Tikkun

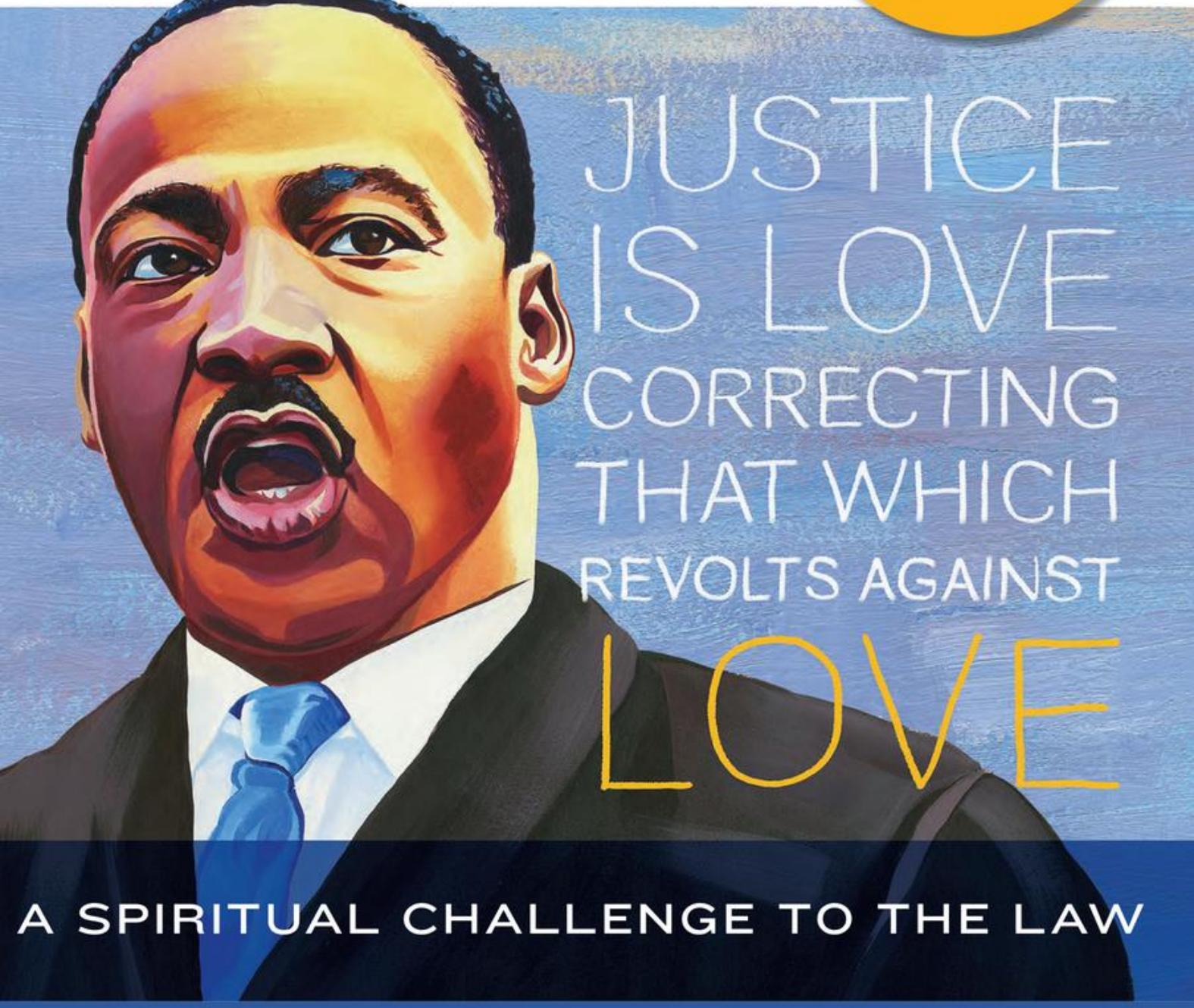
POLITICS + SPIRITUALITY + CULTURE

(tē•kün) To heal, repair, and transform the world.

SUMMER 2015

NONVIOLENCE IN FOREIGN POLICY

page 27



A SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE TO THE LAW

Vandana Shiva on Protecting Biodiversity | Lessons from the Shadow Side of Football
A Scientific View of God | A Psychoanalytic Approach to Trauma in Israel/Palestine
Net Neutrality and the Fight for Social Justice | Love for the Prophet Muhammad

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SUMMER 2015

3 Letters

EDITORIALS

5 Repenting for What Israel Did to Gaza — Without Condoning the Wrongs Committed by Hamas

The human suffering is monumental. The political consequence was a major rightward turn in Israel that shaped the 2015 Israeli elections.

8 A Spiritual Practice of Forgiveness and Repentance

You don't have to be Jewish to benefit from the spiritual wisdom of Jewish High Holidays!

10 War with Iran: The Disastrous Aim of Israel and the Republicans

But it's actually the last thing the United States or Israel needs.

POLITICS & SOCIETY

13 Net Neutrality and the Fight for Social Justice | SAM ROSS-BROWN

Net neutrality is not just for techies. The digital roots of the Black Lives Matter movement show why we must fight to keep the internet open to all.

15 Acknowledging the Other's Suffering: A Psychoanalytic Approach to Trauma in Israel/Palestine | JESSICA BENJAMIN

Even in situations of extreme trauma and asymmetrical power, it's possible to move beyond an us/them mentality. Here's how.

17 The Spiritual Dimension of Social Justice: Transforming the Legal Arena | PETER GABEL

We need a new legal paradigm that affirms the spiritual dimension of our common existence. Join our efforts to place empathy at the center of the law.

24 Rethinking Agriculture: Protecting Biodiversity Amid Climate Chaos | VANDANA SHIVA

Biodiverse systems are more resilient to climate change. As the oceans rise, we must hasten to stop the spread of monocultures and protect biodiversity.

SPECIAL SECTION: NONVIOLENCE IN FOREIGN POLICY

PAGE 27

28 Nonviolence Writ Large | MICHAEL N. NAGLER

Nonviolence could be the way of nations — and that might just save us.

29 Alternatives to War from the Bottom Up | STEPHEN ZUNES

Simply opposing war is not enough — we need to put forward credible alternatives. Nonviolent statecraft is within our reach.

The Genesis of Gender

page 39

Cover Image: *Justice Is Love* by Olivia Wise (oliviawisestudio.com). Right: (detail) *Adam and Eve and the Sweat and the Pain* by Samuel Bak.

Online Exclusives

Tikkun is not just a print magazine — visit our blog at tikkun.org/daily and our web magazine site at tikkun.org. Each has content not found here. Our online magazine is an exciting supplement to the print magazine, and the daily blog brings in a range of voices and perspectives.

Visit tikkun.org/nonviolence to read additional articles by Marc Gopin and others on "Nonviolence in Foreign Policy."

31 Revolutionary Nonviolence: Statecraft Lessons from the Global South | MATT MEYER
Nonviolent activists in the Global North have much to learn from their counterparts in Zambia, Ghana, Tanzania, India, and Grenada.

34 Strengthening Local Economies: The Path to Peace? HELENA NORBERG-HODGE
To understand the rise in terrorism worldwide, we must examine the impact of global consumer culture on communities across the planet.

RETHINKING RELIGION

39 The Genesis of Gender | JOY LADIN
A closer look at the Book of Genesis reveals how deeply the gender binary is ingrained in our culture. What would it mean to smash this binary?

44 Lessons from the Shadow Side of Football: Building the Religious Counterculture | ANA LEVY-LYONS
To uproot our most entrenched institutions, we need a countercultural vision. The story of professional football illustrates why.

46 Love for the Prophet Muhammad: A Key to Countering Islamism and Islamophobia | JOSEPH LUMBARD
Neither Islamophobic westerners nor militant Islamists are right about the Prophet Muhammad — he believed in nonviolence, not retaliation.

CULTURE

BOOKS

49 A Scientific View of God
A God That Could Be Real: Spirituality, Science, and the Future of Our Planet by Nancy Abrams | Review by Rami Shapiro

51 What Can Replace Prison?
Burning Down the House: The End of Juvenile Prison by Nell Bernstein
Locked Down, Locked Out: Why Prison Doesn't Work and How We Can Do Better by Maya Schenwar | Review by Al Hunter

54 Jacob Chose Hospice: A Critique of Invasive End-of-Life Care
Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End by Atul Gawande
Review by Martha Sonnenberg

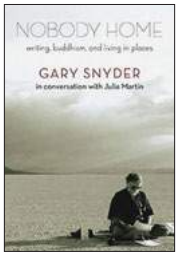
56 The Poetry of a Jewish Humanist
Swimming in the Rain: New and Selected Poems 1980-2015 by Chana Bloch
Review by Philip Terman

POETRY

58 Babel | by Chana Bloch

72 Do You See Me | by Else Lasker-Schüler, translated by Jay Hopler

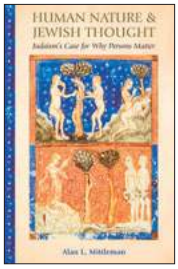
Tikkun RECOMMENDS



Nobody Home: Writing, Buddhism, and Living in Places

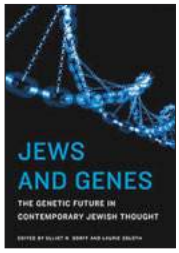
Gary Snyder, in conversation with Julia Martin
Trinity University Press, 2014

Nobody Home presents three interviews conducted by South African scholar and writer Julia Martin with the poet Gary Snyder that take place from the late 1980s to 2010, along with a selection of letters between them covering the same period. Martin was a young academic in apartheid South Africa when she first reached out to Snyder, motivated by her critical work on his poetry and thinking. Martin's study and practice of Buddhism and her intuitive grasp of Snyder's importance as a forefather of a growing international movement of spiritual environmentalism provoked Snyder to respond with sympathy and encouragement. They had an instant rapport in letters, which led to the interviews. This is a great period for Snyder, as his thinking about the nondualism of self/no-self and its relation to the world and all phenomena is culminating in his concentration on finishing *Mountains and Rivers Without End,* one of the crowning works of his generation of poets.



Human Nature & Jewish Thought

Alan L. Mittleman
Princeton University Press, 2015

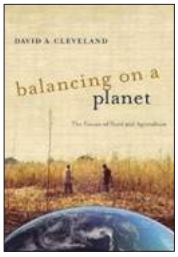


Jews and Genes: The Genetic Future in Contemporary Jewish Thought

Edited by Elliot N. Dorff and Laurie Zoloth
Jewish Publication Society, 2015

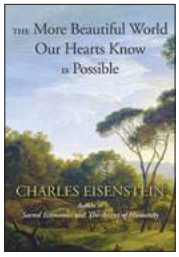
One of the popular ways to dismiss plans for healing and transforming the world is to assert that the distortions we see in the contemporary world are an inevitable outcome of a fixed human nature. In his careful examination of Jewish thought, Alan Mittleman insists on the centrality of moral personhood not constrained by any set of conditions external to the process of ethical reflection and intuition. Not only are reductionist programs incoherent, he argues, they are also absurd. He argues for real freedom and transcendence but simultaneously insists on our human limitations: "We are holy—and capable of unimaginable evil." Holding both, he suggests, is one of the great strengths of the Jewish tradition.

Some genetic diseases are more prevalent among Ashkenazic Jews than among the general population, largely because Jews were always a small population and historically predominantly married only other Jews. Elliot N. Dorff and Laurie Zoloth discuss how, as a result, "representatives of all Jewish denominations have enthusiastically endorsed embryonic stem cell research, genetic testing for diseases, and if possible, the development of genetic cures." Yet work with genetic changes raises important ethical issues and the possibility of human arrogance seeking to transform nature with potentially unpredictable consequences. Dorff and Zoloth have brought together articles from an impressive array of scholars and ethical thinkers who grapple with some of the most difficult issues. Though much of the discussion is refracted through the frame of Jewish law, at least some of the authors are aware of the way that the capitalist marketplace, rather than ethical concerns, may already be driving genetic research and pushing for a wider use of genetic interventions than any health concerns may mandate.



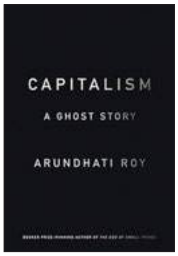
Balancing on a Planet: The Future of Food and Agriculture

David A. Cleveland
University of California Press, 2014



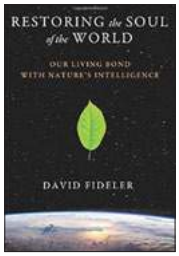
The More Beautiful World Our Hearts Know Is Possible

Charles Eisenstein
North Atlantic Books, 2013



Capitalism: A Ghost Story

Arundhati Roy
Haymarket Books, 2014



Restoring the Soul of the World: Our Living Bond with Nature's Intelligence

David Fideler
Inner Traditions Publishing,2014

The food crisis may be where the environmental crisis becomes most personal to billions of people on this planet. The contradiction between a "socially just agriculture" and an adequate supply of food comes into sharp focus in David A. Cleveland's careful study of the future of food and agriculture. Cleveland does a great job of laying out the major disconnects within the mainstream agrifood systems: between the places where food is cultivated and the places where it is eaten; between the places where food is grown, processed, transported, and consumed and the places where the resources (e.g., water, energy, nutrients, labor) used are from; and between the eating of food and its fundamental roles as biological, psychological, and cultural nourishment. He is less successful, however, at envisioning how enough healthy food to feed everyone on the planet can be grown, transported, and processed by adequately paid workers, in ways that are nurturing to the earth.

To get there, we need to transcend the injunction to "be realistic" and move toward new visions of what is possible. Charles Eisenstein does just that. Encouraging us to leave behind the shelter of our cynicism, he shows us how to enter into the vulnerable state of the unguarded sharer. Eisenstein argues that our very existence is relational and our task is to offer our uniquely human gifts for the well-being and development of the whole. This book offers an inspiring vision of how this change of consciousness may already be happening, but it does not offer much advice for engaging in the political struggles necessary to achieve deeper change.

Meanwhile, Arundhati Roy's *Capitalism* introduces us to some of the ways that India, with its capitalist ethos and institutions, puts attempts at implementing utopian fantasies to the test. Roy helps readers understand how very deep the pathologies of capitalist society have sunk into the legal system, the media, and even the consciousness of those who are suffering most deeply on account of capitalism.

David Fideler explores "our living bond with nature" with special emphasis on the self-organizing intelligence at its heart. "The universe is not a collection of mechanical cogs, but a community of beings," he writes. "Parts come together to form organic, emergent, and autonomous entities." So we must learn to embrace the experience of belonging to a larger reality that transcends our limited selves. And if we could "see the entire earth as a garden—as a living but damaged paradise, worthy of love and admiration—we could then act as gardeners, working in collaboration with the soul of the world."

Readers Respond

A NOTE ON LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We welcome your responses to our articles. Send letters to the editor to letters@tikkun.org. Please remember, however, not to attribute to *Tikkun* views other than those expressed in our editorials. We email, post, and print many articles with which we have strong disagreements because that is what makes *Tikkun* a location for a true diversity of ideas. *Tikkun* reserves the right to edit your letters to fit available space in the magazine.

INSIDE DISABILITY JUSTICE

Your welcome attention to "disability justice" in your Fall 2014 print issue found me recovering from a year's bout with cancer and facing the new experience of using a wheelchair, rollator, and cane for post-hospital getting around in New York City. Not only am I now more empathetic with the debilitating effects of illness; I am also newly grateful for those pioneers of urban transportation that make my city livable for the disabled: beveled curbs, buses with easy wheelchair access, subways with seats, and laws that favor the disabled. These facilities are examples of clearing away structural barriers to justice in urban life. Along with this, I find, goes the readiness of many fellow riders to vacate a seat for someone in a wheelchair or carrying a cane. Turns out that Tom Shakespeare's quote from Jean Vanier has implications for both the architecture and the culture of cities: "The weak teach the strong to accept and integrate the weakness and brokenness of their own lives." Seats on bus and subway are a great continuing reinforcement of that acceptance.

— Donald Shriver, *New York, NY*

SOCIALIZING LAND VALUE

I am very pleased to see that through the online addendums to the Winter 2015 issue (published at tikkun.org/jubilee) the Jubilee and debt sabbatical themes are still very much alive in *Tikkun* magazine. I'd like to share a response to Norman Solomon's online contribution, "The Jubilee and the Global Economy: Lessons from Leviticus."

The economic effect of the Jubilee's fifty-year family land restoration was to ensure that all Hebrews had access to the basis of a livelihood, that they had access to land. In today's complex economy it is the same: equality of access to land is the basis of justice. The difference is that today it is the *socially generated* value of land that one cannot be alienated from without dire individual and social consequences. To the extent that these socially generated values are privatized, their privilege is incarnated and a gross injustice is perpetrated. To the extent that the socially generated value of land is socialized, the meaning of community is realized. I will supply just two examples:

First, in a jurisdiction where land values are completely socialized — where the annual rent potential of "location, location, location" is taken up as revenue for paying for fire protection, streets, education, public transit, etc. — the sales price of land falls toward *zero*. Why? Because when anything, including land, ceases to generate income for its owner, it loses its sales price. The abolition of the sales price of land destroys land-value-related debt and the interest that goes along with that debt. In many places, certainly anywhere that is desirable, half and more of the debt associated with real estate is the sales price of land. A land value tax would eliminate debt for land, hence ending interest on land debt.

With this dynamic at play, the prospect of paying for a house in seven years isn't so hard to imagine. Solomon's assertion that long-term mortgage debt is inescapable is simply wrong. But it's wrong only when land is treated as a common heritage and a commonwealth, as something that it is heresy and absurd to privatize. Rabbi Hillel condoned the privatization of Creation when he conceived the *prosbul*. Period. He was theologically an apostate in that regard. I don't condemn him. His position was expedient in a tenuous time. But it denied God, the King of Creation, by substituting for common inheritance in land the Romanesque legal provisions for privatizing land itself.

My second example of how socializing the value of land begets justice in accord with the intent and spirit of the Jubilee is this: to the extent the rent potential of land is abolished, the incentive to hoard land evaporates. At present there is powerful incentive to speculate in land values, to acquire and underdevelop land, and then wait for a rise in mere land value independent of any improvement to that land itself. Where the full rent potential is socialized and thus removed as an objective of the investor, land ceases to be withheld from the market for meeting current housing and business needs. Indeed, a full land value tax compels those with desirable land to put it to optimal market use immediately! If the owner of a site has to pay society the full site rent value, he will develop that site with diligence in order to derive income.

Advocating for this modern version (the land value tax) of the intent of the Jubilee is no more challenging or idealistic than inveighing corporations, nations, and individuals to "do the right thing" and believing that these entities will do so. Solomon proposes that "traditional land rights should be respected as far as compatible with economic realities." Well that is as much as conceding Creation to private parties just as we have at present. "Compatible with economic realities" amounts to saying, "We can't change anything (much less heal the world)." Such a position is not *tikkun*; it is in its very statement a broken covenant.

— David Giesen, *San Francisco, CA*

EMBRACING GOD'S QUEERNESS

After hearing Rabbi Lerner speak in Ashland, Oregon, this past summer, I subscribed to *Tikkun*. What a pleasant surprise to receive my first issue with the article "Embracing God's Queerness" highlighted on the cover. I applaud your decision to feature the voice of Joy Ladin speaking from the fringe of religious sensibility, whether it be Christian or Jewish. Our religious progenitors were always radicals, defying established norms. What a breath of fresh air to read this thoughtful article. Thank you!

— Julian Spalding, *Ashland, OR*

EMBRACING A UTOPIAN VISION

Thank you for urging us to embrace a utopian vision in Rabbi Lerner's Fall 2014 editorial, "*The Big Picture* — a Movie I'd Like to Make." Unfortunately, the visions we view in books and films are usually dystopian, filled with

MORE LETTERS

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zombies, evil aliens, and killer sharks embodying all that is frightening around us.

Although I'm merely a lowly public health specialist and teacher, I have written a political novel that also presents a more utopian alternative—one that is postcapitalistic, postmoney, and in which more enlightened educational, penal, medical, and social systems prevail.

—Barry Karlin, *Boulder, CO*

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Tikkun magazine is . . .

. . . a vehicle for spreading a new consciousness. We call it a spiritual progressive worldview. But what is that?

What Do You Mean by "Spiritual"?

You can be spiritual and still be an atheist or agnostic. To be spiritual, you don't have to believe in God or accept New Age versions of spirituality. You don't need to give up science or your critical faculties. We use the word "spiritual" to describe all aspects of reality that cannot be subject to empirical verification or measurement: everything pertaining to ethics, aesthetics, music, art, philosophy, religion, poetry, literature, dance, love, generosity, and joy. We reject the notion that everything worthy of consideration to guide our personal lives and our economic and political arrangements must be measurable.

What's a Spiritual Progressive?

To be a spiritual progressive is to agree that our public institutions, corporations, government policies, laws, education system, health care system, legal system, and even many aspects of our personal lives should be judged "efficient, rational, or productive" to the extent that they maximize love, caring, generosity, and ethical and environmentally sustainable behavior. We call this our New Bottom Line.

Spiritual progressives seek to build "The Caring Society: Caring for Each Other and Caring for the Earth." Our well-being depends upon the well-being of everyone else and also on the well-being of the planet itself. So we commit to an ethos of generosity, nonviolence, and radical amazement at the grandeur of all that is, and seek to build a global awareness of the unity of all being.

If you are willing to help promote this New Bottom Line for our society, you are a spiritual progressive. And if you are a spiritual progressive, we invite you to join our Network of Spiritual Progressives at spiritualprogressives.org.

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Repenting for What Israel Did to Gaza—Without Condoning the Wrongs Committed by Hamas

It's been a year since Israel's massive incursion into Gaza. The horrendous costs of that war are still being lived by the people of Gaza, who have not received substantial help in rebuilding from Israel or the West. It's hard to know what could be done for the families of the 2,800 Gazans who were killed by the Israeli assault, or for the more than 10,000 who were injured. But what certainly should have been done by now is a complete rebuilding of all the apartment buildings, homes, schools, and hospitals that the Israeli Defense Forces destroyed. As we approach the Jewish High Holidays this September, it's time for Jews and Americans who supported the Israeli assault to begin a process of repentance for their failure to repair the damage they caused.

How the War Began

Let's consider first how that war started. The Palestinian Authority entered into negotiations with Israel in 2013 under protest, because Israel was refusing to agree to a halt in West Bank expansion of settlements (which was part of what these negotiations were supposed to be about). The Palestinian Authority agreed, though skeptical of the sincerity of Israel's intent to end the struggle and create an economically and politically viable Palestinian state. But since Netanyahu professed in public his commitment to a two-state solution, and Obama and Kerry naively believed him, the Palestinian leaders agreed to participate in a new round of negotiations led by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry who had gotten Israel to agree to a specific schedule for releasing long-held Palestinians who were arrested while resisting the Occupation. But in spring 2014, when the time came for Israel to let the last and most important group of prisoners out, Israel refused to live up to its own agreement.

At that point, Palestinian Authority supporters felt they had once again been lied to by the Netanyahu government and realized that their participation in the negotiations had just afforded more time for the Occupation to continue. So the Palestinian Authority turned to Hamas and concluded a peace agreement that sought to reincorporate Hamas into the government of Palestine. Those of us who want peace welcomed this move, because a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinian Authority that does not include Hamas is of limited value. The reincorporation of Hamas into the government of Palestine meant that Netanyahu's government could no longer say that an agreement with the Palestinian Authority was meaningless because it did not include Hamas and Gaza. But Netanyahu reacted angrily and cancelled the negotiations with the Palestinian Authority, to the chagrin of Kerry, who had spent months and much of his reputation on these suddenly abandoned talks. The Obama administration looked foolish but did nothing to put economic or military pressure on Israel to change its direction.

What must have been particularly upsetting to Netanyahu and his right-wing coalition was that Hamas seemed to be willing to let the Palestinian Authority work out an agreement with Israel. Hamas leaders explained that they would not formally endorse the agreement themselves but would participate in a Palestinian government that would endorse an agreement. Hamas leaders said they would accept such an agreement as a *hudna* (ceasefire), which they could live with even while still asserting that Palestinians had a right to all of Palestine. This way, Hamas would have a way of explaining to its own people that it had not given up the struggle for the full liberation of Palestine. But in reality, the participation of Hamas in a government led by the Palestinian Authority would have necessitated a total suspension of the armed struggle.

Netanyahu Wreaks Mass Devastation in Gaza

At this point, three Israeli teenagers were kidnapped and murdered by former Hamas operatives who had been in rebellion against Hamas, which they saw as too tame, and who were presumably dismayed at Hamas's "capitulation" to the moderate and nonviolence-committed Palestinian Authority. Their act gave Netanyahu the excuse he needed to escalate his struggle against the Palestinian people. Though Israeli leaders knew that the teens were dead (a tape of one of them calling from the car in which they were held, followed by loud gunshots, was in the hands of the police within thirty-six hours), they deceived their own people and claimed that they were involved in an intense search to find the teens. The Israeli government used this claim as the pretext to break into over 1,000 West Bank Palestinian homes and arrest large numbers of Hamas supporters.

When the government finally revealed the fate of the three Israeli teens, outraged Israelis took to the streets in what could only be labeled as an ongoing pogrom against random Palestinians in Israel's major cities. In Jerusalem and other cities, Palestinian citizens of Israel were grabbed and beaten. And in Jerusalem a young Palestinian teen was grabbed by Jewish Israeli extremists and then doused with oil and burned to death. Palestinian citizens of Israel who for decades had been seeking to build peace with Jewish Israelis feared for their lives. Many Palestinians living in Israeli cities returned to their native villages, while others sought to leave the country altogether.

In addition, Israel targeted and killed some top Hamas operatives in Gaza. At this point, Hamas, filled with anger at Israel for the ongoing blockade that was causing severe malnutrition in Gaza, struck back by sending a barrage of ineffectual missiles at Israeli population centers. Almost all of those rockets failed to penetrate the Iron Dome defense system that the United States gave to Israel and has helped to maintain.

Israel sent troops into Gaza to find the source of these missiles but quickly lost dozens of soldiers. Netanyahu, realizing that this latest incursion would be costly to his own political future should he preside over the deaths of more Israelis, decided to rely mostly on heavy artillery and airplane and drone attacks. The devastation of Gaza continued through much of the summer, after Hamas leaders rejected an initial truce offer that did not meet their demand to end the blockade. The targets included hundreds of housing complexes, hospitals, and schools, as well as Gaza's electricity, water filtration, and waste management systems. These attacks on public sanitation resulted in a dramatic escalation of pollution and destroyed access to clean water in parts of Gaza. These were demonstrable human rights violations, and those who committed them and those who ordered them, including Benjamin Netanyahu, ought to face charges in the International Criminal Court.

The outrage of the Palestinian people and the anger of Hamas at Israel were certainly understandable. But Hamas's attempt to bomb civilian centers was also a huge violation of human rights, and its leaders, too, ought to face human rights trials through the International Criminal Court.

How Hamas Damaged the Palestinian Cause

We know the arguments: "People have a right to resist oppression and occupation." Indeed they do. Had Hamas announced that it was targeting only military bases in Israel and the command and control center of the invading army in Tel Aviv, this might have had a reasonable defense. But Hamas did not make such a distinction; thus its actions could reasonably be described as consistent with its past targeting of civilians and its refusal to countenance Israel's existence in any part of what Hamas describes as Palestine (which includes all of Israel, not just the parts conquered in 1967). So we have to say to both sides: "You cannot target civilian noncombatants without violating international law." And while we feel a special responsibility to repent for what Israel did in 2014, we unequivocally condemn Hamas's attempts to bomb civilian centers as well. What it did was not only a human rights crime against the Israeli people; it was also a huge ethical crime against its own people.

Hamas had no reasonable basis for believing that bombing Israel all summer would weaken the resolve of the Netanyahu administration or increase U.S. opposition to the blockade of Gaza. By continuing that bombing, Hamas sent millions of Israelis fleeing each day into bomb shelters, because the Israeli government told its people that "the Iron Dome" would not necessarily protect them against every missile. And this in turn melted away peace sentiments among Israelis, who were feeling under attack and hence were unwilling to demand that Netanyahu stop the destruction of Gaza and the killing of large numbers of Palestinian civilians.

The damage to the Palestinian cause was immense. Netanyahu was suddenly faced with a reinvigorated fascistic right, which criticized him for being too lenient with Gaza and threatened to bring down his government for its failure to conduct a more extensive war to kill every last member of Hamas. Racist language against Palestinians and Muslims proliferated throughout Israeli society. Netanyahu was perceived by many Israelis as a centrist in comparison with the more extreme political voices that emerged and sought to rid the land of Israel of its Palestinian population. The whole political spectrum in Israel, which was already tilted to the right, shifted even further rightward. The March 2015 elections confirmed that. In part due to the fear that Hamas's rocket attacks had triggered, Israelis gave Netanyahu a new mandate based on his promise to never allow a Palestinian state to emerge — which in turn strengthened the most militarist factions of Hamas that had always contended that the Palestinian Authority had been wasting its time and creating illusory hopes among Palestinians by trying to find a peaceful solution to the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza.

So Much Has Been Lost

Some people defended Hamas's actions with this argument in the summer of 2014: "We felt we had nothing to lose — we were going to die anyway, so we wanted to die with dignity. Isn't that what the fighters of the Warsaw Ghetto had chosen when they engaged in a last ditch struggle against the Germans? We would prefer to emulate them than emulate those Jews who went quietly to the slaughter."

But this argument is full of holes. First of all, the Israeli blockade was not killing people en masse, and the Palestinian

An ambulance lies in the rubble of the Shuja'iyya neighborhood of Gaza following Israeli attacks in summer 2014. Gazans have yet to recover from the Israeli airstrikes on their hospitals, homes, and schools.

Creative Commons/Boris Niehaus

people are not being pulled off the streets to be sent to gas chambers or crematoria. Their condition is terrible, and what Israel has been doing is ethically indefensible. But it is not a systematic genocide. Second, the notion that Palestinians "had nothing to lose" was not true for the ordinary citizens of Gaza. Those people, largely innocent of the crime of ordering or executing the rocket assaults on Israeli cities, had a lot to lose, and they have been suffering terribly since Hamas launched its attack on the citizens of Israel and then continued it even after Israel proposed a ceasefire. Needless to say, the people of Gaza became the innocent victims, of both Israel's outrageous assault and Hamas's outrageous attempt to bomb Israeli civilians. The people of Gaza have no democratic control over Hamas, and if they rally around the Hamas government now, it is not out of solidarity with Hamas's strategy but out of their recognition that in the final analysis it is Israel, not Hamas, that blockaded Gaza and destroyed their homes, schools, hospitals, and water and electricity supplies.

Shame on Hamas. Shame on Israel.

We in the United States have a special responsibility. Our government has been providing military and political cover for Israel throughout the past several decades, and the Obama administration has gone out of its way to surpass previous administrations in supplying military equipment and expertise to the Israeli government. The American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) and the Israeli right do not respond with gratitude in large part because they don't respect the easily-pushed-around Obama administration. So instead they ask for more — demanding that the United States become their proxy in declawing the Iranian government.

We at *Tikkun* are deeply saddened by this whole picture. And as we enter the High Holidays in the fall of 2015, we call for both sides to repent of their irresponsible behavior. For those of us who are Jews, the Jewish tradition teaches us to take collective responsibility for the actions of our brothers and sisters who speak in the name of the whole Jewish people, the millions of Jews who support the behavior of the Israeli government, the vast majority of Jewish institutions that either remained silent or opposed any criticism of what Israel had been doing, and the millionaires and billionaires who pour their monies into right-wing organizations while the peace movement in Israel and in the American Jewish world are financially starved. For all of this, we as Jews need to do *teshuvah* (repentance and return to our highest values). We as a people have been missing the mark. We pray that we will not soon be faced with the karmic consequences of our actions as a people. ■

A Spiritual Practice of Forgiveness and Repentance

You Don't Have to be Jewish to Benefit from the Spiritual Wisdom of Jewish High Holidays!

Practice I: Repentance — a central practice for the period from August 16 (the first day of the Hebrew month of Elul) through September 23 (Yom Kippur).

Carefully review your life: acknowledge to yourself whom you have hurt and where your life has gone astray from your own highest ideals. Find a place where you can be safely alone, and then say out loud whom you've hurt how, and how you've hurt yourself. In the case of others, *go to them and say clearly what you've done and ask for forgiveness*. Do not mitigate or "explain"—just acknowledge and sincerely ask for forgiveness.

We do not start from the assumption that anyone has become evil. Rather, we envision any "sins" as "missing the mark." We are born pure and with the best of intentions to be the highest possible spiritual beings we can be: we are arrows being shot toward God to connect more fully. Yet at various points in our lives, the arrow gets slightly off track and misses the mark. Repentance is really about a midcourse adjustment to get back on track, and it can be done every day. But we also recognize that each of us is embedded in a global economic system that oppresses and exploits many while systematically undermining the life-support system of the planet. We unintentionally benefit from that global system. So we have a spiritual and Jewish obligation to do more to find ways to transform our economic and political system and to support others who are similarly engaged in the struggle for a New Bottom Line of love, generosity, social justice, nonviolence, forgiveness, kindness, peace, environmental sanity, and celebration of all that is good and awesome about this universe. These seemingly utopian goals have now become a survival necessity for the continuation of life on earth.

This practice does not require one to be Jewish, so we invite all *Tikkun* readers to use this repentance practice and the forgiveness practice described below, and to invite others to do so as well. We also invite you to join our interfaith and secular-humanist-welcoming Network of Spiritual Progressives and to create a local group to study *Tikkun* articles together, develop ideas on how to popularize the New Bottom Line in your own geographical area or workplace, and act on those ideas. We believe that true repentance should involve a willingness to move beyond single-issue activism to envision the society we actually want—as well as a willingness to work with others to bring that society into existence. So we urge you not only to repent about what has gone wrong, but also to think through the details of the world you want to build. Once you have a clear vision of that, the next step is to work in that direction and share your efforts with fellow members of the Network of Spiritual Progressives. Otherwise, repentance can become an empty exercise in self-aggrandizement, allowing us to feel good about ourselves for having wanted to change our world without having done anything to make change happen. To help in this process, please read and reread once a week this article: tikkun.org/yearning.

Practice 2: Forgiveness — for every day of the year.

Every night before going to sleep, or every morning before engaging in your various tasks, projects, or interactions with others, review your life. Recall who you feel has hurt or betrayed you and toward whom you are still holding resentment or anger. Then, say this out loud:

You, my Eternal Friend (Yud Hey Vav Hey, Shechinah, Adonai, or whatever name you give to the God or the spiritual energy of the universe), the Power of Transformation and Healing in the Universe, witness now that **I forgive anyone who has hurt, upset, or offended me** by hurting my body, taking my property, damaging my reputation, hurting my feelings, shaming me, undermining my friendships, hurting my income, scaring me, making me angry, or damaging people that I love—whether by accident or purposely—with words, deeds, thoughts, or attitudes.

I will continue to fight against social and economic institutions that oppress me and others, but I will do so not with hatred in my heart but with love for those who have been wounded.

I think particularly of _____ *(fill in here anyone in your life who may have done some of the above).*

I forgive _____ *(name each person)* and every other person who has hurt or upset me, whether or not I can

remember them at this moment. May no one be punished because of me. May no one suffer from karmic consequences for hurting or upsetting me.

Help me, Eternal Friend, the spiritual energy of the universe, to keep from offending you and others. Help me become aware of the ways I may have unintentionally or intentionally hurt others, and please give me guidance and strength to rectify those hurts — and to develop the sensitivity to stop acting in a hurtful way. Let me forgive others — let me forgive myself — but also let me change in ways that make it easy for me to avoid paths of hurtfulness to others.

I seek peace; let me *be* peace.

I seek justice; let me be just.

I seek a world of kindness; let me be kind.

I seek a world of generosity; let me be generous with all that I have and to everyone I encounter in my life and to those whom I do not encounter but who need my help.

I seek a world of sharing; let me share all that I have.

I seek a world of love; let me be loving beyond all reason, beyond all normal expectation, beyond all societal frameworks that tell me how much love is "normal" — beyond all fear that giving too much love will leave me with too little. Let me be overflowing with love toward others.

And let me be open, aware, sensitive, and receptive to all the love that is already coming to me: the love of people I know; the love of the universe that pours through all that is and sustains life on this planet (also known as the love of God/dess for all her creatures); the love that is part of the human condition; and the accumulated love of past generations that has been passed down to us and that flows through our languages, music, technology, literature, religions, agriculture, and family heritages, such as our recipes for cooking food. Let me pass that love on to the next generations in an even fuller and more conscious way.

I commit to act lovingly in all my interactions and to use some of my energy to participate in activities aimed at *tikkun*: transforming and healing our society and saving human and nonhuman life on the planet. So this week or next I will _____ *(fill in an intended action).*

Source of goodness and love in the universe, let me be alive to all the goodness that surrounds me. And let that awareness be my shield and protector. Let it give me the energy I need to engage in struggles to transform our economic, religious, and political systems, our media and our educational systems, our science and our technological systems, our legal system and our government, and all other practices and institutions — including my own profession and workplace — so that they reward and give sustenance to our capacities for love, kindness, generosity, and compassion. And let me bring to these struggles a spirit of generosity, love, forgiveness, and openheartedness.

Hear the words of my mouth, and may the meditations of my heart find acceptance before you, Eternal Friend, who protects and frees me. Amen. ■

A full version of *Tikkun*'s High Holidays Workbook can be found at tikkun.org/highholidays2015.

For information on our High Holidays services led by Rabbi Michael Lerner and open to people from every background and spiritual tradition, including atheists and secular humanists, go to *beyttikkun.org.*

This workbook was composed for Beyt Tikkun Synagogue-Without-Walls (beyttikkun.org) by Rabbi Michael Lerner (rabbilerner.tikkun@gmail.com) and inspired by Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi (z"l). We invite you to join the Network of Spiritual Progressives' campaign for a Global Marshall Plan and an Environmental and Social Responsibility Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. You can find more information at spiritualprogressives.org.

She Blew the Shofar by Lynne Feldman.

Lynne Feldman (lynnefeldman.com)

War with Iran

The Disastrous Aim of Israel and the Republicans

Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his supporters would love to see a series of military assaults on Iran. In particular, they are hoping for assaults that would decisively undermine Iran's ability to develop nuclear power, even for peaceful purposes. Netanyahu has felt this way for years, but after the disastrous war with Gaza in 2014, it was strategically clever for him to put the issue of Iran on the world's agenda in order to shift global attention away from the suffering of the Palestinian people.

Netanyahu's discussion of possible assaults by Israel or its sole ally, the United States, on Iran succeeded in steering Israeli voters away from discussions of Palestine in the run-up to the March 2015 election.

The U.S. invasion of Iraq, which was encouraged by Netanyahu and a spate of neoconservatives working with the Bush administration, unleashed sectarian warfare between Sunni and Shi'a groups that has left hundreds of thousands of Iraqis dead and maimed and that has forced millions to abandon their homes and live as refugees, either in Iraq or in surrounding countries. Many Muslims in the Middle East, like many others (including Jewish, Christian, Buddhist, and Hindu fundamentalists) who have held on to the values of traditional societies (a blend of communitarian commitment to mutual well-being along with sexist, homophobic, and coercive practices) have long nurtured a deep resentment against capitalist values. This resentment is understandably directed toward the Western countries that have planted multinational corporations inside the Middle East, bringing in their wake the materialistic, ultra-individualistic, community-destroying values that lay the foundation for a fundamentalist counterrevolution. The emergence of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Nigeria's militant Islamist group, Boko Haram, is a product of these factors combined with huge resentment of Israel's repression of Palestinians and Western powers' exploitation and domination of the Middle East.

Very few Israelis want their own soldiers to go to war with Iran. What they want most is for the United States to fight that war, which many Israelis believe is necessary in order to remove the threat to Israel's existence that Iran is thought to constitute.

Those Israelis who seek to encourage the United States to fight this war, as Benjamin Netanyahu did quite eloquently—though deceitfully—in his address to a joint session of the U.S. Congress on March 3, 2015, have a powerful ally in that quest, namely the Republican majorities in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives. Most of these Republicans have never seen a war that they didn't yearn to get into, motivated in part by their funders in the military-industrial complex and in part by a lingering desire to reestablish the United States as the undisputed and sole major power of the world.

What makes war with Iran so particularly appealing to the militarists is that it has the support of the many Democrats beholden to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), as well as popular support from Christian Zionists, who are among the more vocal elements in the base of the Republican Party. Other proponents of an ill-advised war with Iran include the section of the American public who would love to watch the first African American president appear like a failure, thereby covertly validating the racism that has given the Republican Party its staying power, even among middle-income and poor people whose economic interests have been battered by Republican-instigated cuts to the already paltry safety net. As a result, for the first time in a very long time, the war seekers have a wide enough base to have a shot at winning the presidency in 2016 and strengthening their hold on both houses of Congress (even if they fail to fully derail the Obama agreement with Iran). Though they may not be able to deliver a war on Iran until 2017, they will almost certainly harass the Obama administration continually until then and challenge liberal Democrats by trying to split them from those Jews and others who support a more aggressive policy toward Iran.

The Current Strategy of Domination

To the shame of the American Jewish community, many Democratic senators from states with a high percentage of Jewish voters, donors, and community activists find themselves caught between a White House that would very much like to deliver a mutually satisfactory agreement with Iran, on the one hand, and otherwise liberal American Jews who have been pressing the Obama administration to demand terms that Iran would never accept, on the other.

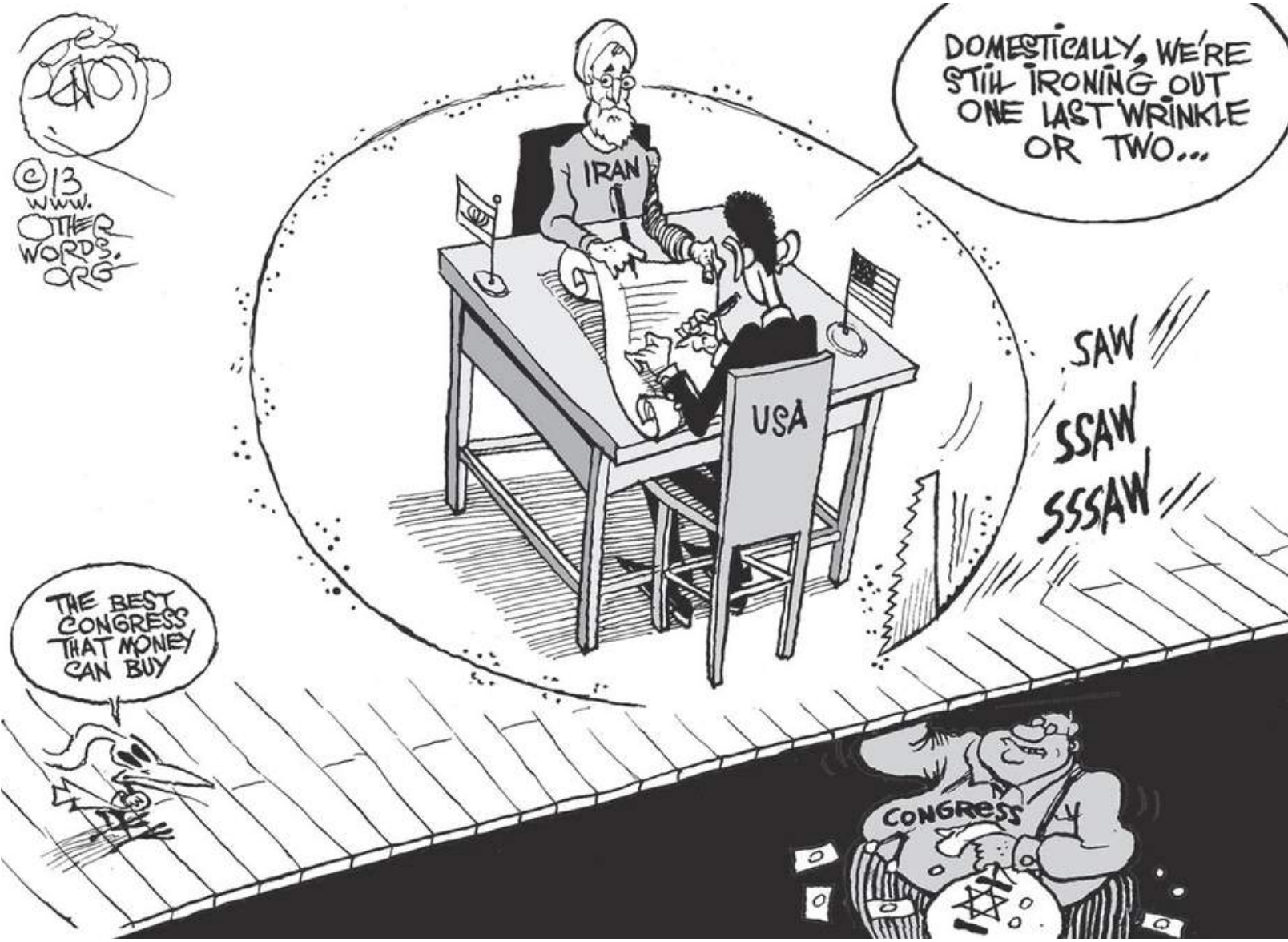
Neither "facts" nor "new information" will change this reality. No matter how tough the terms of a deal with Iran become, the champions of fear will still have strong rhetorical power in their fearmongering. They will argue: "Do you really think we can trust the Iranians? Don't you know that

Facing page: Khalil Bendib (bendib.com)

they are fanatics like the Nazis, committed to destroying the Jewish people? Didn't you hear their statements denying the Holocaust and embracing the goal of destroying Israel?" Most Jews rejected these very same kinds of arguments when they were being used by militarists in the 1950s to urge a war with the Stalinists who were ruling Russia. But many Jews are now ready to drop bombs to prevent Iran from developing any nuclear capacity, even as an alternative energy source. The logic of mutual destruction that kept the United States and Russia from using nuclear bombs during the Cold War would almost certainly apply to Iranian fundamentalists as well. They do not want their Islamic republic to be reduced to rubble by a second strike. They may be hateful and fanatic, but they are not self-destructive.

So why do the militarists always gain the upper hand in these conversations? The militarists invoke what I've called the "strategy of domination." It goes like this:

We are each thrown into this world by ourselves, alone, and facing a world filled with people who are seeking to maximize their own interests without regard to the consequences for others or for the earth. They will find ways to advance their own interests in any way they can, often resorting to overt or covert manipulation and even ready to use violence to achieve their goals. Given that this is the reality of the world we live in, you would be a fool, an idiot, a *shlemazel* (unlucky oaf), and a *freier* (sucker) if you didn't seek to maximize your own power and interests to dominate and manipulate others before they dominate and manipulate you. It is



The Best Congress That Money Can Buy by Khalil Bendib.

a worldview that validates fear of the other and first strikes and "preventive wars."

Toward a Strategy of Generosity

This view of life is countered by what we call the "strategy of generosity." This spiritual view says:

No, we didn't get thrown into the world by ourselves. We actually came into the world through a mother, and it was that mother (or other nurturing caregiver) that made it possible for us to survive when we were helpless little infants. This primary nurturer may have been a nurse, a father, a neighbor, or a sibling. But we are each alive because some other person cared for us, not because she or he expected a good return on the investment of time and energy, but rather because she or he loved us. This early experience of genuine love — of "giving to give," not "giving to get" — has shaped the yearnings of everyone on the planet. We all want to live in societies based on the kind of love and generosity of spirit that made it possible for us to survive past infancy.

This different way of thinking is articulated through the vast majority of spiritual and religious traditions that have survived in the world. In this view, "homeland security" can best be achieved through generosity and caring for others.

Most people yearn for a different kind of world, a world in which the love and generosity they've experienced within their families or friendships might also shape their public lives. But they have also internalized the voice of fear, so it doesn't take much for them to be pushed back into reluctant or sometimes enthusiastic acceptance of the Strategy of Domination.

But this is never a fixed reality. The hunger for a world of love keeps on popping up in unexpected places. Many people disavow this hunger, fearing they will be seen as nurturing childish fantasies or not understanding the "real world" if they dare to say they don't like the world as constituted. So they articulate the tropes of the Strategy of Domination to reassure their friends and themselves that they are "true adults," "sophisticated," and "realistic." These same tropes are massively reinforced every day in the world of work, in the workings of the economy, in sitcoms, on news shows, and in movies and television dramas. But the most important way these tropes get reinforced is by people telling them to each other as though they were the revealed truth of the universe. Each of us, to some extent, participates in this process, and the more we do so, the more we bind others to the worldview of domination and fear.

The great failure of the peace and social justice movements, of the Obama administration, and of liberals and progressives in Congress is that they never publicly articulate support for a strategy of generosity. No wonder, then, that they find themselves struggling to show that they are "realistic" within the terms of the worldview of fear and domination.

Alternatives to Militarism

To provide an alternative to the militarists in both parties, the liberal and progressive forces would have to articulate a worldview of love, generosity, caring for each other, and caring for the earth. They would have to help people see the earth not just as a resource but as something that can generate a sense of awe, wonder, and radical amazement. And they would have to encourage people to overcome a narrow, utilitarian approach to other people (always asking "What can I get from them?") and instead see them as embodiments of the sacred. Taking this as a new bottom line for our society, while explicitly challenging the old bottom line of money and power, and teaching people about the ongoing struggle between the two worldviews, has become a central part of what *Tikkun* and the Network of Spiritual Progressives are offering to the liberal and progressive movements. And our proposed Global Marshall Plan (tikkun.org/gmp) and the Environmental and Social Responsibility Amendment (ESRA) to the U.S. Constitution (tikkun.org/esra) are vehicles for taking this alternative worldview into public space and developing a major change of consciousness in Western societies. Of course they are dismissed as unrealistic by those who have been mesmerized by the "realism" of the fearmongers and champions of domination. But we know that what is deemed realistic can change, because not long ago the struggles against apartheid, segregation, sexism, and homophobia were similarly dismissed, but have since won great victories.

Don't expect to hear this worldview explicitly promoted by Hillary Clinton or by the Democrats. Liberal politicians' failure to promote a strategy of generosity is one major reason why they may be facing another electoral defeat in 2016. And until the liberal and progressive movements start talking this way, moving beyond what they are *against* and instead talking about what they are *for*, they too will remain too marginal to impact national policies. If we want to stop the headlong march toward a war with Iran, or whatever other wars the militarists propose, and if we want to counter the view that ending poverty domestically and globally and repairing the environment is "too costly," we need to persuade liberals and progressives to embrace a movement for love and justice and affirm our new bottom line. This is the positive and visionary strategy that will work. Be part of the solution — join the interfaith and secular-humanist-welcoming Network of Spiritual Progressives at spiritualprogressives.org/join. ■

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INFO: tikkun.org/interns
Tikkun invites people of all ages to apply to work as interns and volunteers on editorial, social justice, environmental sanity, and consciousness-raising tasks at our office in Berkeley, CA.

Net Neutrality and the Fight for Social Justice

BY SAM ROSS-BROWN

Ferguson residents' ability to create internet-based media played a major role in persuading mainstream media to cover the story of Mike Brown. Popularized under the striking logo below, KARG Argus Radio's live stream from Ferguson was viewed more than a million times in just a few days in August 2014.

Argus Streaming News (argusnewsnow.com)

"Historically, the debate over net neutrality has been between techies, public interest groups, and big telecoms," says activist Steven Renderos. "The real voices of people outside of D.C. haven't really been heard on these issues up until this last year."

What made this past year different was an overwhelming public push for stronger net neutrality protections. Back in January 2014, a federal appeals court threw out the bedrock net neutrality rules of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), thereby allowing big telecoms like Comcast to provide faster speeds to websites that could afford to pay for them. It didn't take long for users and activists to push back, and push back they did. By September, the FCC had received more than 3.7 million comments — enough to crash its website. And then this past February, after the petitioning and organizing had gone on for months, FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler announced sweeping new protections for a free and open internet. Called Title II reclassification, the new rules label the web as a public utility that must operate on a level playing field. "This is a big deal," Renderos adds.

Renderos is the policy director of the Center for Media Justice, one of many groups at the forefront of the recent net neutrality push. As a nationwide coalition of more than 150 activist groups, the Center for Media Justice (in concert with its activist offshoot, the Media Action Grassroots Network) has worked at the intersection of media policy and social justice for more than a decade. Through popular education, community organizing, and grassroots media projects, the group has worked tirelessly to amplify the voices of communities of color and low-income people and to challenge corporate control of the media system. The coalition has enjoyed more than a few major victories in recent years, on everything from laws governing municipal broadband to local control of radio. But net neutrality is by far the most critical issue.

"Net neutrality is the free speech of the internet," says Malkia A. Cyrus, the executive director of the Center for Media Justice. "It's the principal set of rules that keeps the internet fair and levels the playing field." But like Renderos, Cyrus sees mainstream coverage of these issues as a barrier

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to organizing. "We know that the way these issues are talked about is very technocratic — people don't understand it," she says. "And so we don't really talk about net neutrality all that much. What we talk about are the social impacts of the web, the issues of justice, the questions of equality that arise. What we're fighting for is an internet that's open and fair."

A key part of this strategy, says Renderos, is recognizing how important the web has become in the economy of the twenty-first century. "People utilize the internet today for everything from applying for a job, for work, for health care, to access government services," he says. "The reality is that the way we interact with the technology today is more as a utility and not necessarily as an entertainment platform."

This is particularly true for students and job seekers. According to a 2013 Pew Research survey, three-fourths of teachers now require students to download and submit assignments online; another 40 percent require students to participate in online discussions. A broadband connection at home makes high school students up to 8 percent more likely to graduate, the FCC said in a recent report. And more than four-fifths of Fortune 500 companies post job openings only on the web. The FCC's proposed new rules, says Renderos, actually take into account "what the internet is today for most people."

What Title II doesn't do, however, is bridge a growing digital divide that amplifies racial and economic divisions in communities across the country.

Internet Access Supports Media Justice

At a time when having a basic web connection has never been more critical, only 18 percent of teachers say all or almost all their students have the digital tools they need at home — a problem that is correlated with students' income. More than half of teachers say digital technologies are widening the gap between the most successful and least successful students.

Renderos says it's low-income communities and communities of color who stand to gain the most from a free and open web that lets them bypass the inequities of traditional media, because having the capacity to start a free blog or a YouTube channel enables them to create media on issues that mainstream agencies ignore.

"Most marginalized communities would look at the way our media system is currently functioning and say, 'it is not reflective of me,'" he says. "With fewer and fewer people owning our media, the less likely it is that it's going to be reflective of the conditions and experiences of marginalized communities."

Since deregulation in the mid-'90s, a series of mergers and corporate buyouts have left the lion's share of American TV, radio, and newspaper markets in the hands of just six giant conglomerates (down from fifty in 1983). And the web is no exception: under a new definition of broadband, the FCC now says that Comcast's proposed bid to buy Time Warner Cable would leave 63 percent of Americans with only one choice for high-speed internet. This level of consolidation has eliminated many of the smaller media outlets that used to report on the issues most relevant to low-income communities. It's also pushed women and people of color out of media ownership. According to a 2012 FCC radio survey, blacks, Latinos, and women own a much smaller share of TV and radio stations than they did even just a few years ago.

"But it's not just a matter of being shut out," says Cyrus. "While some groups are excluded from the media, others are constantly talked about but don't have their own voice. The way African Americans are portrayed in major media is predominately as criminals and as bad actors. It's not just about exclusion; it's also a question of exploitation and misrepresentation."

Which is precisely why a strongly protected web is so critical today. Unlike more traditional platforms, the web gives users the opportunity to directly reflect their experience on their own terms, rather than let large corporations frame the conversation. "The internet is one of the very few decentralized platforms in which people are both active producers and active consumers of information," says Renderos.

The Digital Roots of the Uprising in Ferguson

A dramatic illustration of what that kind of access can mean came late last summer during the civil rights protests in Ferguson, Missouri. "A lot of folks kind of point to Ferguson as a flashpoint nowadays but it took a million tweets coming out of Ferguson before CNN actually paid attention to what was happening," Renderos says. And even when mainstream attention began to center on the Ferguson protests, following several days of online and on-the-ground activism, major media outlets like MSNBC and CNN continued to rely heavily on digital voices outside the corporate media system.

When events in Ferguson first began grabbing the nation's attention last August, KARG Argus Radio's live stream from Ferguson, dubbed *I Am Mike Brown*, was viewed more than a million times in just a few days, and footage later appeared on CNN, MSNBC, and countless other media outlets. In a similar vein, the Twitter feed of St. Louis Alderman Antonio French jumped from 5,000 to over 100,000 followers when the *New York Times* began relaying his coverage from Ferguson. Coverage like this demonstrates the tremendous social power of a free and open media platform — particularly on issues rarely given such attention in corporate media. If these protections didn't exist, and it was up to big telecoms to decide what users could and couldn't see, it's hard to imagine a movement like #BlackLivesMatter reaching the number of people it has. "This is why fighting for net neutrality is such a vital thing for these communities," says Renderos. "Because without it we don't have a place where the names Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Oscar Grant, Denzel Ford, [and] Eric Garner mean anything to the general public. We don't have a place to tell their stories."

Digital technology even informed how the Black Lives Matter movement was organized initially and who had the ability to organize, says Cyrus. "When we look at Ferguson and the way actions were coordinated, the pace at which they were coordinated, that could not have happened without an open internet," she says. Not only that, because of the online organizing and coalition building that had preceded Ferguson, the movement was able to give voice to groups historically excluded by social movements of the past. "For the first time in history, a black civil rights movement is actually centering the voices of women, queer communities, trans communities," she adds, referring in part to the ongoing leadership of Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi, the queer black women who created the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag and campaign that later went viral. "One of the reasons that's possible is because trans people, queer people, and women can speak for themselves on an open internet. They can join in the conversation and provide leadership for the movement."

Participation and access like this is a far cry from the movements of the 1960s, which depended heavily on mainstream coverage for visibility. Yet in another sense, the fight for an open web has everything to do with those earlier struggles, Cyrus adds. It was a 1964 federal appeals court case that made public participation in media a requirement for outlets licensed by the FCC — a requirement that today forms the legal basis for Title II protections. The case was over the way a Mississippi television station covered the civil rights battles being fought there, and what little role nonwhite residents had in shaping that coverage. Circumstances have changed dramatically since then, of course, but the basic demand for public input in mass media remains the same. And it's undoubtedly a demand that goes far beyond the call for a free and open web.

Struggles on the Horizon

"Net neutrality is a critical step but it's not the last step," says Cyrus. "In many ways it's the first step." Although Title II is nothing if not a major victory, our media system remains deeply unequal and out of reach for millions of American voices due to the financial, political, and cultural investments of its gatekeepers. Even as the FCC moves to implement sweeping new web protections, it's also weighing the legality of the Comcast–Time

Warner Cable merger, one of the largest media deals in history. On that front, Renderos hopes that the momentum that the Center for Media Justice built for net neutrality could pave the way for another big win. The center has used popular education, grassroots organizing, and broad coalition building in its fight to kill the merger, just as it did during the fight for Title II. "This idea of fighting for net neutrality and fighting against the corporate gatekeepers of the internet has really laid some relevancy for people in terms of what's at stake in the Comcast deal," he says. "That's the next big fight."

Another battle on the horizon, says Cyrus, has to do with digital surveillance. Although, like net neutrality, surveillance is often framed as technocratic, even remote, it has very direct and immediate impacts on people's lives. This is particularly true when it comes to local police forces' use of surveillance tools like drones and "stingray" cell phone trackers, technologies that can keep detailed records of a suspect's whereabouts and movements without their knowledge. Viewed in the context of mass incarceration and police brutality, such "predictive policing" measures are in danger of further criminalizing black and Latino communities, says Cyrus.

In spite of the victory on net neutrality, the ongoing battles against consolidation and surveillance underscore just how uncertain the internet's social impact may still be. At once open and exclusive, empowering and controlled, the web remains a critical twenty-first-century battlefield. With much of the internet's rules still unwritten, says Cyrus, "it's up to us to decide whether the internet becomes the most powerful equalizer in the world or one of the most powerful legitimizers of inequality that this century has seen." ■

Acknowledging the Other's Suffering

A Psychoanalytic Approach to Trauma in Israel/Palestine

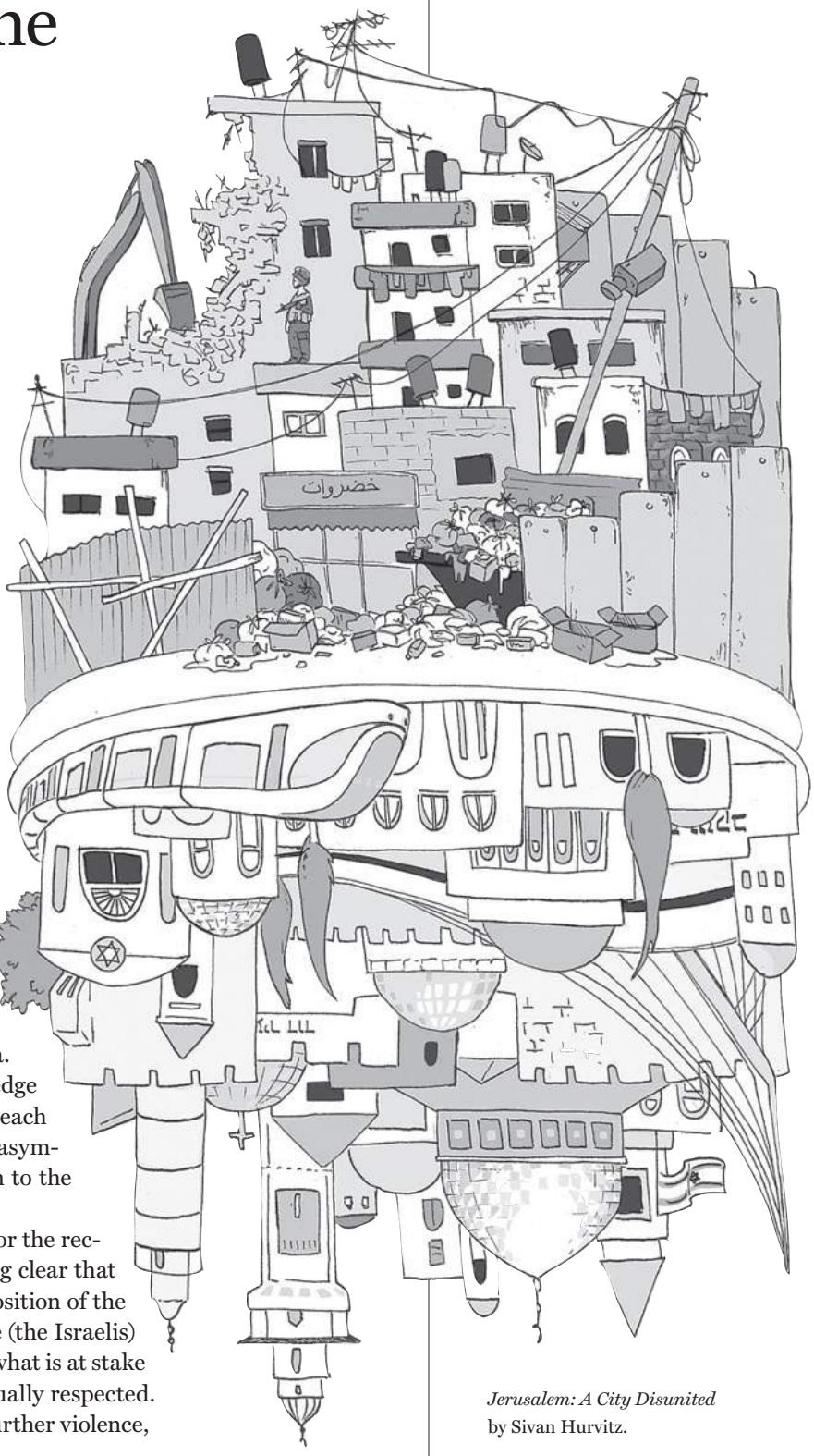
BY JESSICA BENJAMIN

In the aftermath of the Israeli ground invasion into Gaza in 2008, the BBC filmed Palestinian psychiatrist Eyad El-Sarraj standing amid the rubble. Placing his hand on his heart, he said, "I do believe the Israelis are more insecure than we are."

Now, nearly two years after his death, I remember that speech as one of the many moments in which El-Sarraj demonstrated how the moral can be practical, how our ideas of good can direct our actions, and how even though we are scared and flawed, we can live by those ideas.

I started working with El-Sarraj back in 2005, when we began the Acknowledgment Project, a series of dialogues between Israeli and Palestinian mental health practitioners. The aim of our work was to enable Palestinians and Israelis to create a connection with each other that would allow them to grapple with their collective trauma. Specifically we sought to enable them to acknowledge having caused harm and injury and to recognize each other's suffering, while being aware of the power asymmetry and the need to come together in opposition to the Occupation, rather than be separated by it.

In this work El-Sarraj encouraged me to stand for the recognition of all injuries while at the same time being clear that one side (the Palestinians) was coming from the position of the occupied and less powerful, whereas the other side (the Israelis) was occupying and dominating. Ultimately this is what is at stake in nonviolent resistance: all injuries have to be equally respected. Injuries cannot be used to justify retaliation and further violence,



Jerusalem: A City Disunited by Sivan Hurvitz.

Sivan Hurvitz (behance.net/sivanhurvitz)

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This article is offered in memory of the late activist psychiatrist Eyad El-Sarraj, who founded the Gaza Community Mental Health Program and spearheaded many efforts to replace retaliation with the demand for recognition. The text of this article was adapted from a paper given at the Psychoactive Conference in Tel Aviv in December 2014.

because using our injuries in this way is to place our injuries above those of others. In other words, all violence, regardless of whom it injures, is equally important. While this sounds easy, in practice it is difficult for us to give equal weight to the suffering of those who have harmed us or who have been portrayed as enemies and therefore as less human.

This practice of *acknowledgment* (the act of dignifying and validating others' suffering with our attention) is often impeded by reactions of denial and dissociation. As a result, the very fact that some people are subjected to great suffering and helplessness makes them and their injuries appear less worthy to those who are safe. The challenge lies in working to overcome denial so that more people can acknowledge their own responsibility for that suffering.

How do we create a partnership between two sides that are so unequal but that both need recognition from the other? How do we understand the different needs of each, yet come together in a third space that honors the struggle of both?

The Psychological Position of the Moral Third

The psychological position of the "third space" transcends the oppositions of us/them (doer or done-to). It is the position from which violations of lawful behavior and dehumanization can be witnessed or repaired. This is a fragile position that is hard for both individuals and collectives to maintain.

The moral third acknowledges violations of lawful behavior while it *affirms* the contrast between the reality of how things are and how they ought to be, holding the tension between is and ought, thereby fostering truth and affirming lawfulness while opposing denial.

The third position transcends binaries such as good versus bad and us versus them. It is a position in which we encompass the ordinarily split positions of perpetrator and victim, bad and good. However, "good" and "bad" refer to psychologically complex constellations, not merely righteous versus wrongdoing, but also clean, safe, and pure versus abject, contaminating, and dangerous. There is more implied in the ability to hold opposites than merely recognizing one's own capacity for destructiveness or wrong action.

What makes this position of "acknowledgment" possible and what prevents it? One thing that prevents us from being able to occupy this third space is seeing ourselves as victims, which can interfere with our ability to identify with the suffering of others. When we self-identify as victims, the fear of not being recognized as such, and of being blamed for injuring others in the name of protecting the self, leads to a terrible dilemma. Overcoming this fear requires a trust or belief in the moral third, yet this trust is not always present for us; rather, we have to *return* to it, repair it, rediscover it. Holding the third in mind makes it possible to move beyond self-interest to identification with the other. Only then can we begin to imagine that both we and the other can share at a level that makes safety and compromise possible.

An emotionally grounded moral third maintains a sense of the multiplicity of our identifications and the ambiguity of the positions we take up. The less able we are to genuinely identify with all parts of the self, the more we give in to the temptation to identify with one side of the victim/perpetrator opposition, and the more likely we are to engage in mere moralizing rather than in cultivating the perspective of the moral third.

From an early age we all discard and project that which is abject and fecal in the human body, labeling all that is weak or disgusting as "other" rather than "self." But to cultivate the position of the moral third, we must learn to accept bodily or psychological weakness within both self and other. Otherwise what dominates is the powerful impulse to project it outward onto a vile and dangerous other that must be excluded from the self's group at all costs. Preserving the safe, pure realm of "us" against the impure, dangerous "them" makes violent action appear good rather than bad, thereby confusing the notions of right and wrong. Likewise, projecting all violence and destructiveness onto the other makes it seem good and right to destroy the other.

These considerations of purity and danger, bad and good, and righteousness versus destructiveness require a more complex notion of the moral third. It is necessary to carry the concept of the third further into the territory of other binaries shaped by unconscious fantasy and fears of bodily disintegration. The idea of recognizing the other needs to include transcending the binary between weak and strong, vulnerable and protected, helpless and powerful, and especially discarded and dignified.

In this binary opposition, the ostensibly positive values, e.g., invulnerability and triumphalism, are actually defensive. The projection of what is bad or impure inside the self thus accompanies the perversion of its opposite term, and, in its repudiation of the weak, vulnerable, discarded other, the self is made grandiose, self-righteous, and devoid of empathy. However, by the same token, the self that does not discard or split off weakness and vulnerability can bring dignity to suffering. In other words, the person in the "victim" position, which is usually seen as degraded, can maintain dignity through nonviolence — something Eyad El-Sarraj was known for doing even when threatened with violence himself.

The cultivation of the moral third position depends on not only asserting dignity but also embracing the primal identification with the split-off aspects of vulnerability and weakness. In this way the moral third crucially relates to weakness and strength — psychological categories that underpin decisions about power and violence.

The Importance of Moral Witnesses

The penetration of our psyches with these visceral binaries is as critical to understanding the outcome of collective trauma and failures of recognition as the global psychic position of "complementarity" between doer and done-to — the idea that only one of these two parties can live. "Only one can live" is the mindset that prevails when the moral third — and its certainty that "all deserve to live — is missing. Unlike most reversals of opposites, the reversal in favor of dignifying suffering has the potential for positive transformation.

The moral third's idea that everyone can live has to be upheld by witnesses across the world who publicly acknowledge every violation. These witnesses must serve as the eyes and voice of the world by expressing condemnation and indignation over all injustice, injury, trauma, and agony endured by victims of all kinds. This kind of witnessing affirms the dignity of the suffering or death of the victims and affirms the value of their lives. Their lives are worthy of being mourned; in Judith Butler's words, they are "grievable" lives. In other words, they are not simply objects to be discarded. Conversely, the underlying idea that "only one can live" is translated into "only one can be recognized."

Victims the world over know whether their suffering is seen and regarded. They often ask in despair, "Why is no one paying attention as we die here?" The failed witness is a central component of trauma. Those who feel that the world has turned away often embrace the rationality of self-protection as if it were a justification for any action, no matter how destructive. The presence of a witness who embodies the moral third may make it possible for victims to begin to believe once more in the possibility of a lawful, caring world that does not leave people to be killed or discarded.

El-Sarraj expressed this idea in practice by arguing that the missing link in peace proposals was apology for the Nakba, a kind of recognition that he said caused even his Hamas opponents who believed in using violence to stop arguing and agree with him. Although not a substitute for political, juridical change, witnessing and acknowledging injuries and injustice — especially ones we have perpetrated — creates the conditions for change, as the effort to recognize suffering and injustice affirms the possibility of lawful social behavior and responsibility for fellow human beings. The social recognition of trauma should ultimately contribute both to an awareness of human interdependence and to an attachment to a social order, as well as to respect for individual rights.

Barriers to Acknowledging Trauma in Israel/Palestine

A major barrier to creating a culture of acknowledgment and witnessing in Israel/Palestine is the difficulty that most Israelis have in accepting their positioning on the side of the saved. Israelis continually invoke their victimhood, and this makes it impossible to confront the actual moral and emotional trauma of being perpetrators, of killing, and of risking the lives of so many young soldiers. Unfortunately the problem of being perpetrators who also suffer cannot be embraced unless Israelis renounce their justification of the harming and killing committed by their government, in a way that only some Israelis are willing to do.

The idea that "everyone can live," that no one should be unprotected or discarded, is essential in the effort to reform Israeli society, which is founded on the untenable proposition that only Jewish lives matter. As long as only Jewish lives and safety matter to Jews, they cannot deeply believe that their lives matter to non-Jews and, hence, that they can survive without harming others. Jews' demand for recognition, including recognition of their own need for safety, when counterposed to Palestinians' need for safety, leads to an insoluble dilemma. By promoting only one side's need for safety rather than everyone's safety, the state has created a hideous mess.

The fundamental basis for nonviolence in Israel has to be this simple recognition: Palestinian lives matter. Without embracing that principle, with all the problems it entails, the moral center that is the basis for a lawful existence, however impaired and flawed, is missing. It is not merely the Occupation that must be overcome. Israelis must also overcome the idea that "only one can live." An affirmation that everyone should live must replace a thousand-year-old system of tribal loyalty on both sides.

Historical movements in which victims become perpetrators, preserving the binary opposition between oppressed and oppressor, lead to endless repetition of violence. Although some form of indignation and anger is essential for one to demand justice, a victim's moral indignation can become a manic defense, first repudiating identifications with the aggressor, then leading the victim to become an aggressor.

Nonviolence requires us to take seriously imagining a way out of the mindset that "only one can live." It requires envisioning a world governed by the moral third, in which our attachment to all beings is honored as real. That vision of social attachment is a condition of the ethical position of the third. When we hear all victims' protest, outrage, and testimony, we restore the lawful third, affirming the principle that we are all human. In so doing, we affirm that vulnerability and suffering must be honored and met with recognition.

Lessons from South Africa

Creating a possibility for mutual acknowledgment under conditions of great asymmetry — for example, the situation in Israel/Palestine where there is great power on one side and great injury on the other — requires holding many paradoxes. We all have to struggle in our own ways with the possibility of being the one who is not recognized, whose suffering may go unnoticed, as well as with responsibility for being a perpetrator of violence and harm. We must also struggle to give up narratives of justification and attempts at legitimation that deny the existence of others' suffering and that stand in the way of emotionally embodied witnessing. Witnessing each other's suffering is a crucial part of working together and overcoming the violence that has separated us.

Those of us who are working to create opportunities for this sort of witnessing in Israel/Palestine have much to learn from the South African tradition of *ubuntu*, which deeply informed South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. As defined by Desmond Tutu, ubuntu refers to the understanding that "a person is a person through other persons" and the idea that "my humanity is caught up, is inextricably bound up, in yours." In other words, a person with ubuntu "has a proper self-assurance that comes

from knowing that he or she belongs in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished, when others are tortured or oppressed."

Ubuntu means that our humanity depends on reciprocal recognition of each other and of our ineluctable attachment. The belief that one's humanity depends not only on the respect that one receives but also on the quality of recognition that one *gives* is a more radical part of the ubuntu perspective. The ubuntu tradition's idea that one's own dignity is fostered by giving recognition beautifully represents the position of the moral third. In this way, ubuntu challenges the normal dissociation of the perpetrator's suffering and need for rehumanization. By "normal dissociation," I mean humans' tendency to split off their awareness of pain, particularly pain that they cause, by denying that it is painful, denying their role in causing it, or denying that they can do something about it. Perpetrators especially may imagine that only the other suffers and deny their sense of being monstrous, but underneath they feel sullied, degraded, ashamed, and even remorseful for the harm they have done. Under certain conditions like South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, some can come to admit these "pangs of conscience" — this buried pain and fear of being no longer human — and can express the need to be forgiven and readmitted into the company of humans.

A New Approach to Victimhood in Israel/Palestine

I believe it is important to introduce new ideas about victimhood and perpetrator identity in order to change Israeli discourse. In the Acknowledgment Project that I directed with Eyad El-Sarraj's inspiration and help, the idea of dignifying victimhood as a position from which to recognize the other emerged when some Palestinian members of our project were inspired to articulate in a powerful way how they as victims had the power to forgive, to be a moral force, to become agents. This idea of the politically weaker side having the power to give something the other side urgently desires — recognition of their efforts to repair and their pain at having harmed — was difficult to grasp in the midst of our dialogue project. It required victims of violence to recognize that being on the powerful side (whether as a bystander or as a perpetrator) compromises one's feeling of humanity.

We found *A Human Being Died That Night*, a book by South African psychologist Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela, to be an invaluable resource as we explored these ideas. Assuming the burden of responsibility for the perpetrator's own feeling of humanity seems unfair to the victim, yet it is a liberating way of moving out of the complementarity of power-powerlessness. The vision of a dignified victim gestures toward the power of the third. It says that the victim has the power to humanize and release the other, to create the moral third.

For example, a Palestinian member of our project described going through a checkpoint in a car with his family. He was harassed by an Israeli soldier and forced to wait unnecessarily, despite having a VIP pass. When the soldier finally waved them through, the Palestinian man's baby, who had been wriggling in the back seat, waved back at the soldier — causing a look of confusion and consternation on the soldier's face. After a moment's pause, in which he clearly tried to discover how he could be perceived as human in this moment, the soldier waved back to the baby.

A similar dynamic occurred a few months after the Gaza War of 2008-2009, when El-Sarraj spoke to a meeting of the Israeli group in the Acknowledgment Project. It was clear that he was speaking both personally and as a representative of victims, and he was speaking to those who saw themselves as representatives of the perpetrator group, even though they were very opposed to the war and in some cases involved in helping the Gazans. The Israelis in the group were paralyzed by guilt, helplessness, and despair.

El-Sarraj said of course he was very angry about the destruction, but, recognizing the terrible position in which the Israelis found themselves, he wanted to share his conviction that the only way to deal with our feelings of badness and helplessness is to accept

that each of us has bad and good within us. He urged the Israelis not to be immobilized by the part of themselves that identifies with the fear and self-protectiveness that motivated their nation's aggression. He said this sort of badness, fear, and potential for destructiveness is part of all people, including himself. And he advised that when we truly accept both sides of ourselves, we become no longer paralyzed — we become able to act again in a positive way. His simple speech seemed to release the Israelis from their grim despair. His modeling of self-forgiveness implicitly offered a form of forgiveness they could make use of for themselves. He modeled the relation to the moral third, including the capacity to see the subjectivity of the other, which liberates the potential for agency.

El-Sarraj's speech came from a deep understanding that accepting both the perpetrator and victim sides of the self breaks down the fictitious line between those who deserve mercy (and hence deserve not to be condemned) and those who do not, between those who consign others to die and those who perish. These issues are explored in a dramatic way by two former Combatants for Peace in *Moving Beyond Violence*, a film for which I provided commentary (available at movingbeyondviolence.org).

For members of the perpetrator group, acknowledging the human bond with the victim may allow them to feel partially returned to themselves, to inhabit a human status in which their own vulnerability is included. I believe it is this sense of connection to the other that makes the possibility of forgiveness real and generates in us the ability to accept ourselves in all aspects of humanity. This may include accepting our very vulnerable sense of shame about harming, the feeling of monstrousness, the feeling of having blood on one's hands, and the sense of being contaminated; all are part of the moral trauma. As we have seen in places like Rwanda and South Africa, this trauma is transformed in the light of the other's acceptance or forgiveness — the other's recognition of our humanity.

We all have a monstrous side that identifies with inflicting pain. In discussing clinical work with torture victims, researcher Martha Bragin speaks of the importance of the witnessing analyst also "knowing terrible things" so that the patient is not left alone with her knowledge of the atrocities others can commit, as well as her knowledge of her own violent identifications with the aggressor. We have to continually rediscover not only the remorse of failing to witness, but the fact that denial is based on an unwillingness to know these terrible things about ourselves. To reclaim the position of witness and restore the lawful third ultimately requires a tension between "I could never imagine doing such a thing" and "I could imagine doing it."

Accepting badness is a part of the journey for those who expose themselves to human rights violations, collective trauma, and other horrors with the hope of witnessing or actively helping to change the consciousness of their fellow citizens. The solidarity of would-be enemies who become partners in peace can make it possible for us to bear this painful knowledge about ourselves, our lack of humanity, our desire to be saved instead of discarded, and our denial of reality that occurs because we cannot hold all the suffering.

Guilt and moral outrage too often constitute a reactive reversal against denial. As such, they do not help us witness, empathize, dignify suffering, or protect those who might be discarded. Psychologically, guilt often upholds the splitting between the discarded and the saved. Shamed at being on the monstrous side, the perpetrator denies that all are capable of destruction and that all are vulnerable. In the deepest sense, we are all both discarded and saved — and when we fail to realize this, we fail to realize our true humanity. By uniting in solidarity, we try to overcome this split and inhabit the psychological position of the moral third. ■

The Spiritual Dimension of Social Justice

Transforming the Legal Arena

BY PETER GABEL

Revolting Against Isolation by Olivia Wise.

Olivia Wise (oliviawisestudio.com)

When Martin Luther King Jr. said, "Justice is love correcting that which revolts against love," he conveyed a vision of justice based on the assumption that we are already connected, that we are anchored to each other in our common humanity.

In this frame, the work of law and justice is something like the work of a mountain climber, who throws his pick to the top of a mountain, pulls strongly on the rope of conviction that links us to a common vision—our common destination—and then finds his or her steps as a result of that anchorage in a future vision based on our already existing social bond. If love can correct that which revolts against love, that means we can, based on our inherent loving bond as humans, intuit a moral direction to heal and repair that which divides and dehumanizes us.

The foundation of that felt, loving social bond is what I call the desire for mutual recognition, the desire to see and be seen by the other in a relation of true mutual presence, in what the Jewish theologian Martin Buber called a relation of I and Thou. We are all animated by this desire, all long for it to be made manifest in the world. But in our culture, the desire for loving mutual recognition is, to a large degree, denied. It's denied when we pass each other with blank gazes on the street. It's denied when we stare at each other through restaurant glass windows, as if we were in a zoo, gazing at others as if they were objects. And it's denied in the roles we play within our culture that withdraw us deeply within ourselves. How much of our lives we spend in fear of each other, each throwing up an outer artificial persona of ourselves in order to conceal our true longing and vulnerability, each attached to familial or nationalist loyalties that may bind us to a collective image of community but leave us instead enveloped in mutual distance and isolation!

Although we each silently long for "unarmed love," to again use a phrase of Dr. King's, we spend much of our lives encapsulated in private, separate spheres, living out our private destinies in a kind of mutually imposed spiritual prison.

Social movements gain momentum and transformative power when they succeed at tapping into and affirming our deep and collective yearning for mutual recognition. These movements help us to break on through to the other side, to emerge from our reciprocal isolation through a common struggle for justice that links our highest moral impulses with a collective coming-into-connection that holds the promise of making those high moral impulses a living social reality. That morally inspired life force is actually what gives social movements their "movement" character. What *moves* is our collective being itself, awakened through our new recognition of each other's transcendent and beautiful humanity.

Peter Gabel is former president of New College of California, where he also taught public-interest law. He is currently editor-at-large of *Tikkun* magazine. His most recent book is *Another Way of Seeing: Essays on Transforming Law, Politics, and Culture* (Quid Pro Books, 2013).

As any powerful movement "rises up" in this way, its carriers must enter the legal arena, because the very basis of the movement is to make a claim on the community as a whole for justice, for correcting that which revolts against the high moral consciousness that the movement itself is carrying forward. What happens when a social movement animated by the spiritual force of a longing for mutual recognition and authentic, loving human connection enters into the legal arena?

Social Movements in the Legal Arena

When any progressive social movement reaches the point when it must convert its spiritual claim into a legal claim, the movement immediately faces a significant challenge because the legal arena that we have inherited, and that we live enveloped by, is despiritualized. By this I mean that the framework of American law is based on the assumptions of what we often call liberal political theory, or the liberal paradigm, a worldview based on a secular/empirical view of the known universe and an individualistic view of the social compact. But seen from the perspective of the socially connected framework that I have articulated, the individualism of the liberal vision is actually a *social* description of the world in which people are inherently disconnected, rather than inherently in relationship.

Thus the communal longing for mutual recognition is not manifested in our inherited legal paradigm. Like other forms of the denial of the desire for mutual recognition, our inherited legal culture denies this desire by assuming we are ontologically separated individuals whose bond is purely after the fact and voluntary, rather than constitutive of who we are in our very essence before we even become individuals. The liberal paradigm supported the accomplishments of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries in establishing the integrity of the individual's freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and the protection of the person against the group through the medium of individual rights, but it has now become an expression of the very problem we must overcome if we are to realize our true social nature as inherently loving and generous social beings.

So to reiterate: When I say that our law as it is represents us as disconnected, what I mean is that the picture of the social world transmitted through law's discourse and processes is one of floating, separate spheres who may come into connection through voting separately to create the government, or through the formation of contracts and a whole variety of other voluntary activities, but who are not inherently already connected in the sense of being constituted by the social bond that I'm trying to describe. The liberal legal world is a representation of the social world that corresponds to and expresses our fear of each other and masks, obscures, and denies our inherent bond and our longing for mutual recognition. Our law institutionalizes, ontologizes, and takes for granted as inevitable the existential separation that we live out painfully in our everyday private existences.

Now we do feel separate. There's a lot of truth to the fact that we do exist as separate beings, and we do have an authentic individuality that liberal political theory correctly recognized and established within historical social thought, freeing the individual from the coercive, authoritarian imagery of prior forms of group life. But when that individuality is severed from the social bond of recognition, the bond of love by which we actually become whole persons, the liberal model conveys to us a sort of entropy of eternal separation: we appear to each other like an unraveling sleeve, like a collection of people constantly moving away from each other, guarding ourselves against each other rather than moving into authentic, empowering connection with each other.

So when the movement enters into this "legal world"—which is to say, when it must represent itself publicly through the collective image of "we, the people" that shapes our thinking and our reasoning within law—it must express its own aspirations through a discourse in which the dimension of our connectedness is hidden, suppressed from the outset in the very worldview embedded in the images and thinking that we have inherited from the political and legal projects of earlier centuries.

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Join Us in Transforming the Legal Arena

Working hand in hand with the Project for Integrating Spirituality, Law, and Politics, the Legal Task Force of the Network of Spiritual Progressives is developing a detailed vision of how to reorient the legal profession toward love, kindness, and generosity.

Email cat@spiritualprogressives.org to get involved.

Social Disconnection in Legal Doctrine

Consider, for example, the law of contracts, with its emphasis on each transaction as a bargain entered into by two individuals at arm's length, pursuing their respective self-interests. In reality, we as a community constantly cooperate to cocreate the entire socioeconomic world through these contracts. In reality, the social economy is a vast cooperative encounter. But mediated through law, this cooperative reality is understood as if it were the result of socially separated, self-interested activities — bargainers in the marketplace seen seeking only to realize the benefit of their bargains, rather than to form a cooperative relationship with one another in order to bring about a social good.

Tort law, to give another example of precisely the same socially separated image that is used to interpret our civil obligations to one another, is mainly about not intruding on or causing harm to each other's separate existences, about protecting ourselves from each other. In the operating room, we have a right not to be harmed by improper medical practice; on the highways, we have a right not to have our cars smashed into recklessly; when we sit down at the dinner table, we have the right not to have the chair pulled out from under us. But this vision of tort law does not describe any positive duty of care, does not call on any inherent duty to rescue others in distress. There's no civil notion embedded in tort law that affirms our inherent bond with each other, and instead the framework is the socially separated one.

Olivia Wise (oliviawisestudio.com)

The law of property is about the exclusion of people from parcels of land that are demarcated by imaginary lines we institutionalize in the concept of "title," but not about sharing land, sharing the resources of the land together.

And the very same image of collective separation is also manifested in corporate law, which treats corporations as the creations of socially separated investors seeking to maximize their short-term profits. The idea that the corporation would be commonly understood to accomplish a shared social purpose so that the legal form would be enlivened with the expression of our social bond is utterly foreign to the present-day liberal conception, and because of this, the potential social meaning of such a coming-together-for-social-good is a priori excluded or hidden from view in any legal interpretation of the goals of the shareholders or the duties of corporate officers.

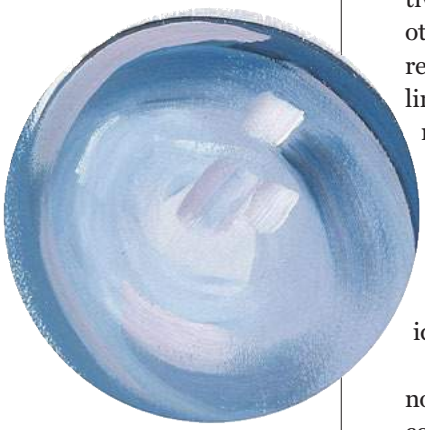
This legal imagining of society as a mere collection of socially separated individuals forms a kind of collective, imaginary world internalized by the culture as a whole. A central part of the significance of this interpretive, imaginary world, and what gives it its character as "law," is that we understand it to be binding on all of us. That is precisely why every social movement enters the legal arena to do battle in the first place and why it must do so: by appealing to "law," the movement is seeking to make its justice claim binding on the entire community.

But unintended consequences occur when a movement of social being founded on the affirmation of our human connection enters a conceptual arena in which people are perceived as inherently separated and as not embodying any spiritual bond. The collectively shared mental image of "society" embedded in our legal discourse presupposes that no

such inherent spiritual bond exists, that we become socially connected only by virtue of contracts, or legislative democratic action, or in some other way that follows on our inherent, ontological, individual natures. The inherently connected nature of social reality as it really is, with its foundation in the desire for mutual recognition and affirmation, is represented in existing liberal law through an interpretive schema that begins with our inherent separation.

The Spiritual Roots of Affirmative Action

An example of the consequence of this disjunction is reflected in the history of affirmative action, as expressive of, on the one hand, a movement for social justice, and on the other, a legal claim founded on the Fourteenth Amendment. When the affirmative action remedy emerged from the Civil Rights movement, it was intended as a morally compelling call based on our common recognition of the suffering of 400 years of slavery, of the massive injustice that had been done to the African American community over that historical time. And this vision of injustice was embraced not just by the African American plaintiffs who happened to bring the lawsuits; it was a vision that also had broad appeal within the culture of the 1960s, which was suffused with a feeling of responsibility and presence to one another accompanied by an idealistic aspiration to create a truly good world.



When affirmative action first emerged, its connotative, metaphorical meaning was that "we" could all engage through "affirmative action" in a collective, common, affirmative act of redemption, which involved affirmatively reaching out to people who had been unjustly oppressed over hundreds of years. That was affirmative action's meaning as expressive of the social movement that gave birth to it and that radiated through the culture as a whole.

But when the legalized remedy of affirmative action as a Fourteenth Amendment claim was interpreted through the prism of the socially separated, despiritualized individuals of the legal universe, it was instantly given a different cast. The spiritual dimension of affirmative action as a resonant, redemptive force that could play a part in "affirmatively" healing the culture of its own injustice was replaced, or better, overshadowed, by a conception in which one person, subject to past discrimination, was asking to have that impediment removed so that he or she could compete in the marketplace against other individuals on a fair basis.

In this latter cognitive schema, expressive not of the movement but of the liberal-legal image-world, you can see that there is no evocation of a preexisting communal bond that has been ruptured by slavery's legacy and that must be healed by the affirmative action of the entire group, but rather a conception in which no preexisting spiritual/communal bond exists. Instead, the history of

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A New Book on Transforming Justice

To learn more about the efforts described in this article, check out *Transforming Justice, Lawyers and the Practice of Law*, an anthology of writings edited by Marjorie A. Silver. The forthcoming book, to be published by Carolina Academic Press, will showcase how lawyers, judges, and law professors are finding more communitarian and healing ways to achieve justice.

Info: tikkun.org/justicebook

racial oppression is narrowly understood as an imposition of "bias" or discrimination among a disconnected collection of abstract individuals.

It was quite natural for working class whites and others to resent affirmative action as understood from within this liberal-legal paradigm, and it was quite natural for them to believe that, if we are living in an individualistic, competitive world in which everyone is pursuing his or her private destiny, they should not be "singled out" to bear the burden of the remedy of the "past discrimination" of others, because they didn't cause this harm to the African American community. In other words, the very conception of an antagonism between competing individual claims within the legal framework presupposed the erasure of the spiritually interconnected meaning that had been generated by the Civil Rights movement itself as a morally transcendental presence, the presence of the legacy of unjust suffering of the African American community exerting an ethical call on all of us as coexisting social beings.

Once that immanent spiritual bond was presupposed away through the image-world of legal discourse, it was inevitable that hostility to affirmative action would lead to a loss of consensus behind it. The issue of affirmative action as a corrective to past discrimination recast the meaning of the impulse toward healing historical injustice as a mere equity issue between two ahistorical, individual people (or the groups they represented), each with their respective claims in a competitive, privatized, abstract, and individualistic universe. So for some it became humiliating to advocate for affirmative action or make a claim based on it because it became a kind of "handout," a stigma of inadequacy, instead of being a source of righteousness, recognition, and healing. And it became a source of anger for those who felt that "no one had helped them," that they had not engaged in discriminatory conduct, and that they deserved what they had achieved based on their "better credentials" in the normative competitive universe.

Thus as affirmative action entered into and was appropriated by the interpretive schema of legal discourse, it largely lost its spiritual meaning. As the movement came to see itself through the legal mirror held up to it, it came to define itself in terms of its rights, and in terms of whether it deserved to have more rights vis-à-vis those resisting the rights claims because the powerful, spiritually connecting, and redemptive meaning of affirmative action was not reflected back to it. The movement no longer could see itself as a morally transcendent upsurge of social being, as it had during its generative moments when each person saw herself connected to and constituted by being with the others in the movement. For this reason, the movement's entry into the legal arena partly undermined its own power; the life force within it was, so to speak, absorbed into a despiritualized, external representation of itself with no immanent historical and concrete bond uniting its members.

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Visit tikkun.org/gabel to read online responses to Peter Gabel's proposal for transforming the legal arena.

Integrating Spirituality and the Law

So what do we do about this? How do we change law so that this most "binding" of our cultural institutions affirms the spiritual dimension of our common existence rather than obscuring its presence? What can we do to transform the liberal paradigm so that we can build a vision of, for example, the U.S. Constitution that emphasizes the importance of community rather than the importance of protection of the individual against the other, and that emphasizes the other as the source of our completion rather than as a threat against which we must guard ourselves?

The Project for Integrating Spirituality, Law, and Politics is one such effort that I have helped to organize with a number of other lawyers, law teachers, law students, and some non-lawyer "spiritual activists." Our goal is to build a way of working through social problems as matters of moral justice embedded within an inherently moral universe and grounded in our common longing to fully recognize one another's humanity. We hope to transform law into the building of a binding culture in public spaces — in public rooms such as courtrooms and classrooms and in written discourses such as law books and legislation — that fosters empathy and compassion and human understanding. We want to make law a force for healing and mutual recognition, rather than the mere parceling out of rights among solitary and adversarial individuals.

Our work focuses on several areas: restorative justice; transformative mediation emphasizing the capacity to foster empathic and cooperative resolutions of civil disputes; the development of remedies that minimize the role that money transfers (or "damages") play in the resolution of conflicts; and maximizing the healing and transformation of human relationships themselves through an understanding of the factors that have caused these relationships to break down.

Restorative Justice as Healing Justice

The restorative justice movement is making a remarkable attempt to shift the framework of criminal law away from identifying the crime, finding the wrong-doer, and punishing him or her. It is seeking to replace the traditional model, which presupposes that a crime is the act of a detached individual against the state, with a model that fosters direct victim/offender encounters aimed at encouraging people who cause harm to address directly the suffering of their victims. The point is to bring intersubjective concreteness to the infliction of human suffering in a way that calls on those who inflict harm to take responsibility for it, to apologize and provide restoration for it, but also where possible to be forgiven for it and to be reintegrated into the community. At its best, restorative justice also incorporates the historical community out of which social harms occur, helps to illuminate the broader origins of the rupture of human connection that leads to the infliction of harm, and helps to heal and transform whole communities as well as those immediately involved in the criminal act itself, the victim and the offender.

Restorative justice offers a powerful alternative to the liberal model of crime as an abstract and decontextualized individual act. Several years ago in Des Moines, Iowa, two teenagers who identified as skinheads defaced a synagogue with swastikas. A creative prosecutor asked the defense attorney if the defendants would be willing to meet with the synagogue's rabbi in order to find an alternative to simply sending these teenagers to jail for a short time and then back to the same fearful subculture within which they were immersed. The defense attorney and the defendants accepted, even though this meant the defendants would be acknowledging their responsibility for what they did, rather than engaging in the more customary liberal rights-based approach of pleading not guilty, attacking the evidence, and eventually negotiating a plea.

Through face-to-face discussions with Holocaust survivors from the synagogue, the young skinheads learned about the pain of the swastika and the suffering of the camps. This process evidently opened their eyes not only to what had happened to the Jews as

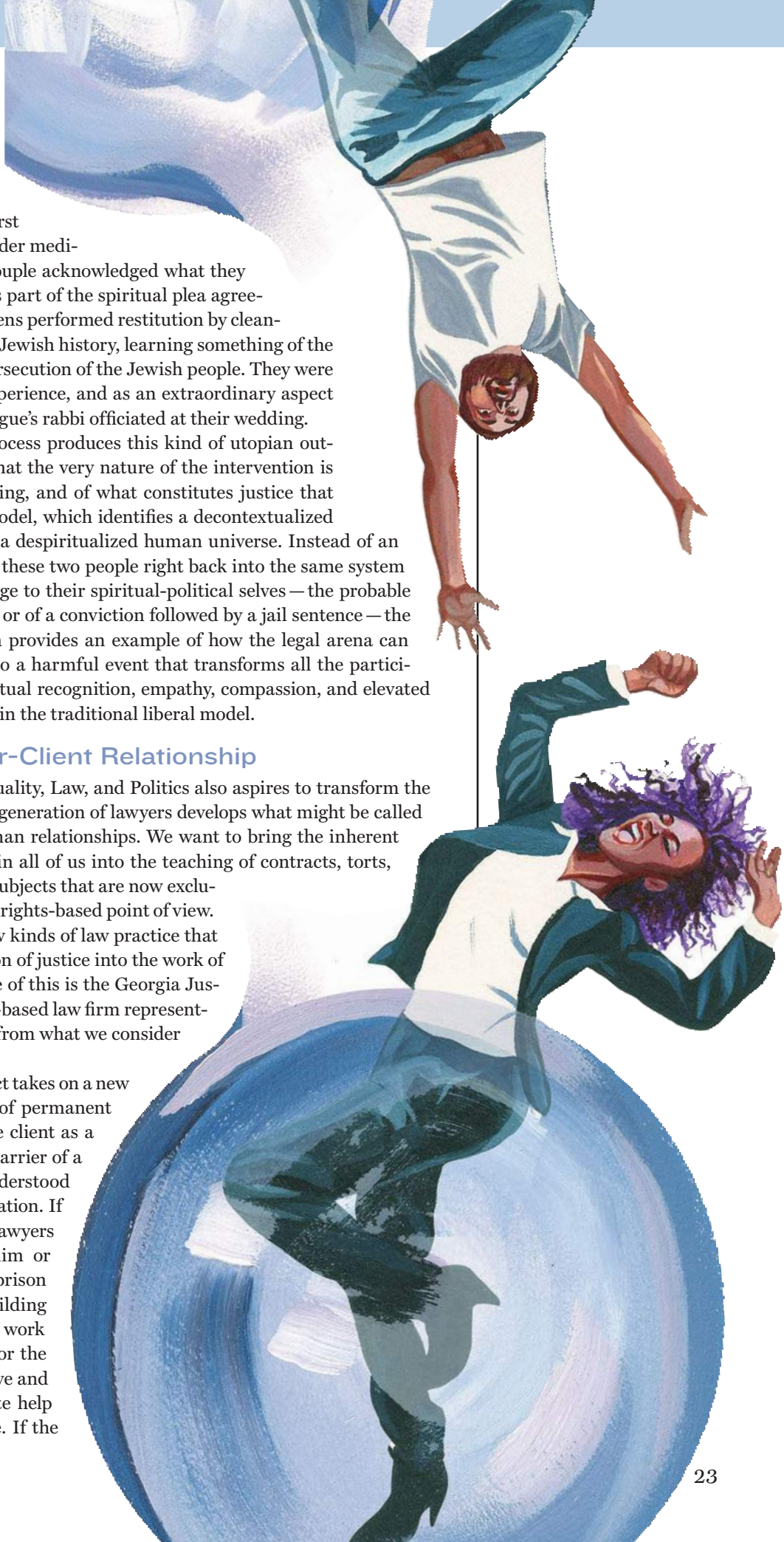
real human beings, but also to the bitterness, pain, and anger in their own lives that had led them to become skinheads in the first place. Following the "victim-offender mediation," as it is called, the young couple acknowledged what they had done and apologized for it. As part of the spiritual plea agreement that resolved the case, the teens performed restitution by cleaning the building, and they studied Jewish history, learning something of the pogroms and the history of the persecution of the Jewish people. They were apparently transformed by the experience, and as an extraordinary aspect of the overall outcome, the synagogue's rabbi officiated at their wedding.

Not every restorative justice process produces this kind of utopian outcome, but it is important to see that the very nature of the intervention is based on a view of harm, of healing, and of what constitutes justice that differs sharply from the liberal model, which identifies a decontextualized bad act by an individual actor in a despiritualized human universe. Instead of an intervention that would have sent these two people right back into the same system that produced them with no change to their spiritual-political selves — the probable outcome of a normal plea bargain or of a conviction followed by a jail sentence — the resolution of this human problem provides an example of how the legal arena can manifest a community response to a harmful event that transforms all the participants, fostering a new kind of mutual recognition, empathy, compassion, and elevated understanding that is uncommon in the traditional liberal model.

Rethinking the Lawyer-Client Relationship

The Project for Integrating Spirituality, Law, and Politics also aspires to transform the way law is taught so that the next generation of lawyers develops what might be called a "post-liberal" conception of human relationships. We want to bring the inherent cooperative force that exists within all of us into the teaching of contracts, torts, property, and the Constitution — subjects that are now exclusively taught from the adversarial, rights-based point of view. And we're trying to help build new kinds of law practice that incorporate the spiritual dimension of justice into the work of lawyers. Perhaps the best example of this is the Georgia Justice Project, a remarkable Atlanta-based law firm representing poor people in criminal cases from what we consider a "spiritual-political" perspective.

When the Georgia Justice Project takes on a new client, the two enter into a kind of permanent contract, in which support for the client as a whole person, rather than as the carrier of a mere discrete legal problem, is understood to be at the heart of the representation. If the client is convicted, his or her lawyers commit themselves to visiting him or her throughout the course of any prison term; to support the client in rebuilding his or her life by helping identify work opportunities and a community for the client after release; to manifest love and solidarity; and to provide concrete help in the rebuilding of his or her life. If the



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client is acquitted, he or she may work in local businesses affiliated by agreement with the Georgia Justice Project, learning life skills and experiencing the validation of his or her essential humanity and worth. These experiences may help overcome the internal feelings of worthlessness or permanent marginality that may have led the client to engage in the activities that got him or her into trouble in the first place. The law office has a kitchen and the lawyers and staff periodically hold communal meals for all their current and former clients.

With the Georgia Justice Project as our model, we aspire to help shape a generation of openhearted lawyers capable of seeking spiritually informed justice, lawyers different from the clever manipulator of concepts that we currently hold as an ideal in our law schools. Through the Project for Integrating Spirituality, Law, and Politics, we are trying to show in theory and practice that law and legal culture, in their next evolutionary incarnation, must begin with the affirmation that the longing for mutual recognition — for social meaning and purpose animated by a moral vision of life grounded in our connection to each other as social beings — is what the pursuit of justice requires. Justice itself can be fully achieved only by going beyond the winning of individual rights toward the bringing into existence of the Beloved Community — the incarnation in the present of who we already are but whom we have not yet been able to make manifest in our social reality.

New Paradigms for Legal Scholarship

If law's legitimacy derives from its relationship to justice, and if justice is an inherently spiritual and moral effort to transform that which is into that which ought to be, then our legal scholarship and teaching should be understood as inherently spiritual and moral work that envisions a just future shaping our legal interpretations of the present moment. In the context of legal scholarship, this means transcending the inherited paradigm of scholarship as a neutral and detached, despiritualized, and purely rational activity aimed at uniting the disembodied minds of writer and reader, in favor of an impassioned scholarship addressing the reader as a spiritual and moral being.

We can follow a similar path in our efforts to spiritualize legal education. The traditional approach conceives of law teaching as the transmission of an analytical technique consisting of identifying legally relevant facts, reasoning by analogy, and mastering and applying existing legal doctrine supplemented by process-based policy considerations. Traditional legal education renders invisible our fundamental longing for the recognition and realization of this bond. And since law's legitimacy inherently flows from its relationship to social justice, traditional legal education itself silently embraces a vision of social justice as its normative foundation that presupposes that this bond does not exist.

Overcoming what we might call this normative limitation in legal education requires that legal educators present as spiritual and moral beings who recognize the humanity of our students by treating them with empathy and compassion. It may mean, as the contemplative law movement in legal education argues, that we introduce a minute of meditation into the beginning of classes to prepare both teachers and students to experience the moral depth of the human situations we will be discussing. It means slowing down the recounting of "the facts" so that these situations recover their true narrative depth, and it means expanding our notion of what is relevant in these situations beyond the restricted and flattened-out information that suffices for analysis within the existing rule system. It also means wherever possible redeeming the moral core of doctrinal concepts like "equal protection," or "detrimental reliance," or "duty of care," so that doctrinal debate becomes capable of speaking to the spiritual and moral call that is present in the deepened presentation of "the facts."

Certainly, recognition of the spiritual dimension of doing justice means introducing into our courses remedies for broken relationships other than just money damages (remedies such as transformative mediation and restorative justice). It also means reshaping our clinical curricula so that students learn to represent clients in a way that recognizes

their full humanity and incorporates spiritual and moral understanding in the healing and repairing of their clients' circumstances. The Georgia Justice Project is today working with Mercer Law School in Macon, Georgia, to create just such a legal clinic.

To fully realize a spiritual alignment of law and justice will eventually require a post-liberal transformation of our entire legal culture, in which the fostering of empathy, compassion, and mutual understanding among human beings becomes central to what our Constitution and laws and legal processes are meant to help bring into being.

But it took 400 years of gradually transforming consciousness to bring about the liberal revolutions of the eighteenth century, and there is no reason we cannot begin the next evolutionary transformation of legal consciousness in our lifetime. ■

(This essay is adapted from an address delivered at the 2012 Scholarship Luncheon at the Georgetown University Law Center. The full address originally appeared in Volume 63, Number 4 of the Journal of Legal Education. *To read the full address, go to tikkun.org/gabel-talk.)*

Rethinking Agriculture

Protecting Biodiversity Amid Climate Chaos

BY VANDANA SHIVA

We are faced with two crises on a planetary scale — climate change and species extinction. Our current modes of production and consumption, which started during the Industrial Revolution and grew worse with the advent of industrial agriculture, have contributed to both. If no action is taken to reduce greenhouse gases, we could experience a catastrophic temperature increase of four degrees Celsius by the end of the century. But climate change is not just about global warming. It's also about the intensification of droughts, floods, cyclones, and other extreme weather events. Climate extremes are already costing lives, as we witnessed in the northern Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, where more than 200 people lost their lives due to flooding in 2014, and in the nearby state of Uttarakhand, where floods in 2013 took nearly 6,000 lives.

The Effects of Industrial Agriculture

Over the course of human history, levels of carbon dioxide in the Earth's atmosphere never exceeded 280 parts per million until the Industrial Revolution, but they have risen sharply in recent decades: current carbon dioxide levels are at 395 parts per million. Levels of nitrous oxide and methane — which are also greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide, only more potent — have also increased dramatically due to industrial agriculture because nitrous oxide is emitted through the use of synthetic nitrogen fertilizers, and methane is emitted from factory farms. According to a report from the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, nitrous oxide has roughly 300 times the global warming potential of carbon dioxide, while methane is roughly twenty times stronger.

The spread of monocultures and the increasing use of chemical fertilizer in agriculture, combined with the destruction of habitats, have also contributed to the loss of biodiversity. Paradoxically, this biodiversity would have helped sequester greenhouse gases. Four years after the United Nations Earth Summit held in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, the UN International Technical Conference on Plant Genetic Resources in Leipzig assessed that 75 percent of the world's biodiversity had disappeared in agriculture because of the Green Revolution — the widespread turn toward agrochemicals and high-yield cereal grains — and industrial farming. Industrial agriculture has also eroded biodiversity by killing off pollinators (such as honeybees) and beneficial soil organisms.

Climate change, agriculture, and biodiversity are intimately connected. Biodiversity in our agriculture can help mitigate climate change while industrial agriculture can only aggravate it. As I have shown in my book *Soil Not Oil*, chemical agriculture and a globalized food system are responsible for 40 percent of all greenhouse gas emissions. Chemical

DR. VANDANA SHIVA is a physicist who has dedicated her life to the protection of biodiversity, especially native seeds, for which she started the movement Navdanya in 1987. She is the author of many books including *Earth Democracy* and *Soil Not Oil*. Dr. Shiva is also the recipient of the Right Livelihood Award (an Alternative Nobel Prize).

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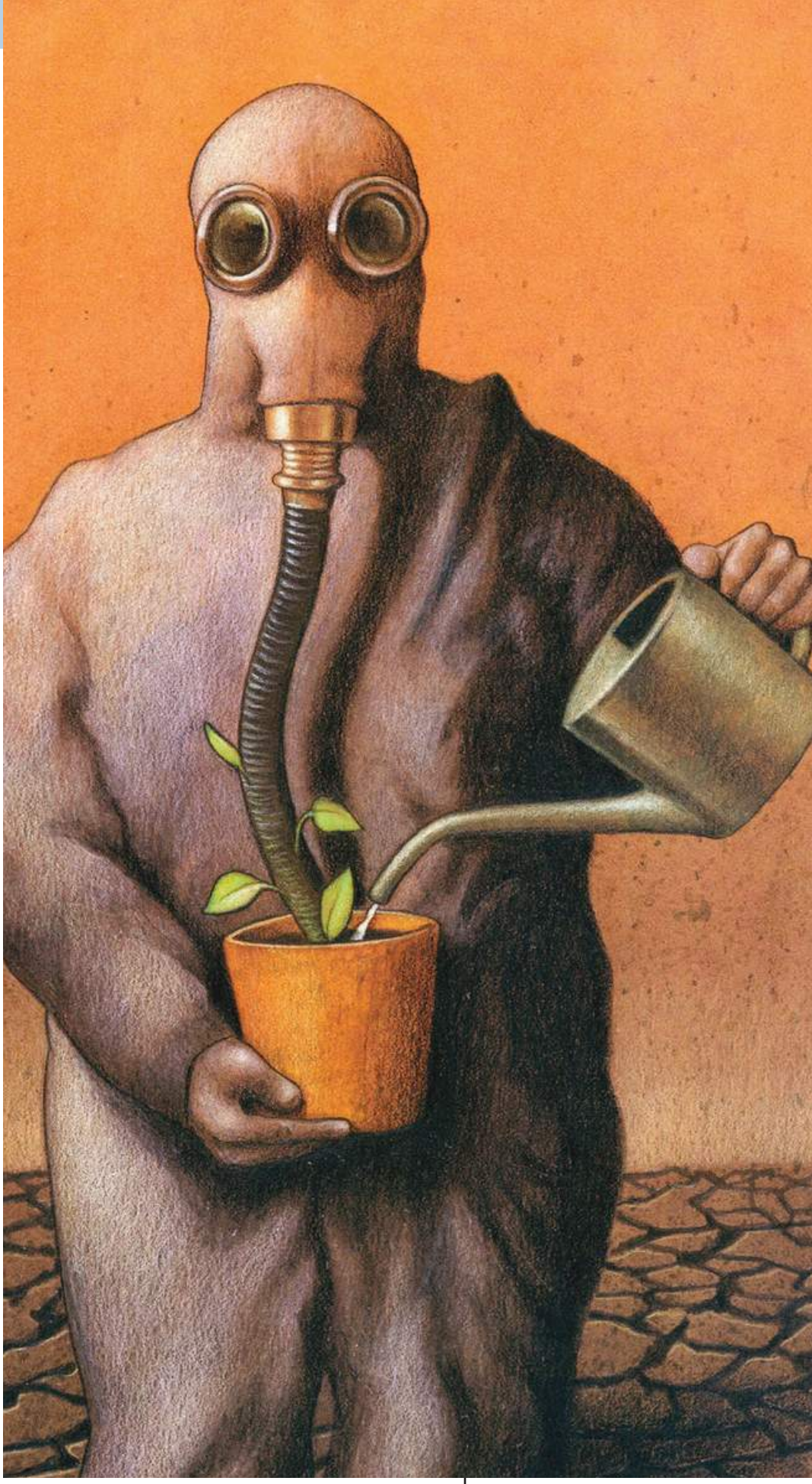
We must act now to stop chemical pollution, agricultural monocultures, and climate change from threatening the earth's biodiversity. *Eco* by Pawel Kuczynski.



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monocultures are also more vulnerable to failure in the context of an unstable climate — for example, if a farmer grows only one kind of plant and it turns out that plant is particularly sensitive to drought, then a short drought could wipe out the entire food supply. As a result, monoculture-based agriculture is hardly a system we can rely on for food in times of uncertainty.

Biodiversity Means Resilience

Adapting to unpredictable climate change requires diversity at every level. Biodiverse systems are more resilient to climate change and are more productive in terms of nutrition per acre. Feeding the world is more about providing nutrition than it is about harvesting commodities to be shipped globally, thus adding to emissions. Decentralized systems have more flexibility to respond to uncertainty as well. That is why participants in Navdanya, the Indian biodiversity conservation movement that I founded, promote the creation of community seed banks at a local level, as well as other steps to intensify biodiversity within farming systems.

It is not that humanity was unaware of — and did not take steps to avert — the climate and biodiversity crises. At the UN Earth Summit in 1992, the international community signed two legally binding agreements: the UN Framework

Convention on Climate Change and the UN Convention on Biological Diversity. Both treaties were shaped by knowledge from the emerging ecological sciences and the growing ecology movement. The first was a scientific response to the ecological impact of atmospheric pollution caused by the use of fossil fuels. The second was a scientific response to the erosion of biodiversity caused by industrial, chemical monocultures, as well as a response to the potential for new threats to biodiversity, including genetic pollution caused by genetically modified organisms (GMOs). Article 19.3 of the Convention on Biological Diversity led to the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, which requires exporters to label GMO goods and enables countries to ban GMO imports. At the invitation of the United Nations Environmental Program, I served as a member of the expert group that created the framework for the Cartagena Protocol.

Defending Environmental Law and Embracing Agroecology

Cutting-edge interdisciplinary science and democratic movements created the momentum for international environmental law. Today, science and democracy continue to be the forces that will protect the planet and our lives. Since 1992, the big polluters — the fossil fuel industry and the agrichemical industry (which is now also the biotechnology industry) — have done everything they can to subvert the legally binding, science-based, international environmental treaties on climate change and biodiversity. Lawless transnational corporations are violating international law and then covering their tracks through propaganda and public relations tactics. The fossil fuel industry (and its supporters, who are in denial about climate change), and the agrichemical/biotech industry (and its supporters, who are in denial about biosafety hazards) seem intent on following the same path that caused the crises in the first place.

Those who deny all threats to biosafety are ignorant of the scientific assessments of the impact of GMOs on the environment, public health, and socioeconomic conditions. The PR attack on ecological science stands on unscientific grounds. It is irresponsible because it pushes us closer to disaster and prevents a change in spite of scientific evidence showing we have better alternatives that work. Biosafety science — along with the emerging paradigm of agroecology, which seeks to conserve biodiversity, increase health and nutrition per acre, provide food security, and increase climate resilience — has the power to ensure the social and ecological sustainability of our agriculture and food systems.

We must move away from industrial, chemical-intensive agriculture and a centralized, global, commodity-based food system that contributes to emissions. Biodiversity conservation is central to adaptation. Instead of creating biodiversity-destroying industrial monocultures, including those based on GMO seeds, we need to adopt agroecological practices that conserve biodiversity and ensure biosafety. A transition to biodiversity-intensive, ecologically intensive agriculture addresses both the climate crisis and the biodiversity crisis simultaneously, while also addressing the food crisis. Even though industrial agriculture is a major contributor to climate change and more vulnerable to it, the biotechnology industry is attempting to use the climate crisis as an opportunity to further push GMOs and to deepen their monopoly through biopiracy-based patents on climate-resilient seeds that were bred by farmers over generations.

We cannot depend on a mechanistic worldview and its unscientific denial of the interconnected nature of living systems and ecosystems to get us out of the crisis. As Einstein is believed to have said, "We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them." Centralized, monoculture-based, fossil-fuel-intensive approaches, including that of GMO agriculture, are not flexible. They cannot adapt and evolve. We need flexibility, resilience, and adaptation to survive a changed reality. This resilience comes from diversity. This diversity of knowledge, economics, and politics is what I call "Earth Democracy." ■

NONVIOLENCE IN FOREIGN POLICY

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What would a nonviolent statecraft look like? What are the steps—both in thought and in practice—that can begin to move state actors away from their reflexive turn to martial responses? If the ultimate messianic moment is the day when swords are made into plowshares, what is the first move? How do we pressure our leaders to think in other veins than violent ones? Moreover, what tools have been used and perfected in nonviolent struggles that can then be transferred to statecraft?

Inspired by these questions posed by *Tikkun* contributing editor Aryeh Cohen, the following discussion of nonviolent statecraft seeks to move beyond the frame of realist and idealist approaches to foreign policy. As the United States enters the fourteenth year of war in the Middle East—a single war that is actually comprised of a chain of smaller wars—the burden of proof is on "realists" to show that war is the best option. The empirical evidence seems to be that war is a failure that only brings war in its wake. In the articles that follow, we enlarge the conversation on nonviolence to go beyond resistance to governments and talk about nonviolent *statecraft*, that is, nonviolence as governmental policy in the arena of foreign conflicts.

Don't miss the powerful web-only articles on this topic at **tikkun.org/nonviolence.**

Nonviolence Writ Large

BY MICHAEL N. NAGLER

It was not NATO that freed the Baltic republics from Soviet control—it was millions of ordinary citizens. In this photo from August 23, 1989, residents of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania form a human chain of over 2 million people to protest Soviet occupation.

Say "nonviolence" today and your hearers are likely to think of protest marches and sit-ins, but nonviolence, as Mahatma Gandhi said, "is not the inanity it has been taken for down the ages." It is a law of nature and can be applied in any relationship or situation, including statecraft. Indeed, Gandhi argued that "it is blasphemy to say that nonviolence can only be practiced by individuals and never by nations which are composed of individuals."

In North America, an early experiment in nonviolent statecraft began in March 1681, when King Charles II granted William Penn governorship of the vast territory in North America that today bears his name. Penn was a close friend of George Fox, founder of the Religious Society of Friends (the Quakers), and the Quaker regime he created remained an island of peace even as traumatic battles between Native Americans and European settlers swept over surrounding territories. Penn's "Holy Experiment" only came to an end about seventy years later—*not*, please note, because the nonviolent colony could not defend itself but because later generations lost faith in its nonviolent principles. Those principles, along with some ideas borrowed from the Iroquois Confederacy, created a foundation of governance that we would envy today: freedom from racism and intolerance (Penn had himself been imprisoned in London for his Quaker beliefs), restorative justice (Penn reduced the 212 capital crimes under British law to two and made all prisons "work houses" for rehabilitation), democracy (even though the king had granted him absolute power over the colony), and peace. The "Great Law" that Penn established in 1682 did away with war and standing armies. What a contrast to the "statecraft" (or corporate craft?) working its violence today in Ladakh, as Helena Norberg-Hodge poignantly describes on page 34 of this issue of *Tikkun*.

Though Penn was not aware of it, his was not the world's first experiment in nonviolent statecraft (nor was it the last, as Matt Meyer skillfully shows in his essay on page 31). Around 260 BCE, a great king of Northern India, Ashoka Maurya, succeeded in conquering a neighboring kingdom in a huge battle, but was so overwhelmed when he saw the devastation he had caused that he renounced war on the spot. Adopting Buddhism, which seemed at the time a more practical basis for compassionate rule, he actually *expanded* his reign to almost the whole subcontinent and his peaceful empire lasted until his death in 232 BCE. Like Penn's Holy Experiment, the Ashokan rejection of war did not occur in a vacuum but was built on aspects of nonviolence in the supporting culture, including nonviolence toward animals in Ashoka's case, and religious tolerance. A famous edict of his states "He who cannot respect another's religion has no respect for his own."

I happened to be in Japan when the first noises were made about abolishing Article Nine of the Japanese Constitution, which encodes Japan's famous renunciation of militarism, and Japanese friends asked me how to prevent this loss. I argued that you can't just renounce war, you need to adopt an alternative such as civilian-based defense (where citizens are trained to disobey coup attempts or foreign interventions) and/or unarmed civilian peacekeeping—the work being done across borders in dangerous areas by Nonviolent Peaceforce, Peace Brigades International, and about fifteen other organizations. Nonviolent statecraft must also include the kind of measures adopted by Penn and Ashoka to shift the paradigm from a national security state to "common security" or "total security."

Stephen Zunes, in his highly informative essay on page 29, explains that the successes of nonviolence he lists have not come, "in most cases, from a moral or spiritual commitment to nonviolence, but simply because it works." In other words, we have seen by and large what Gandhi called "the nonviolence of the weak," and if we think *that's* impressive, just imagine what it will look like when we see the nonviolence of the strong—of those who could use force but choose not to because they have an inner sense that we're all connected. Imagine. ■

MICHAEL NAGLER is professor emeritus at the University of California, Berkeley, founder and president of the Metta Center for Nonviolence Education (mettacenter.org), and author of *The Search for a Nonviolent Future*.

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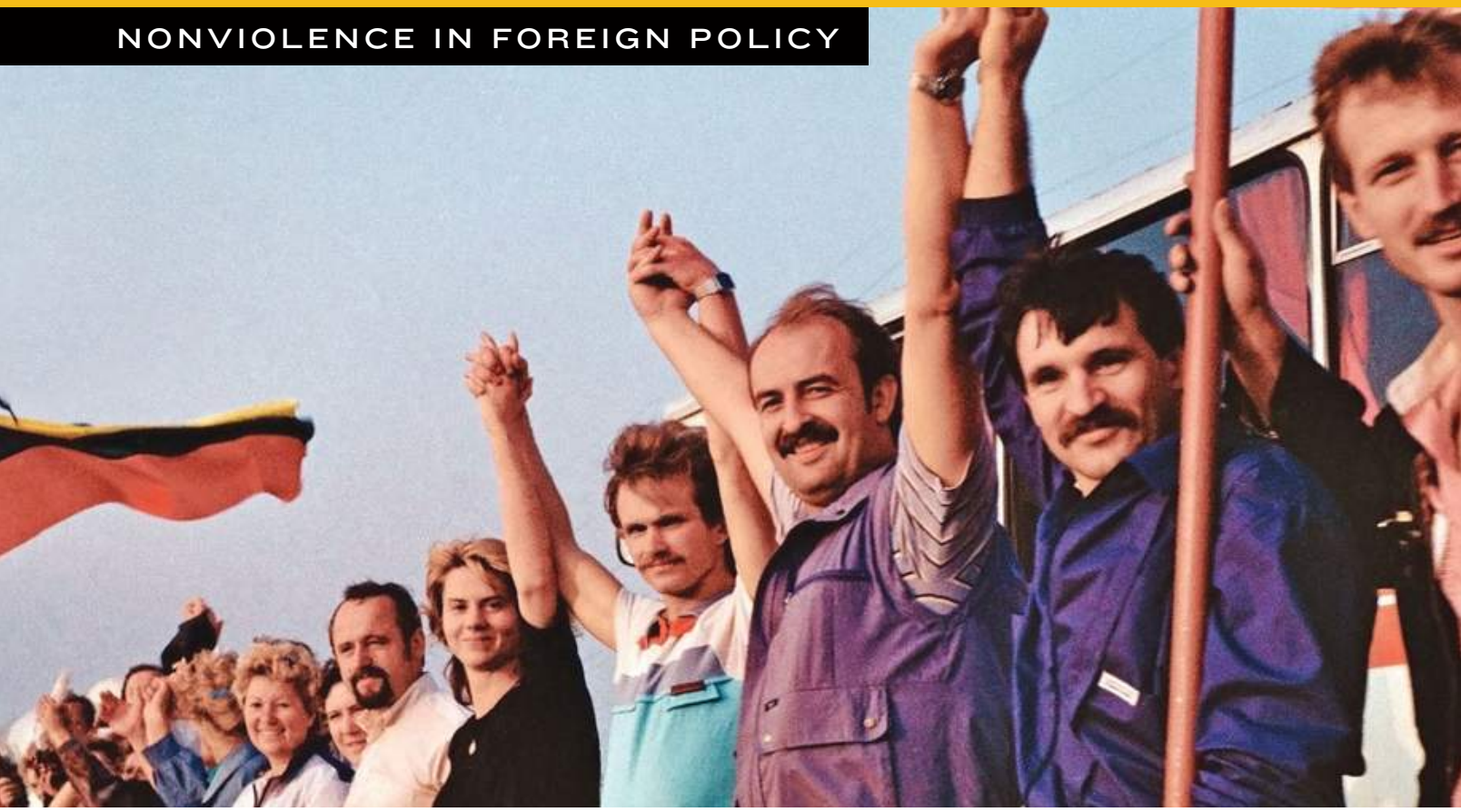

Alternatives to War from the Bottom Up

BY STEPHEN ZUNES

More than at any other time in history, a strong case can be made on pragmatic, utilitarian grounds that war is no longer necessary. Nonviolent statecraft need not be the dream of pacifists and dreamy idealists. It is within our reach.

Simply opposing war and documenting its tragic consequences is not enough. We need to be able to put forward credible alternatives, particularly in the case of efforts to rationalize war for just causes, such as ending dictatorships and occupations, engaging in self-defense, and protecting those subjected to genocide and massacres.

Some states have rationalized arming revolutionary movements that are fighting dictatorships. Some have even rationalized intervening militarily on these movements' behalf in the name of advancing democracy. However, there are other, more effective means to bring down dictatorship.

It was not the leftist guerrillas of the New People's Army who brought down the U.S.-backed Marcos dictatorship in the Philippines. It was nuns praying the rosary in front of the regime's tanks, and the millions of other nonviolent demonstrators who brought greater Manila to a standstill.

It was not the eleven weeks of bombing that brought down Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic, the infamous "butcher of the Balkans." It was a nonviolent resistance movement — led by young students whose generation had been sacrificed in a series of bloody military campaigns against neighboring Yugoslav republics — that was able to mobilize a large cross-section of the population to rise up against a stolen election.

It was not the armed wing of the African National Congress that brought majority rule to South Africa. It was workers, students, and township dwellers who — through the use of strikes, boycotts, the creation of alternative institutions, and other acts of defiance — made it impossible for the apartheid system to continue.

It was not NATO that brought down the communist regimes of Eastern Europe or freed the Baltic republics from

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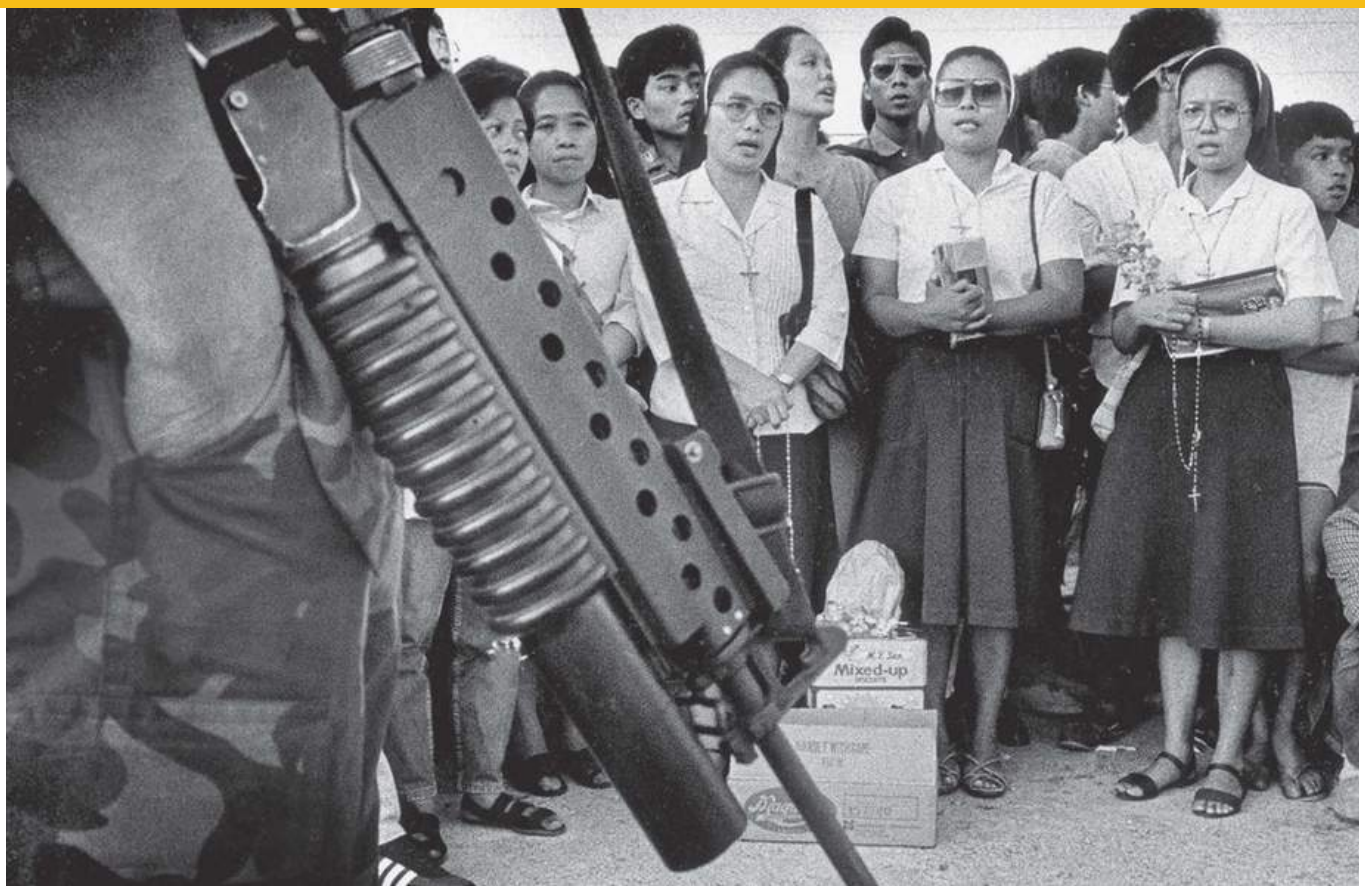

Over 2 million Filipino citizens joined together to overthrow the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos through nonviolent resistance in 1986. Here, nuns form the first line of defense against Marcos's troops.

Soviet control. It was Polish dockworkers, East German churchgoers, Estonian folksingers, Czech intellectuals, and millions of ordinary citizens who faced down the tanks with their bare hands and no longer recognized the legitimacy of Communist Party leaders.

Similarly, such tyrants as Jean-Claude Duvalier in Haiti, Augusto Pinochet in Chile, King Gyanendra in Nepal, General Suharto in Indonesia, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali of Tunisia, and dictators from Bolivia to Benin and from Madagascar to the Maldives were forced to step down when it became clear that they were powerless in the face of massive nonviolent resistance and noncooperation.

Nonviolent Action Has Proved Effective

History has shown that, in most cases, strategic nonviolent action can be more effective than armed struggle. A recent Freedom House study demonstrated that, of the nearly seventy countries that had made the transition from dictatorship to varying degrees of democracy in the previous thirty-five years, only a small minority did so through armed struggle from below or reform instigated from above. Hardly any new democracies resulted from foreign invasion. In nearly three-quarters of the transitions, change was rooted in democratic civil-society organizations that employed nonviolent methods.

Similarly, in the highly acclaimed book *Why Civil Resistance Works*, authors Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan (decidedly mainstream, quantitatively oriented strategic analysts) note that of the nearly 350 major insurrections in support of self-determination and democratic rule over the past century, primarily violent resistance was successful only 26 percent of the time, whereas primarily nonviolent campaigns had a 53 percent rate of success. Similarly, they have noted that successful armed struggles take an average of eight years, while successful unarmed struggles take an average of only two years.

Nonviolent action has also been a powerful tool in reversing coups d'état. In Germany in 1923, in Bolivia in 1979, in Argentina in 1986, in Haiti in 1990, in Russia in 1991, and in Venezuela in 2002, coups have been reversed when the plotters realized, after people took to the streets, that physically controlling key buildings and institutions did not mean they actually had power.

Nonviolent resistance has also successfully challenged foreign military occupation. During the first Palestinian intifada in the 1980s, much of the subjugated population effectively became self-governing entities through massive noncooperation and the creation of alternative institutions, forcing Israel to allow for the creation of the Palestine Authority and self-governance for most of the urban areas of the West Bank.

Kim Komenich/UC Berkeley Bancroft Library

Nonviolent resistance in the occupied Western Sahara has forced Morocco to offer an autonomy proposal which — while still falling well short of Morocco's obligation to grant the Sahrawis their right of self-determination — at least acknowledges that the territory is not simply another part of Morocco.

In the final years of German occupation of Denmark and Norway during WWII, the Nazis effectively no longer controlled the population. Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia freed themselves from Soviet occupation through nonviolent resistance prior to the USSR's collapse. In Lebanon, a nation ravaged by war for decades, thirty years of Syrian domination was ended through a large-scale, nonviolent uprising in 2005. And last year, Mariupol became the largest city to be liberated from control by Russian-backed rebels in Ukraine, not by bombings and artillery strikes by the Ukrainian military, but when thousands of unarmed steelworkers marched peacefully into occupied sections of its downtown area and drove out the armed separatists.

Almost all of these anti-occupation movements were largely spontaneous. What if, instead of spending billions for armed forces — governments would train their populations in massive civil resistance? Governments mainly justify their bloated military budgets as a means to deter foreign invasion. But the armies of the vast majority of the world's nations (which are relatively small), could do little to deter a powerful, armed invader. Massive civil resistance may actually be a more realistic means of resisting takeover by a more powerful neighbor through massive noncooperation and disruptions.

The efficacy of nonviolent resistance against state actors has become increasingly appreciated. Can nonviolent resistance also be useful in dealing with nonstate actors, particularly in situations involving competing armed groups, warlords, terrorists, and those who don't care about popular support or international reputations? Even in the cases of what could be referred to as "fragmented tyrannies," we have seen some remarkable successes, such as in war-torn Liberia and Sierra Leone, where primarily women-led nonviolent movements played a major role in bringing peace. In Colombia, the Guatemalan highlands, and the Niger Delta, there have been small-scale victories of nonviolent resistance against both state security forces and notorious private armed groups, giving a sense of what might be possible if such strategies were applied in a more comprehensive manner.

Empirical Studies Rebut the Case for Militarism

What about cases of systematic persecution bordering on genocide, which has been used as an excuse for the so-called responsibility to protect? Interestingly, the empirical data show that so-called humanitarian military intervention, on average, *increases* the rate of killing, at least in the short term, as the perpetrators feel they have nothing to lose and the armed opposition see themselves as having a blank check with no need to compromise. And, even in the long term, foreign intervention doesn't reduce the killings unless it is genuinely neutral, which is rarely the case.

Take the 1999 NATO intervention in Kosovo: while the Serbian counterinsurgency campaign against armed Kosovar guerrillas was indeed brutal, the wholesale ethnic cleansing — when Serb forces drove out hundreds of thousands of ethnic Albanians — came only *after* NATO ordered the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to withdraw its monitors and began bombing. And the terms of the cease-fire agreement that ended the war eleven weeks later were pretty much a compromise between the original demands by NATO at the Rambouillet meeting prior to the war and the counteroffer by the Serbian parliament, raising the question as to whether an agreement could have been negotiated without eleven weeks of bombing. NATO had hoped that the bombing would force Milosevic from power, but it actually strengthened him initially as Serbs rallied around the flag as their country was being bombed. The young Serbs of Otpor, the student movement that led the popular uprising that eventually toppled Milosevic, despised the regime and were horrified by the repression in Kosovo, yet they strongly opposed the bombing and recognized that it set back their cause. By contrast, they say that if they and the nonviolent wing of the Kosovar Albanian movement had gotten support from the West earlier in the decade, the war could have been avoided.

The good news, however, is that the people of the world are not waiting for a change in the policies of their governments. From the poorest nations of Africa to the relatively affluent countries of Eastern Europe; from communist regimes to right-wing military dictatorships; from across the cultural, geographic, and ideological spectrum, democratic and progressive forces have recognized the power of mass strategic nonviolent civil resistance to free themselves from oppression and challenge militarism. This has not come, in most cases, from a moral or spiritual commitment to nonviolence, but simply because it works.

Can we say with confidence that military force can never ever be justified? That there are *always* nonviolent alternatives? No, but we're getting close.

The bottom line is that the traditional rationales for militarism are becoming harder and harder to defend. Regardless of whether or not one embraces pacifism as a personal principle, we can be far more effective in our advocacy for nonviolent statecraft if we understand and are willing to advocate nonviolent alternatives to war, such as strategic nonviolent action. ■

Revolutionary Nonviolence

Statecraft Lessons from the Global South

BY MATT MEYER

A 1970 statue by Zoltan Borbereki commemorates the involvement of the African National Congress in the struggle against South African apartheid.

Twenty-first-century political analysts are increasingly realizing that militarism is a dead end: it has become obvious that the ongoing global expansion of the military-industrial complex has not brought us peace, and new research on the effectiveness of civil resistance as a way to expel intruders and topple dictatorships has sparked wider interest in the idea of nonviolent statecraft. But it would be a mistake to see nonviolent statecraft as a new idea. Indeed, the last half of the twentieth century was peppered by creative and often effective attempts at nonviolent policy making in the Global South. Political theorists in the United States have much to learn from a more careful study of the victories and failures of movements in Zambia, Ghana, India, Grenada and elsewhere.

A Nonviolent Revolution in Zambia

In Zambia, after almost a century of largely nonviolent struggle, independence leaders successfully wrested their nation from colonial control, transforming the British colony of Northern Rhodesia into an early example of the power of positive action. The year was 1964. The Pan-African Freedom Movement of East and Central Africa had threatened to launch an international mass mobilization and pressured the colonial powers to ultimately succumb to the demands of Zambia's United National Independence Party and their leader, Kenneth Kaunda. From prisoner to party leader to president, Kaunda's rise to state power was nothing short of meteoric — an especially unusual feat for an avowed pacifist!

During the few years between the jail cell and the presidential mansion, Kaunda traveled to the United States to meet with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. He worked closely with leading nonviolent activists, including political leader Rev. A. J. Muste, conscientious objector Bill Sutherland, and peace campaigner Michael Randle, but understood the limitations he'd have once assuming national office. In our cowritten book *Guns and Gandhi in Africa*, Bill Sutherland shared the torment and challenges that Kaunda shared with him and the other nonviolent activists on the eve of independence. "How, using nonviolence," Kaunda questioned, "am I going to be able to defend the country against all the spies and agents from Southern Rhodesia and apartheid South Africa attempting to destabilize us?" Together the leading nonviolent activists worked long into the night, struggling with this question, but were unable to provide a clear and well-defined answer to what Kaunda would later call "the riddle of violence and nonviolence." It is a question we are still struggling with today.

"The Gandhi of Africa"

Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah, while not a principled student of nonviolence like Kaunda, was still heralded as "the Gandhi of Africa" because of his widespread popularity as an anticolonial leader and because of his early writings on the significance of nonmilitary methods of engagement. His devotion to Pan-Africanism can be seen as one facet of an antimilitary foreign policy, looking as it did to broad unification of the continent beyond both economic and political/ideological poles; his participation in the founding of the Non-Aligned Movement should also be understood as a similar attempt at creating international spaces outside the dominant Cold War dynamics of the time.

After a few years as a government leader, and especially in the years after Ghana's full independence, however, Nkrumah moved away from nonviolence, towards a "pragmatism" that was his ultimate downfall. Authoritarian laws making

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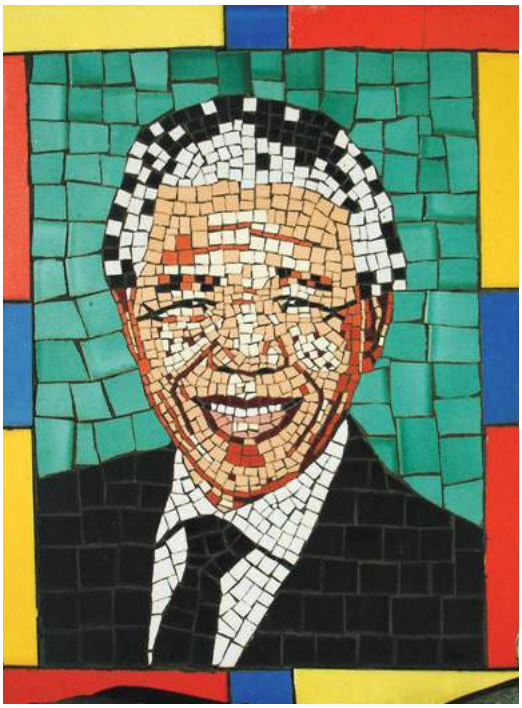
strikes illegal, preventive detention of dissidents, and growing collaboration with the communist powers created a domestic environment that opened the door for the 1966 coup that ultimately deposed him from power. Nevertheless, even Muste — the "dean" of the U.S. peace movement who had decried the possibilities of nonviolence in Africa just a decade earlier — saw the experiments in Ghana and Zambia as the greatest global possibilities for a nonviolent influence on state power. "We've never been so close to government leadership," Muste noted — and we're unlikely to soon be so close again.

Experiments with Nonmilitary Alternatives

The past half-century has seen some nations develop policies based on interest in nonmilitary alternatives, but these have been few and far between. Jawaharlal Nehru, the first prime minister of India, was certainly an admirer of Gandhi, but India's policies toward Pakistan quickly extinguished any pacifist leanings in his government. Meanwhile, in Israel's earlier years, some Israeli leaders developed close ties with the burgeoning African independence movements. Bill Sutherland corresponded with revered Israeli philosopher Martin Buber (whom many would see as too much of an idealist to have substantial influence on government) in the development of the World Peace Brigades — a planned "army" of nonviolent peacemakers who would intervene as needed in conflict situations.



South Africa has moved away from nonviolence, but Nelson Mandela's legacy still lives on in significant ways.

In the Americas, Nicaraguan Jesuit Miguel d'Escoto served as foreign minister during his country's war-torn Sandinista era and did all he could to bring the warring sides to the peace table without surrendering the basic principles of human rights and liberation. Costa Rica's Oscar Arias Sanchez won the Nobel Peace Prize in this same period, in part because of his skills at mediating a negotiated settlement to the conflicts in Central America — but also in part due to his own government's many-decade adherence to survival without a standing army.

The West Indian island of Grenada, whose New Jewel Movement is possibly the only movement to ever win state power through a nonviolent coup d'état, experienced three years of rule based on widespread popular control of education, health care, and the press — with no conflicts with neighboring countries, aside from the indignation of the United States when Grenada dared to establish friendly relations with Cuba.

Modern-day Rwanda, at the other extreme, emerged from the bloody realities of a genocidal moment, with close to one million people murdered in just one hundred days, to a contemporary government that — though embroiled in many regional conflicts — has instituted domestic policies that reflect much deep thinking about nonviolent social change. Rwanda's famed Gacaca court system uses community elders and a consensus-like discussion process to help determine solutions to community-based conflicts, and Rwandans have also begun utilizing other traditional African modalities to address various local challenges. Meanwhile, in Mozambique, government leaders have reflected on their civil war years with a pacifistic self-criticism of the overreliance on traditional warfare and the need now to connect ends and means. And even armed-struggle advocate Amilcar Cabral, leader of Portugal's colony Guinea-Bissau, recognized that trouble would follow if his fellow militants became militarists.

South Africa is probably the nation with the most contemporary possibility for nonviolent statecraft, thanks in large part to its history of truth and reconciliation, its grounding in the vision of "champion of forgiveness" Nelson Mandela, and its legacy of the largely nonviolent victory against apartheid. Moreover South Africa can claim the distinction of having had world history's only pacifist deputy minister of defense: Quaker activist Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge, who served in that post from 1999–2004, was deputy minister of health from 2004–2007, and became deputy speaker of the National Assembly before returning to civilian life and grassroots organizing in 2009.

South Africa has moved significantly away from nonviolence, however, through its continuation of economic apartheid, including violent techniques on the part of local and national government to uphold the status quo, as well as through the development of its bloated arms trade industry. But it is also meaningful that conscription and forced military service were ended under Madlala-Routledge's watch and that there is a heightened awareness of the need to look

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beyond revenge when seeking reparations and long-term resolution of conflicts. In 2014–2015, South Africa was still reported as the global leader in popular mobilizations, street demonstrations, strikes and boycotts, and similar popular civilian attempts to influence government policies.

The Case of Tanzania

Arguably the most important and least well-known attempt at nonviolent statecraft over the past half-century came from the East African country of Tanzania. Julius Nyerere, like Kaunda and Nkrumah, was close to U.S. pacifists and — unlike so many of his colleagues — enjoyed a long period of twenty-five years at the helm of his country before a peaceful transition of power at the time of his retirement. He oversaw the regional integration of Tanganyika and Zanzibar, and supported many neighboring African peoples in their struggles for liberation from colonialism. His administration instituted widespread educational, social service, health, and cultural domestic policies without reliance on a significant military and transformed the use of the local language of Swahili into an officially accepted and embraced mode of communication.

Perhaps most crucially, Nyerere's economic policies of Ujamaa were among the most ambitious attempts at creating equitable rural livelihoods in the modern era, even though they were never fully implemented. Nyerere was far from a believer in nonviolence as a philosophical absolute, but he distinguished himself as a truly independent thinker, eschewing the simplified notions of armed insurgencies and distancing himself from the personal aggrandizement of every government leader of his time (he was, for decades, the lowest paid head of state). Tanzanian intellectual Godfrey Mwakikagile, author of numerous works on contemporary statecraft, noted that Nyerere led with "extraordinary intelligence, verbal and literary originality, and an apparent commitment to non-violence." Nyerere's story suggests that, at times, flexibility is important: in his case, absolute adherence to a philosophical nonviolence would have been more of a hindrance than a help to nonviolent statecraft. But while flexibility must be a feature of any successful campaign — grassroots or governmental — we need not bend to realpolitik.

Even armed-struggle advocate Amilcar Cabral recognized that trouble would follow if his fellow militants became militarists.

Guidelines for Nonviolent Statecraft

The most successful short-term examples of nonviolent statecraft come from those who considered themselves revolutionaries, fighting against all oppression, settler colonialism, imperialism, racism, sexism, and the like. To garner our successes into effective long-term social change — which molds resistance and reconciliation into a single organizational construct willing to fully engage in policy making and beyond — we must become nonviolent revolutionaries. Revolutionary nonviolence cannot be utopian or merely idealistic in nature; it must be a sharply defined set of guidelines based on lessons learned from our past experiences.

While we are not yet at the point of articulating all of these guidelines — we have not yet adequately defined revolutionary nonviolence for the twenty-first century — we can identify some significant examples, especially from Africa's postcolonial period.

Revolutionary nonviolent statecraft will include:

- more focus on building alliances and friendships than on securing oneself against enemies;
- conversion of military-industrial entrenchment to a demilitarized industrialism based on urban and rural development needs;
- more openness to domestic dissent and diversity than interest in criminalization and imprisonment;
- restorative, localized, indigenous judiciaries with a focus on reconciliation rather than retribution; and
- focus away from "great, heroic icons" toward the power of decentralized cooperatives and communities.

It goes without saying that nonviolent activists from the Global North have much to learn from our counterparts in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America, and the Middle East. We reveal our own weakness and arrogance when we assume we are close to understanding in practice what true democracy, peace, and egalitarianism look or feel like. Activists in the Global South — including those who recently took up the gun — have important insights about lasting peace. We had best not shy away from the tricky questions of state power, even as we have good reason to remain suspicious of anything relating to governmental affairs. The contemporary crisis of long-standing warfare must serve as our greatest opportunity: to learn from the past and build anew. ■

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Strengthening Local Economies

The Path to Peace?

BY HELENA NORBERG-HODGE

Those who argue that governments should respond to conflict with military force have, at first glance, their strongest case with regard to the group calling itself the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, or ISIS. However, if we look at the root causes of fundamentalist extremism, it becomes clear that a nonviolent response to groups like ISIS offers a much greater likelihood of lasting success, in addition to being more acceptable morally.

While people around the world have been horrified by the beheadings and similar acts of wanton violence perpetrated by ISIS, most seem mystified by the origins of the anger that can lead to such atrocities. Even more confounding is ISIS's allure for young men in the industrialized West, particularly Europe: over the years we have been told that ethnic and religious violence can be cured by so-called "development," education, and the opportunities provided by free markets. Apparently not.

The fighting in Syria and Iraq is not the only ethnic or religious conflict underway. Most of us are only dimly aware, if at all, of the conflicts that simmer and periodically boil over into acts of terror and warfare in Sri Lanka, Eritrea, Bhutan, Myanmar, Nigeria, Guatemala, Kashmir, and many other regions. These conflicts are generally most "newsworthy" when they are uncomfortably close to Western industrial countries — Ukraine, for example — or when they offer exciting YouTube and television imagery — as is the case with ISIS. But unbeknownst to most Westerners, fanaticism, fundamentalism, and ethnic conflict have been growing for many decades — and not just in the Islamic world.

Failure to recognize this trend can lead to the belief that terrorism is a product of nothing more than religious extremism and will end when secular market-based democracies are established throughout the world. Unfortunately the reality is far more complex, and unless we address the underlying causes of terrorism, a more peaceful and secure future will remain elusive.

To really understand the rise in terrorism associated with religious fundamentalism and ethnic conflict we need to look at the deep impacts of the global consumer culture on living cultures throughout the planet. Doing so allows us not only to better understand ISIS and similar groups, but also to see a way forward that lessens violence on all sides.

My perspective comes from nearly fifty years of experience in numerous cultures in both the Global North and the Global South. I studied in Austria in 1966, when the Tyrol conflict was raging; I was a resident in Spain in the 1980s and 1990s, when the Basque separatist group ETA was active; I have lived in England where I saw the effects of the IRA's long-running battles with the UK government; and I've worked for almost four decades on the Indian subcontinent, where I've seen terrorist acts in Nepal, as well as ethnic tensions and open conflict in India and Bhutan.

Most important of all, since 1975 I have witnessed the emergence of tensions between the Buddhist majority and the Muslim minority in Ladakh, a region of India in the western Himalayas that has close cultural and historical ties to Tibet. I founded a project called Local Futures more than forty years ago in Ladakh to support local efforts to protect

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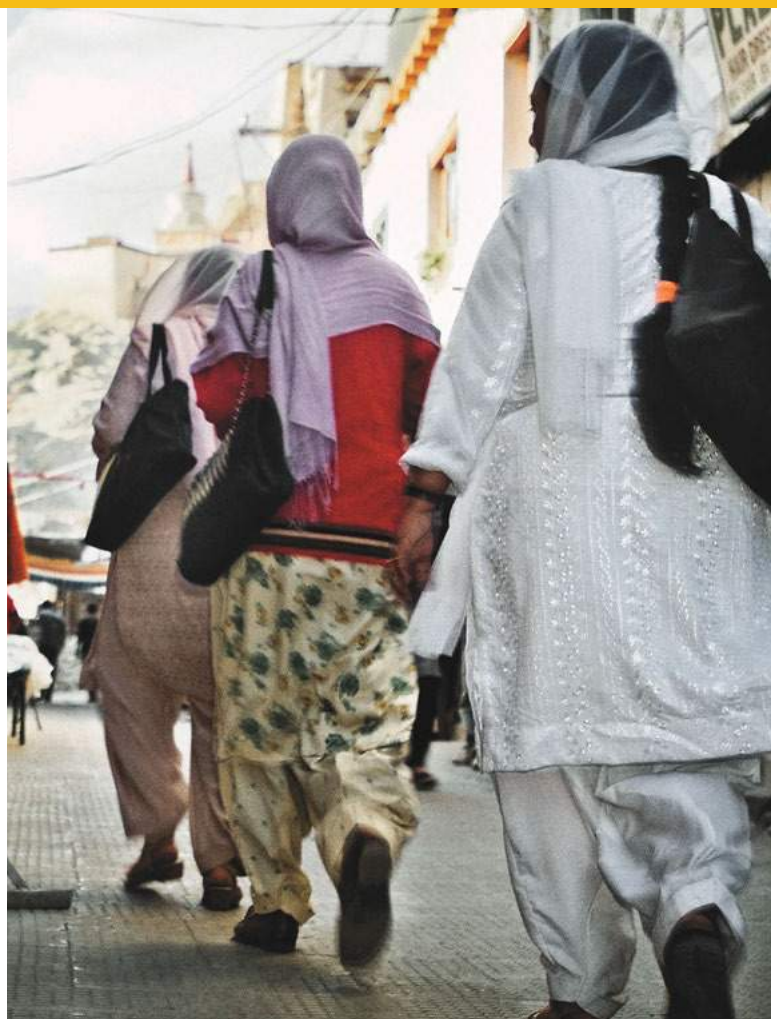


Women in Ladakh walk past an advertisement featuring a blonde model. "The undermining of cultural self-worth is an implicit goal of many marketers," Norberg-Hodge writes.

Tomasso Galli

the regional economy and maintain cultural integrity in the face of economic globalization, and I have witnessed sobering changes in the area during these decades.

For more than 600 years Buddhists and Muslims lived side by side in Ladakh with no recorded instance of group conflict. They helped one another at harvest time, attended one another's religious festivals, and sometimes intermarried. But over a period of about fifteen years, tensions between Buddhists and Muslims escalated rapidly, and by 1989 they were bombing each other's homes. One mild-mannered Buddhist grandmother, who a decade earlier had been drinking tea and laughing with her Muslim neighbor, told me, "We have to kill all the Muslims or they will finish us off."

How did relations between these two ethnic groups change so quickly and completely? The transformation is unfathomable unless one understands the complex interrelated effects of globalization on individuals and communities worldwide.

Developing Scarcity and Competition

Throughout the world, globalized "development" generally entails an influx of external investments that are then used to build up an energy and transport infrastructure. This new infrastructure then shifts the locus of economic and political life from a multitude of villages and towns to a handful of large urban centers. This is what happened in Ladakh. Suddenly, villages that had previously provided food, energy, medicine, and skills born of generations of local knowledge were struggling to survive. They were no longer able to compete with the city, where subsidized imported food, petroleum, pharmaceuticals, and designer clothes were available for the lucky few. The destruction of the local economy and culture by the global economy also created what can best be described as a cultural inferiority complex.

When I first arrived in Ladakh forty years ago, there was no indication that people thought of themselves as poor or inferior. Instead they regularly described themselves as having enough and being content with their lives. Though natural resources were scarce and hard to obtain, the Ladakhis had a remarkably high standard of living. Most of the region's farmers only really worked four months of the year, and poverty and unemployment were alien concepts.

In one of my first years in Ladakh, I was shown around a remote village by a young Ladakhi man named Tsewang. Since all the houses I saw seemed especially large and beautiful, I asked him to show me the houses where the poor lived. He looked perplexed for a moment, then replied, "We don't have any poor people here."

In part, the Ladakhis' confidence and sense of having enough emanated from a deep sense of community: people knew they could depend on one another. But in 1975 — the year Tsewang showed me his village — the Indian government decided to open up the region to the process of development, and life began to change rapidly. Within a few years Ladakhis were exposed to television, Western movies, advertising, and a seasonal flood of foreign tourists. Subsidized food and consumer goods — from Michael Jackson CDs and plastic toys to Rambo videos and pornography — poured in on the new roads that development brought. Ladakh's local economy was being swallowed up by the global economy, and its traditional culture was displaced by the consumer monoculture.

A new form of competition began to separate Ladakhis from one another. As the "cheap," subsidized goods from outside destroyed the local economy, Ladakhis were forced to fight for the scarce jobs of the new money economy.

Competition also increased for political power. In the past, most Ladakhis wielded real influence and power within their own economy. But in the late 1970s, when the Ladakhis were absorbed into India's national economy of 800 million and a global economy of 6 billion, their influence and power were reduced almost to zero. The little political power that remained was funneled through highly centralized institutions and bureaucracies, dominated by the Muslims in Kashmir.

Competitive pressures increased further as development replaced plentiful local materials with the scarce materials of the global monoculture: thus stone gave way to concrete and

steel; wool to imported cotton and polyester; and local wheat and milk to imported wheat and milk. The result was artificial scarcity: people who had managed well for centuries on local materials were now, in effect, in fierce competition with everyone else on the planet.

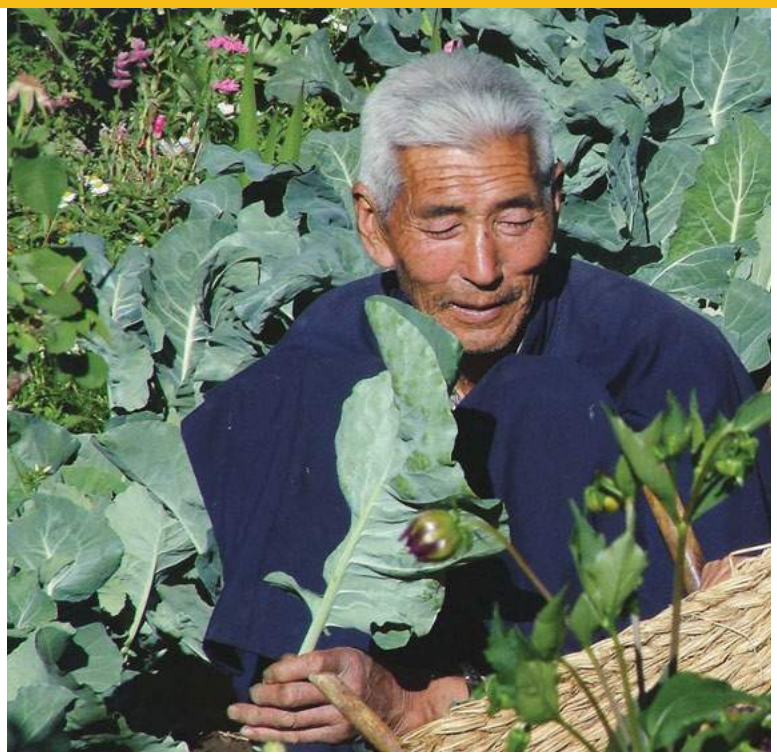
The Exportation of U.S. Consumer Culture

In Ladakh and elsewhere in the Global South, these economic pressures are reinforced by the media and advertising, whose images consistently portray the rich and the beautiful living an exciting and glamorous version of the American Dream. Satellite television now brings shows like *Sex and the City* to the most remote parts of the world, making village life seem primitive, backward, and boring by contrast. Young people in particular are made to feel ashamed of their own culture. The psychological impact on Ladakh was sudden and stark: eight years after Tsewang told me that his village had no poor people, I overheard him saying to some tourists, "If you could only help us Ladakhis, we're so poor."

The undermining of cultural self-worth is an implicit goal of many marketers, who promote their own brands by imparting a sense of shame about local products. An American advertising executive in Beijing admitted that the message being drummed into Third World populations today is "Imported equals good, local equals crap."

But it is not just local products that are denigrated by advertising and media images: it is local *people* as well. In Ladakh and around the world, the one-dimensional media stereotypes are invariably based on an urban, blonde, and blue-eyed Western consumer model. If you are a farmer or are dark-skinned, you are supposed to feel backward and inferior. Thus, advertisements in Thailand and South America urge people to "correct" their dark eye color with blue contact lenses: "Have the color of eyes you wish you were born with!" For the same reason, many dark-skinned women throughout the world use dangerous chemicals to lighten their skin and hair, and some Asian women have operations to make their eyes look more Western. These are profound acts of capitulation to a global social and economic order that offers material and social rewards to those who come closest to the West's commodified standards of beauty.

Few in the Global South have been able to withstand this assault on their cultural and individual self-esteem. A few years ago I visited the most remote part of Kenya's Masailand, where I was told that many people had withstood the pressures of the consumer monoculture and still retained an untarnished dignity and pride. So I was horrified when a young Masai leader introduced me to his father saying, "Helena is working in the Himalayas with people who are even more primitive than we are." The old man replied, "That is not possible: no one could be more primitive than us."



The Rise of Fundamentalism in Ladakh

In the past, Ladakhis would rarely identify themselves as Buddhists or Muslims, instead referring to their household or village of origin. But with the heightened competition brought by development, that began to change. Political power, formerly dispersed throughout the villages, became concentrated in bureaucracies controlled by the Muslim-dominated state of Kashmir, of which Ladakh was part. In most countries the group in power tends to favor its own kind, while the rest often suffer discrimination. Ladakh was no exception. Political representation and government jobs—virtually the only jobs available to formally schooled Ladakhis—disproportionately went to Muslims. Thus ethnic and religious differences—once largely ignored—began to take on a political dimension, causing bitterness and enmity on a scale previously unknown.

Young Ladakhis, for whom religion had been just another part of daily life, took exaggerated steps to demonstrate their religious affiliation and devotion. Muslims began requiring their wives and daughters to cover their heads with scarves. Buddhists in the capital began broadcasting their prayers over loudspeakers, so as to compete with the Muslim prayer call. Religious ceremonies that were once celebrated by the whole community—Buddhist and Muslim alike—became instead occasions to flaunt one's wealth and strength. By 1987 tensions between the two groups had exploded into violence. This in a place where there had been no group conflict in living memory.

Between 1986 and 1990 I met a number of young men in Ladakh who said they were ready to kill people in the name of Islam or Buddhism. Strikingly, I noticed that these young

Tsewang Rigzin Lagruk, former president of the Ladakh Ecological Development Group, works the earth with Helena Norberg-Hodge in Sankar, Ladakh.

Claire Lembach

men did not seem to have had much exposure to the traditional teachings of their respective religions. Instead, they tended to be those who had studiously modeled themselves on Rambo and James Bond, and who were the most psychologically insecure. On the other hand, those who managed to maintain their deeper connections to the community and to their spiritual roots in general seemed psychologically strong enough to remain gentle and tolerant.

It may be surprising to some people to know that the Ladakhis most prone to violence generally were those with exposure to Western-style schooling. This feature of development — usually seen as an unequivocal good — pulled the young away from the skills and values most suited to their regional economy on the Tibetan Plateau. Instead it was a training for scarce jobs in an urban, fossil-fuel based economy, an education suited to a consumer lifestyle that will lie forever beyond the reach of the majority. Battered by the impossible dreams foisted on them by their schools, the media, and advertisements, many youth ended up unemployed, unwanted, frustrated, and angry.

The Effects of a Demoralizing Global Monoculture

Ladakh's story is not unusual. The rise of divisions, violence, and civil disorder around the world are a predictable effect of the attempt to force diverse cultures and peoples into a consumer monoculture. The problem is particularly acute in the Global South, where people from many differing ethnic backgrounds are pulled into cities where they are cut off from their communities and cultural moorings and face ruthless competition for jobs and the basic necessities of life. In the intensely demoralizing and competitive situation they face, differences of any kind become increasingly significant, and tension between differing ethnic or religious groups can easily flare into violence.

Since rural communities and local economies in the Global North are being ripped apart by many of the same destructive forces at work in the Global South, it should be no surprise that the effects are similar here too. Christian fundamentalism, for example, has taken root in America's rural heartland, as has increased hostility toward immigrants, Muslims, and other ethnic minorities. Across Europe, there has been hostility toward immigrants and their children, many of whom live on the tattered edges of glamorous cities whose affluence is like a cruel taunt. Moreover, neo-Nazi movements have gained strength in places like Greece, where the Golden Dawn party has blamed "illegal immigrants" — rather than the "structural adjustments" that followed the recent bailout — for the country's economic woes.

Despite the clear connection between the spread of the global monoculture and ethnic conflict, many in the West place responsibility at the feet of tradition rather than modernity, blaming "ancient hatreds" that have smoldered beneath the surface for centuries. Certainly ethnic friction is a phenomenon that predates colonialism and modernization. But after four decades of documenting and analyzing the effects of globalization on the Indian subcontinent, I am convinced that becoming connected to the global consumer economy doesn't just exacerbate existing tensions — in many cases it actually *creates* them. The arrival of the global economy breaks down human-scale structures, destroys bonds of reciprocity and mutual dependence, and pressures the young to substitute their own culture and values with the artificial values of advertising and the media. In effect this means rejecting one's own identity and rejecting one's self. In the case of Ladakh, it is clear that "ancient hatreds" didn't previously exist and cannot account for the sudden appearance of violence.

Stopping the Violence

Nonviolent statecraft can play a critical role in preventing the spread of ethnic and religious violence if it aims at reversing the policies that now promote growth-at-any-cost development. Today, free trade treaties — one of the prime engines of globalization — are pressuring governments to invest in ever larger-scale infrastructures and to subsidize giant, mobile corporations to the detriment of millions of smaller local and national enterprises.

The creation of a global monoculture in the image of the West has proven disastrous on many counts, none more important than the violence it does to cultures that must be pulled apart to accommodate the process. When that violence

spins out of control, it should remind us of the heavy cost of leveling the world's diverse multitude of social and economic systems, many of which are better at sustainably meeting people's needs than is the system that aims to replace them.

Until about 500 years ago, most local cultures throughout the world were the products of a dialogue between humans and a particular place, growing and evolving from the bottom up in response to local conditions. Cultures have absorbed and responded to outside influences such as trade, but the process of conquest, colonialism, and development that has affected so much of the world is fundamentally different. It has forcefully imposed change from the outside. And since the end of World War II, the forces dismantling local economies have grown far more powerful. Today, speculative investment and transnational corporations are transforming every aspect of life — people's language, our music, our buildings, our agriculture, and the way we see the world. That top-down form of cultural change works against diversity, against the very fabric of life.

In any case, the Western model that is being pushed on the world is not replicable: the one-eyed economists who look at electronic signals to tell them whether economies are healthy or "growing fast enough" don't do the arithmetic needed to see if the earth has enough resources for their abstract models to work. It is little more than a cruel hoax to promise the poor of the world that development and free trade will enable them to live like Americans or Europeans, who consume ten times their fair share of resources. The American Dream is a physical impossibility. No wonder then that increased poverty and breakdown lead to rising resentment of Westerners — particularly Americans, who are seen as the main proponents and beneficiaries of the global economy. This despite the fact that the American Dream is now beyond the reach of most Americans, as well.

It is vital that we in the West shift to a decentralized, less resource-intensive economic model immediately. But equally urgent, and easier to implement, is a shift in development policies for the less industrialized, less oil-dependent South. For advocates of nonviolent statecraft, this means looking critically even at those well-meaning proposals for further "aid" to the Global South to alleviate poverty (a presumed cause of terrorism). The elimination of poverty is certainly a worthy goal, but most aid is export-oriented and actually creates more real poverty while tying people more tightly to a global economy over which they have no control. It undermines the ability of communities and whole nations to produce for their own needs, maintain their own culture, and determine their own future. It cannot prevent either poverty

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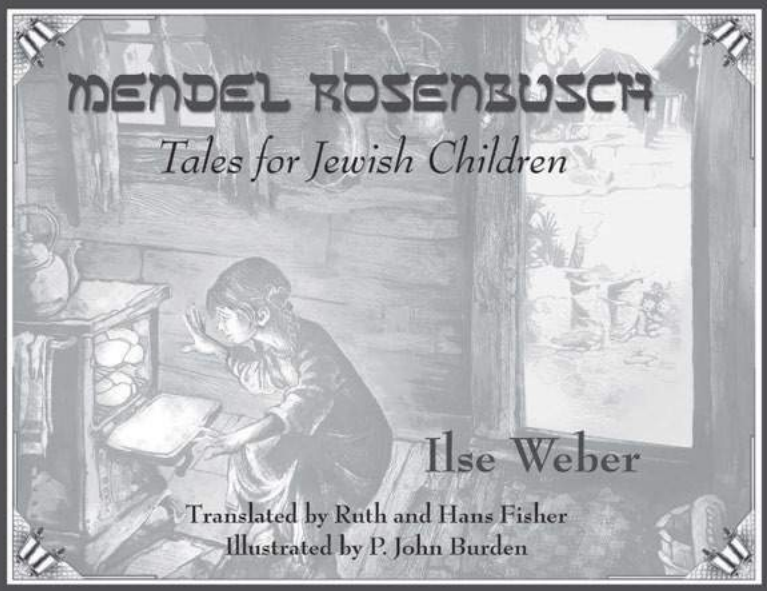

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or terrorism. Like further trade deregulation, most development aid primarily enables global corporations to exploit labor, resources, and markets worldwide.

Would a shift in policy — away from the costly effort to create a single global market and toward support for stronger local and regional economies — help reduce fundamentalism, ethnic conflict, and terrorism? My experiences in Ladakh strongly suggest that it would. For forty years, Local Futures has been running a range of initiatives aimed at boosting self-reliance and cultural self-respect. Those efforts have included a program to demonstrate renewable energy technologies — primarily small-scale solar and hydro — that improve living standards without tying Ladakh into the fossil fuel economy. Our work has also sought to deglamorize the consumer culture. We have painted a fuller picture of modern urban life, sharing information about the serious problems of crime, unemployment, loneliness, and alienation in the West. At the same time we have highlighted the various movements that seek to strengthen local economies and community, regenerate healthier agriculture, and foster a deeper connection to the living world.

Paradoxically, these efforts have involved a closer connection between Ladakhis and Westerners: we have sponsored Ladakhis to come on reality tours to the West, while enabling Westerners to experience traditional village life in Ladakh. The interest and involvement of these Westerners in Ladakh's culture and in farming has helped to counter the derogatory messages sent by Western media.

The steps described above were taken by a small international nongovernmental organization, working closely with indigenous leaders. Our efforts were essentially about countering, or providing alternatives to, global development models based on debt and fossil fuels. The most effective way for statecraft to contribute to a reduction in both poverty and violence is not to *scale up* funding for development, but to *scale back* the forces of globalization. Those forces are underwritten by governments through free trade treaties, investments in trade-based infrastructures, a wide range of subsidies and tax breaks for global corporations, and much more. Withdrawing that support is a necessary step toward reversing the wave of resentment and anger spreading through much of the Global South.

Instead, the primary "solutions" to the problem of terrorism have involved smart bombs, drone attacks, and wall-to-wall surveillance programs. At the same time, governments continue to undermine cultural identity through policies promoting a worldwide monoculture for the benefit of global corporations and banks — policies often described as the projection of "soft power," even though they are merely more subtle examples of violent statecraft. Such policies will only breed further desperation and fanaticism among people who already feel betrayed and disenfranchised. Encouraging instead a deeper dialogue between people in the Global North and the Global South, while shifting our economic policies to support local and national economies, would represent ways in which nonviolent statecraft could set us on the path toward a more harmonious world. ■

The Genesis of Gender

BY JOY LADIN

In the beginning, there was gender. We all were born into a world in which to be human is to be divided by gender, assigned roles based on gender, and taught to understand ourselves and our relationships with others in terms of gender. We inherited this world from our parents, who inherited it from their parents, and on and on, back to the dawn of humanness, when hominids began extrapolating the physical difference between male and female bodies into systems of meaning that go far beyond genitals, secondary sex characteristics, or reproductive functions.

Though the specifics of gender roles and expression vary widely, there is no culture that does not divide and define individuals, family relationships, and social roles in terms of gender. And though some cultures provide for what are often called "third genders," even there, the vast majority of people are defined in terms of the local version of the gender binary of male or female.

Feminist activists and scholars, joined in recent decades by gender studies scholars and gay and lesbian studies scholars, have long documented the oppressiveness of the system of binary gender, the limitations and sometimes cruelty of conventional definitions of male and female, and the staggering social inequities and misogyny that grow out of distinguishing men from women. But as Judith Butler demonstrated in *Gender Trouble*, the pervasiveness of binary gender makes it hard to critique gender without relying on the very categories of maleness and femaleness whose oppressiveness we are exposing. How, for example, can one fight for women's rights without distinguishing between women and men?

Indeed, the vast majority of gender's critics, including those who, like Butler, argue that gender is something we do rather than something we are, identify and live as women or men, an irony reminiscent of a joke Woody Allen tells at the end of the movie *Annie Hall*:

> A guy walks into a psychiatrist's office and says, "Hey doc, my brother's crazy! He thinks he's a chicken." Then the doc says, "Why don't you turn him in?" Then the guy says, "I would but I need the eggs."

Perhaps, as Butler and other gender theorists have suggested, our sense that we are male or female is as imaginary as the brother's sense that he is a chicken. Certainly, when we contemplate the systems of oppression based on our divisions of humanity into male and female, our insistence on identifying ourselves as men and women seems at least as crazy as the brother's insistence on identifying himself as poultry. But like the guy who walks into the psychiatrist's office, most of us seem to need the eggs — the social and psychological benefits that binary gender offers.

When I say "most of us," I include myself, even though the gender binary model that insists that everyone is either male or female has no place for someone like me. I was born, raised, and lived as a male for forty-five years. But as long as I can remember, my gender identity — my sense of my own gender — has been female. (The technical term for

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my relationship to gender is "transsexual," but "transsexual" is a diagnosis, not a gender.) The conflict between the male gender I was assigned at birth and my internal sense of being female was excruciating, and after decades of struggle, I stopped living as a man and began living as a woman. But according to gender binary definitions, which see gender as a consequence of physical sex, I was, am, and always will be male.

You would think that someone who has suffered as much as I have from living in a society that defines everyone as either male or female, and who knows as intimately as I do that those terms cannot account for the diversity of humanity, would abandon binary gender. But despite the decades of suicidal depression that resulted from my efforts to understand myself in terms of the gender binary, and despite the difficulty of living as a woman who doesn't fit the usual definition of woman, my gender identity remains female, and I express that identity by presenting myself as a woman — because I need the eggs.

In recent years, many transgender people — people who are not simply male or female — have argued that the gender binary should either be replaced by a vastly expanded understanding of gender diversity, or "smashed" (an idea popularized by t-shirts that say "smash the gender binary") so that no one will be forced to define themselves in terms of gender. Certainly, transgender people need and deserve far more recognition, respect, opportunity, and legal protection than we currently have. But is this a matter of redressing discrimination against a misunderstood and oppressed minority, or does respect for gender diversity require non-transgender people (more than six billion people) to radically change the way they define themselves and relate to others?

The Gender Binary in the First Chapter of Genesis

Thus far, such questions have been explored largely in theoretical discussions that, for those who don't have degrees in feminist, gender, transgender, or queer studies, are difficult to follow. But if we are truly on the verge of a radical transformation of binary gender, we need ways of thinking about the nature and functions of gender that are accessible to those who are not familiar with gender, queer, or transgender theory.

One way to do so is to examine the two very different stories of the creation of humanity we find in the opening chapters of the biblical book of Genesis. These familiar stories offer a surprisingly nuanced account of the ways in which the gender binary is bound up with our ideas of what it means to be human.

When we examine the first chapter of Genesis, we don't find gender at all, apart from the gendering of verbs and pronouns required by biblical Hebrew. God creates light and dark, day and night, sky and earth, seas, plants, stars, sun and moon, and animals "of every kind" without referring to maleness or femaleness. Those terms don't appear until the end of the chapter, when God creates human beings:

> And God said, Let us make [humanity] in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. So God created humanity in God's own image... male and female God created them (1:26-27).

God creates humanity "male and female," suggesting that these categories are built into the nature of humanity. (The Hebrew word I am translating as "humanity" is *adam*, which means "earth," "man," and humanity in general, and becomes the first man's name.) But at this point, "male and female" refers to physical sex (differences between male and female bodies) rather than gender identities (individuals' identification of themselves as male or female, men or women). The gender binary doesn't merely note the difference between male and female bodies; it also gives this difference meaning, assigning different roles and characteristics to males and females. At this point in Genesis, such differences have not yet emerged. Both male and female are "created in the image of God," and in the verse that immediately follows, God blesses and instructs humanity without distinguishing one from another:

> And God blessed them, and God said to them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth. And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed . . . and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat (1:28-29).

Here, unlike in the later creation narrative that tells the story of Eve being created from Adam's rib, all human beings share the same characteristics: they are created "in God's image," have dominion over other creatures, and are ordered to be vegetarians. Of course, by specifically creating humanity "male and female"—by singling out that difference among all the variations characteristic of human bodies—God has laid the foundation of the gender binary, which ascribes different roles, characteristics, feelings, desires, and so on to men and to women. But in the first chapter of Genesis, differences in genitalia and secondary sex characteristics have not yet been translated into differences in roles and identities.

But though little at this point rides on being male or female, these verses establish that humanity can be understood in terms of that binary.

Adam and Eve and the Sweat and the Pain by Samuel Bak.

Samuel Bak, Image Courtesy of Pucker Gallery (puckergallery.com)

The Effects of Binary Thinking

To understand what God's introduction of the gender binary later comes to mean, we first have to understand binary thinking—the habit of simplifying complex phenomena by dividing them into mutually exclusive and mutually defining categories. We think in binary terms so often that these categories often seem like built-in aspects of existence. For example, take the binary of light and darkness. These categories don't seem like ways of thinking; they seem like facts. Darkness is the opposite of light, and light is the opposite of darkness; each defines the other. But the second verse of Genesis presents darkness as existing before the creation of light, and when, in verse 3, God says, "Let there be light," light is created as an independent entity, without regard to the darkness we are told preceded creation. As rabbinic commentators have noted, at this point in the Genesis narrative, light and darkness don't exist in relation to one another. They coexist, intertwine, and interpenetrate. In the next verse, though, this potentially dizzying complexity is simplified: "God separated the light from the darkness," dividing light and darkness into binary categories. From here on, light and darkness are mutually exclusive: where there is light, there is no darkness, and vice versa.

Like the male/female binary into which God divides humanity in verse 27, the light/darkness binary is a purely physical distinction, without symbolic or social significance. But as we see in verse 5, once we organize physical reality into binary categories, we tend to give those categories additional meanings, by associating them with other binaries:

"And God called the light Day, and the darkness God called Night." By associating "light" and "darkness" with "Day" and "Night," God turns a way of distinguishing degrees of illumination into a way of describing the human experience of time.

The association of day with light and night with darkness seems natural, but this association is a way of thinking rather than a built-in feature of reality. For example, those who live near the poles experience days when it is always dark and nights when it is always light, but we still call those days "days" and those nights "nights," because these terms refer not to physical phenomena but to a way that human beings think about time.

Genesis moves on after associating light and darkness with day and night, but most cultures pile on many more binary associations. For example, since light enables us to see, and seeing is associating with knowing, light is often associated with understanding and darkness with ignorance. Similarly, since being able to see makes us feel safe and being unable to see makes us scared, light is often associated with goodness and darkness with evil. Such associations expand the light/darkness binary into a complex web of symbols and metaphors, ways of thinking that have little to do with physical conditions. People can be ignorant and evil when it is light, and understanding and good when it is dark.

But even the relatively reality-based binary of light/darkness drastically simplifies much more complicated phenomena. In scientific terms, "light" is a vague catchall term for the portion of the electromagnetic spectrum that is visible to human eyes; "darkness" has no scientific meaning at all. If Genesis were written in the language of science, the statement "And God called the light Day, and the darkness God called Night" would read something like this:

> And God called the period of time when the yet-uncreated human residents of the yet-uncreated planet not yet called "Earth" would generally perceive the greatest amount of visible electromagnetic radiation (Day), and the period of time when they would generally perceive the least amount of visible electromagnetic radiation (Night).

I'm not sure what theological consequences this sort of language would have, but if Genesis had avoided binary simplifications in favor of precise physical descriptions, the Bible would never have become a bestseller.

In other words, binaries are sexy. They offer attractively simple terms for overwhelmingly complex phenomena; they promiscuously associate with other binaries that extend their resonance and meaning; and they even sound good, lending themselves to rhythmic rhetorical devices such as parallelism.

The Grey Areas of Sex and Gender

No binary is sexier—literally as well as figuratively—than the gender binary, which has been used to interpret everything from individual behavior to the structure of the universe. Like the light/darkness binary, the gender binary of male/female is based on a physical distinction. And like the light/darkness binary, the gender binary extends vastly the meaning of that physical distinction through webs of association that are so fundamental to our ways of interpreting reality that they are hard to disentangle from our experience of the world.

But unlike the distinction between light and darkness, as we see in the first chapter of Genesis, the distinction between male and female is a cornerstone of our concept of what it means to be human. The association of light and darkness with good and evil, understanding and ignorance, and so on fosters racist habits of thought that have justified centuries of oppression. But as we see in precolonialist and some postcolonialist societies, human beings do not universally define ourselves in terms of relative skin color. By contrast, there is no society in which human beings are not defined as male or female. And though the associations that extend the meaning of the male/female distinction vary considerably, there is no society in which the structure of relationships, families, and institutions is not based on distinctions between men and women.

That is presumably why Genesis describes God as creating humanity "male and female," when this distinction is not mentioned in the creation of fish, birds, or other mammals. But just as the light/darkness binary drastically simplifies the nature of electromagnetic radiation, the division of humanity into male and female drastically simplifies the nature of human bodies. While most human bodies fit scientific definitions of maleness or femaleness, a significant percentage do not: talmudic discussions of two additional sexes, the *tumtum* and *androgynos*, acknowledge this fact. And though the Talmud recognizes only two sexes in addition to male and female, there are many kinds of "intersex" bodies, a fact that has been obscured by doctors' penchants for surgically "correcting" the genitals of intersex newborns. This persistent Western form of genital mutilation attests to our profound, sometimes violent insistence that everyone must be either male or female.

Transgender men Surat Knan and Broch Bender pray together at the Western Wall in Jerusalem.

Gender and Loneliness in the Second Chapter of Genesis

When we turn from physical sex to the web of associations we call "gender," the chasm between the complexity of human beings and the simplicity of the categories "male" and "female" yawns even wider. However cultures define those categories, few if any of us completely fit them. Human beings are ever-changing bundles of contradictory emotions and desires buffeted by unpredictable circumstances and relationships. Why, if the terms fit us so badly, do most of us define ourselves as male or female?

For me, as for many transgender people who try to "pass" as men or women, the answer is simple: however badly binary gender categories represent us, being gendered seems better than being alone. That's why, for forty-five years, I did everything I could to fit the male identity I had been assigned at birth. Though living as someone I knew I wasn't drove me to, and sometimes over, the edge of suicidal despair, I clung to my male persona, terrified that if I didn't present myself as male I would be rejected by everyone who knew me — because, as Genesis tells us, to be human is to be male or female. Whatever suffering it cost to live as a male, it was better than being alone.

According to the second chapter of Genesis, which offers a very different account of the creation of humanity than chapter 1, that is why gender was created: so human beings would not feel alone. In chapter 1, humanity is created collectively, but in chapter 2, humanity begins with the creation of a single person:

> And the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground, and blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living soul (2:6-7).

As in the first chapter, humanity here is created with sex (Adam, "the man," is physically male), but not with gender. Gender is a system for defining and interpreting differences, and at this point, there are no differences to define: the man is the only person there is.

God gives Adam a home, a place to live (the Garden of Eden) and a purpose for living: "to work [the Garden] and guard it" (2:15). God even gives him a law to keep — the famous prohibition against eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But

though the man has a body, a soul, a home, work, plants to eat, a relationship with God, and the beginning of morality, he is not yet human, because though some of us enjoy living in solitude, as a species, human beings are social animals. To fully become ourselves, we need others, a fact God belatedly realizes: "It is not good that the man be alone" (2:18).

And the man is very, very alone. In the first chapter, humanity is created after all the other creatures on earth, but in chapter 2, Adam is created first—he's the only living thing on Earth other than vegetation. In an effort to give him companionship, God "form[s] . . . all the wild beasts and all the birds of the sky" and brings them to Adam (2:19). Adam names the creatures, but, though they, like Adam, were "formed out of the earth," he doesn't recognize in any of them the "fitting helper"—literally, "the helper who is his opposite"—he longs for. Finally, God gets it: Adam needs a creature whose body is akin to his own:

> And the LORD God cast a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept: and while he slept, God took one of his ribs. . . . And the LORD God fashioned the rib taken from the man into a woman; and God brought her to the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh (2:21–24).

Though here, as in Genesis 1:27, humanity is created "male and female," in this story, the difference between male and female bodies is far less important than the kinship between human beings. That is why, instead of forming the woman from the earth, God forms her from Adam's body: so the man will see the woman as fundamentally like him and no longer feel alone. Adam isn't struck by her physical differences, but by her humanness: "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." For Adam, the primary function of gender is not sexual desire, reproduction, or male privilege, but to enable men and women to recognize their common humanity.

That recognition of common humanity inspires Adam to elaborate into a system of mutually defining identities: "She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." In Adam's (and Genesis') male-centered account, it is "woman" who is defined in relationship to "man," but though the text doesn't make it explicit, "man" is radically redefined now that the term stands in relation to "woman." Before the woman was created, "man" was a unique term for a unique being. The creation of the woman turns "man," and maleness, into one of two possible forms of humanity, demoting Adam from the supreme, species-defining individual to a member of a gender-based social system that defines him just as much as it defines the woman.

Adam doesn't mind the demotion; in fact, he is delighted, because being defined by the gender binary feels better than being alone. Indeed, being part of the gender binary inspires him, till now the only human being on earth, to imagine a future filled with gender-based relationships: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they shall be one flesh." In Adam's vision, the gender binary is the basis of human society, the root from which not just family but human history (imagined here as family dramas caused by the conflict between loyalty to parents and heterosexual attachments) grows. To express gender's widening significance, Adam invents two more associated binaries, "father/mother" and "husband/wife," terms that expand gender from a means of interpreting the difference between individual bodies into a way of defining human relationships.

Is There More to This Story Than Sexism?

Adam's enthusiastic response to the woman suggests many of the benefits we receive from binary gender. When we define ourselves as men and women rather than as unique individuals, we, like Adam, know we are not alone: however unusual our bodies, feelings, or experiences, the gender binary defines us as "like," fundamentally similar to, half the

human race, and offers us a variety of roles (mother, father, husband, wife, son, daughter, boyfriend, girlfriend, and so on) through which we can relate to those in the other half.

But despite Adam's enthusiasm about the relationship-forming potential of the gender binary, there are already signs of trouble in paradise. As numerous feminist readers have pointed out, though humanity is created equally "male and female" in chapter 1, chapter 2 is all about "the man": God forms Adam first, designs the garden for him, creates the animals for his benefit, and invites him to name them. Only then, to relieve the man's isolation, does God create the woman. Though he and the woman presumably saw each other simultaneously, the story tells us only about Adam's response to seeing her, not her response to seeing him. (The woman, as they say, is seen and not heard.) In short, the creation of humanity is presented as a story about a man, his needs, and a woman who is literally created to fulfill them — a bias that Adam foresees continuing into the gendered future he describes in terms of "a man" leaving "his" family for "his wife."

Despite this story's male-centered and heteronormative bias, taken together, Genesis' accounts of the creation of humanity offer a surprisingly radical perspective on gender. Chapter 1 invites us to imagine a time when the distinction between male and female had no significance beyond the physical. Even more radically, chapter 2 invites us to imagine humanity before the existence of gender, describing the time when Adam was the only human. In these stories, then, gender is presented not as an inherent or essential aspect of human beings (humanity is created, twice, with sex but without gender), but as a historical (if one can use that term in relation to mythic narrative) consequence of the human desire for relationship. That desire is presented as greater than the desire for individuality: Adam readily and joyfully gives up his solitude and embraces the vision of a future in which everyone, men and women, will be assigned roles defined by gender. Chapter 2 presents gender not as a single binary but as a bundle of associated binaries (male/female, man/woman, father/mother, husband/wife), each of which is introduced at different moments in the narrative, and gives different meanings to maleness and femaleness. Gender, here, is portrayed as composite, as historical, and as a system of reciprocal relationships rather than of hierarchical oppression — even though it is already bound up with heteronormativity in this narrative.

Trouble In Paradise: The Invention of Patriarchy

But whatever its virtues and limitations, this Edenic vision of gender is lost, along with Eden itself, in chapter 3, when God, in response to the woman and man eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, curses them in terms that transform the gender binary into an engine of inequality:

> God said to the woman, I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in sorrow you shall bring forth children; and your desire shall be to your husband, and he shall rule over you. And to Adam God said, Because you hearkened to the voice of your wife, and ate of the tree . . . cursed is the ground for your sake. . . . By the sweat of your brow shall you eat bread (3:16–17).

God's decrees that the woman is to be "ruled over" by the man and burdened by childbirth, while the man is to toil for "bread," magnify the consequences of being male and being female, and transform the gender binary into patriarchy, a system in which social roles, privilege, and power are unequally divided on the basis of gender.

But even here, Genesis hints that there could and should be a better form of gender. God presents patriarchy as a curse on both men and women. And though patriarchy is the final step in the biblical genesis of gender, patriarchy is portrayed as a result of human error, not as the result of inborn differences between males and females. In chapter 2, neither God nor Adam says anything that identifies the gender binary with male dominance or female submission; even Adam's male-centered vision of a gendered future, in which men leave their parents for their wives, ends on an egalitarian note, with

husband and wife becoming "one flesh." In chapter 3, patriarchy is presented not as an inherent aspect of the gender binary, but as the tragic consequence of bad decisions — in Christian terms, of original sin. Had those decisions gone differently, the story implies, gender would never have become patriarchal.

But these are hints of a paradise that certainly was lost. Though the gender binary has taken innumerable forms, most fulfill all too aptly the biblical curse of patriarchy. And while it is generally better to rule than to be ruled over, as the biblical curse suggests, men as well as women suffer from patriarchal forms of the gender binary that translate biology, the physical difference between male and female, into social destiny. According to the curse, and to many definitions of male social roles, Adam has to work for bread whether he wants to or not — and Adam, like many men, clearly doesn't want to do that work; he is literally cursed with it.

The Rewards of Gender Identification

But as I noted at the beginning of this essay, no matter how much we suffer from the roles the gender binary assigns us, most of us continue to identify ourselves as men or women, and structure much of our lives in terms of our gender. Even in societies in which men and women are free to mingle, most of us are homosocial — that is, most of us socialize and form friendships with people of "our" gender. The gender binary encourages homosociality by promoting a sense of kinship based on shared interests, socialization, and experience among those born into a given gender, and by magnifying the sense of difference between genders: the more homosocial our lives and cultures are, the more we will tend to see men and women as speaking different languages, embracing different values, engaging in different modes of thinking and feeling — and even, as the hoary bestseller *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus* claims, coming from different planets.

We are also bound to the gender binary in far more intimate ways, because gender is more than just a means of relating to others; for most of us, our sense of being either male or female is a fundamental aspect of our identities. The idea that binary gender identification is foundational to individual identity is a staple of psychoanalytic and feminist theory and practice. This idea is so foundational that many feminist, queer, and transgender theorists argue that binary gender must be radically transformed or completely done away with for the sake of individual liberation and social transformation.

Whether or not we want to smash the gender binary, there is wide agreement that the gender binary encourages us to embrace and express aspects of ourselves that fit the gender with which we identify, and to repress, conceal, or minimize aspects of ourselves that don't. As Kate Bornstein's *Gender Workbook* questionnaires show, in order to maintain stable gender identities, we have to prune the complex flux of our psyches to fit definitions of male or female. Indeed, simplifying and stabilizing our shifting streams of thought, feeling, and desire into relatively consistent, intelligible identities is one of the primary functions of the binary gender. Whatever sacrifices binary gender demands, we define ourselves as male or female because we need the psychological and social benefits we get from our gender identities — because we need the eggs.

Reckoning with Trans Identity

One of the advantages of being transgender — of having an identity that doesn't fit binary gender categories — is that we are constantly reminded that the gender binary cannot adequately express our humanity, and so we are forced to imagine selves, lives, and relationships that are not defined by maleness or femaleness.

Socially, though, being transgender is not generally an advantage. Those who don't identify as either male or female, or whose bodies or histories don't fit those categories, must constantly choose between misrepresenting ourselves in order to get along in a binary gender world, or expressing our identities in ways that mark us as outsiders. Some

of us enjoy being what Kate Bornstein calls "gender outlaws"; some of us find friends and family, partners and communities, who love us as we are. But for too many, our inability to fit the gender binary leads to exile from family and community, loss of home and employment, verbal and physical abuse, isolation, and, once or twice a week, death by suicide or murder.

In recent decades transgender people have become increasingly visible, vocal, and organized. Transgender people run for public office, lobby for antidiscrimination legislation and better health care, are interviewed on news programs, publish books, appear in movies, and are represented in academic journals, such as the new *Transgender Studies Quarterly*. Increasing numbers of institutions and facilities include restrooms and other accommodations that are not designated for one gender or the other. Some same-sex institutions, such as Wellesley and Mount Holyoke colleges, have begun admitting and accommodating transgender students; others have redefined their gendered policies in nonbinary terms.

As individuals, institutions, and the zeitgeist recognize the existence of transgender people — recognize, as Adam did when he first saw Eve, that despite our differences, transgender people are human — we find ourselves in the midst of a new genesis of gender. Though the gender binary is not likely to be smashed any time soon, the recognition that some people don't fit into the categories of male and female is slowly and subtly changing the meaning of gender — and thus, what it means to be human.

For example, to understand transgender identities, we have to recognize the composite nature of the gender binary: the fact that, as the second chapter of Genesis suggests, the gender binary is comprised of many different binaries. For non-transgender people, these binaries are so closely aligned that we rarely bother to distinguish between them: when we say a non-transgender person is a woman, we mean that person is biologically female as opposed to male, identifies as female rather than male, and presents herself to others as a woman rather than as a man. But for transsexuals like me, these binaries are not aligned. Though I identify as female and present myself as a woman, biologically I still have a Y chromosome, and so recognizing me as a transsexual means recognizing that the gender binary combines and conflates different, and sometimes disparate, aspects of being human. Once we see the composite nature of the gender binary, it becomes easier to see the diversity of gender among non-transgender people — to notice, for example, that the category "men" includes physically male, male-identified people who don't much care for masculine modes of gender expression, and that the category "woman" includes physically female people who present themselves as women but don't strongly or clearly identify as female.

In short, as we reckon with transgender identity, we find our understanding of what it means to be a man or woman changing, encompassing a wider range of possibility and variation — and, as a result, becoming less clearly defined. That is why non-transgender people across the political spectrum, from religious conservatives to anti-trans feminists, may see transsexual identities as threatening their own sense of identity, complicating and blurring their gender definitions, posing uncomfortable questions about what it means to be a man or a woman, and revealing ranges of variability and possibility within maleness and femaleness that are usually obscured by the simplifications of the gender binary. Most human bodies are indeed created male and female, as the first chapter of Genesis puts it, but we are also created in ways that don't fit those categories. And when we see that, it's hard not to recognize the many ways in which even bodies that are physically male or female don't fit norms of maleness and femaleness. There are women with facial hair and men without it, women without breast tissue and men with plenty, women who are over six feet tall and men who are under five feet, women who don't have uteruses and men who don't have testicles, women with low voices and men with high voices, and so on. When the simplifying filters of binary categorization fall from our eyes, we find ourselves confronting the

dazzling variety of human bodies, gender identities, and gender expressions. Our gender identities come to seem less like essences and more like active choices, ways we understand and present ourselves rather than built-in aspects of who we are.

Building on Feminist Transformations

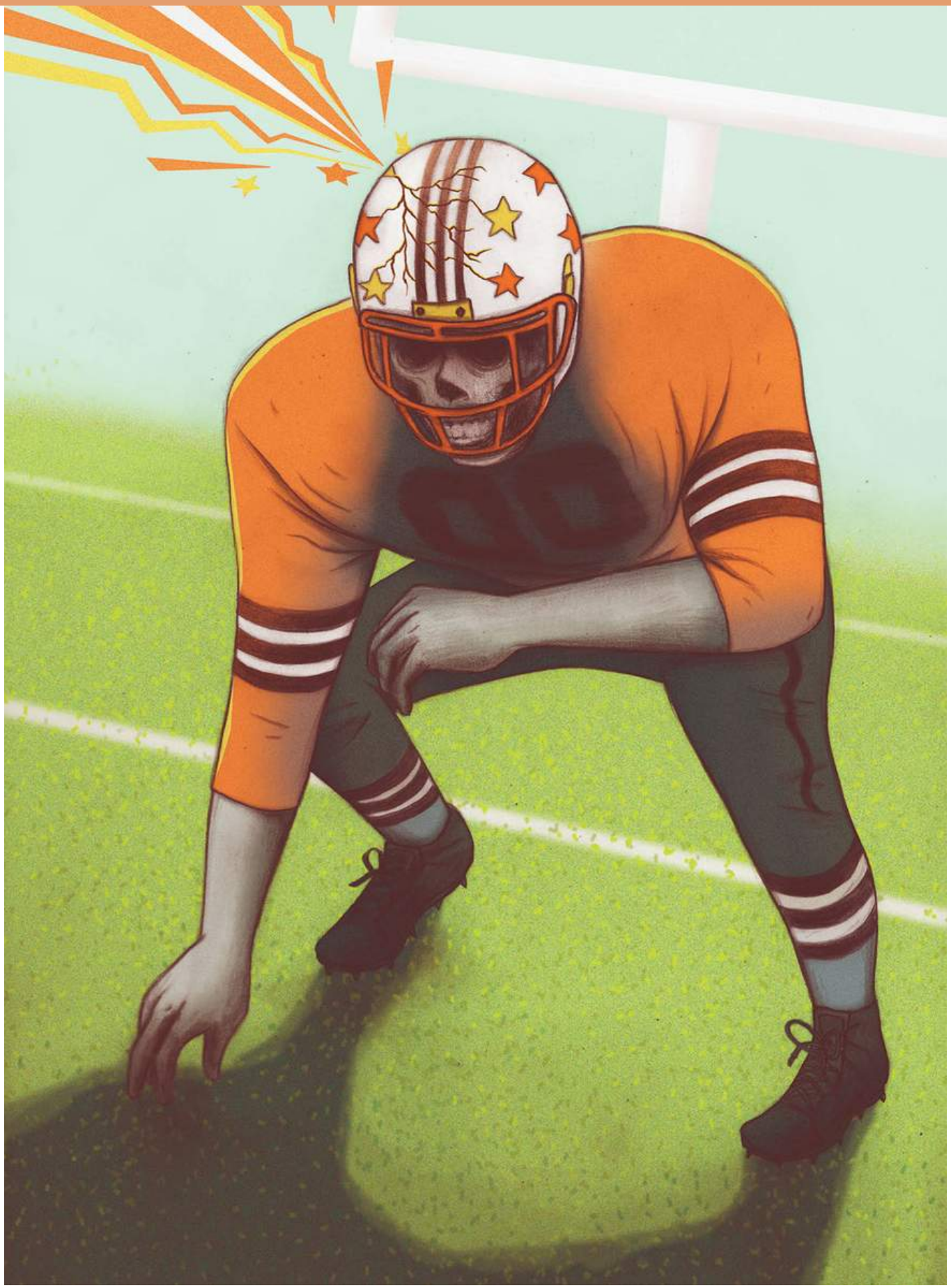
It is too soon to tell how radical the effects of recognizing people with nonbinary identities will be. But thanks to Western feminism, we have already lived through a major change in our understanding of binary gender. Before feminism, being a woman meant having a female body and gender identity and also a gender expression that fit cultural norms of femininity. Those who failed to fit feminine norms of gender expression — for example, women like George Sand who wore trousers, or engaged in "male" professions, or demanded equal rights — were often accused of not being women.

After centuries of feminist insistence that having a female body and gender identity does not require one to dress, talk, work, or otherwise act in ways the gender binary defines as appropriately feminine, there are now few forms of female gender expression that disqualify women from being seen as "real women" in Western societies. (Men, of course, still have a very narrow range of gender expression; it's easy for men to do things that lead others to accuse them of not being "real men.") As innumerable articles, essays, TV shows, and movies attest, the liberation of women from feminine gender expression has led not only to individual freedom but also to social uncertainty (sometimes we can no longer tell if someone is a woman just based on hair length or clothing choices); psychological stress (as we see in the interminable "mommy wars" among middle-class women arguing about whether women are obliged to raise children, have careers, or both); and upheaval in communities, families, and institutions, many of which were founded on pre-feminist assumptions about how women should look and act. Some are exhilarated by these changes in the definition of "woman" and some are dismayed. But whether or not we identify as feminists or as women, everyone has been affected by them, because gender is a system that embraces us all.

Feminist efforts to free women from the constraints of traditional femininity represented a conscious, sustained, and explicit effort to change the terms of the gender binary; in a very real sense, then, these efforts marked the beginning of the new genesis of gender. But they are only the beginning. Nonbinary identities challenge us to reconsider not only binary definitions of gender expression, but also all the ways in which the gender binary defines what it means to be human.

Nonetheless, our experience of the feminist transformation of the definition of "woman" suggests some of the ways in which recognition of nonbinary identities might transform our understanding of ourselves and one another. For example, feminism has accustomed us to the fact that gender expression may vary widely among women and that even the most happily heteronormative woman may express her gender differently at different times, wearing, say, masculine work clothes during the day and feminine clothes to go out at night. In the wake of the new genesis of gender, we may become accustomed to the idea that anyone's gender expression can vary widely and often, not only within the ranges we now think of as masculinity and femininity, but also in ways that combine or confound binary categories. Just as many women who don't think of themselves as feminists now feel comfortable wearing jeans, in the wake of the new genesis of gender, even those of us who don't think of ourselves as transgender might feel free to live in ways that don't fit current binary definitions of maleness and femaleness.

Whatever we end up making of gender, we can be sure that we will find its transformation liberating, unsettling, exhilarating, confusing, infuriating, and, despite everything, exalting — because no matter what discomfort it entails, the new genesis of gender will give each of us and all of us a richer understanding of who we are, what we can become, and what it means to be human. ■



Jeff Gomez (jeff-gomez.com)

Seeing Shadows by Jeff Gomez

Lessons from the Shadow Side of Football

Building the Religious Counterculture

BY ANA LEVY-LYONS

DR. BENNET OMALU was uninterested in football. The game had always seemed bizarre to him. Growing up in Nigeria, in his own words, "I thought these were people dressed like extraterrestrials, you know, like they were going to Mars or something . . . headgears and shoulder pads. And I wondered why, as a child, why did they have to dress that way?" He figured they must get hit in the head a lot if they had to wear those ridiculous helmets. But back then, no one gave it much thought.

In their book *League of Denial: the NFL, Concussions, and the Battle for Truth*, Mark Fainaru-Wada and Steve Fainaru describe a Saturday morning in 2002 when Omalu pulled into the parking lot at a Pittsburgh coroner's office to do a routine autopsy. He was annoyed to be stuck working the weekend shift and apparently had been out clubbing the night before. As he arrived, he found the parking lot packed with news trucks, reporters, and cameras. He had to fight his way through to get inside the building.

"What's going on?" he asked inside.

"That's Mike Webster on the table," they said.

"Who's that?" he asked.

Bennet Omalu was probably the only person in all of Pittsburgh at that time who did not know who Mike Webster was. Mike Webster was the legendary center for the Pittsburgh Steelers, considered by some to be the best center in NFL history. Five years prior he had been inducted into the Hall of Fame. He was fifty years old and he had just died of a heart attack. Everybody knew all of that — except for the man who was about to perform his autopsy. And it was this man who, from his singular vantage point outside of the culture of football, was able to change the course of history. His story illustrates the power of a countercultural vision to uproot even our most entrenched institutions.

Omalu's Discovery

Omalu considers himself a very spiritual person and when he's doing an autopsy, he seeks to communicate with the spirit of the dead person. He talks to the corpse and asks how it died, and he feels guided. So there he was in 2002 with the body of Mike Webster, saying, "Mike, you need to help me. I know there's something wrong, but you need to help me tell the world what happened to you." He commented later that the body seemed worn and drained.

Webster had ostensibly died of a heart attack, but he had also suffered from some kind of extreme dementia toward the end of his life. He had lost all his money, couldn't keep

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a job, and was living in his truck, addicted to prescription drugs. Depressed and paranoid, he had accumulated an arsenal of weapons and was constantly threatening NFL officials. He had gone to see doctors about memory loss and excruciating headaches, and when asked if he had ever been in a car accident, he answered, "Only about 25,000 times."

As part of the autopsy, Omalu opened up Webster's skull. His brain looked normal. He had died of a heart attack, after all, and everything seemed OK. The technicians asked Omalu if they could sew him back up and go home. But Omalu did something a little unconventional for the circumstances. He ordered that the brain be "fixed," which is a chemical process that allows the brain to be solidified and sliced and examined on the inside. People thought he was crazy.

But when Omalu got the images back from the lab, he couldn't believe this was Webster's brain. It was profoundly damaged in a way that was not consistent with Alzheimer's or any other known condition. There were changes that, according to Omalu, shouldn't have been in a fifty-year-old's brain — that shouldn't be in any brain at all. He soon realized that he had stumbled upon something huge. He had discovered the shadow side of football.

Jung's Concept of the Shadow

The Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung introduced the concept of "the shadow" to psychology. The shadow is the negative or destructive part of our being that is hidden from view. It's the suppressed, sometimes sinister unconscious. It's not a question of whether or not someone has a shadow — according to Jung, we all have it. It's a question of how we engage it, how hard we look to try to see it, to come to terms with it, and ideally assimilate it into our consciousness. The more we can bring it into the light, the more we can work with it for good. The more hidden it is, he says, the more "dense" it is and the more power it has over us. Jung writes, "A man who is possessed by his shadow is always standing in his own light and falling into his own traps ... living below his own level."

We can probably all think of parts of ourselves that are self-destructive — the parts we are ashamed of, the parts we want to bury and hide from the world. Sometimes our shadows are so deeply painful, we can't even admit to ourselves that they exist. Those shadows are the most dangerous of all. They are the weaknesses that make us give up without even trying, the insecurities that make us push our loved ones away, the fears that make us live small, the blinding rage that makes us lash out. We act out without even knowing what we're doing. When our shadows are hidden, we don't know what we don't know. And even when we do know our shadows, sometimes we just can't accept them and make the changes we need to make. We retreat, like the groundhogs who get so scared by the sight of their shadows that they duck back into their holes and stay there for six more weeks of winter.

This same cycle plays out at a macro level time and again throughout history. When the harm caused by a beloved cultural institution gets exposed, there is a predictable pattern of denial, anger, and attempts to turn back time — to unknow what we now know. The obvious example today is American culture's response to the science of global warming. Collectively we have emerged from our burrows, seen the shadow side of our consumer culture, and disappeared back down into our holes, refusing to believe or respond.

The Shadow Side of Football

What Bennet Omalu discovered has now been brought fully and irreversibly into the light: football players receive multiple concussions over the course of their careers resulting in permanent, debilitating brain damage. But this illumination was hard won. *League of Denial* details the story of the NFL's attempts to cover it up, discredit Omalu, and make the whole thing just go away. Omalu experienced firsthand Jung's insight that

we humans resist seeing our own shadows. It's too terrifying, too painful, and too disconcerting at the deepest level of our being because the shadow is part of us.

In the collective unconscious of football fans, it was unthinkable that this beloved game could be destroying its heroes. And then, in the face of the indisputable evidence, the players began hiding their own concussions from the public. As recently as a few years ago, over half of NFL players said they would try to hide a concussion rather than take themselves out of a game. They explain that if you don't want to get hit, you shouldn't be playing football. They hid their concussions, even while acknowledging that they would suffer from them later in life — acknowledging that they will have trouble walking and speaking, perhaps becoming, so to speak, a shadow of their former selves. One player who was interviewed about why he would not report a concussion said, "I'm not going to tell on myself." This phrase echoes Jung's description of a man "standing in his own light." It speaks of a person at war with him or herself: a divided being that can't turn and face its own shadow. And the shadow overwhelms it.

"Shadow" is an apt metaphor because of course shadows are shaped like the objects that cast them. They're not spontaneous and separate. They are intimately related to those objects. In human terms, our shadows often correspond to unique gifts and strengths that we have. They are the opposite sides of a coin that makes us who we are. You can't discard just one side of a coin. And our ego — the part of ourselves that we like, that we see, and that we do claim as "us" — holds on desperately to itself at all costs.

The raw aggression of 300-pound men repeatedly slamming each other to the ground is not just incidental to the game. It's not something that can be neatly and politely removed with the coroner's scalpel because someone might get a headache. It is central to the game. It is, at least in part, what the game is about. The game is a celebration of male strength and power. So it's not surprising that its inverse, its shadow, is a condition that creates ultimate weakness, dependency, and internal collapse. And it's also not surprising that this shadow — the fact that these heroes would be rendered so vulnerable by the very thing that made them so powerful — would be virtually impossible to see. To anyone invested in the culture of football, which was most of the country, the implications of letting it sink in were literally unthinkable.

What It Takes To See Our Shadows

It took someone who did not care about football to be able to see its shadow. It took someone who was born in another country. It took someone who knew nothing about the game, to whom the players looked like extraterrestrials, to whom the whole thing was literally *alien*. It took someone with no investment in the institution to see it for what it was. The people who became Omalu's foes recognized immediately that his "otherness" posed an existential threat to football as we know it. They were vicious in their defense. In an interview, Omalu said, "Yes, some of them actually said that I'm attacking the American way of life. 'How dare you, a foreigner like you from Nigeria? What is Nigeria known for, the eighth most corrupt country in the world? Who are you? Who do you think you are to come to tell us how to live our lives?'"

The fact is that Bennet Omalu *was* a threat to the American way of life and to the multibillion-dollar industry of football. And through this threat, he was a blessing for humanity. When he asked, "Who's Mike Webster?" he modeled the benefits of standing a little apart from even our most beloved institutions. He modeled the genius available to us when we look at the world afresh, through a spiritual lens, with no preconceptions of what we might find.

In these days of powerful, entrenched institutions, of global capital and political gridlock, we would be wise to intentionally cultivate a perspective like Omalu's. Individually and through our religious communities let's reserve some corner of our being that is not invested *at all* in advancing our social accomplishments, making money, or preserving

who we think we are as a culture. We need to develop a countercultural corner of our being that is not mired in what *is*, but free, even by a hair's breadth, to imagine what could be. This is the spiritual self and this is the religious self: the self who can see our world even from a little distance, as if we were extraterrestrials. This is the self who can lovingly coax us out of our holes, allow us to see our shadows and not be afraid, and herald the coming of the warmth and light of spring. ■

Love for the Prophet Muhammad

A Key to Countering Islamism and Islamophobia

BY JOSEPH LUMBARD

Non-muslims often struggle to understand Muslims because they fail to grasp the role that the Prophet Muhammad plays in our lives. Failing to realize the breadth of the Prophet's teachings and the depth of love for the Prophet throughout the Islamic world, many non-Muslims are quick to believe ISIS, the Wahhabis, and other militant groups when they claim that it is they who adhere to the precepts set by the Prophet Muhammad and are thus the true followers of the "prophetic model."

Yet the understanding of the prophetic model among militant Islamist groups falls far short of what is conveyed by the classical Islamic tradition. Far from being the literalists that some portray them to be, militant Islamists choose to ignore or explain away those teachings that expose their wanton violence for what it is. When non-Muslims fail to recognize this, they succumb to severe miscalculations regarding both ISIS and the nature of Islam. It is thus of the utmost importance to consider what the prophetic model means to the majority of Muslims.

Several years ago, the song that topped the charts in Turkey, Egypt, and elsewhere in the Arab world was Sami Yusuf's "Muallim" (Teacher), a song in praise of the Prophet Muhammad. A few years later, Mesut Kurtis topped the charts with "The Burdah" (The Mantle), whose refrain is "Our Lord, bless and have peace, at all times and forever, upon the beloved who is the best of all creation." The title and refrain of the latter come from the most widely read poem in the history of Islam, "The Mantle" (al-Burdah), written in thirteenth-century Egypt, and recited to this day by Muslims from Indonesia to Europe, from Senegal to South Africa to the United States and almost everywhere in between.

The Prophet As a Source of Love and Hope

The enduring love of the Prophet Muhammad exhibited in this and thousands of other poems is perhaps the most misunderstood aspect of Islam. As the German scholar Annemarie Schimmel observes, even Western accounts that display tremendous respect for the Prophet Muhammad "betray nothing of the mystical love that his followers feel for him." This love endures throughout popular culture among the young and old alike, as evoked in this oft-recited passage of "The Mantle":

> Incomparable, his beauty has no peer—
> The essence of beauty itself is inseparable from him.

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Covenant from the Prophets
by Salma Arastu.

Salma Arastu (salmaarastu.com)

Ascribe to his essence what you wish of honor,
Attribute to his exalted status what you will of greatness!

Truly, the Messenger of God's bounty
Cannot be overstated by two lips and a tongue.

If a miracle could equal his magnitude,
The mere mention of his name would revive decaying bones.

For the majority of Muslims it is this inner spiritual reality that defines the Prophet Muhammad. We understand all of his actions in light of his direct connection to God. But for many non-Muslims, as well as for Muslims entrenched in militant political manifestations of Islamism, it is as if the Prophet's spiritual nature is veiled by his human nature; his role as a spiritual model and guide is obscured by his role as a statesman and military leader. This misunderstanding is perpetuated in the West by much of the misinformation and disinformation regarding the Prophet that has become ingrained in Western culture for over 1,000 years. As the *Cambridge History of Islam* observes,

> Occidental readers are still not completely free from the prejudices inherited from their medieval ancestors. In the bitterness of the Crusades and other wars against the Saracens, they came to regard the Muslims, and in particular Muhammad, as the incarnation of all that was evil, and the continuing effect of the propaganda of that period has not yet been completely removed from occidental thinking about Islam.

Given this background and a view of the Prophet that is at best "all too human," from a classical Islamic perspective, the vast majority of Westerners are unable to understand that a caricature of the Prophet is, for many Muslims, the greatest of insults. This is especially so for those Muslims who feel dispossessed by the forces of globalization, and

hold fast to God and his Prophet as their lifeboat in a sea of troubles. For as "The Mantle" says, "The Prophet is the beloved whose intercession is hoped for."

Even many non-practicing Muslims find in the Prophet Muhammad the greatest source of love, hope, and inspiration. As the Qur'an says, "The Prophet is closer to the believers than they are to themselves" (33:6). The Qur'an advises, "You have in the Messenger of God a beautiful example" (33:21), and verse 68:4, addressing the Prophet, states, "truly thou art of an exalted character." When asked about the Prophet's character, his wife Aisha says, "The character of God's Prophet was the Qur'an."

Based upon these and other sayings, the Prophet Muhammad is seen as the living embodiment of the message he delivered. The well-preserved record of his actions, sayings, and even tacit approvals thus provides Muslims a model for how they, like him, can conduct themselves with submission and mindfulness at every turn. To follow the Prophet's example is to live a life wherein all the diverse elements of one's being rotate around the truth, unified in perpetual submission to God. This prophetic model coordinates the chaos of worldly existence by returning it to its divine center, transforming the diffuse cacophony of daily life into the harmony of a life lived by the eternal rhythm of heaven.

Countering Extremist Interpretations of the Qur'an

Today, some see the actions of strident puritanical Islamists as indicative of a warrior religion that will stop at nothing to suppress all others. Such militarist interpretations, however, take particular incidents and sayings out of their broader context and employ them to justify political and apocalyptic aspirations. It cannot be denied that military campaigns occurred in the life of the Prophet and that the Prophet and his followers took both the defensive and the offensive in these campaigns. But nothing could be further from the practice of the Prophet Muhammad than political and military processes in which the ends are used to justify the means.

For the first thirteen years of his prophetic mission (610-622), the Prophet and his followers suffered persecution, yet he sought the way of nonviolence. In 622 he was driven from his home in Mecca. He and his followers were forced to employ military tactics to ensure their survival. Even then, the Prophet sought to avoid conflict when possible, preferring just treaties to armed conflict, as stipulated in verse 8:61 of the Qur'an: "If they incline unto peace, then incline unto it." In this vein, the Prophet instructed his followers, "Do not desire to meet the enemy." Fewer than 1,000 people died in the battles by which he came to rule Arabia, and when he rode into Mecca at the head of a victorious army in the year 629, he ordered that no blood be shed, for his mission was to ennoble, not to abase.

When asked of the Prophet's conduct, Anas ibn Malik, who had been his servant for much of his prophetic mission, declared, "He never struck a man, woman, or child." He was known to many as the most trustworthy, generous, and gentle of God's creation. In a statement that still echoes throughout the Islamic world, the Prophet said, "The merciful are those upon whom God has mercy. Have mercy upon those on earth, He Who is in Heaven will be merciful unto you" and "There is no harming or requiting harm." When the Prophet received insults from his enemies, he was enjoined to turn away from those who mocked him and to instead turn toward God: "Certainly We know that thy breast is constricted because of what they say. So hymn the praise of thy Lord, be among those who prostrate, and worship thy Lord, until certainty comes unto thee" (Qur'an 15:97–99).

Qur'anic passages such as this teach that in the face of mockery and ridicule, one should not respond with pettiness, anger, or violence, but instead seek solace in God. When confronted with the pettiness of others, Muslims are enjoined, "Remember God and leave them to their idle chatter" (Qur'an 6:91). It is a general principle of Islamic ethics that one not respond in kind to insults, be they intentional or unintentional; rather one should have patience and trust in God.

When a group of the Prophet's opponents addressed him by saying, "Death be upon

you" (*al-sām*^{u} *'alaykum*), a play on the Muslim greeting "Peace be upon you" (*al-salām*^{u} *'alaykum*), the Prophet cautioned his wife against verbal retaliation, saying, "Go easy, O Aishah! You must be kind." Such counsel is in accord with a well-known maxim articulated in many sayings of the Prophet Muhammad that one should never act out of anger. The wisdom behind such counsel can be seen in the effects of responses to the satirical cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad published in the Danish periodical *Jyllands-Posten* in 2005. While the vast majority of Muslims voiced their opposition to the caricatures in a peaceful manner, the violent responses of Islamists in Syria, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, among other countries, ensured that such caricatures would spread far and wide and inspired the creation of dozens if not hundreds of other caricatures of the Prophet. Similarly, the murder of eleven employees at the offices of the French weekly satirical *Charlie Hebdo* in January 2015 has not brought the honor that was sought. Rather it has undermined the understanding of Islam and compromised the safety of Muslims in Europe and beyond. In both instances, violent retaliation has done far more to besmirch the name of Muhammad than to honor it.

The Politics of Satire

The atrocities committed by Islamists in response to the caricatures in *Charlie Hebdo* and to the Danish cartoon affair were a direct violation of Islamic teachings. It nonetheless behooves us to examine why some Muslims' reactions to caricatures of Prophet Muhammad have become so strident, not in an effort to excuse such responses, but to see them from all perspectives. What is the context wherein emotions could be so readily inflamed by a few cartoons? This was not simply about depicting the Prophet, as some have portrayed it to be. The permissibility of producing images of the Prophet has always been debated in Islam. Nonetheless, there are thousands of classical Islamic miniatures in which he is depicted, though always in the context of veneration, not caricature. The issue that gave rise to so much consternation among Muslims of all walks is the needless desecration of sacred symbols through misrepresentation and vilification of the Prophet Muhammad.

Satire is not an innocent game. It can in fact be quite cruel, especially when some claim the right to trample with impunity upon that which is closest to the hearts of others. All societies and individuals have lines they believe should not be crossed: words, deeds, and subjects that are considered taboo. For Muslims, even many secular non-practicing Muslims, insulting the Prophet Muhammad (or any prophet for that matter) is such a subject. In the West, it is generally agreed that although free speech might permit us to insult or even denigrate another, basic human decency does not allow us to do so. It is not illegal for anyone to insult my parents, but it is also not socially acceptable. Propriety and courtesy are part of an unwritten social contract woven from delicate abstentions that reflect respect for all human beings. Most recognize that freedom of speech is not an absolute inalienable right—that as with any freedom, it comes with responsibilities. It is by meeting those responsibilities that we maintain the privilege to have that freedom. This is why we have laws against hate speech in over two dozen Western countries.

Modern Incarnations of the Medieval Polemic Against Islam

In this context, many Muslims feel that the Charlie Hebdo caricatures and the Danish cartoon affair are emblematic of the West's inability to apply equitable standards of hate speech to itself. The caricatures of the Prophet appear as a continuation of the medieval polemic against Islam, a polemic whose weapon of choice was often the vilification of the Prophet and the Qur'an. As Minou Reeves has shown in *Muhammad In Europe: A Thousand Years of Western Myth Making*, from the medieval period through the Enlightenment and beyond, there has been no shortage of pens

ready to dishonor, denigrate, and (from the Muslim perspective) blaspheme the Prophet Muhammad.

Faced with such patronizing claims as "if we mock you, that shows that you are part of our culture," and "everyone must be willing to put up with sarcasm, mockery, and ridicule," along with disingenuous lectures about the nature of free speech, obfuscations regarding the intent behind the caricatures, and claims that any Muslims who are offended are backward, totalitarian, and medieval, many Muslims cannot see the continuing caricatures of the Prophet as anything other than another chapter in the long and sordid history of Western anti-Islamic polemics.

The outward attacks against the Prophet Muhammad, such as the epithets of Dante, the fulminations of Luther and other men of the Church, the vituperations of Marlowe, mockery at the hands of Rabelais, and the vitriol of Voltaire, are easier to accept. Such polemic is straightforward and honest. But the pen of the satirist is far more insidious, especially when used to ridicule and even provoke fractured and dispossessed minorities, which Muslims constitute in France, Denmark, and much of Europe. In this respect, many would agree that some of the caricatures represent a puerile and irresponsible use of free speech. Just as the atrocities committed by a few Islamists did more to besmirch the name of the Prophet and of Islam, so too did the publication of the caricatures do more to harm the moral foundations of free speech than to uphold them.

Until we seek to understand one another through real dialogue, and learn to respect each other's sanctities and sensibilities, we will remain complicit in continuing the cycle of senseless and reciprocal hate. In the current environment, such efforts are of the utmost importance. Those of us who seek to adhere to the fullness of the prophetic model provide the bulwark against those who cherry-pick prophetic statements to support narrow objectives. Recognition of what following the "unlettered Prophet" (Qur'an 7:157), the "luminous lamp" (33:46), and the "bearer of glad tidings" (17:105; 25:56; 33:45) has meant to Muslims throughout history can thus serve as the means whereby the Prophet Muhammad does indeed remain a beautiful example whose legacy is "a mercy unto the worlds" (21:107). ■

Culture

BOOKS

A Scientific View of God

A God That Could Be Real: Spirituality, Science, and the Future of Our Planet
by Nancy Abrams
Beacon Press, 2015

REVIEW BY RAMI SHAPIRO

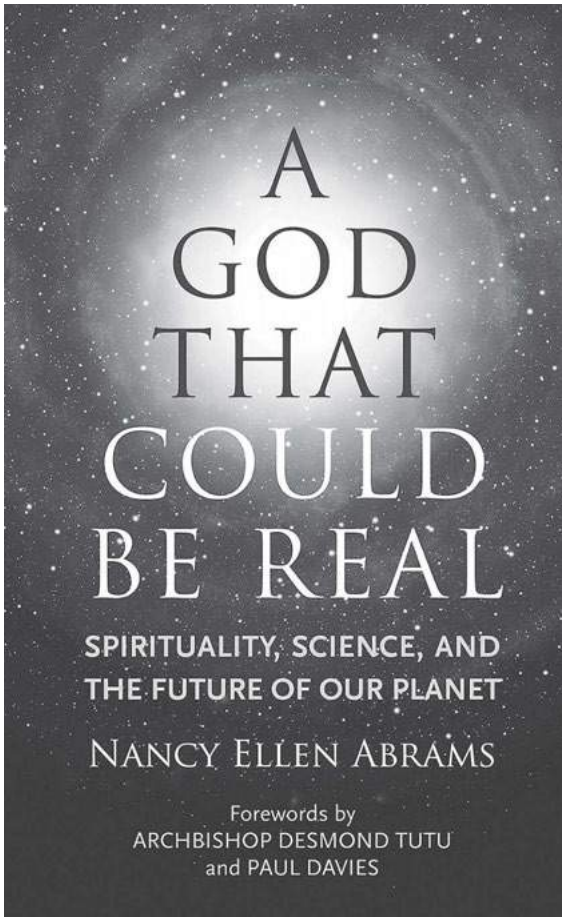
NANCY ABRAMS needed a higher power. As one of the premiere science writers of our time, she found both the Iron Age gods of the Abrahamic faiths and the pseudo-scientific mysticisms of New Age gurus wanting. So she turned to what she knew best: science. What she found is set forth in her important, cogent, and challenging new book, *A God That Could Be Real: Spirituality, Science, and the Future of Our Planet*.

This is not another book about the clash of science and religion. As far as Abrams is concerned, that war has been won, and religion lost. Nor is this a book of triumphalist atheism or scientism; Abrams subscribes to neither of those ideologies. Rather, this is a rigorously scientific and deeply spiritual investigation into the nature of nature in general and human nature in particular. It's an investigation that reveals to her — and through her to us — the God she sought.

The key to her discovery is the phenomenon of "emergence": the natural process of evolutionary mutation whereby something new, greater, and larger emerges from something older, lesser, and smaller that in and of itself gave no hint of the something new to which it gave birth.

For example, a billion and a half years ago, simple microorganisms unintentionally joined together to create systems complex enough to birth eukaryotic cells, the kind of cells necessary for human existence. There was nothing intrinsic to these microorganisms that made eukaryotic cells necessary, nor was their rising complexity predestined. Rather it was billions of years of random interaction that created a level of complexity among and between these microorganisms great enough to cause the mutation we call eukaryotic cells.

Over the next billion years these eukaryotic cells came together until they too reached a level of complexity from which something new could emerge, in this case life forms with distinct organs. Over the following millennia, systems of greater and greater complexity emerged, eventually giving rise to human beings with the capacity to make meaning, fashion purpose, imagine goals, and create gods.



God Rises from the Human Imagination

The Greek philosopher Xenophanes sought to question the validity of human god-making in the sixth century BCE by suggesting that if cows created gods, their gods would look like cows. In other words, the gods we imagine always resemble those who imagine them. This is why the Jewish God chose the Jews, the Christian God put a premium on Christian souls, and the Muslim God chose Muhammad (peace be upon him) to receive his final revelation. We get the gods we want and who want us.

Put simply, God is a creation of human imagination. You may object and say that, while our ideas about God are creations of our imagination, God in and of God's own self is something else. That may be true, but there is no way of knowing this "something else." All human knowledge is a product of thought, and thought is always conditioned by nature and nurture: genes and memes. We cannot know what cannot be thought; so if there is a God beyond thought, this God is beyond knowing, and such an unknowable God is irrelevant to us. No one wants this God. Even Maimonides, who posited an unknowable God, insisted that this God revealed his truth in a very knowable Torah, an idea that salvaged the chosenness of the Jews and thus ensured their loyalty to Maimonides's God.

We want a God who echoes our desires. We desire certainty, so our gods demand unquestioning faith. We crave power, so our gods empower pious elites. We are terrified of death, so our gods promise eternal life. We fear "the other," so our gods condemn outsiders to horrific fates in this world or in the next. Our gods battle one another because we battle one another. Our gods love and hate because we love and hate. Our gods push us toward extinction and planetary collapse because our greed and arrogance push us toward extinction and planetary collapse. But the God that Nancy Abrams found is different from all of these. Her God isn't an echo of desire, but a necessary condition of an evolving universe.

Abrams isn't repackaging Xenophanes. First, she is saying that cows don't have gods and, more important, *can't* have gods because their level of biological and social interaction isn't complex enough to produce gods. Second, she is saying that, while previous levels of human complexity did produce gods that were and are little more than extensions of ourselves, humanity is reaching a new level of complexity that makes new gods not only possible but inevitable. This new God, the "God that could be real," emerges not from our desire to control or transcend nature, but from our scientific understanding of nature, especially the process of emergence.

A God for the Postmodern Era

To continue the worship of pre-Copernican gods is to ensure the emptying of synagogues, churches, mosques, and temples in our postmodern era. To deny the wonder of an emergent, unknown future by making a fetish of the known, albeit highly romanticized and fictionalized past is to insure the irrelevance of contemporary religion. To pretend that who we are is who we will always be is a futile stand against greater evolutionary complexity and the mutational *next* that such complexity will birth.

This is not to say, however, that God is the process of emergence. Emergence has existed for billions of years, whereas gods have existed for only a few hundred thousand years, and our knowledge of the God that could be real has been around for only a few decades. Emergence makes God possible, not the other way around. God is, as Abrams writes, "an emergent phenomenon," not the phenomenon of emergence itself. God is not what is, but what is next. God, Abrams writes, emerges from the distinctive human aspiration to be something more. God is "endlessly emerging from the staggering complexity of all humanity's aspirations across time." And this is where Abrams and I part company: emergence isn't about humanity bettering itself, but about humanity transcending itself.

Remember, emergence is the birth of something new and unpredictable. It wasn't the distinctive quality of microorganisms that gave rise to eukaryotic cells; it was the complexity that these microorganisms achieved. Why would things be different with humans?

Abrams seems to be saying that it is humanity's unique capacity to aspire to be something more, rather than our evolutionary capacity to achieve pregnant levels of complexity, that leads to God. This seems to be an abandoning of emergence rather than an embracing of it.

Standing gratefully on Abrams's shoulders, I suggest that if emergence is real, and it is, then what will emerge from humanity will not be an improved humanity, a transhuman innovation, but rather something new, a posthuman mutation. Emergence through complexity will prove the serpent's revelation regarding humanity to be true: "You shall be as gods" (Genesis 3:5).

This doesn't negate the thesis of *A God That Could Be Real*—it merely takes it to its logical next step. As human complexity increases, perhaps via "the cloud" or some other as yet unimagined technology, something posthuman will emerge. Given the nature of emergence, we cannot predict what this something new will be; nature is nothing if not surprising. Nature is, if I may again borrow from Torah, *Ehyeh asher Ehyeh* (I am becoming what I am becoming). God as Ehyeh is reality forever self-mutating (Exodus 3:14). We humans are part of this self-transcending evolution; we cannot predict what we are becoming, but whatever it is, it will be posthuman.

The posthuman is intrinsically emergent, dynamic, and self-surprising. Unlike classical humanism, which sees human nature as universal and fixed, the posthuman is a field of (often contradictory) possibilities manifesting in different ways in different situations. The motto of the posthuman could well be Walt Whitman's "I am large; I contain multitudes" ("Song of Myself") or Emerson's "a foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds" ("Self-Reliance"), allowing the posthuman to create and use a variety of identities without selecting any one as "true."

The God of the posthuman may carry the aspirations of the posthuman, but there is no reason to think that these aspirations will be the same as those of their human ancestors. As posthumans achieve immortality, perhaps moving from carbon to silicon as the foundational element of their existence, allowing the posthuman to become transhuman, the memes of civilization will change, and with them our conception of self and God, and the aspirations these conceptions carry.

This is the real genius of *A God That Could Be Real*: it invites us to face the awesome wonder of emergence, and the terrifying humility of not knowing. I urge you to read this book, not so much for the answers that Abrams offers, but for the brilliant questions she poses. ■

RABBI RAMI SHAPIRO is an award-winning author and educator. Rami writes a regular column and hosts a weekly podcast for *Spirituality and Health* magazine. His most recent books are *Perennial Wisdom for the Spiritually Independent* and *Embracing the Divine Feminine: Song of Songs Annotated and Explained*.

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Visit tikkun.org/abrams to read "A God That Could Be Real," an online-only article by Nancy Abrams on the themes of her new book.

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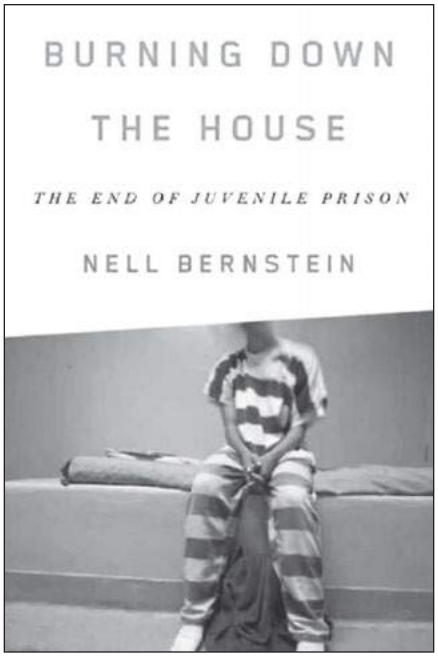
What Can Replace Prison?

Burning Down the House: The End of Juvenile Prison
by Nell Bernstein
The New Press, 2014

Locked Down, Locked Out: Why Prison Doesn't Work and How We Can Do Better
by Maya Schenwar
Berrett-Koehler, 2014

REVIEW BY AL HUNTER



If you have the capacity to read one book on prisons this month, which should you choose?

For many people I would say without hesitation: Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (The New Press, 2012). It is a stunning book. Or it was for me. Call me naïve, but it had never occurred to me that the cancerous growth of the prison system since the 1970s might have been a response to the success of the Civil Rights movement in the '60s.

I knew many pieces of Alexander's thesis — the way Republicans since Nixon have won elections with covert appeals to racism (the infamous "Southern strategy"), or the way the "war on drugs" set penalties for drugs used by blacks as much as a hundred-fold higher than for those used by whites. But I hadn't seen the picture the way Alexander — reluctantly, one should point out, as she is no conspiracy theorist — came to see it. It's not just that I have been as clueless as most white people on the topic of race in America (though I have). Alexander, an African American lawyer, argues that the entire African American civil rights establishment for decades misunderstood the centrality of incarceration in the counterattack of white supremacists on their movement. Her book has changed that. It's a must-read.

A few weeks back I heard another opinion about *The New Jim Crow*. I had recommended it to a bright young man who was recently out of prison. He has transformed his life and is eager to help others. He is hungry for books on prisons, how to stay out of them, how to recover from trauma, and how to build a radically different justice system. He found *The New Jim Crow* interesting but depressing, even hopeless. As he told me this, his face lost its usual shine.

I get it. The other "best book" in my prison library — Angela Davis's cogently argued call for prison abolition, *Are Prisons Obsolete?* (Seven Stories Press, 2003) — could be received the same way. So can most radical analyses of America, capitalism, global warming, etc. Radical movement-building in America is not languishing for lack of analysis, nor even for lack of revulsion in millions of people at the failings of the present system. It's quiescent for lack of vision, hope, and belief in plausible transformation. And for lack of inspiring stories.

Stories of Hope

Fortunately, two new books in the prison-abolition genre do include sections on hopeful alternatives. If that's what you crave, one of these may be the best to start with.

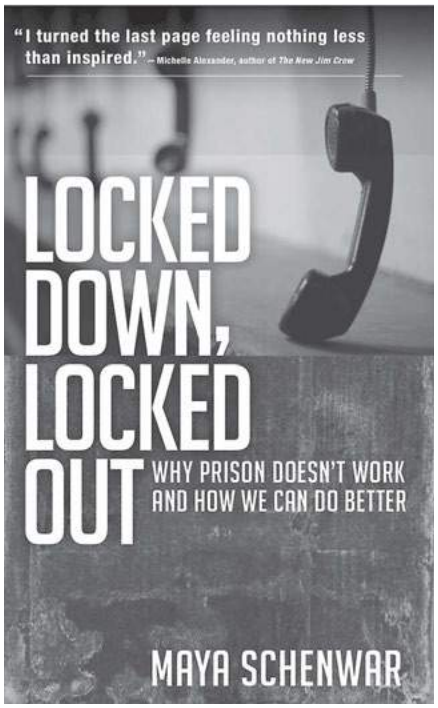
In *Burning Down the House: The End of Juvenile Prison,* Nell Bernstein convincingly demolishes the notion that the U.S. juvenile detention system either improves public safety or rehabilitates youth. Then she asks, what does transform the lives of violent, reactive youngsters? Her answer is deep and undeniable: *rehabilitation happens in the context of relationship.*

Bernstein argues strongly against "therapeutic prison," asserting that compulsory trauma recovery programs in prison are doomed by their compulsory aspect. She praises the results of therapy that involves a youth's entire family, when it is employed as an alternative to lockup. At base, what matters most is the ongoing presence of someone who cares and who connects.

Burning is worth reading for its description of the "Missouri Model" alone. I was as astonished as Bernstein to learn that over almost forty years the state of Missouri has managed to create a system in which young, incarcerated people tell her time and again, "Here, they care about you." Her skepticism is largely overcome. The stories she tells of young people she has known anchor the book.

Meanwhile, the story around which Maya Schenwar constructs her new book, *Locked Down, Locked Out: Why Prison Doesn't Work and How We Can Do Better*, is even closer to home. My newspaper tells me that one in five U.S. women has an incarcerated relative. For Schenwar, a young, white, Swarthmore-educated, left-leaning journalist, it is her "only sister and best friend," an addict, who is in and out of jail.

Schenwar writes vulnerably and movingly about her own experiences and emotions. The book starts with her despair at her sister's seventh



jailing in six years, and this statement, remarkable for a prison abolitionist: "She's in jail again — and this time, we're sort of hoping she'll stay there." "If she's in there," says their mother, "at least she'll be safe." I found it admirable that Schenwar, who at this time had almost ten years of "wholehearted opposition to the prison-industrial complex" behind her, was this honest. She thinks her own reaction, "born out of desperation," means that even she had to some extent internalized this society's use of prison to bury social problems rather than solve them. But perhaps it simply meant that she saw no other way to keep her sister alive in a time when so few solutions have been funded and developed. Our society's failure leads us to desperate choices.

Her book does a fine job of presenting the current facts about the prison industrial complex. But what makes it a strong contender for best book to catch you up quickly on prison issues is her readable style, her brevity, her storytelling — including tales of many others across the spectra of race and class — and the *How We Can Do Better* part.

Imagining Prison Abolition

Abolishing prisons sounds extremely dangerous. Murder, rape, and robbery cannot be dreamed away. How do abolitionists imagine ensuring public safety? Or even the safety of the person who did the harm? A number of lifers in San Quentin State Prison have told me, "If I hadn't come here, I'd be dead long ago."

Schenwar quotes an activist from Decarcerate PA, a grassroots group working to end mass incarceration in Pennsylvania, who says, "Abolition is a complicated goal which involves tearing down one world and building another." Among various hopeful community-based projects, she describes a restorative circle process in a Chicago high school where teens are learning how to, as one girl says, "safen things." That is, not just to respond to harm done, but to "foster non-harm."

Both Schenwar and Bernstein are clear that beyond helping teens or adults to make better choices is the huge sociopolitical project of making better choices available in the realms of education, jobs, housing, and health care. Bernstein describes the concept of "justice reinvestment," whereby the money now spent on prisons gets spent instead on bringing these essentials to neighborhoods devastated by high levels of incarceration. An example she mentions in Deschutes County, Oregon, sounds exciting.

As a restorative justice facilitator, I was disappointed that the current role and future promise of restorative justice programs as alternatives to prison seemed underreported and somewhat misunderstood in both these books. To explain this requires a sidetrack.

Healing Trauma

I first learned of restorative justice from Sunny Schwartz's *Dreams of the Monster Factory: A Tale of Prison, Redemption, and One Woman's Fight to Restore Justice to All* (Scribner, 2008). Her program in a San

Francisco county jail sharply reduced recidivism. The stories of personal healing inspired me.

The vision of a strategy for responding to harm with healing instead of punishment is by no means merely theory. It is of ancient human lineage, brought into the modern world largely by indigenous groups in Canada and New Zealand. In the United States it was first taken up by white Mennonites, a much less political and racially conscious group than the prison abolitionists of Critical Resistance, whose founders included high-profile activists of color like Angela Davis and Ruth Wilson Gilmore. That gulf is still in the process of being bridged by activists like Fania Davis, Angela's sister, who founded Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth. Grassroots restorative justice programs now exist in many U.S. cities. *Tikkun*'s Winter 2012 restorative justice issue is a good introduction to this movement, giving a broad overview from various authors, including Fania Davis.

At the core of restorative justice is the process whereby a community works out its own way to meet the needs of the harmed and to foster the transformation and healing of those responsible, without the involvement of police or courts. The healing of trauma is central, as it needs to be to all radical social change work and politics. Without it, we all too often recreate the harm we suffered, whether individually or — after "the revolution" — collectively.

So it seems fitting to slip in here the best book I have read on trauma healing: *Healing the Soul Wound* by Eduardo Duran (Teachers College Press, 2006). A Native American psychologist with decades of experience running a mental health clinic in Indian country, Duran may overturn your ideas about addiction and mental illness. Indigenous healers never pathologize the person, Duran argues. Many restorative justice activists are themselves trying to learn how to remove from their own work pathologizing language drawn from psychology (as well as correctional language from the prisons).

Can Restorative Justice Replace Prison?

But can restorative justice replace prison? In New Zealand, the entire youth justice system has been run on restorative principles since 1989. All the youth detention centers there have closed. The book to read is *The Little Book of Family Group Conferences: New Zealand Style,* by Howard Zehr and Allan MacRae (Good Books, 2004), and the best article describing what happened is "Twenty Years of Restorative Justice in New Zealand" by Judge Fred W. M. McElrea in *Tikkun*'s Winter 2012 issue.

A New Zealand–like "pretrial diversion" restorative community conferencing system is now in use or development in several U.S. cities. Those who complete their restorative plan are not charged with the crime and it does not go on their record. In Oakland, California, the results so far show a 12 percent recidivism rate, compared to 45 to 70 percent recidivism in cases that go through the courts. In many of these cases, the responsible youths meet with the people they harmed, who are given the chance to say what they need. "Couldn't you just punish us instead?" two young men once asked. Feeling the pain of the person you hurt: that's hard, that's relationship, and it often creates a desire to put things right.

Given that juvenile prison has ended in New Zealand, how is it that Bernstein doesn't mention this fact in her book on ending juvenile prison? In *Locked Down, Locked Out*, Schenwar recounts a Maori (indigenous New Zealander) antiviolence activist's story that tells how her community set a young person on the right track, but doesn't mention the bigger story of the Maori-led replacement of the system. And why does neither writer profile the similar projects in U.S. cities? Maybe they just don't know about them.

Schenwar both praises some restorative justice practices she has seen and criticizes the movement as a whole for a strange reason: she believes it seeks to "restore" what should be transformed. The parallel transformative justice movement — which also does excellent work — receives her full measure of support.

There is more going on here than I understand. No restorative justice activist thinks for a moment that restorative justice is about restoring some harmful status quo. But clearly some transformative justice and abolitionist activists mistrust the restorative justice world and have formed negative judgments about it that I believe they would revise upon greater acquaintance with it.

It is certainly true that many restorative justice activists I know are more focused on individual than large systemic change. Many transformative justice activists are more political, more aware of systemic oppression.

I see the classic division between people-changers and system-changers operating here. The political left has not yet managed to unite the two, even though its goals can never be met without doing so. The good news is that in the years between Davis's *Are Prisons Obsolete?* and the two new abolition books reviewed here, a great deal of progress has been made. To replace prisons, it is now understood, we need to *build relationships*. On the way, the relationships between transformative justice and restorative justice, and between an abolitionist approach and restorative justice, are among the ones we need to strengthen. For restorative justice enthusiasts, reading Bernstein and Schenwar's books would be a great start. ■

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Jacob Chose Hospice: A Critique of Invasive End-of-Life Care

Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End
by Atul Gawande
Metropolitan Books, 2014

REVIEW BY MARTHA SONNENBERG

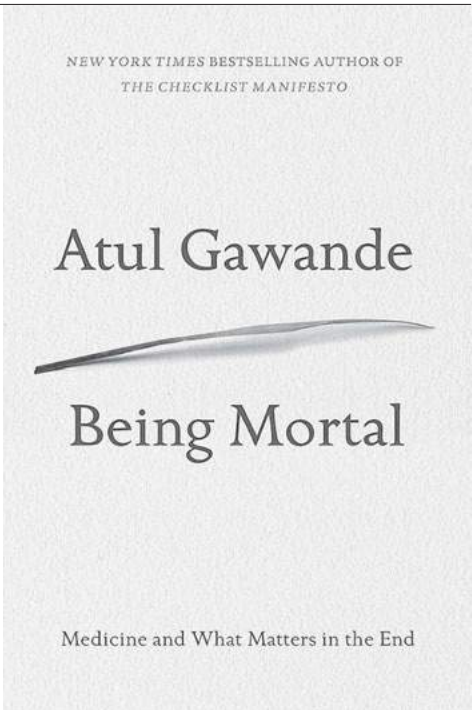
What does the Torah have to say about end-of-life care? Its most striking story on this topic appears in the last four chapters of Genesis, which describe the hospice death of the Jewish patriarch Jacob. After Jacob became ill, he summoned his children and grandchildren, and requested burial in the Caves of Machpeleh, alongside his parents (Isaac and Rebecca) and his grandparents (Abraham and Sarah). He gave blessings to his sons, and "when Jacob finished instructing his sons, he drew his feet onto the bed; he expired and was gathered to his people" (Gen. 49:33). He suffered no invasive medical interventions, he was surrounded by his family and was able to bless them, and he died a peaceful death.

This model of a peaceful end-of-life process has been lost in the contemporary world of modern health care, as shown by Atul Gawande in his new book, *Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End*. Gawande was already well known for his writings on the deficiencies in our health care system, but *Being Mortal* stands out as his most profound and most personal account. He was deeply affected by the illness and death of his father, also a physician, and this led him to look at the end-of-life process with a humility that enhances his already astute and critical perspective.

"I learned about a lot of things in medical school, but mortality wasn't one of them," he writes. "The purpose of medical schooling was to teach us how to save lives, not how to tend to their demise." Gawande's insight is shared by many of us in health care who have long realized the incompetence and insensitivity of our profession's approach to end-of-life care. Gawande's book reinforces the recent report from the Institute of Medicine, "Dying in America: Improving Quality and Honoring Individual Preferences Near the End of Life." Jointly, these texts underscore the deficiencies caused by an already fragmented care delivery system and exacerbated by financial incentives that rely on the profits of acute care settings for treatment of terminal illness.

In a perverse dialectic, medicine with all its technological and clinical advances, has in fact failed the very people it was supposed to help. Thus, Gawande notes, even in cases of terminal disease, the final days of our lives "are given over to treatments that addle our brains and sap our bodies for a sliver's chance of benefit. They are spent in institutions — nursing homes and intensive care units — where regimented, anonymous routines cut us off from all the things that matter." Our reluctance to examine end-of-life care increases the harm inflicted upon patients.

I witnessed this process firsthand when, as the chief medical officer of a small community hospital, I saw patients with terminal disease and advanced age suffer the most invasive treatments in intensive care units. One aging patient with severe metastatic liver cancer underwent surgical procedures, ventilation support, and broad spectrum antibiotic therapy that led to superinfection with hospital-acquired bacteria. None of these measures had a chance of curing his underlying disease or even lessening his pain — they led only to increased suffering. This "do everything you can" process was encouraged by the promises of modern medicine and promoted by the physician,



who led the family to believe that their father was receiving optimal care.

Treatment at All Costs

Gawande's book takes on end-of-life care both for the elderly and for those whose illnesses bring on an earlier mortality. For both, the medicalization of mortality with its "treatment at all costs" mentality may prolong life but subjects patients to suffering that they often would have preferred not to endure. Gawande sees one source of the problem in how physicians are educated and trained, and another source in the current hospital-based model of disease management.

Doctors are trained to fix problems; that is the measure of their competence. They are not trained to work with other health care professionals or seek advice from alternative caregivers or spiritual advisers. Further, when medical "fixing" has gone as far as it can go, doctors want someone else to take the problem away; they do not

want to talk about end-of-life issues. While they may be proficient at giving a patient "treatment options," most doctors are not comfortable with discussing a patient's concerns, anxieties, or fears, often finding it difficult to respond to a patient who just wants comfort in his or her remaining days.

Gawande categorizes doctors from two models, the paternalistic or priestly model (based on the idea that "the doctor knows best"), or the informative model, which describes more of a retail relationship, in which the doctor provides the "facts" and the patient chooses the treatment "product." In reality, neither model provides what a patient really needs. Patients want information, certainly, but they also want guidance in making decisions.

Gawande suggests a third model, the interpretive model, in which the physician helps patients to determine what is best for themselves, based on their particular priorities. "We think our job is to ensure health and survival," Gawande writes, "but really it is . . . to enable well-being. And well-being is about the reasons one wishes to be alive." It follows, then, that medical interventions are justified "only if they serve the larger aims of a person's life."

To back up this point, he discusses a 2008 "Coping with Cancer" report from Harvard Medical School, which showed that patients with cancer who were treated with aggressive interventions (mechanical ventilation, electrical defibrillation, chest compressions, or admission to ICUs) had a substantially worse quality of life than those who had no such interventions. The study showed that patients' top priorities were the avoidance of suffering, relationships with their families, mental awareness, and achieving a sense that their life had been compete. One cannot help but note how similar these priorities are to those of the patriarch Jacob as his end of life approached. But, as Gawande points out, "our system of technological medical care has utterly failed to meet these needs."

The Problem With Hospitals and Nursing Facilities

The modern hospital is the second source of the problem. The hospital as we know it had its real start in 1946, with the Hill-Burton Act, which provided massive government funding for hospital construction. Hospitals were to be the gleaming settings in which physicians carried out their performances as medical heroes. With ever-increasing technological advances, hospitals offered the promise of cures. Skilled nursing facilities and assisted living facilities were a direct offshoot of hospitals — these places absorbed the excess of patients who could no longer be "fixed" or cured. They became essentially custodial units that relieved hospitals of patients whose care could not be medically justified and therefore would not be reimbursed by federal, state, or private payers.

The skilled nursing facilities have their own sad history. By 1970 the construction of skilled nursing facilities exploded due to the increased numbers of elderly people who were not eligible for acute hospital care. To receive Medicare payments, the nursing facilities had to conform to basic health and safety standards, but these standards were lowered so that the facilities only had to prove "substantial compliance" (not full compliance) with them. Thus, Gawande says, the facilities' priorities were to prevent bedsores and infection, maintain patients' weight, and keep patients from falling, rather than to make patients' lives worth living. The truth is, however, that too many nursing facilities fail at even meeting basic safety and quality standards. Increasingly patients from nursing facilities require readmission to acute care hospitals for severe bedsores and overwhelming infections, thus providing hospitals (and doctors) with an ongoing source of reimbursement. It is estimated that about 18 percent of patients discharged to nursing homes are readmitted within thirty days.

Gawande sees sources of hope in a few experimental facilities that have tried to provide a meaningful life for elderly patients, in the field of geriatrics and in the hospice movement.

Although Gawande argues that a change in philosophy in health care is necessary, he does not provide a vision for implementing an alternative. This he leaves for us. Nonetheless, his book delivers an important indictment of our health care system and brings into focus the limitations of the modern "acute care" approach to disease. As long as modern health care views death and terminal illness as medical failures rather than as life's natural conclusion, patients will continue to be subjected to the kinds of prolonged suffering that Gawande illustrates.

Gawande's book is a must-read for a society in need of healing. For health care professionals, in particular, his book is a call to action. We need profound changes in the way we as a society view life and death. These are changes that go beyond the need for universal health care: they require not only increased access to care but also changes in the very nature of that care. To bring this about, many health care providers — including doctors, nurses, case managers, alternative care givers, medical educators, and more — will need to work together to formulate a vision of what meaningful and compassionate care would entail, as well as a strategy for realizing that vision. This is the mandate of the Health Care Task Force of the Network of Spiritual Progressives. Gawande's book should motivate physicians, nurses, alternative health care practitioners, and others who care about transforming health care to join in this effort. ■

(For more information regarding the Network of Spiritual Progressives' Health Care Task Force, email cat@spiritualprogressives.org.)

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The Poetry of a Jewish Humanist

Swimming in the Rain: New and Selected Poems 1980-2015
by Chana Bloch
Autumn House Press, 2015

REVIEW BY PHILIP TERMAN

A CHILD OF IMMIGRANT parents who was raised in an observant Jewish household, poet Chana Bloch has absorbed the details of her ethnic and linguistic heritage; this includes what she has called "the habit of questioning," which is "not only sanctioned by Jewish tradition, it's an honored part of it." As a poet, biblical scholar, and translator of ancient and modern Hebrew poetry, she has followed her teacher Robert Lowell's advice to "learn to write from [her] own translations."

Swimming in the Rain: New and Selected Poems demonstrates that Bloch has converted that important lesson into a unique poetic voice that modulates from the homespun to the literary and shifts from wit and humor to a pull-no-punches toughness. Spare and musical, intimate while open to history, intelligent and emotionally rich in the details of divisions and connections, Bloch's poetry negotiates the complexities of her identity as a first-generation Jew, a woman, a child, a parent, a wife, a lover, and a citizen.

A self-proclaimed "Jewish humanist," Bloch quarrels with tradition by asking why God has to make divisions. Some of the divisions she writes about include those between husband and wife, parents and children, illness and health, historical memory and momentary joy, and the contradictions within Judaism itself. Bloch critiques these divisions and, when she finds them, offers alternatives that are more inclusive and more humanistic. The advantage of a career-spanning collection is that it shows how these themes echo and expand consistently within her work. In "Furniture," from her first collection, *The Secrets of the Tribe* (1980), the speaker's mother claims that "God will punish" her if she writes on Shabbos. The speaker responds: "When I wrote, I pulled down the shade." A later poem, "The Dark of Day," from *Blood Honey* (2009), is more explicit:

> The rabbis taught us the mathematics of dividing
> this from that. They certified
> the micro-moment when day tips over
> into night: *When the third star presents itself in the sky.*
> They drew a line through that eye of light, a longitude.
> You've got to navigate the evening blessing
> with precision, not one star too soon.

Bloch immediately follows with the alternative perspective — that nature can't be so evenly divided: "But night comes on slowly. / It takes all day." The poem then takes a dramatic turn, shifting to the poet's friend's father, who was "killed / in a car crash"; though her friend "hadn't seen him in years," she nevertheless "tore out a stain" of blood she had found on his "open notebook . . . and took it into her mouth." Bloch's initial critique of rabbinic law opens to a devastating insight into the maze of emotions that we cannot navigate "with precision." This powerful critique becomes self-referential in the title poem, "Swimming in the Rain," in which the speaker, instead of "pulling down the shade," can unabashedly declare: "Thank God / I've got the good sense at last // not to come in out of the rain," as it "falls . . . onto the face of the deep as it did / on the first day // before the dividing began." The poet is wise enough to know that "Half the stories / [she] used to believe are false." Though the connection — where the rain falls into the ocean — is momentary, Bloch's wry phrasing expresses a hard-earned maturation of her singular and self-assured voice.

Though Bloch no longer lives in the religiously observant world embodied by her parents and ancestry, she captures it with affection and poignancy. "Exile" (from *Secrets of the Tribe*) and "Hester Street, 1898," (a new poem from *Swimming in the Rain*), convey an innocence lost. In the older piece, it's "the ten lost tribes," who, she claims, by becoming modern Jews, have lost their chosen-ness. In the new poem, the loss is of a different kind: the immigrant's hopeful dream of the future, which "they believed . . . they taught diligently / onto their children, / who taught it to me." The speaker reflects to her sons that she "can't give [them] that." Loss of chosen-ness, loss of immigrant hope: Bloch skillfully preserves the vitality of that world and its inhabitants, tenderly capturing them in all their complexities and contradictions. In "The Converts," the poet's irony is in full force as she observes the converted Jews' obsessive devotion at a Yom Kippur service, while the "normal" Jews dream of escaping: "If they go on loving that way, we'll be here all night." The poet asks: "did they think / we were happier?" Bloch is wise enough to know that Jews don't have "the lost words / to open God's mouth" any more than anyone else does, and she's smart in the tartness of voice that says so.

On the subject of happiness, Bloch has much to say, perhaps because, given the realistic territory within which her poetry operates, "happiness" isn't quite so simple as it seems. Particularly admirable is her voice — honest and intimate in its formal familiarity. In "Primer," Bloch questions, with her

typically tragicomic wit, the nostalgia of the "happy childhood," asking "If we were so happy, / why weren't we happy?" When Bloch revisits the subject of happiness as reflected in her parents' long marriage, she presents the subtleties and complexities by contrasting the "noisy bedsprings" with the "clashing-and-carping, nagging-and-clamoring." In this poem, set "in the cancer ward," she brings us inside her parents' marriage with an irresistible joke:

> Out in the corridor she outdid his
> story:
> "Daddy wanted to make love.
> I told him. But honey, your back!"
> You know what your father answered?
> *There's nothing wrong with my front*."

The joke resonates in the last stanza, as the speaker watches her mother shave her father "in the hospital bed . . . stroking his cheek with the razor." Here Bloch conveys the mishmash — arguments and jokes, delicacy and confusion — that makes up a marriage.

In Bloch's fourth collection, *Blood Honey,* some of the strongest poems articulate the tension between the old and new world. As in all her work, she writes against sentimentality and nostalgia, depicting a world in which her uncle "killed a man and was proud of it." Here, she provides a succinct, pungent description of the old country:

> That's the old country for you:
> they ate with their hands, went hungry
> to bed,
> slept in their stink. When pain
> knocked,
> they opened the door.

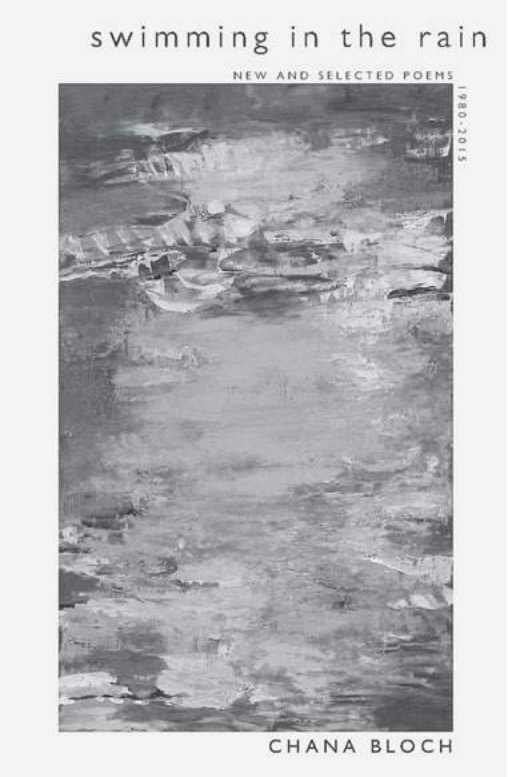
"The past keeps changing" becomes a central theme throughout Bloch's oeuvre, as we follow the permutations of how the speaker attends to that past. Like an unknown friend, we learn the multifaceted details about Bloch's first marriage and painful divorce, her happy second marriage, the birth and development of her children, and her responses to, among other concerns, art, the environment, the Holocaust, friendships, love and sexuality, history, illness, and aging. Bloch's *Swimming in the Rain: New and Selected Poems* is an epic compendium of one Jewish American woman's poetic journey that reaches back to the Bible and into the present moment. It offers a deep appreciation of the present as an antidote to the divisions that often accost us, as a joy within our reach, as suggested in the poem, "Happiness Research":

> "Even in the slums of Calcutta
> people on the street describe
> themselves
> as reasonably happy." Why not
> be reasonable? why not in Berkeley?
> why not
> right now, sweetheart, while the rain
> is stroking the roof?

In Bloch's poems we hear echoes of Yehuda Amichai's brilliant use of metaphor and Dahlia Ravikovitch's mixture of the personal and political. We also hear echoes of Emily Dickinson's clean, spare intensity, Elizabeth Bishop's formalized wit, and Sylvia Plath's controlled music. Though not a formalist, Bloch writes poetry that is formally shaped, offering a balance of story and song, keeping to language and truth in the way she describes her poet friend Mark O'Brien, who was paralyzed with polio and required an iron lung. As Bloch observes, O'Brien composed his poems:

> . . . letter by letter
> on a propped keyboard, the
> mouth-stick
> wobbling between his teeth.
> That kind of speed keeps a poet
> accountable.
> He won't ever say "The grass is very
> green"
> when it's only green.

Likewise, Bloch's poems are consistent in their concision, not often wavering from four to six self-contained stanzas of shortish lines. Much of the pleasure of reading her is coming across the



epigrammatic lines that often surprise us, epiphany-like, at the poem's end. "The Converts" provides a good example: "and I covet / what they think we've got." In "Brothers," the speaker reads a story to her two young children about the legendary witch, Baba Yaga, scaring them silly and chasing them around the house, threatening to eat them. Instead of the playful frenzy she expects, one of the boys cries in a "stricken voice" to her to "Eat him! / Eat my brother."

Though Bloch is consistent in her use of form, there are variations and expansions in both theme and style from book to book; the poems in the new section offer new formal arrangements ("The Revised Version" and "Dispatches From the Tourist Bureau") and a wider reach of subjects, especially those involving history ("The Hall of Human Origins," "Hester Street, 1898," "Summer in the City, 1947," and "July in the Bronx, 1971"). Alongside her contemporaries Alicia Ostriker and Marge Piercy, Chana Bloch continues to provide a forceful

poetic critique of traditional Jewish identity and the limitations of divisions in a tone that registers the full range of experience. Ambitious in scope, wide-ranging in subject, and attentive to the fault lines of history and the human heart, *Swimming in the Rain* is an essential contribution to American poetry. ■

PHILIP TERMAN'S recent book is *Our Portion: New and Selected Poems*. His poems have appeared in *Poetry*, *The Kenyon Review*, *The Georgia Review*, and *The Sun Magazine*. He teaches at Clarion University and is codirector of the Chautauqua Writers Festival.

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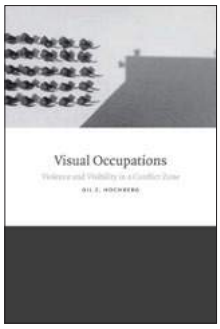

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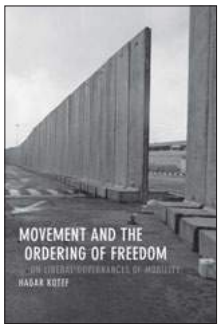

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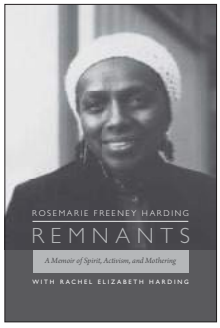

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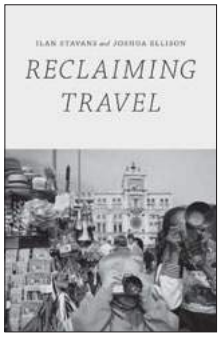

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Babel

They used to conspire in a brother tongue
no one else could parse.
They were its sole native speakers,
these sons of mine
who grew up talking their way to the table.

They come back as men to the keep
of my kitchen, the habit of food and talk,
leaving their rented rooms
half a life away.

Who are these children-in-disguise
with their beards and glasses,
smoking and joking, each in his own tongue,
about who knows what?

Don't get twin beds, I begged my mother, afraid
of the slightest space
between him and her—a nightstand
with its drawers and knobs,
foursquare and stolid as a gravestone,
the two of them
buried on either side.

These sons at my table: the slightest silence
and I rush to translate.
Let them speak one language again
the way they used to.
This is still my house.
When I die, they'll divide it.

—Chana Bloch

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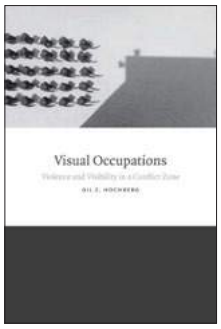

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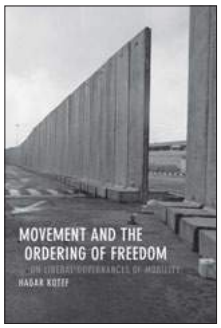

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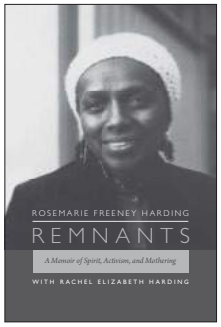

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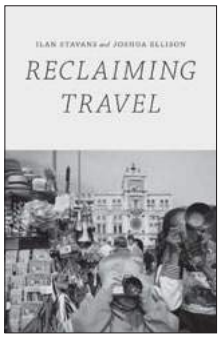

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Between earth and Heaven?
I've never been anything but alone.

But your face warms my world.
Everything that blooms, blooms from you.

When you look at me,
My heart sweetens.

Day and night, beneath your smile,
I lie, preparing myself,

Conjuring you up and letting you go.
It's the only game I play.

"Siehst du mich," by Else Lasker-Schüler
Translated from the German by Jay Hopler

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