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FALL 2015

THE PSYCHE IN PSYCHEDELIC

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What's Next for Israel/Palestine?

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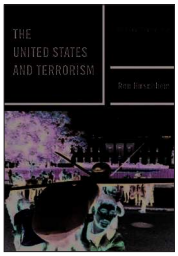
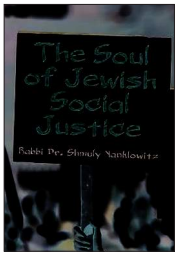


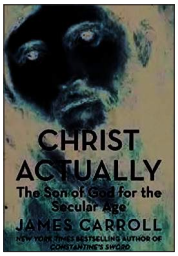
The United States and Terrorism: An Ironic Perspective
Ron Hirschbein
Rowman and Littlefield, 2015

This is a deeply insightful analysis of how self-destructive and dangerous to all humanity U.S. responses to and engagements with terrorism have been. For many decades, Ron Hirschbein has been an intellectual architect of Concerned Philosophers for Peace. He asserts that the U.S. campaign against terrorism has helped produce the very violent world it was supposed to prevent. Terrorism is most widely understood as the intended infliction of violence upon noncombatants or civilians, so it is ironic that most of the Western media fail to notice that the United States and its allies have been engaged in terrorism since World War II, despite sanctimoniously condemning the terrorist actions of others. Hirschbein gives us an alternative history of the past seventy years. He unveils systematic hypocrisy in the self-understanding and self-representation of Americans who cheer on their government's aggressions but are shocked at the violence of others, even as U.S. terrorism has predictably remained a recruiting tool for jihadists. Hirschbein's book is indispensible for anyone trying to build a saner world. He brings wisdom, analytic clarity, and humor to this important study.

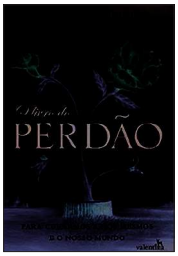


The Soul of Jewish Social Justice
Shmuly Yanklowitz
Urim Publications, 2014

Orthodox Rabbi Yanklowitz makes a powerful case for the centrality of social justice in Judaism and challenges Jews to become faith-based activists in the work of *tikkun olam*, here conceived not as doing a few acts of charity but as challenging the selfishness and materialism of contemporary society. "I feel compelled to work for justice from within Orthodoxy," he writes. "In a community that is oftentimes so dedicated to text study and yet also sadly passive in social systemic change beyond the parochial, it is my conviction that our sense of duty for laws of ritual must apply with equal force to laws and ethics of *kavod ha-briot* (honoring all people), *tzelem Elokim* (serving with the consciousness that all people are created in the image of God), and *v'ahavta l're'echa kamocha* (loving another like oneself)." Yanklowitz goes on to address many of the most significant social issues of our time, including education, health, ethical consumption, the health risks of eating meat, animal welfare, gun control, torture, prisons, immigration, gambling, sexual abuse, business ethics, discrimination against Muslims, the demonization of sharia law, overpopulation, and the failure of our society to use its resources to eliminate global hunger and poverty. In each area, Yanklowitz shows that "the purpose of the Torah and the Jewish tradition is to inspire leadership for the creation of a more just and holy world." Give Yanklowitz's book as a gift to every rabbi you know, but also to every clergyperson and religious activist—this enlightening and powerful book is certain to make a huge impact on anyone who reads it. And it will give secularists and militant atheists a new respect for the powerful ethical vision that Judaism can sustain when it's not being appropriated for nationalist or fear-mongering purposes.



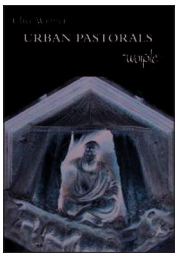
Christ Actually: The Son of God for the Secular Age
James Carroll
Viking, 2014



The Book of Forgiving: The Fourfold Path for Healing Ourselves and Our World
Desmond Tutu and Mpho Tutu
HarperOne, 2014

James Carroll's *Constantine's Sword* unveiled to many Christians the sordid way that Christian institutions transformed Jesus's message of liberation into a doctrine to support imperial domination and the persecution of Jews. In this newer book, Carroll attempts to reclaim the prophetic voice of Jesus that is rooted in Jewish messianism: "Recovering that sense of Christian Jewishness, like recovering the Jewishness of Jesus, defines the essential work that Christians must do in a post-Auschwitz world." Throughout this powerful and insightful presentation of the ways a Christian can be "faithful to the classical tradition of Christian faith while simultaneously limiting assertion about (Jesus) to a modern—or postmodern—mind," Carroll reads Christian texts from a contemporary perspective, in light of the distortions that led to the destructive misuse of these texts in the past.

Contemporary Christians can take special pride in the work of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the outspoken Christian activist whose challenge to apartheid won him the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize. Tutu became the chair of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which sought to lead his country beyond the pain and anger that had festered under racist oppression. This beautiful and insightful book should be part of the school curriculum in every country of the world. The authors preach forgiveness and offer practical instruction for getting to the place within oneself where one can genuinely forgive those who have caused unreasonable and systematic harm. His work with Mpho Tutu lays out "a fourfold path for healing ourselves and our world" that is at once easily accessible and urgently needed.



Urban Pastorals
Clive Wilmer
Worple Press, 2014

In this short, rich book of prose poems, Clive Wilmer renews the pastoral tradition by eschewing romantic idealizations and coming into contact with the living image of an Eden corrupted by natural processes. Those processes, which connect us to the mystery of life and spirit, include both the workings of memory and the mechanisms of civilization. Wilmer's memories are of a midcentury South London childhood "injured by enemy bombs"; of wooded commons where trees were "the very image of freedom in community"; of discoveries of Shakespeare's power and Louis Armstrong's musical "good place, where the leopard lies down with the kid"; and of art as "the expression of man's pleasure in labour." These memories form a groundwork for his warmly drawn and enigmatic human portraits, which enliven a religious vision that is convincing for its glowing clarity and sense of scale. Also recommended: Wilmer's *New and Collected Poems* (Carcanet, 2012).

EXTENT AND NATURE OF CIRCULATION

Average number of copies of each issue published during the preceding twelve months; (A) total number of copies printed, 5734; (B.I) paid/requested mail subscriptions, 3155; (B.3) sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors, and counter sales, 319; (C) total paid/requested circulation, 3474; (D.I) samples, complimentary, and other nonrequested copies, 80; (D.4) nonrequested copies distributed outside the mail,II; (E) total nonrequested distribution (sum of D.I & D.4), 91; (F) total distribution (sum of C & E), 3565; (G) copies not distributed (office use, leftover, unaccounted, spoiled after printing, returns from news agents), 2170; (H) total (sum of F & G), 5734.

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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.

STOP BLAMING ISRAEL

Michael Lerner's article on "What's Next for Israel/Palestine" in this Fall 2015 issue of *Tikkun* ignores the simple fact that it takes two to tango. Unfortunately, the two dancers in this case (Abbas and Netanyahu) are equally uninterested in actually arriving at a two-state solution. To place all the blame for this tragedy at the feet of the Israeli government is both immoral and counterproductive. Michael Lerner and those who agree with him are not part of the solution but part of the problem. The simple reason for the nonexistence of a Palestinian state is that the Palestinian national movement appears to be uninterested in having a state.

The various organs of the pro-Palestinian movement are busy proving that they are not interested in the welfare of Palestinians as much as they are interested in destroying Israel—otherwise, there would be marches, demonstrations, sit-ins, and the like protesting the murder of Palestinians in the Yarmouk refugee camp. Apparently, Arabs are allowed to kill Arabs without arousing the ire of anyone in the "progressive" camp.

—Menachem Kellner, *Haifa, Israel*

THE ISRAELI ELECTIONS

My friends and I have often lamented that we in the United States don't have a parliamentary government, which on paper seems more democratic. Viewing the recent Israeli election from this perspective brings a creeping fear that the Rush Limbaugh ditto-heads would be part of a "moderate" faction in any U.S. parliament as the real farther-out crazies of our right would create small bands of ideological tribes bent on forming power cults demanding death to abortionists, death to Iran, death to . . . well, you get the picture. The lesser of two evils? Well, maybe the lesser of many evils is the modern conundrum. Good luck, Israel! I'd pray for you if I were religious.

—John Balawejder, *Santa Cruz, CA*

INSIGHTS FROM KABBALAH

I am a new subscriber to *Tikkun* magazine. I must say that since I received my first issue in Spring 2015, my heart has been leaping with joy. The space that *Tikkun* is holding for the world is one of many pillars that support the totality of all life. But while your articles often discuss the consciousness of love and connectedness that we must attain in order to live fully as one, they rarely mention how we are to develop this consciousness. I suggest that you consider the writing of Rabbi Michael Laitman, who explains that Kabbalah teaches us that we are destroying ourselves and others because we have not learned to master the balance of receiving and giving, or bestowal. He argues that we must learn to receive in a way that supports all of life. We must receive for the sake of *one*; only in doing so in this manner do we give. We struggle as a society because we have been conditioned to receive only for the sake of self. The only way to wake up from the coma of being overly concerned with oneself is to develop a second pair of senses to feel and know complete connection with others.

—Michael Tucker, *Tucson, AZ*

DYING WITH DIGNITY

I have a *yahrtzeit* candle lit today in honor of my husband, Alan Alberts. He died two years ago today, when he decided to voluntarily stop eating and drinking (VSED) so that he would not have to live into the late stages of Alzheimer's disease. He was in the middle stages of Alzheimer's when he did this, and he was still mentally competent. VSED is a legal choice. The U.S. Supreme Court has asserted that anyone has the right to refuse food and water. Alan had a kind and competent doctor and twenty-four-hour caregivers to support him through this process. It took him nine-and-a-half days to die. We learned about VSED from a volunteer chaplain for Compassion and Choices of Washington. It took months for Alan to decide that this was the most compassionate thing he could do for himself. He identified a marker so that he would know when it was time to start the VSED process. He had to VSED while mentally competent so that he would remember what he was doing. Two weeks before he started this process, he told me: "I'm not afraid of dying. I've lived a good life. But I want everyone to know about VSED."

Until there is a cure for Alzheimer's, please publish this letter so others know that it is a legal choice to stop eating and drinking rather than live into the late stages of Alzheimer's disease. My husband had a good life and a peaceful death. He died one month shy of seventy-seven years. My support of my husband through his process of dying peacefully and consciously was my biggest act of love.

I gave a TEDx talk about the five choices my husband made leading up to his decision to VSED. Google "Phyllis Shacter Not Here By Choice" to view it.

—Phyllis Shacter, *Bellingham, WA*

EDITOR MICHAEL LERNER RESPONDS:

Tikkun's former publishers, Trish and George Vradenburg, are now leading an organization called USAgainstAlzheimer's. Part of their

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focus is to spread awareness and information about the disease and the issues facing those with Alzheimer's and their caregivers. Another part of their focus is to ask all of us to demand that anyone who is running for Congress, seeking a presidential nomination, or running for president absolutely commit to dramatically escalating the amount of research money available to pursue paths for prevention and treatment of this horrible disease. Please join this effort. See usagainstalzheimers.org.

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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.

Tikkun

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Left-Wing Follies

The Self-Defeating Ideas That Hold Activists Back

In the fifty-one years that I've been involved in social change activism, I've been impressed with the ethical seriousness, creativity, courage, and energy that so many people bring to their engagement in social change activities.

And yet, at the same time, I've also been discouraged by some of the ideas that commonly emerge in activist movements—ideas that often severely limit the impact that they could have.

There really are two largely separate lefts in the United States. First there is the left of the magazines and books and universities. Many of the authors and academics who compose that group have developed sophisticated critiques of American society, but Western capitalism has found many ways to ensure that these critiques never reach the vast majority of Americans. As a result, the critical perspectives on American society generated within this arena only reach a small, elite group of readers and people who participate in the left culture surrounding a handful of major universities.

Second there is the left constituted by the millions of activists engaged in social change activities. Although some of these activists also read the discussions of the academic or intellectual left, most do not. They are the people who canvas for liberal and progressive candidates in the Democratic Party or the Green Party, engage in labor organizing, participate in mass demonstrations for peace, engage in local campaigns to stop fracking, challenge police violence, and rally for a higher minimum wage. They are the people who participate in the Occupy Wall Street movement, the Black Lives Matter movement, the immigration rights movement, human rights campaigns, and other struggles to oppose sexism, racism, homophobia, and xenophobia.

In many ways these on-the-ground campaigns, projects, and movements are the pulsing heart of the left: they are the messy and persistent efforts to effect change in practice. But they are often undermined by their resistance to engaging with the intellectual discussions taking part in the other sector of the left. A mistrust of intellectual discussion and an embrace of the imperative to "lead with your heart, not your head" can end up diminishing the effectiveness of some of these movements.

Anti-Intellectualism on the Left

Anti-intellectualism has deep roots in American culture. The dumbing-down of political discourse in our country is not primarily the fault of the left but of our dominant culture. The oversimplification of political discourse serves the interests of the powerful in an obvious way: the less people explore political ideas that might lead them to challenge the status quo, the easier it is to get them to accept the existing structures of economic, political, and social domination. And this dilution has been greatly facilitated first by the rise of television, starting in the 1950s, and more recently by the rise of the internet and mobile technologies, which generate a culture of texting and tweeting that eschews nuance and embraces short takes and simplistic slogans.

The dumbing-down of political discourse is massively reinforced by the anti-intellectualism that young people take away from our schools, colleges, and universities. Our education system tends to feed us a deeply embedded worldview of individualism, materialism, and selfishness that serves the status quo. Our schools teach us that wars, inequality, domination of the many by the few, competition, and unrestrained self-interest are inevitable realities. Gradually we learn that

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any ideas that challenge the reigning worldview of competition and militarism are utopian illusions that we must abandon in order to be considered sophisticated and intellectually respectable.

Much, though not all, of American education provides students with a narrow set of skills or techniques to help them fit in and find jobs, while guiding them away from thinking creatively outside the boxes that will lead to gainful employment. It does not encourage them to develop the capacity to look critically at what is and to imagine what could be. Moreover, it delivers an experience of intellectual life that is mostly divorced from ethical, spiritual, or psychological understanding.

Students often intuitively know something is wrong with their education. Even when they feel they are being offered high-caliber intellectual training, they know in their bones that the assumptions undergirding their schools' curricular and pedagogical priorities are deeply misguided. It's useful to teach basic arithmetic and algebra to everyone, but why should trigonometry or calculus get higher priority than courses on organizing people for democratic participation, building an economy based on equality, or growing food in accordance with the principles of permaculture? Why should we be prioritizing funding for science classes above all else unless they are taught in a way that encourages students to develop a sense of awe and wonder at the miracles that surround us, rather than in a way that deadens students' enthusiasm and brews resentment about having to memorize facts, theorems, and supposed laws of nature?

I'm all for having electives in physics and chemistry, along with electives in music and art history, but when students experience education as largely dominated by an imperative to memorize facts, they quickly develop a skeptical view of learning itself. For this reason, history classes can have powerful effects if they demonstrate how the past illuminates the present or how people can change things in their world, but history is intellectually stultifying when framed as an abstract accumulation of facts.

Colleges should require students to learn generosity, empathy, compassion, nonviolent behavior and communication, and the capacity to see other human beings as embodiments of the sacred. Why not require advanced empathy rather than advanced chemistry? What if every fourth-grade student were assigned a first-grade student to mentor, and mentoring were part of every grade level until high school graduation? We could reward empathy and nurturance by giving the best mentors priority in college admissions and scholarships.

Currently, many schools produce anti-intellectual graduates by neglecting to show students how learning can connect with their own yearning for meaning and purpose in their lives. Since this disconnect often starts in elementary school, many teens have already developed such antipathy for learning that by the time they get to high school they find it hard to concentrate on schoolwork or creatively engage with the material being presented to them. Those who remain capable of functioning at a college level are all too often those who have been scared into believing that their ability to survive in this world is dependent on mastering materials that they care little about personally but that they feel will help them in their search for employment. So increasingly they take courses in economics, business, and various practical technologies so that they will have skills sought by potential employers or professional schools. Their interest in ideas has been narrowed to what is useful for their material success.

Activists often put each other down for getting "too into their heads"—unconsciously affirming American anti-intellectualism, which is crippling to the left.

Challenging Common Sense

Given the general alienation from intellectual life that pervades our society, it's no surprise that when many people enter social change movements, they bring with them a derisive attitude toward social theory and the sometimes academic-sounding language of critical self-reflection.

For example, when asked to describe how the current plans of a given movement are connected to its stated goals, to explore why they believe that their strategy will work, to reflect on why past efforts have succeeded or failed, or to define what will count as success or failure, a significant number of activists respond by shouting down or ridiculing the person asking the question. I have heard endless stories of activists denouncing each other for being "too much in their heads," as though ideas were necessarily counterposed to feelings in a zero-sum game. In my psychotherapy practice and while counseling people in my own synagogue, I have often heard clients say this dynamic is a major factor preventing them from taking part in social movements.

This is more of a problem for the left than for the right because the right doesn't need to engage in creative and self-reflective discussions about how to create new definitions of success or failure. Rather, the right simply builds upon ideas that have been commonly accepted in our culture for the past several hundred years: time is money; success means having more money, power, fame, or sexual conquests; institutions, policies, and actions should be lauded as efficient, rational,

and productive to the extent that they generate more money and power (what we call "the old bottom line"); and don't hold on to childish fantasies—be realistic and accept the world as it is, rather than dream about how the world could be repaired or transformed. Given that these ideas are already in our minds, it doesn't take much more than a few words for right-wing activists to elicit them and bring them to mind as common sense.

If, however, you want to question these ideas or present fundamentally different ones, you may have to spend a lot of time helping people move into a new frame of reference. It takes hard work to convince others that getting the best deal on imported clothes, furniture, appliances, or other items at Costco and Target and Wal-Mart is directly tied to the impoverishment of people in the developing world. It takes hard work to convince others that voting for the "lesser evil" in an election guarantees that we will never get candidates who are willing to change oppressive policies and challenge the top 1 percent of wealthy people in the country. And it takes hard work to draw others into a serious conversation about how to channel the outpouring of righteous indignation expressed at demonstrations into a long-term strategy to win the political power necessary to make lasting changes. That conversation can't be had through tweets or through three-minute talks at a mass rally.

"What's missing in our social change movements is a real link between the head and the heart.

Acting With Our Heads and Hearts

As a therapist and as a rabbi I've often encouraged people to get more deeply in touch with their feelings. But I've also learned that our feelings are not a direct path to becoming the most holy, spiritual, or ethical beings that we want to be. Our feelings, like our ideas, are often shaped by our families of origin or our unconscious rebellion against them. Our feelings are shaped by the experiences we have growing up in a competitive, patriarchal, materialistic, and power-oriented society. They are also shaped by the mass media and our daily experiences in the world of work. As a result, when we are asked to speak from the heart, we are not always able to do so, because when we try to access our hearts, we instead access a kind of emotional scar tissue: a knobby mass of emotions composed of what we have been rewarded for thinking or feeling. To rediscover the deepest truths of our hearts, we must undo much of this conditioning. To do so often requires the help of therapists, spiritual communities, and intelligent social change activists.

What's missing in our social change movements is a real link between the head and the heart. We need to publicly analyze not just the economic system but also our alienation from ourselves and others and how this alienation reproduces an oppressive social reality. A successful transformative movement will help us all understand that "human nature" can be changed and that we can all get past the stuck places that are preventing us from agitating for change and treating one another with empathy.

Exercise, meditation, spiritual practices, and psychotherapy can all be very helpful, but we also need to develop other practices to strengthen our capacity to resist capitulation to a world of oppression and environmental destruction. We have to learn to discern between messages from our hearts that are hurtful and messages that are revolutionary. Our ethical and spiritual health requires outrage at injustice—but it also requires us to feel connected to the well-being of everyone else on the planet. To resist capitulation to the status quo, we need to develop both empathy and intellectual skills so that we can analyze and reject the multiple ways that movies, novels, television shows, newspapers, and the assumptions that govern our workplaces and social institutions all make us feel alone and unable to imagine a different kind of world. Anti-intellectualism is one factor that prevents many of us from joining with others regularly to form a reading group to discuss methods for resisting the worldview of the status quo. So please challenge anti-intellectualism whenever you hear it being articulated.

When we make progress in letting go of all the stale ideas that were inculcated into us, we can get closer to the pure innocence and goodness that is the birthright of every human being on this planet. Our hearts and our heads can work together to heal the world. But to distinguish between the goodness within us and the destructive ideas within us that were created by violent external forces is a process that takes hard work, support from others, and the active use of intellect. A movement that can't think critically has little chance of unweaving the massive distortions and evils of the contemporary world. ■

Create a Monthly Reading Group

Tikkun articles are exciting and provocative. But it's hard to squeeze every drop from them without having the opportunity to discuss them with others who share your desire to heal and transform this world. That's why we want to invite you to start a monthly study group. Invite friends, co-workers, professionals you know, or people from your civic, political, or religious organizations. For information on the forms of support available to readers who want to create such a group, contact leila@tikkun.org.

Dear Friends of *Tikkun* and the Network of Spiritual Progressives,

I APOLOGIZE FOR THE DRAWING that accompanies my editorial in the Summer 2015 issue of *Tikkun*, "War With Iran: The Disastrous Aim of Israel and the Republicans," in which I critique Netanyahu and his allies in Israel and in the American Jewish community, who are opposing the nuclear deal with Iran. The drawing depicts U.S. and Iranian diplomats negotiating at a table. Under the platform on which the negotiators sit, a figure representing Congress is sawing away and will likely soon succeed in defeating the attempt to find a peaceful way to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons. All fine and appropriate. But then in the hands of that figure representing Congress is a sack of money with a Jewish star on it. I can't remember seeing that when I was shown a much smaller version of this drawing and approved it, but when I saw it next to my editorial I was shocked and deeply upset.

The implication of that drawing is that somehow it is Jewish money that is bribing Congress to oppose the deal: a little figure on the side looking like a duck says, "The best Congress that money can buy," which in the context of the money bag with a Jewish star seems to indicate that Jewish money is behind the whole problem. To me, this is reviving an ancient and distorted anti-Semitic trope that I detest: that Jews have all the money and that they use it for nefarious purposes.

In this very same issue of *Tikkun*, placed in one of the most highly visible places (inside the front cover), I wrote a statement titled, "Anti-Semitism is Always Wrong." There, I explain why criticism of Israeli policies and the policies of right-wing American Jews is appropriate, but it is inappropriate to blame the entire Jewish people for these ethical errors, and doing so is racist and unacceptable. So imagine my dismay when I saw this drawing — for me it evokes Nazi propaganda against Jews.

The overwhelming political and financial support for most electoral candidates who give blind support to Israel's West Bank settlements or militarist policies comes from the Christian Zionists and other right-wing Christians, not from Jews. There are an estimated 30 million Christian Zionists, and they play an important role in shaping the dynamics of the Republican Party and the Christian Right. It is these Christian forces that help elect a right-wing-dominated Congress, not Jewish voters who mostly vote for candidates that support liberal measures to help the poor, oppose racism, and fight for human rights and civil liberties (and who voted overwhelmingly for Democrats in the 2014 elections — if other groups voted like Jews we'd have an overwhelmingly liberal Democratic Congress). Moreover, several Jewish organizations and groups of rabbis supported the nuclear deal with Iran. AIPAC and sections of the leadership of the organized Jewish community and Christian Zionist groups and non-Jewish hawks must together share the blame for unethical U.S.-Israeli policies in Palestine and for their campaign to reject the nuclear deal — not the Jewish people as a whole.

We at *Tikkun* raised money and bought a full-page ad in the *New York Times* in which we proudly spoke on behalf of many American Jews and our non-Jewish allies in saying "No, Mr. Netanyahu, you do not speak for American Jews — and no, we don't support the path you suggest which would lead to a war with Iran." *Tikkun* and the NSP, our educational and consciousness-raising arm, are the voice of progressive Jews and progressive Christians, Buddhists, Muslims, Hindus, and secular humanists who seek "the Caring Society — Caring for Each Other, Caring for the Earth."

With your support, we will continue to advocate for a world based on generosity, environmental sanity, love, kindness, empathy, peace, economic justice, and awe and wonder at the grandeur of the universe.

Rabbi Michael Lerner
Editor of *Tikkun* magazine

P.S. — Please feel invited to send me a "Letter to the Editor" either critiquing or praising articles in the magazine or on our website www.tikkun.org. Send to: RabbiLerner.tikkun@gmail.com (If we publish your letters, we may edit them for length). ■

The Audience of the Future

Building the Religious Counterculture

BY ANA LEVY-LYONS

Early in the evening on February 10, the newsfeed alerts on everybody's phones suddenly began beeping and chiming with a breaking story: Jon Stewart was leaving *The Daily Show*. I happened to be within watching range of a TV at the time, so I turned it on and it seemed like every station was announcing the news. Jon Stewart, Jon Stewart, Jon Stewart. They were running clips from the early days of the show; pundits were pontificating. It was a whole thing. And then it came time for *The Daily Show* itself . . . the one where he was going to make this announcement. Or, rather, the one where he had already made this announcement to the live studio audience several hours earlier.

That live studio audience had spread the news after the taping, the networks had picked it up, and by the time the show actually aired, the entire TV-watching public already knew. Now Jon Stewart, being the media-savvy fellow that he is, had guessed in advance that this would happen. And so when *The Daily Show* began that day, he looked into the camera and said to the TV audience, "You probably know things these people [in the studio] don't know yet, which is a twist on things but—we'll get there."

Maybe if I were a regular TV watcher I wouldn't have found this as completely mind blowing as I did. But Jon Stewart was speaking to an *audience of the future*—one that didn't exist yet—one that would know something and be affected by something that, at the moment he said those words in the present tense, affected no one. At that moment, there was no TV audience that already knew "some stuff that these folks here in the studio" didn't. But he knew that they would know and so he was addressing them in their future state. And he said, "We'll get to it. We'll get there."

When you think about it, that's really how time and life work. We have the live studio audience right here, right now—you and me and the people we know and love and don't love. And then we have the much, much larger TV audience of the future: our grandchildren, our great-great-great-grandchildren, our farms and cities in the year 2200, the entirety of the human and natural worlds of the future that will all be affected by what happens and how we live our lives here and now. Our lives will make sense to them only in the context of things they know but which we can't possibly fathom. Truly, we are speaking and acting in the present tense but being watched and heard by the audience of the future.

Getting Past the Culture of "Now"

The culture of our secular society is oriented primarily around the live studio audience. We are a "now"-focused people. Our attention spans are short and, research indicates, growing shorter than that of a goldfish. Politicians focus their work on the next election; corporate executives make decisions based on predicted quarterly or yearly earnings. Our economic policies are intended to grow the economy and create jobs *now*, regardless of the painful environmental or long-term social impacts they may cause. We seek immediate gratification in food and entertainment, despite health risks to others and ourselves. And tragically, in both our interpersonal and our global relations, we all too often resort to violence to force swift results rather than doing the slow, painstaking work of building relationships for a lasting peace. The "now" culture sacrifices the future for the present, as if the future were an expendable resource placed on the earth to serve us, the live studio audience.

By contrast, the ethic of the religious counterculture calls the live studio audience to orient our present-tense words and deeds toward the TV audience of the future. We are not here to preen in the spotlight, but to serve the universe that grants us our moment in it. From a religious point of view, we know that what we do here and now matters profoundly to times and places and people and purposes far beyond us. Our actions have spiritual significance that transcends any given moment. We are reminded of this regularly through prayer practices, dietary laws, ethical injunctions, and the telling of our sacred stories. Through this spiritual lens, we see that we cannot avoid our impact. We change the world just by breathing. Our cells create electricity. Our waste winds up in distant oceans. Everything we do ripples outward and affects everything and everyone else, for better and for worse. And that's when we're not even trying. It's electrifying to think of how much we change the world when we actually get together and try to do something.

ANA LEVY-LYONS is senior minister at First Unitarian Congregational Society in Brooklyn, New York. She is writing a book on the Ten Commandments as a radical spiritual and political vision. Visit facebook.com/Ana.LevyLyons.author. Twitter: @Ana_LevyLyons. Email: analevylyons@hotmail.com.

The show that is the human story has been airing for about 200,000 years now. Today we live in a time and a country where women can vote, Africans are not enslaved (at least not literally), same-sex couples can legally marry in many states, and the hole in the ozone layer is shrinking, all because of the future-oriented work of the people in the live studio who came before us. This is our heritage as a progressive movement. We are the future they were looking into the camera and addressing back then. We are the future that they were building toward and working for. And now it's our turn. The actors change but the show goes on. It's up to us to carry that heritage forward. It's up to us to look into the camera and make a promise to the audience of the future—the promise that we will work together and give of ourselves, not only to make our own lives richer but also to make their world—the future world—a healthy, just, and joyful one. In the vision of the religious counterculture, it is this promise that sanctifies our lives.

We are making a promise to a fourth-grade boy in Sydney in the year 2200 whose history textbook will read:

> In the early part of the twenty-first century our planet was on the verge of an ecological holocaust. The decadent consumer culture of the day was causing a dramatic increase in global temperatures, threatening all life on the planet, and politicians were refusing to take meaningful action. The impasse was finally broken by an interfaith alliance of religious groups as wide ranging as the Jewish Renewal movement and the Vatican. This alliance, through countercultural community building, mass boycotts, divestments, and smart use of the media of the time (then known as "the Internet"), was able to change the public discourse. Healing the planet now became widely seen as an urgent moral, religious, and spiritual imperative. This shift in public consciousness led to a cascade of environmental legislation and, more significantly, the worldwide embrace of sustainable consumer and agricultural practices. The religious commitments of that generation became a model for sustainable living to which all subsequent generations have aspired.

A Four-Year-Old's Wisdom

The day after the big Jon Stewart announcement, my husband and I took our four-year-old kids cross-country skiing for the first time. They had a great time, fell a lot, and proved once and for all that kids really are made of rubber. Later, when we were talking about the day, my daughter asked, "Can we go cross-country skiing more times while I'm still four years old?" I said, "Yeah, probably, but why while you're still four years old?" And she said, "Because when I grow up and my kids are four years old, I want to take them cross-country skiing, and I want to tell them that when I was four, I went cross-country skiing a lot. And I want that to be true."

It's the wisdom of Jon Stewart and the wisdom of a four-year-old; it's religious wisdom and countercultural wisdom:

We have a sacred accountability to the future. Illustration by Lawrence Santanello.

Lawrence Santanello (ljsantanello.com)

begin with the narrative you want to be able to tell the future about yourself and work backward from there to figure out the kind of life you need to live to make that narrative true. Speak in the present tense through your actions, to an audience that doesn't exist yet, but will. In my daughter's case, she imagined being watched by her future kids. In all cases, we are being watched by the audience of some future we can't even imagine. We have a sacred accountability to that future. What do we want them to see when they watch this show that is us? What do we want to be able to say to them? They know some stuff that we here in the live studio don't know yet. But we'll get to it. We'll get there. With our promise, we'll get there. ■

Sacred Earth, Sacred Self

A Meditation on Inner Transformation

BY KABIR HELMINSKI

Only the self liberated from selfishness can bring about the new earth.

Selfish selfhood is a prison. Our prejudices and attachments to wealth and power form the walls of this prison. Our activism will never succeed unless we simultaneously leave the prison of the "false self" through mindful presence and an open heart. To transform the political and economic systems that currently dominate our lives—systems that have been skewed by the power and influence of profit above all else—we must also focus on inner transformation.

We can root this difficult work in prayers such as this one from my Sufi tradition: "O my God, you are peace, and from you comes peace, and our return is to you, to peace." What I offer here is an extended meditation on this prayer.

The current economic system is the vehicle of the false self insofar as its only criterion of value is the bottom line of profitability. As a result, it is a blind machine that consumes life and spews garbage. The corporations that rule this system are a result of the alienated self because they are driven to make decisions solely on a logic of their own short-term profiteering rather than on the long-term well-being of human society. For example, they reap fracking profits while escaping the incalculable costs of the destruction that fracking leaves in its wake.

What permits this efficient machinery of death and corruption, this perpetual war, this molestation of nature, this sabotage of health, this desecration of life? The root cause of this desecration is our economic system's detachment from empathy and reality. This society-wide detachment creates echoes of detachment in all of us as individuals, as well, imprisoning us in selfishness.

The system is unsustainable because it prioritizes financial profits regardless of any cost to the environment and human well-being. It fails to see and acknowledge its own demise. The corporate death machine has no empathy. It turns people into objects. It normalizes violence and cruelty. It blames and victimizes the weak. It projects its own evil onto others. What it considers normality is suicidal.

Awakening Our Empathy

The change that is required is so fundamental that it challenges common assumptions of how life is supposed to be lived. What we need is the ability to stand apart, to be quiet and reflect, to think critically about our situation, and to realize that the steps we are capable of may be only incremental.

How can we collectively come to know that the purpose of life is not to consume but to produce, not to acquire but to share, not to excessively build up our defenses, not to increase our capacity for violence but to awaken the empathy of the fearless heart?

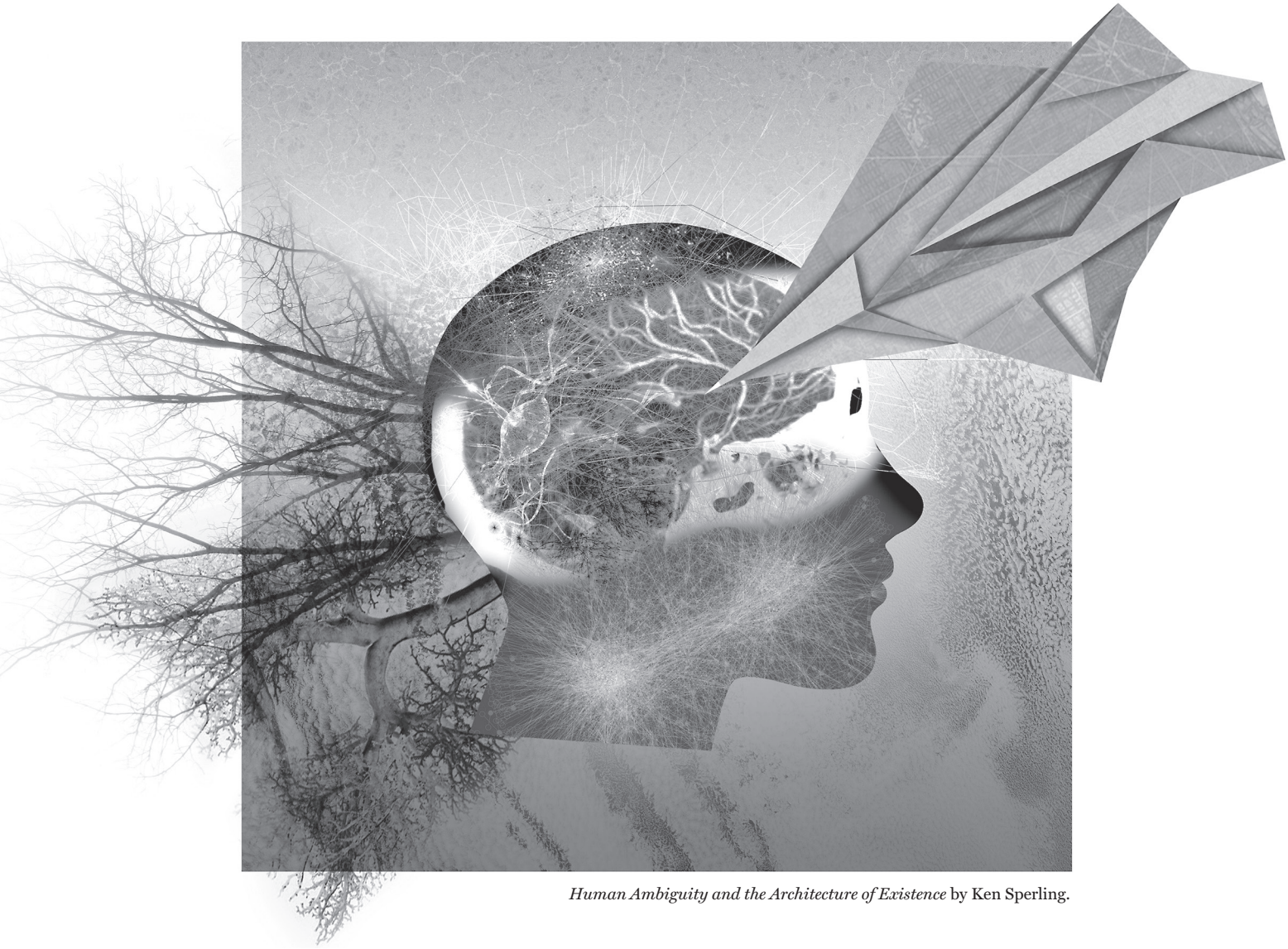
Behind the false self, which is constructed from our own alienation, defenses, pretenses, and disguises, is the experience of the true self, which is fundamentally sacred. We are able to experience the true, sacred self, even without reference to the supernatural, if we are willing to slow down, become quiet, and listen to our own hearts. Recognition of this experience could be the common ground among the spiritual, religious, and secular worlds.

Some experience this true self as a state of transcendence, a foretaste of the divine. At the same time, the experience of the sacred self is likely to be an experience of a self in harmony with the earth. Nature lives deep within human nature. The human self contains its own transcendence. To the extent that we touch that immanent transcendence we step into greater harmony with the earth itself. This inner experience of the self in harmony with a greater whole is an important precondition of sweeping social change, but it alone is not enough—we also need practical knowledge.

Sacred Activism

Most approaches to peace are ineffective because they lack a deep understanding of the forces that contribute to violence. Social movements to change the masses, whether religious or political, will be successful when these social movements transform the self. For example, movements to reshape foreign policy must teach us to reject selfish and competitive approaches to conflict and instead pursue reconciliation and

KABIR HELMINSKI is the author of *Living Presence* and *The Knowing Heart*, a translator of Rumi, and the codirector of the Threshold Society (sufism.org). He has been named one of the "500 Most Influential Muslims in the World."



Human Ambiguity and the Architecture of Existence by Ken Sperling.

Ken Sperling (kensperling.com)

win-win solutions. Movements to reshape our economic system must teach us to live with less and enjoy sharing.

Spiritual and religious practices can support these transformations by showing us how the experience of the sacred is an experience of joining with something much greater than ourselves. The experience of the sacred inspires awe, wonder, and a sense of participation in something much greater than the ego's preoccupations.

In the current era, most humans are vulnerable to exploitation by corporations because the great majority of us are living without a spiritual center capable of withstanding global capitalism's weapons of mass distraction. The power of suggestion, when not balanced by conscious thought, can lead us to be programmed to believe almost anything. Consciousness is the best corrective for this suggestibility, and it is the responsibility of practical mystics to help others become less vulnerable to the advertisements and distractions that corporations use to distract us from what is really going on. In the United States, the Network of Spiritual Progressives (spiritualprogressives.org) is working to reorient our society around a New Bottom Line that values love and generosity over profitability.

Our society has embraced selfishness, at least at the political level. But we can cultivate an experience that opens us to realms of value beyond both the desires of the senses and selfish thinking.

What is sacred are the qualities we cannot measure.

What is sacred is the life of the imagination.

What is sacred touches the heart.

We must forgive those who have projected their own violence upon us, because reacting with violence only proves them right and perpetuates further cycles of violence.

We must all find the elements within our own traditions that can contribute to ending violence in the world.

The challenge of this generation is to establish a culture of compassion. It is time to call forth an awakening in all of humanity. Bless everyone and call it forward in everyone—they're all part of God. ■

The Annunciation by Henry Ossawa Tanner.

Henry Ossawa Tanner

Against Patriarchy

Reclaiming the Christian Doctrine of the Virgin Birth

BY WILL O'BRIEN

Few beliefs in the Christian tradition are as controversial as that of the virgin birth. The doctrine is derived from the "nativity narratives" in the gospels of Luke and Matthew, which recount that the young Jewish maiden Mary conceives Jesus not through human agency but through the Holy Spirit. The teaching appears nowhere else in the New Testament, and even these two accounts have some divergent details. But both evangelists—and consequently official church teaching—agree on this divine miracle of Jesus's birth.

It's a right peculiar doctrine with a long and complex history in the church, and it provokes a range of responses among contemporary believers. On the one hand, the virgin birth is deemed a fundamental of Christian faith (as defined in the early twentieth-century manifestos of "fundamentalism")—on par with the resurrection, the divinity of Christ, and the saving nature of the cross. At the other end of the belief spectrum, those in the flock who are more inclined toward a modern worldview have little problem discarding the teaching as obviously untenable and at best a marginal notion in our biblical stories. For many of us in the middle, the doctrine is a little odd, confusing, perhaps even embarrassing.

I take the gospels very seriously, and I don't trust an arrogant, enlightened intellectualism that dismisses anything that doesn't fit into our rational model of the way the world

Will O'Brien has been active in advocacy on issues of homelessness and poverty for over thirty years. He also coordinates the Alternative Seminary, a grassroots program of biblical and theological study (alternativeseminary.net). He lives in Philadelphia.

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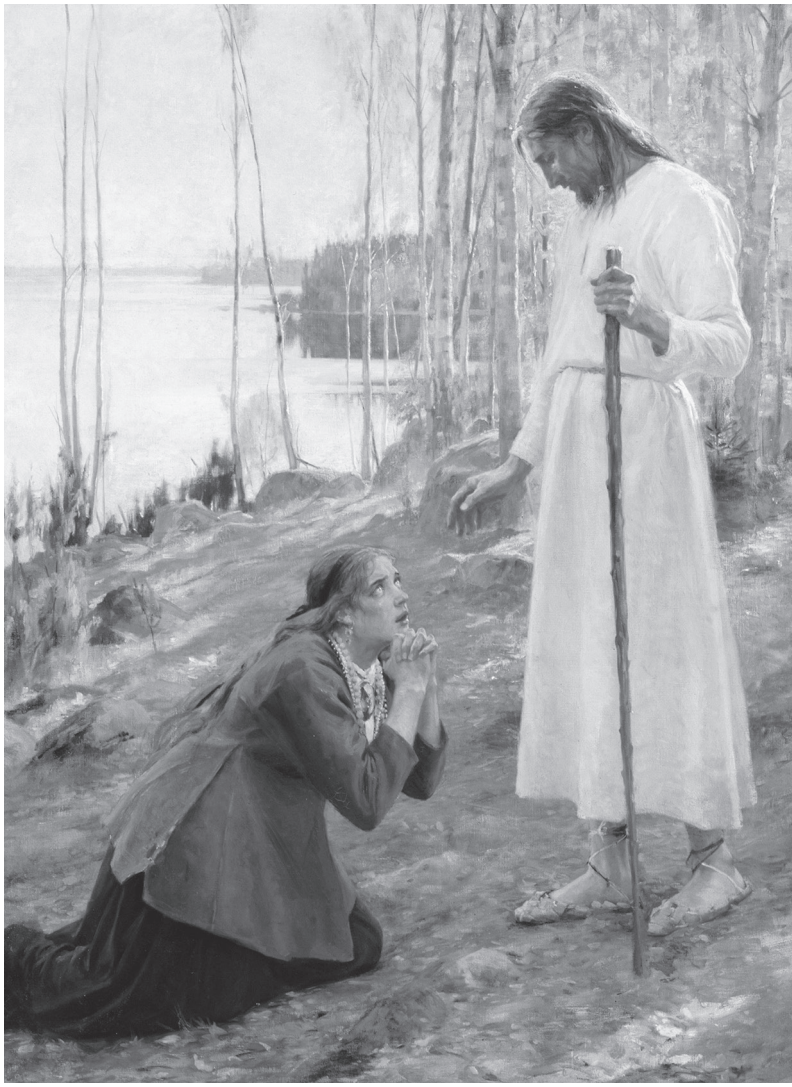
works. Simply rejecting the stories of the virgin birth is not, for me, an option. I am not so much concerned with solving the historicity or factuality of this part of the Jesus story or debating whether the evangelists were weaving fictions to validate prophetic fulfillment. Nor do I worry about historians' accusations that the early church developed the doctrine to compete with other religions (like Mithraism) that already had virgin birth mythologies. But I am deeply troubled by the role the doctrine of the virgin birth has played in church history and in the church's witness to society at large. And I am convinced that we have inherited a distorted interpretive lens on what the evangelists are trying to say through these narratives.

The Shaming of Sex

First, there is the matter of the deleterious consequences of this doctrine: the church's promulgation of the virgin birth as an essential plank of orthodox faith became one of the toxic roots of centuries of very damaging teachings about human sexuality, particularly regarding women. As the institutional church gained social sanction from imperial



In the Christian iconographic tradition, Mary Magdalene is alternately depicted as hedonistic or penitent. Top right: *Mary Magdalene in the Grotto* by Jules Joseph Lefebvre. Left: *Penitent Magdalene* by Donatello. Bottom right: *Christ and Mary Magdalene* by Albert Edelfelt.

Bottom left: Donatello/Creative Commons/Marie-Lan Nguyen Top right: Jules Joseph Lefebvre Bottom right: Albert Edelfelt

Rome, its character increasingly aped the power dynamics of the dominant culture—including a regression from the revolutionary egalitarianism of the early Jesus movement to a reinvigorated male patriarchy with its subordination of women. As ecclesiastical leadership increasingly enmeshed itself in worldly systems of power, Christian theology evolved toward a more abstract, otherworldly, highly spiritualized character, blunting the social and political dimensions of the prophetic tradition and the gospels—all of which was rather self-serving for an increasingly corrupted and domesticated church.

A greater emphasis on the spiritual meant a diminishing of the flesh. Greek philosophical paradigms, which tended toward an almost dualistic tension between the ideal and the real, the spiritual and the material, aggravated the growing distance of the early Christian community from its Jewish roots and became the predominant framework for interpreting the biblical tradition—which made the human body itself suspect. Then along came Augustine in the fourth century, who, in working through some of his own neuroses around his youthful sexual naughtiness, began explicitly to link human sexuality with sinfulness, suggesting that original sin was literally passed on through the sex act, and stressing that sins of the flesh are among the most grievous possible.

Not surprisingly, by this time, the notion of the virgin birth had been highly elevated in church tradition, including the Christian midrash that, despite numerous New Testament references to Jesus's siblings, Mary was a "perpetual virgin." The staid and statuesque (and decidedly nonsensual) figure of the holy Virgin Mother garnered a cult of worship (mediated, one might sardonically suggest, by cross-dressing males). With the eventual elevation of the celibate male priest as the paragon of faith, a pernicious formula would take root in Christendom: virginity equals holiness, and sex equals sin. This formula would, over centuries, claim no small share of casualties.

Illustrative of this corruption was the historical mangling of the story of Mary Magdalene. Gospel references and ancient tradition make it clear that she was an important leader in the early church, no less than an apostle. But a 591 CE sermon by Pope Gregory the Great portrayed her as a prostitute by conflating the Lukan text of the woman who anointed Jesus (7:36–50) with the reference to the seven demons being cast out of her (8:2)—his "logical" conclusion being that she engaged in sins of the flesh. Hence the traditional depictions of the Magdalene in Western art, with her trademark fiery, loose red hair—her dignity can be restored only when she grovels at the feet of the superior (asexual) man. (The 2002 film *The Magdalene Sisters* is a harrowing depiction of the Irish Magdalene Asylums, where "fallen women" were sent to do lifelong penitence for their assumed sexual promiscuity.)

From that distortion, blended with the Marian tradition, is birthed the dichotomous paradigm of women as virgins or whores, saints or sexual sinners, with little in-between—and surely no possibility that they could be church leaders. Meanwhile, in our contemporary political culture, the seemingly endless conservative attacks on women's sexuality—such as Rush Limbaugh's outburst accusing Sandra Fluke of being a "slut,"—are cut from the same misogynist cloth.

Growing up Catholic, I personally experienced and witnessed a plentitude of psychologically damaging guilt and shame around sexuality. When human sexuality is suffocated by religious teachings on sin, it inevitably breeds neuroses and harmful behaviors. It is hardly a stretch to see the current pedophilia scandal involving Catholic priests as part of this same legacy.

I don't wish to suggest the Catholic tradition has cornered the market on sexual dysfunction or misogyny—examples abound in almost all the church traditions. Nor do I blame gospel stories of Jesus's miraculous conception for millennia of abuses and corruption. Rather, the texts played a complex role in the emergence of a toxic theological moralism around human sexuality. With their roots in the Jewish prophetic tradition, these stories on their own would hardly have fostered such institutional misogyny. But they were hermeneutically hijacked and put at the service of a patriarchal institution.

Clearly it's tempting to jettison the virgin birth as nonsense. While it is an important task for Christians of conscience to deconstruct this dismal legacy and the role these gospel texts have played, I want to suggest a very different approach: maybe the lesson of the miracle of Jesus's birth is not the matter of its nonsexuality but what it reveals about the nature of the faith community and its sources of meaning and security.

Lost in Translation

It's worth taking a fresh look at the texts themselves—especially Matthew's account, which predates Luke's, and thus is presumably the first literary version of the tradition. After recounting the scandal of Mary's premature pregnancy, Joseph's compassionate effort to resolve it, and the angelic appearance to him to explain the matter, Matthew then resorts to a standard formula that punctuates his opening chapters, a prophetic interpretation: "All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 'The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel,' which means 'God with us'" (1:23–24).

Matthew is citing Isaiah 7:14. And translation is an important matter in this verse. Matthew's Greek uses the word "παρθένος" (*parthenos*, "virgin"). He is quoting the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, which, owing to the predominance of Greco-Roman culture, was the standard version of that era. However, the original Hebrew text of the same verse has "עלמה" (*almah*), which means something like the English "maiden," a young, unmarried,

or perhaps newly wed woman. Isaiah specifically does not use the Hebrew word "בתולה" (*bethulah*), which has the specific, focused meaning of "virgin," just as the word does in English—someone who has not had sexual intercourse. No Jewish English translation of Isaiah 7:14 uses the word "virgin." Consequently, no Jewish commentator, rabbi, or ordinary reader would assume Isaiah is referring to anything like a miraculous virgin birth.

The point is not to suggest that Matthew has made a linguistic error or an illegitimate interpretive reach. But I do think the ambiguity forces us to ask the question: what did Isaiah mean in that text? And here is an important lesson in biblical literacy: when the Gospels cite the Hebrew Bible, which they do countless times, directly or indirectly, it is not simply recalling a single text (which is usually just a sentence); it is evoking a broader passage or story or tradition. For instance, Jesus's riposte to the devil in the first of the desert temptations ("People do not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God," Matt. 4:4 and Luke 4:4) is part of a broader passage in Deuteronomy 8 recounting the manna story—which is critical to understanding the nature of that temptation and what it prefigures in terms of Jesus's ministry. Likewise, Jesus's controversial statement to the disciples, "The poor you will always have with you" (Mark 14:7), has a meaning that is dramatically different from the usual interpretation when we understand that the immediate citation of Deuteronomy 15:11 in fact evokes the broader economic stipulations of care for the poor in the fifteenth chapter of Deuteronomy.

So the obvious but frequently neglected task for the reader of Matthew is to go back to Isaiah 7—not just the immediate verse but the full oracle in its historical context.

Isaiah preached in the late eighth century. This oracle is addressed to King Ahaz of the southern nation of Judah, likely around 734 BCE. Ahaz, whom 2 Kings roundly condemns as one of the most wicked kings of Judah, faces a serious political crisis. The superpower nation of Assyria has been wreaking havoc in the region and forcing many nations into vassalage, including Syria and the northern kingdom of Israel. Their two kings, Rezin of Syria and Pekah of Israel, are plotting a revolt against Assyria and are pressuring Ahaz to join their coalition. He has refused, and they are now embarking on a full-fledged invasion to force Judah's compliance. (The story is told in 2 Kings 16, complementing the Isaian texts.)

Ahaz's Machiavellian geopolitical instincts are to respond by in fact going to Assyria and offering to make Judah a vassal. Isaiah, acting as a kind of theological secretary of state, urges Ahaz to do what the ancient covenant insisted: hold fast to Yahweh, who is Israel's true and only security. As part of that assertion, a "sign" is given. (At first Ahaz refused God's urging to "ask for a sign," perhaps fearful of what he might hear—or because he has already made his foreign policy decision, which is the Assyrian connection. But God gives the sign anyway.) The sign is a young woman giving birth to a son. "And she will call his name 'God is with us'" (7:14). Most importantly, this child will choose between good and evil. Most commentaries suggest that the prophecy, in its context, is simply referring to the next Davidic prince, who, unlike the wicked Ahaz, would be faithful to Yahweh and would deliver Judah from its enemies. It may even be a specific reference to Ahaz's son Hezekiah, who was deemed by 2 Kings to be one of Judah's most righteous kings.

But whatever specific historical details are involved, the Isaian declaration of "Immanuel" (Hebrew for "God with us") has a broader theme that touches on one of the central tensions within the entire Hebrew Bible narrative: As the people of Israel make their way in the world, where is their security to be found? In whom do they trust? As they adopt the worldly model of kingship, in contrast to their early covenantal tribalism, do they likewise reject their covenantal God, Yahweh, and adopt worldly forms of security? "What sorrow awaits those who look to Egypt for help, trusting their horses, chariots, and charioteers and depending on the strength of human armies instead of looking to the Lord, the Holy One of Israel," the prophet foretells (Isaiah 31:1). "Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God" (Psalm 20:7).

The Virgin Birth as a Call to Trust in God

So, to return to the text from Matthew: I suggest that the Immanuel prophecy is not simply (or solely) intended to illuminate the miraculous nature of Jesus's birth, but also to evoke a fundamental challenge from the Israelite tradition about the need for God's people not to adopt worldly forms of security, but rather place their trust in God alone. It is certainly relevant that the episode following Jesus's birth is the horror story of King Herod's maniacal paranoia that results in the "slaughter of the innocents." This story cannot be historically corroborated, but it rings true, given the well-documented nature of the half-Jewish, publicly loathed Roman puppet ruler. In this gospel account, Herod plays the same role as Ahaz: an Israelite monarch who is drunk on worldly power and ferociously intent on maintaining it immerses himself in geopolitical realpolitik, and trashes the Torah and sacred tradition. He is far from a righteous shepherd of the people rooted in Immanuel. As the prophets repeatedly warned the Israelite people and their rulers, if you choose to adopt the ways of the world, the results will be far from biblical Shalom—as grieving mothers, like Rachel, will agonizingly attest (Matt. 2:17–18, citing Jeremiah 31:15).

As I say, I can't speak to the historicity of either of the New Testament nativity stories. But I am certain that their function in both Matthew and Luke is to foreshadow critical themes of the person, the ministry, and the life of Jesus

that will be unveiled in their respective gospels. In Matthew, I would argue, this theme creates a context for Jesus's ministry and proclamation: the discipleship community is to hear anew the prophetic call to faithfulness and resist the ways of the world. Its radically different path will be charted by the Sermon on the Mount—which teaches the way of humble servanthood, radical nonviolence and reconciliation, economic freedom through trust in God's providence—and not by the world's materialism. Be whole, as God is whole (Matt. 5:48)—which is possible only because of Immanuel, God with us.

Tragically, the institutional church, in its Constantinian bargain, makes the same choice that King Ahaz and later Herod did. It trusts not in Immanuel, but instead conforms to the ways of the world: its hierarchy, power, and wealth bestow a tacit blessing on worldly violence and injustice. And in the process, the patriarchal church conveniently truncated the Isaian prophecy in Matthew 1 to a matter of sexual chastity.

I agree that the virgin birth accounts are intended to stress the unique divine origin of Jesus. And I don't mean to argue that all Christians need to reject the doctrine of the virgin birth. Even those with very traditionally orthodox beliefs need not be excluded from the political-prophetic interpretation. Just a little more biblical attentiveness would go a long way: the Virgin Mary of Luke 1:48–55 speaks directly out of the same prophetic tradition in magnifying the God who casts down the mighty and lifts up the poor and oppressed. Might this not include women oppressed by patriarchal religious traditions?

Many contemporary voices of faith fully embrace the symbiosis of the theological mystery of the virgin birth with its prophetic challenge to the community of God's people. Some contemporary Christian feminists have seen in Marian devotion the preservation of a feminine presence and feminine power within the male-dominated structure—including the compelling assertion that a male was not necessary for the conception of the Savior. Mary's virginity, in a feminist midrash, becomes symbolic of freedom and self-determination. Pope Francis, who is very rooted in the Marian devotional tradition, also speaks strongly out of the prophetic tradition for peace and justice in the global community. Similarly, some Latin American liberation theologians (such as Brazilian feminist Ivone Gebara and Mexican American theologian Virgilio Elizondo) have built a compelling bridge between the popular devotion to the Virgin of Guadalupe, who appeared to the peasant Juan Diego, and the biblical imperative of justice.

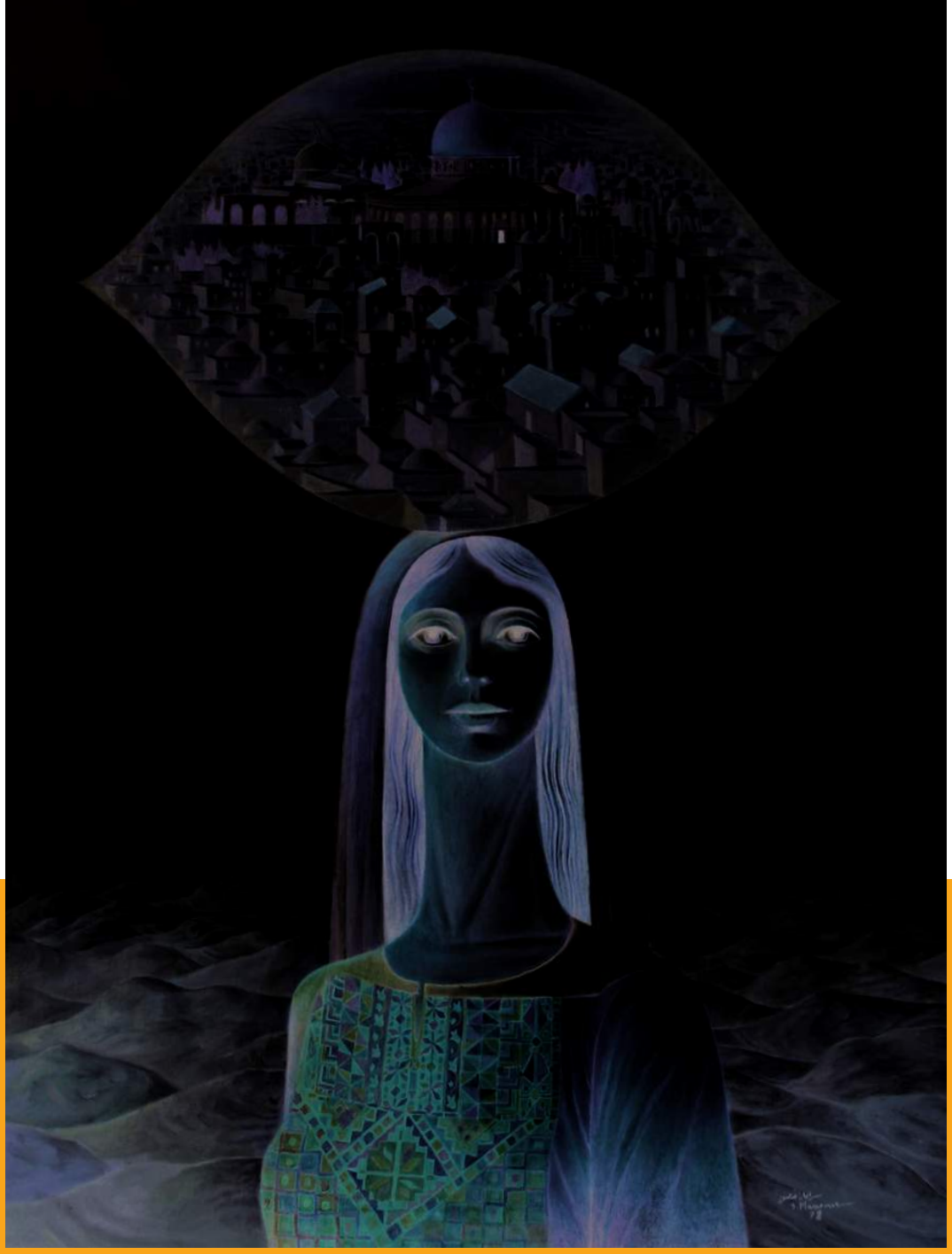
Reclaiming the Virgin Birth

Ironically, a reclaiming of the virgin birth narrative in the gospels, rerooted in and framed by the authentic Isaian prophetic tradition, can challenge the patriarchy that has strangled much of the Christian theological tradition and institutional character. Putting together Matthew's and Luke's complementary portraits of "the Virgin Mary," the church has a vibrant and powerful biblical source with which to critique and repent of its own complicity in sexual oppression and bring a message of justice to the broader world. What a magnificent message that would be (I consciously echo Mary's "Magnificat") to hear from the ever-surprising Pope Francis, as he continually charts new possibilities for liberating the faith community from the stodgy structures of the Roman Catholic institution.

I yearn for more of Jesus's followers to hear this prophetic gospel challenge, with our sisters and brothers in the Jewish faith and in other communities of faith and conscience. A Christian church that, like the young Jewish maiden, said yes to Immanuel would resist the Constantinian exchange of social legitimacy for allegiance to and acceptance of worldly systems of power. A people whose character is rooted in radical trust in God would see through the false ideologies of security provided by violence and domination. A church that understood the sign of the child who could discern good from evil would have its eyes wide open to the terror and oppression that plague so many of God's children, and would respond with loving, nonviolent, sacrificial compassion.

Christians who grasped the true miracle of Jesus's origins would not accept a foreign policy rooted in realpolitik, but would witness to and work for justice, peace, and true liberation for all God's precious children. Church folk would wean themselves from the uncritical patriotism fostered in recent decades by the religious right. Following Pope Paul VI's dictum, "If you want peace, work for justice," more people of faith would be vigorously involved in efforts and campaigns that foster social justice and uphold human dignity. We would see expanded participation in cutting-edge initiatives like Christian Peacemaker Teams, in which persons of faith engage in nonviolent presence in situations of conflict and violence. We might even rethink the tax-exempt status of our religious institutions, which could free up our preachers to take on a more prophetic mantle, speaking truth to power and mobilizing our congregations to action.

Two millennia since Matthew wrote his narrative of Jesus's miraculous birth, power-hungry Herods are still massacring the innocent. Millions of Rachels are still weeping, refusing to be comforted. We have far more to offer such a world than an instruction manual for sexuality. We have the good news of God with us, and a power that comes from such good news. I deeply hope and pray we grasp that good news and offer it to this hurting world. ■



NETANYAHU HAS WON RE-ELECTION.
ISRAELI VOTERS ARE MOVING TO THE RIGHT.
HOPES FOR A TWO-STATE SOLUTION ARE DWINDLING . . .

WHAT'S NEXT FOR ISRAEL/PALESTINE?

Sliman Mansour

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

Jerusalem by Sliman Mansour.

What's Next for Israel/Palestine? An Introduction

BY MICHAEL LERNER

It has become increasingly clear to many people around the world and among many American Jews that the Israeli government has no intention of creating a politically and economically viable Palestinian state. On the eve of his reelection, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed that no Palestinian state would emerge under his next five-year government. Although Netanyahu subsequently qualified this promise by claiming he only meant that the conditions for creating such a state do not yet exist, his party almost certainly owed its electoral victory to his display of staunch opposition to Palestinian statehood. The government he subsequently appointed contains members who are even more extreme and overtly racist than Netanyahu himself. Such a far right government was made possible because Israeli public opinion has shifted significantly against any two-state solution. This opinion is likely to hold until massive external pressure compels Israel to consider a different direction.

Israel faces growing international pressure either to move now to create a viable Palestinian state (not a series of isolated cities with no control over their own borders and surrounded by Israeli West Bank settlers and the Israel Defense Forces) or else give Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza the same voting rights that Palestinians enjoy as citizens of Israel within the pre-1967 borders.

"One person, one vote" is not an ideal solution, and history leads many to doubt that a one-state solution is viable: forcing multiple peoples into one state did not, for instance, lead to peace in Yugoslavia or Iraq. Unless both parties really desire such a state, its creation through international pressure might lead to a bloody civil war. On the other hand, if the Palestinian people were to launch a campaign for "one person, one vote," it would have resonance not only globally but also within Israel and among many American Jews. The democratic aspiration embodied in that demand, made by a people who are now occupied and subjugated, resonates far beyond the demand for two states. Insisting on equal suffrage might weaken Israel's ability to withstand international pressure for a more democratic society. The fear that a "one person, one vote" policy might eventually be imposed on Israelis could move those at Israel's center away from the right-wingers they increasingly support and toward those who are building pressure for a two-state solution. So strategically speaking, Palestinians who favor a two-state solution might get one more quickly by demanding voting rights within Israel. But this approach will feel contrived and dishonest unless it represents a change in what the Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza really want—and there's little evidence for that.

I have little hope that either pressure on Israel from the international community to create a two-state solution or pressure to give Palestinians the vote will actually work. Both Israelis and Palestinians are victims of post-traumatic stress disorder. Some Palestinians remind us that there is nothing "post" about the trauma of the Occupation or of living in Gaza, parts of which were reduced to rubble by the Israeli offensive in the summer of 2014, leaving thousands dead or wounded and tens of thousands homeless. And Israelis who spent much of that summer fleeing to bomb shelters several times a day remind us that they too are not just responding to the oppression of bygone eras, but have recently had that history dramatically reinforced. By attempting to bomb Israeli cities in the summer of 2014, Hamas also ensured that Israelis would have recent evidence that their fears are justified. Once again, a de facto extremist alliance—of Israeli right-wing extremists who wish to rule over the Palestinian people (or push them out of Palestine entirely) and Hamas extremists who wish to eliminate the State of Israel—has managed temporarily to marginalize those on both sides who believe in nonviolence and mutual reconciliation. And all this takes place while the military expansion and brutal fundamentalism of the Islamic State (ISIL) increase these fears.

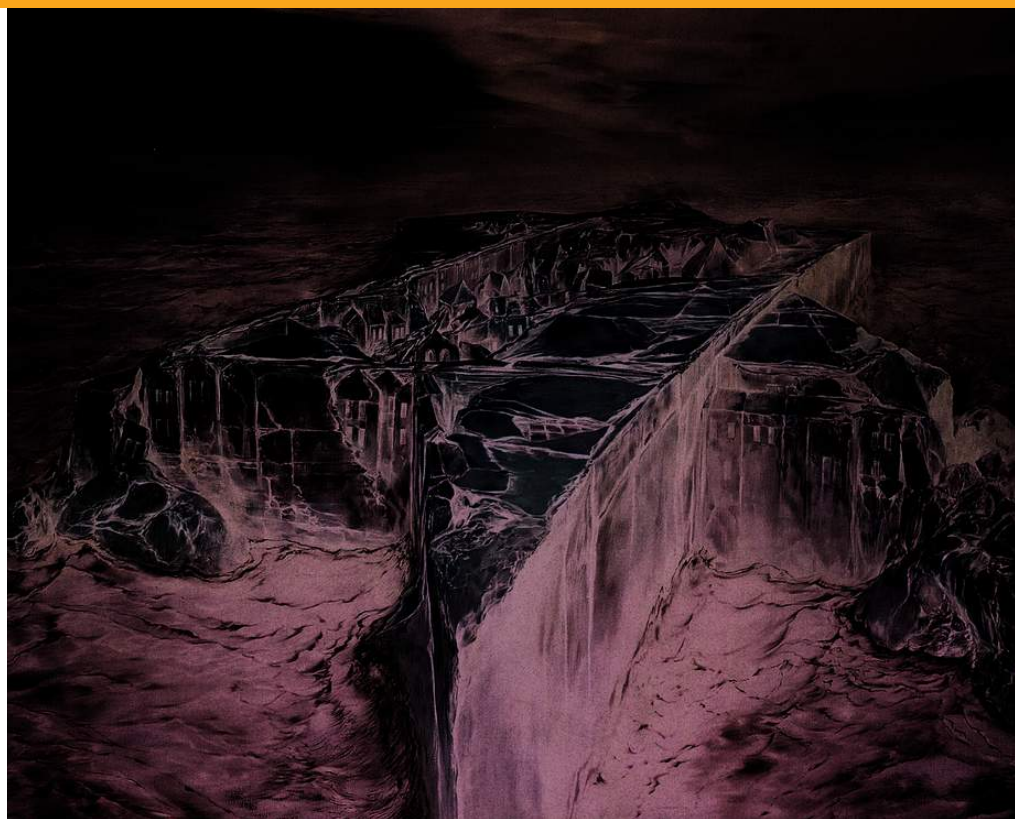
One of the lessons I have learned from my psychotherapy practice is that you cannot coerce people suffering from PTSD to give up their fears—in fact, trying to do so almost always worsens them, a theme I'll explore more fully in the Winter 2016 issue of *Tikkun*.

It would be far more productive if both peoples could recognize the humanity of the other and thus become able to take positive, peace- and reconciliation-oriented political action.

MICHAEL LERNER is editor of *Tikkun*, co-chair of the Network of Spiritual Progressives, and rabbi of Beyt Tikkun Synagogue-Without-Walls. He is the author of eleven books, including *The Left Hand of God*, *Jewish Renewal*, and *Embracing Israel/Palestine*.

Hundreds of dialogue and peace groups in Israel and the Diaspora have attempted to generate this kind of recognition, only to be foiled by some action on "the other side" that undermines faith in that side's humanity and decency. Observing this tendency, increasing numbers of social change activists have come to doubt that reconciliation is likely to happen in a world structured around fear and militarism.

So long as the dominant global common sense is determined by notions of homeland security that depend on military might and violence, and so long as the ethos of global capitalism continues to teach us to "win" for ourselves rather than share with others, the logic of power and domination will appear to be the world's only "truth"—and reconciliation between Israel and Palestine will remain unlikely. Memories of the Holocaust still shape Israelis' view of the dangers of being "too soft," and fears of Iran's nuclear ambitions strengthen the appeal of Israeli ultranationalists, religious fundamentalists, and militarists. Those of us who still wish to foster a consciousness of reconciliation and peace thus appear to most Israelis as naïve.



Alone by Samuel Bak. The State of Israel was supposed to provide a safe home for the Jewish people, but its descent into fear and militarism has left it increasingly isolated from the global community. A radical transformation in consciousness can reverse this isolation.

Samuel Bak, courtesy of Pucker Gallery (puckergallery.com)

But transformations in consciousness, often quite radical, have happened in Israel around the status of women and around the treatment of gays and lesbians. Those who thought this possible thirty years ago were similarly dismissed as naïve. When the Western world changes its sense of what is naïve and what is smart and realistic, Israel and then the Palestinian people are likely to be deeply influenced.

It will take a larger transformation in the global ethos to achieve lasting peace in the Middle East. We at *Tikkun* and the Network of Spiritual Progressives challenge the notion that homeland security can be achieved through domination and power over the other. We urge the U.S. government to replace that strategy with one of generosity toward the other. To make this demand concrete, we've developed a detailed Global Marshall Plan, and Congressman Keith Ellison of Minneapolis has introduced a resolution in support of that plan in the House of Representatives.

The biggest contribution the rest of the world can make toward achieving peace in the Middle East is to work to transform consciousness in our own countries so that masses of people might accept this new paradigm of security through generosity rather than through militarism.

Admittedly, that is an "unrealistic" path. But fifty years ago, it was no less unrealistic to believe that segregation and apartheid could be defeated. Forty years ago, it was naïve to think that patriarchal assumptions could be put on the defensive, just as only twenty years ago it was wishful thinking to believe that gays could gain the right to marry in some states.

Changes of consciousness take huge efforts, but when they are achieved, they can have equally huge consequences. When the strategy of generosity becomes the central way that people in the West think about homeland security, Israelis and Palestinians will no longer be trapped in the old, militaristic paradigm. And what seems impossible today will become practical politics in Israel and Palestine.

In this special section of *Tikkun* we print responses to a question we put to a variety of thinkers: Given the current government in Israel, what's next for those of us who are not content to turn our backs on the suffering that the Occupation of the West Bank and the blockade of Gaza continue to cause to the Palestinian people, and the suffering that the Occupation also inflicts, albeit in more hidden ways, on the Israeli people? What are the strategies we should all pursue together? As you will see, we asked people whom we knew would disagree with our premises, as well as those who agree with our premises but not our conclusions. Aside from the voices in this segment of the magazine, we're also publishing more responses in the web-only portion of this debate—you can read them all at **tikkun.org/whatnext**. ■

Until Two States Exist, Palestinians Deserve Voting Rights in Israel

BY DAVID BIALE

The reelection of Binyamin Netanyahu, accompanied by his renunciation of the two-state solution and racist denigration of Israel's Arab voters, has created the moment of greatest despair over Israel/Palestine that we have experienced in *Tikkun*'s thirty years of existence.

I first published in *Tikkun* in its inaugural year, 1986. At that time I joined Michael Lerner in his courageous call for negotiations with the Palestinians (then forbidden by Israeli law) and the creation of a Palestinian state side by side with Israel. *Tikkun* has consistently fought for that position over the years. There have been moments of hope, such as the Oslo Accords, and moments of great despair, like the Second Intifada. But no moment has held more despair than the present.

Lerner's present proposal—to accord citizenship rights to the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza—is a product of this despair. He acknowledges that a "binational" state may not solve anything and may make things even worse. Yet he is right that absent any movement toward a Palestinian state—and there is none now—the choice is between effective apartheid and one state between the Jordan and the Mediterranean.

Netanyanhu's racist outburst highlights the long-known fact that Israel's Arab citizens are not treated as equals, even if they have the vote. So there is little hope that giving the vote to millions of other Palestinians would guarantee them equality. But it seems as if there is no other way to make clear the choice that Israel faces between a Jewish majority and

DAVID BIALE is the Emanuel Ringelblum Distinguished Professor of Jewish History at the University of California, Davis, and director of the Davis Humanities Institute.

Creative Commons and Oona Taper (cargocollective.com/oonataper)

some form of binationalism, because, like it or not, the world community is going to force it to face that choice in any case.

The history of Zionism has always revolved around this choice. David Ben-Gurion understood the necessity of a Jewish majority to guarantee a Jewish state. Although Israel's Declaration of Independence guaranteed full equality of political participation and the equal allocation of resources to all Israel's citizens, Ben-Gurion never lived up to that promise. He welcomed the flight of the Arabs in 1948 and, at least in the case of Lod, actually ordered their expulsion. He was not sorry to see them go. And after the war, he placed Israeli Arabs under military rule, which was not lifted until 1966 when he was no longer in power.

But whatever the cruelties and undemocratic features of Ben-Gurion's policies, they were nevertheless intended to create a state that could eventually be both Jewish and democratic. The policies of the Israeli right, including the Likud Party and parties even further to the right, are designed to create the opposite. When a democracy rules millions who are not its citizens, it can only spell the end of that democracy. Thus, the demand to extend democratic rights to Palestinians under Israeli rule is also a demand for Israeli Jews to live in a democracy.

What tactics ought to be adopted to achieve this end? Boycotts, divestment, and sanctions are probably not tactically smart because they are associated with groups that want to dismantle the State of Israel. The goal of Lerner's campaign is the opposite: to preserve Israel by extending citizenship to all its subjects. Thus, the campaign ought to embrace Israel's Declaration of Independence and demand that it be applied from the Mediterranean to the Jordan. When Israeli government officials visit the United States, they should be met with this demand. Perhaps an effort should also be mounted toward a United Nations Security Council resolution to the same effect. Rather than punitive, the campaign should be affirmative—and thus force the proponents of the status quo to digest what they've already swallowed. ■

The Logic of Abandoning the Two-States Campaign

BY REBECCA SUBAR

Bringing about the conditions needed for a durable two-state deal would necessitate currently unthinkable shifts in some long-standing assumptions held by Israeli Jews. A deal sufficiently durable to withstand post-agreement pressure from Palestinian dissidents would need to include three components:

1. *Territorial integrity.* Even a deal that accommodated land swaps along the 1967 borders would require some combination of moving and removing many, if not all, of the Israeli Jewish communities living in the territory of a Palestinian state. It would require an arrangement for mobility between Gaza and the West Bank.
2. *Defensibility.* Political sovereignty would require that Israel give up the idea of a demilitarized Palestine. Israel would agree to give up its airspace over the territory of the Palestinian state and, given the need for territorial integrity, its military control of the Jordan River valley. Tougher still, most Palestinians will reject any deal that doesn't account in some way for Palestinian claims on Jerusalem. Any agreement on boundaries, joint authority, or access to holy places would be accompanied by a deal on the defense of all residents and transients in Jerusalem.
3. *Refugee rights.* Many Palestinians have said they won't recognize a deal as minimally just unless there is recognition of the right of return for refugees. Provisions would need to be made for refugees who do return to vote in Israeli elections or to participate in the governance of some other sovereign political entity that would share political authority in that geographic space.

If a change in Israeli political consciousness great enough to accept such a deal is a necessary but unachievable prerequisite of a two-state solution, what can we hope and act to achieve? The reluctant conclusion offered by Michael Lerner in this issue of *Tikkun*—that we ought to replace policies guided by domination with strategies inspired by generosity—nosedives into the pool of well-meaning and impractical

REBECCA SUBAR teaches peace and conflict studies at West Chester University, advises political advocacy groups with Dragonfly Partners, and serves on the board of Jewish Voice for Peace. The views expressed here do not represent the positions of any organization.

approaches to the Palestinian-Israeli dilemma.

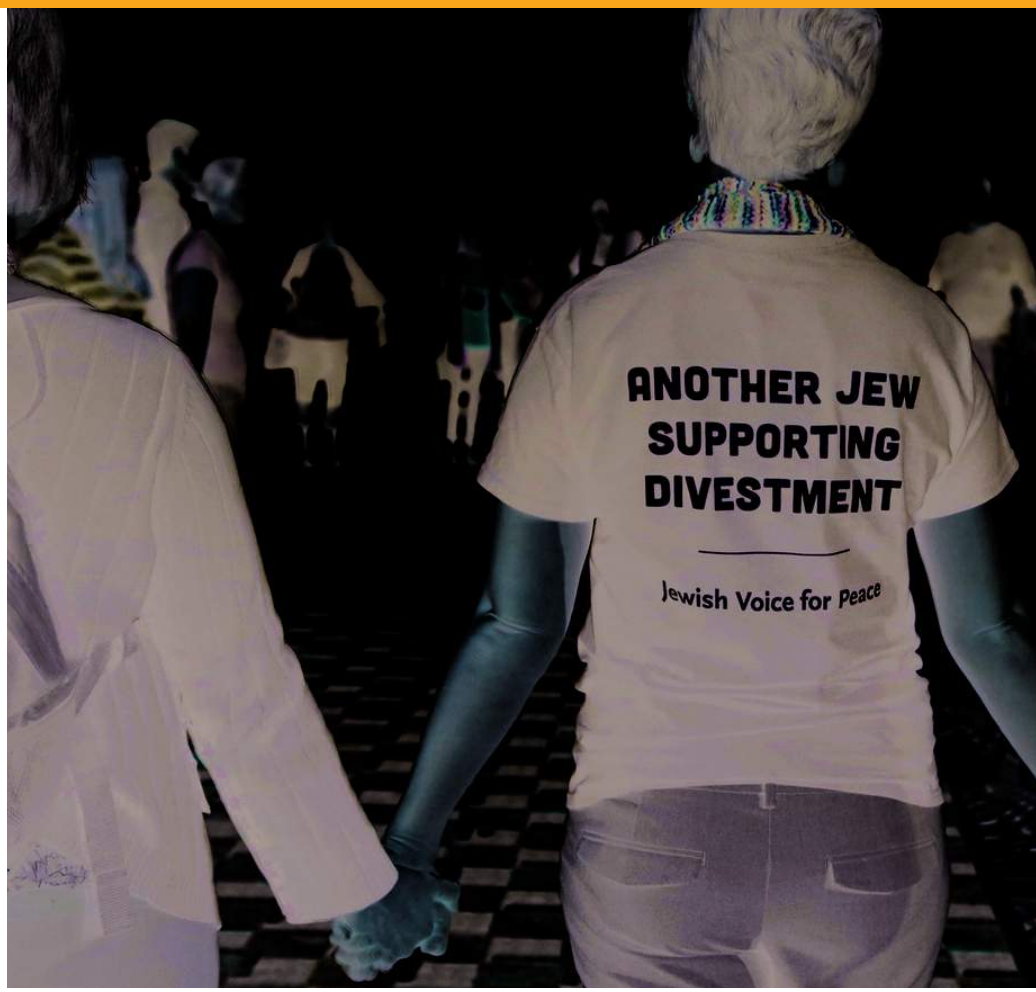
A "one person, one vote" campaign could, as Lerner suggests, have as its goal pressuring Israel to negotiate a two-state deal, but that may be no easier than a campaign whose goal truly is one person, one vote. Israel is already a single sovereign state with millions of disenfranchised adults.

The Palestinian-led rights-for-peace campaign, as described by Yousef Munayyer in the *New York Times* on March 19, 2015, pressures Israel to grant political rights to Palestinians living in the occupied territories. This is the movement that brings us boycott, divestment, and sanctions, the campaign launched in 2005 by Palestinian civil society groups rejecting the official negotiations that failed to produce freedom and equality.

In the *Huffington Post* of May 17, 2015, Jeff Faux of the Economic Policy Institute argues that Israel will not accept a one-state or a two-state solution unless the alternative is becoming an international pariah state like apartheid South Africa. Thinking along the same lines, the U.S. branch of the Palestinian equality movement is prioritizing campaigns to compel Israel to fully include all Palestinians under its control in all aspects of democracy. Tens of thousands of campus activists are building pressure on Israel through university-based divestment campaigns. Meanwhile, the hundreds of grassroots groups that make up the umbrella group U.S. Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation are pressuring the Israeli and U.S. governments to support Palestinian equality. Thousands of Presbyterian, Methodist, and Episcopal activists have mobilized to pressure Israel.

If the tens of millions of dollars invested by its opponents are any measure, the growing pressure of the Palestinian equality movement in the Palestinian territories, the United States, and beyond will be the game changer that coaxes Israel into resolving Palestinian inequality. Growing campus activism frightens pro-Israel groups, because their calls for equality in diversity, political liberties, and suffrage for all under Israeli rule reflect the most fundamental American values.

This equality campaign will push the Israeli public deeper into a debate about the necessity of having a particularly Jewish state apparatus in order to provide safety and security for Israeli Jews.



Members of Jewish Voice for Peace rally in support of boycott, divestment, and sanctions against Israel.

Whereas historically, any pressure on Israel to negotiate a two-state deal was a call for Israeli initiative, nonviolent pressure to transform the current two-tiered, single-state arrangement will require Israel to justify the status quo. Israel can claim that the status quo is better than an unviable deal, but the viability of defending the status quo against the claim of disenfranchisement will continue to dwindle.

It is no easier, then, to imagine the shifts in political opinion required for Israel to agree to a two-state solution than to consider those required to transform the current arrangement into a government for all its people. In response to the Palestinian equality campaign, Israel will need to choose among four options:

1. Resist international pressure, at the risk of ultimately losing the ability to maintain economic, social, and security stability at a level that its citizens will tolerate.
2. Dismantle settlements, accept a militarized Palestine, and accommodate the right of return in order to achieve a minimally stable two-state deal.
3. Agree to an alternative enfranchisement arrangement, such as a binational state or some other type of shared governance and shared sovereignty in what we now call Israel.

Another Jew Supporting Divestment, Jewish Voice for Peace

4. Keep the settlements and avoid a militarized Palestine, but accommodate the right of return and grant Palestinians the vote, ending the project of the Jewish State as the mechanism for protecting Jewish safety. In its place, make a deal that establishes minimally stable, alternative social and security structures for protecting Jewish safety and ensuring Jewish religious and cultural life.

It is not obvious which is most achievable in the shortest time frame. Unpredictable domestic, geopolitical, and natural events may shift the viability of each option. In any case, for Israeli Jews, the first option is inviable. But the second, a two-state deal, is not necessarily the easiest.

Enfranchisement of Palestinian residents of Palestine/Israel could replace the political and military conflict with a principled platform for granting Jews and Palestinians security, economic viability, and individual freedoms, along with free expression and self-determination as peoples.

An enfranchisement campaign needn't insist on any particular political arrangement, and it certainly should not insist on two states or assume that such an outcome is possible. The aim of this movement should be equal to its claim: political equality for all. Any political arrangement would need to ensure equality, and there is more than one imaginable equalizing political arrangement.

What matters is action to pressure Israel to shift its policy, which it can do in any way that accommodates the needs of two sets of people seeking security, freedom, and self-determination. ■

Nonviolence, BDS, and the Dream of Beloved Community in Palestine/Israel

BY LYNN GOTTLIEB

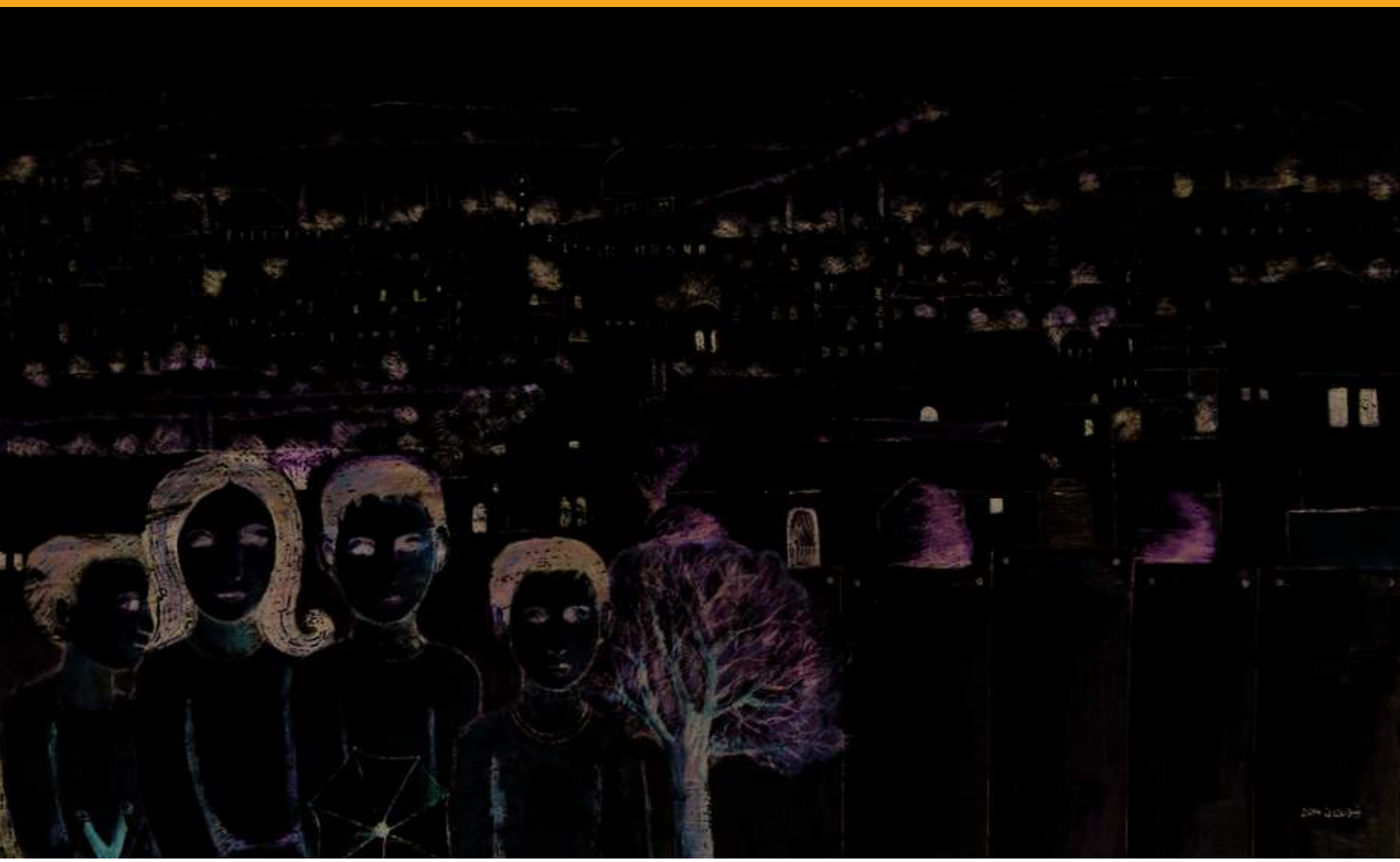
As a lifelong feminist practitioner of the Torah of nonviolence, I am drawn to respond to the question of what's next in Israel/Palestine through the hermeneutics of nonviolence, which I believe is a fruitful way out of the one-state/two-state conundrum.

The practice of nonviolence is a path toward the future. We learn from people on the front lines of systemic violence that "don't speak about us without us" is a core principle of nonviolence solidarity, and so I begin with words from a poem titled "Running Orders" that Lena Khalaf Tuffaha wrote after the massacre of Gaza last summer.

> They call us now.
> Before they drop the bombs.
> The phone rings
> and someone who knows my first name
> calls and says in perfect Arabic
> "This is David."
> . . . . . .
> They call us now to say
> Run.
> You have 58 seconds from the end of this message.
> Your house is next.
> They think of it as some kind of
> war time courtesy.
> It doesn't matter that
> there is nowhere to run to.
> It means nothing that the borders are closed
> and your papers are worthless
> and mark you only for a life sentence
> in this prison by the sea
> and the alleyways are narrow
> and there are more human lives
> packed one against the other
> more than any other place on earth
> Just run.
> . . . . . .

One state or two, here or there, let us mourn the dead, recite the names of the slain, theirs and ours together, until it feels the same. Mourning together points us in the direction of *convivencia* (living well together), which is the

LYNN GOTTLIEB is a rabbi. She works at the Shomeret Shalom Rabbinic School and Learning Center and serves on the Rabbinic Council of Jewish Voice for Peace.



"Nonviolence demands that we pressure Israel to stop prosecuting Palestinian children in military courts and agitate for an end to the criminalization of children of color in the United States," Gottlieb writes. *Jerusalem, 2014* by Nabil Anani.

framework for the future. It helps us address our trauma and fear.

One state or two, here or there, rebuilding has to happen now. Gaza lies in ruins. Entire cities were destroyed. What is true for Gaza is true throughout Israel/Palestine, each habitation with its own story, needs, and strategies of beautiful resistance. The physical restoration of the landscape of cities, villages, farms, fields, and cultural sites of Palestine is paramount. There are many ways to accomplish the task, including supporting specific projects, such as Tent of Nations and Grassroots Jerusalem.

Nonviolence is a form of truth telling. Alas, we have traded *tzedek tzedek tirdof* ("justice, justice shall you pursue") for a fleet of drones, Passover for an Iron Dome. Many members of the mainstream Jewish community are emotionally and economically invested in the infrastructure of military, political, and economic occupation, which is in conflict with every social justice value the American Jewish community promotes in almost every other situation. One state or two, here or there, the Torah of nonviolence calls us to struggle for our neighbor's freedom, resist militarism, and move speech into action. At the moment, we are living with a huge gap between our attitudes and actions toward domestic social justice issues and what is happening to Palestinians. We need to close the gap.

In seeking to close the gap, we need to improve the way we struggle. The practice of nonviolence requires intersectionality in our struggle. We cannot create workable campaigns for justice without a relationship with Palestinian partners. This is also true for white people who want to support Black Lives Matter. Nonviolence also makes specific demands. One state or two, here or there, after decades of failed negotiations, nonviolence demands that we wage direct action campaigns to dismantle the separation wall that cuts Jerusalem off from Bethlehem and Ramallah. Nonviolence also demands that we dismantle the militarized border wall that divides the Americas—the same corporations built both. Nonviolence demands that we pressure Israel to stop prosecuting Palestinian children in military courts and agitate for an end to the criminalization of children of color in the United States. Nonviolence demands that we build strong grassroots alliances that demonstrate a serious commitment to ending violence against people of color, women, and the LGBTQ community here and everywhere.

Once we accept the intersectional nature of nonviolent struggle against racism, sexism, plantation capitalism, and

Nabil Anani (nabilanani.net)

militarism, we are still left with a question: how do nonviolent tactics work? As Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote in his famous "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," "Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and foster such a tension that a community which has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks so to dramatize the issue that it can no longer be ignored."

In the Jewish community, some of us have chosen such a tactic directed toward Israel's Occupation infrastructure and the corporations and governments that support this infrastructure: that is, boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS). This tactic has been extremely successful, even though many detractors have unfortunately drawn a red line around it. BDS grew out of the Palestinian community's realization that negotiations were failing. They were inspired by South African activists who had, in fact, dismantled apartheid. BDS has done exactly what King described: dramatize the issue of the Occupation and create a crisis by applying economic pressure to force institutional change. Nonviolence attacks systems of violence, not people doing violence. BDS is aimed at dismantling the Occupation and seeking a just resolution for Palestinian refugees that honors the right of return. To prepare for that eventuality will require commitment to struggling together for justice and peace.

I believe that nonviolence also requires us to cultivate an "Open Hillel" atmosphere in which we agree to disagree on specific issues and tactics, even as we struggle to create the infrastructures of healing justice. You can't hope to bend the arc toward justice, speak about intersectionality, and then tell Palestinians BDS is illegitimate and ostracize Jewish activists for responding to the Palestinian call for BDS worldwide. In truth, BDS has been a very generous platform for bringing together a multifaith, multicultural, and multigenerational global movement for justice that is healing and positive and represents hope for a future of *convivencia* and peace. As we learn how to struggle together, we also learn how to live together as the beloved community. Is that not what we envision? ■

The Lucrative Arms Trade Behind the Occupation Must End

BY RAJA SHEHADEH

As it now stands, Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories is lucrative rather than costly. No nation in possession of territory it seized from another has been known to give up that territory merely because of a change of heart. The Israeli people will not support withdrawal from the occupied Palestinian territories unless the continuation of the Occupation causes them to suffer, whether materially or in terms of their standing in the world.

One way in which the continuation of the conflict benefits Israel is that it helps Israel test and sell more of the weapons and security systems it manufactures. If activists across the globe can convince the Israeli public that peace will be more lucrative, then the shift toward a peaceful resolution of the conflict, rather than its perpetuation, will become possible.

Boycott is certainly one way of achieving this. Another is the approach *Tikkun* is advocating: challenging the notion that security is achievable through the domination of the Palestinian nation and replacing this with a strategy of generosity toward the other.

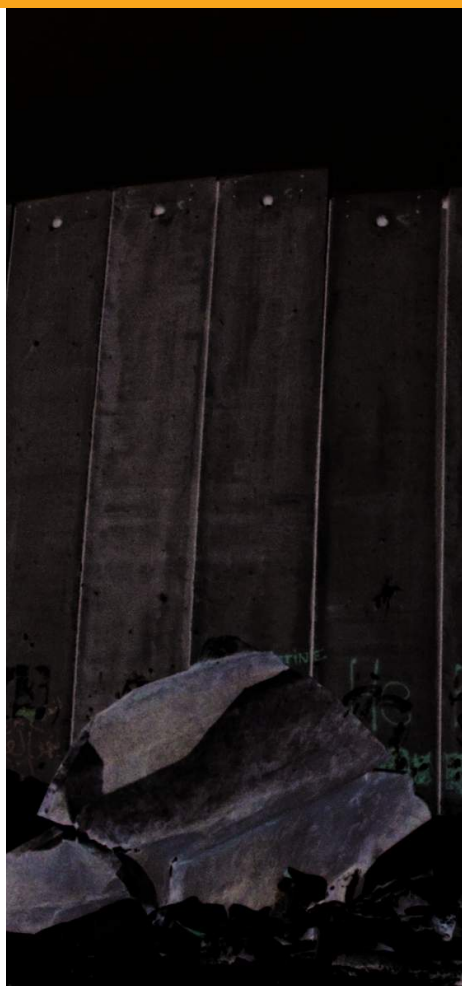
To end the conflict, all parties must recognize that the Occupation is at the core of the problems in the region. A new period of peace and prosperity for the two nations living in Palestine/Israel will not materialize until Palestinians exercise their right to self-determination and Israel acknowledges the Nakba and the right of return of the Palestinian refugees. These are principles; how they are realized should be left for negotiations. After these principles have been recognized, many of the issues that now seem insurmountable will likely come to have a different meaning. It is not impossible to imagine that the meaning now attributed to where a person lives and what religion he or she follows will cease to matter and that open borders and new mutually beneficial relations will come to exist between the nations of the Middle East: Israel, Jordan, Palestine, and eventually the rest of the states that have been created since the region was carved up in the wake of the First World War. ■

RAJA SHEHADEH is a writer and lawyer. His books include *Palestinian Walks: Notes on a Vanishing Landscape* (2007), for which he won the 2008 Orwell Prize, and more recently *Language of War, Language for Peace*. He is a founder of Al Haq.

Israel Can't Have It Both Ways

Recognize Palestine or Grant Equal Rights

BY SAM BAHOUR AND TONY KLUG



Ever since it became clear that the U.S. Secretary of State, John Kerry, had failed to cajole the Israeli and Palestinian leaders into finally ending their conflict, the pressing question has been, what next? Now, with the Israeli prime minister being reelected on a "no-two-state platform," the need to answer this question is more pressing than ever before.

For over twenty years process has trumped outcome, but it is now in danger of being out-trumped itself by the total collapse of the only internationally recognized paradigm for a solution to the conflict. A new international strategy urgently needs to be devised as an alternative to failed bilateral negotiations.

Our proposal takes as its starting point the need to resolve two crucial ambiguities regarding Israel's control of the West Bank and Gaza, its rule over the Palestinians, and the colonization of their land.

First, is it, or is it not, an occupation? The entire world, including the United States, thinks it is and therefore considers the Fourth Geneva Convention and other relevant provisions of international law to apply. The Israeli government does not accept this except when it suits it, notably in not granting Palestinians under its rule the same rights as Israelis. This ambiguity has served the occupying power well.

Second, at what point does an occupation cease to be an occupation and become a permanent or quasi-permanent state of affairs?

Our contention is that the occupying power should no longer be able to have it both ways. The laws of occupation either apply or do not apply. If it is an occupation, it is beyond time for Israel's custodianship—supposedly provisional—to be brought to an end. If it is not an occupation, there is no justification for denying equal rights to anyone who is subject to Israeli rule, whether Israeli or Palestinian. Successive Israeli governments have been allowed to get away with a colossal bluff for nearly forty-eight years. It is time to call that bluff and compel a decision.

The Israeli government should be put on notice that, by the fiftieth anniversary of the Occupation, it must make up its mind definitively, one way or the other. Half a century is surely enough time to decide. This would give Israel until June 2017 to make its choice between relinquishing the occupied territories—either directly to the Palestinians or possibly to a temporary international trusteeship—or alternatively granting full and equal citizenship rights to everyone living under its jurisdiction.

Should Israel not choose the first option by the target date, the international community may then conclude that Israel's government has opted by default for the second option, that of civic equality. Other governments, individually or collectively, and international civil society may then feel at liberty to hold the Israeli government accountable to that benchmark. To be clear, this is not a call for a unitary state. How Israelis and Palestinians wish to live alongside each other is for them to decide. The international community's role is to crystallize this.

The bottom line is that until the Palestinians, like the Israelis, achieve their primary choice of self-determination in their own state (if ever they do), they should no longer, in the modern era, be denied equal rights in whatever lands they inhabit, including Arab states. In the case of Israel and its indefinite Occupation, this means putting an end to ambiguities that have lasted far too long. ■

SAM BAHOUR is a Palestinian American business consultant in Ramallah and serves as a policy adviser to Al-Shabaka, the Palestinian Policy Network.

TONY KLUG is a veteran Middle East analyst and a special adviser to the Oxford Research Group.

At what point does an occupation become a permanent state of affairs? Here, a Palestinian child faces an Israeli soldier before the West Bank separation wall.

Creative Commons/Justin McIntosh

The Only Road to Sustainable Peace

Pluralistic Democracy

BY MAZIN QUMSIYEH

In medical genetics, the field in which I specialize, we believe the correct diagnosis is the best guarantee of selecting the right therapy and improving prognosis. I'd like to offer a diagnosis of the injustice in Palestine/Israel: the morass that we are in was created by an ideology called Zionism, which overlooked the immorality of transforming a multireligious and multicultural Palestine into the Jewish State of Israel.

The immoral ideology of Zionism is now being reevaluated in order to chart a better course forward instead of dealing cosmetically with its symptoms. Jews who have accepted this false idol of Zionism are leaving it in droves.

Those with some conscience who still cling to Zionist notions are mostly driven by fear and are noting major setbacks in their ill-fated efforts. These efforts previously focused on giving us Palestinians a sliver of our lands and denying the most important right we need for peace: the right of refugees to return to their homes and lands.

Our struggle is personal. On a deeper psychological level, the choice we have is between basing our actions on the worst elements of human history and daring to imagine and plan for a better future.

I entreat all of my fellow human beings to shed the chains that they have built around their own minds and make a moral stand for peace, which can happen only if native Palestinians' rights are respected. I predicted twenty years ago that the ardent right wing in Israel would gain more power. But I also predicted the growth of human consciousness at the grassroots level thanks to the internet and better global connectedness.

The push for boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) and similar nonviolent actions help accelerate the growing movement for Palestinian rights. Awareness is growing all around us, and we see people mixing everywhere (including by intermarriage) and rejecting the notion of "us here–them there." The trends are encouraging, and our job is to accelerate them in time to save ourselves and this beautiful planet. We cannot limit our struggle to Palestinian liberation alone—we must also take on the challenges of global warming, nuclear weapons, and the cascading fanaticism of religion-based states in Western Asia.

There are no win-lose or lose-win scenarios (not that this was ever a binary struggle). Here in (historic) Palestine, the lines of the struggle are also now clearer than ever: either you are siding with colonial racism and segregation, or you are committed to transforming the "Holy Land" (Israel/Palestine/Canaan) into a secular, pluralistic democracy for its people (who happen to be Jews, Christians, Muslims, Bahá'ís, atheists, and others). The latter is the only road to sustainable peace, and it happens to be a win-win scenario for *all*. It is moral and it is doable, but we cannot afford to stand on the sidelines. ■

MAZIN QUMSIYEH is a professor at Bethlehem University.

Activists with Jewish Voice for Peace stage a "die-in" protest outside Boeing offices in Seattle.

If You Want Justice, Support All Forms of Nonviolent Pressure on Israel

BY REBECCA VILKOMERSON

It has never been clearer that the status quo in Israel/Palestine is unacceptable. In the wake of the 2014 assault on Gaza, the election of the most right-wing government in Israeli history, the collapse of peace talks, and a clear rejection of a potential Palestinian state by Prime Minister Netanyahu, little hope is left that Israel will change on its own.

Words of criticism are not enough—concrete consequences are necessary to end the continuing human rights violations, systemic oppression, and inequality that Israel imposes on Palestinians. As American Jews whose values demand our support for justice, even when it means confronting our own community, we implore those who stand on the side of freedom and equality to join us in embracing and encouraging all forms of nonviolent pressure on Israel. It is way past time.

The power of the global Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement has grown significantly in the last year, lending hope to the idea that people of conscience, mobilizing around the world, can bring pressure to bear on the Israeli government to comply with international law and human rights norms. In 2005, Palestinian civil society groups issued a call for global civil society to use the tactics of boycott, divestment, and sanctions against Israel. The call states:

> These non-violent punitive measures should be maintained until Israel meets its obligation to recognize the Palestinian people's inalienable right to self-determination and fully complies with the precepts of international law by: 1) Ending its occupation and colonization of all Arab lands and dismantling the Wall; 2) Recognizing the fundamental rights of

REBECCA VILKOMERSON is the executive director of Jewish Voice for Peace (jvp.org).

Boeing, Stop Profiting From Civilian Deaths, Jewish Voice for Peace

the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality; and 3) Respecting, protecting and promoting the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties as stipulated in UN resolution 194.

Jewish Voice for Peace—the grassroots-based Jewish organization with which I work—has endorsed this call in solidarity with the Palestinian struggle for equality and justice. We believe that liberation for Palestinians (millions of whom have lived under military rule for most of Israel's existence) and liberation for Jewish Israelis (whose society is becoming increasingly militarized, antidemocratic, and racist) can be achieved only through outside pressure, through tools such as boycott, divestment, and sanctions.

The BDS call is not for a one-state or two-state "solution" but rather lists the bare minimum needed to move forward toward building a society that respects the full equality, freedom, and rights of Palestinians.

In reality, the one-state/two-state debate is a false choice. There are models for a two-state solution that could theoretically offer full rights for all people in Israel/Palestine, and there are two-state solutions that would create a powerless and fragmented Palestinian state (similar to the Bantustans created in South Africa under apartheid) and make a mockery of the idea of freedom for Palestinians. Likewise, there are models of a one-state solution that would include total annexation and apartheid, and models of a secular, binational state. The question is not how many states should be created, but how to achieve full equality and freedom for all people living in the region.

Justice will not be complete without grappling with the Nakba—the historical and ongoing displacement of Palestinians from their homes and the creation of a Palestinian refugee population that is now in the millions. We are inspired by the work of the Israeli organization Zochrot (zochrot.org) and the Palestinian organization Badil (badil.org), which have begun the work of imagining what return would look like without fear or demonization, and we urge Jewish Americans to engage with this history as part of the quest for justice. ■

Escaping the Two-State Snare

BY IAN S. LUSTICK

The new Israeli government, a coalition of ultra-religious, fundamentalist, racist, and neoliberal ideologues and placeholders, ensures that settlements will continue to expand. The lives of Jerusalem Arabs, Negev Bedouin, and Area C Palestinian residents will be embittered and endangered by intensive expropriation and Judaization campaigns. Every two years or so a military operation in Gaza, Lebanon, or the West Bank will "cut the grass"—that is, cause enough destruction to plunge Palestinian society into misery and discourage any plans to mobilize violently against Israel in the near future. Some key demands of settlers, including construction of Jewish housing in the E1 zone between Ma'ale Adumim and Jerusalem and expansion of ultranationalist Jewish presence on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif, will be pushed aggressively. Israeli foreign policy will continue to characterize the Middle East as a polarized battleground between civilization and Islamist barbarism, to stick its fingers in the eyes of European critics and the Obama administration, while also seeking effective but under-the-table alliances with antidemocratic forces in Egypt, the Arab Gulf, and elsewhere in the region. The hysterical campaign against Iranian nuclear technology and the Orwellian refusal to discuss the future of Israel's massive nuclear arsenal will also continue.

It's an ill wind that blows no good, and the very extremism of this government is as good a guarantee as any that another doomed and counterproductive American negotiating initiative will not materialize, or will at least be substantially delayed. This gives progressives and peace builders a desperately needed opportunity. Fires of hope and change need to be lit. To burn they will require oxygen. That oxygen has for many years been drained out of the politics around this issue by the suffocating mantra that confrontation and open criticism of oppressive, immoral, and ruthless Israeli policies must be avoided to "protect the peace negotiations." We must take full advantage of the present interval by having the courage to draw proper conclusions from the disappearance of a negotiated route to the two-state solution.

In place of a two-state snare and delusion, we must embrace a strategy of political mobilization that makes our

IAN S. LUSTICK is the Bess W. Heyman Professor in the political science department at the University of Pennsylvania. He is the author of dozens of books and articles on Arab-Israeli relations, including a piece in the Winter 2015 issue of the *Journal of Palestine Studies*.

values—not old commitments to institutional forms that used to serve as proxies for those values—the direct guides to our actions. My proposal is for Palestinians and Jews to fight, in every peaceful way possible, for principles of democracy, equality, and non-exclusivist opportunities for self-determination for each people. It is too late to care about whether the results of those struggles will be one state, two states, or three states. This means, for example, advocating that Palestinians vote in East Jerusalem elections, which they still have the legal right to do. Even a partial mobilization of that enormous population could transform governance of the city, establishing an inspiring precedent for deep political alliances between Palestinians and Jews. Israeli Jews seeking to change Israel into the kind of country that could change itself should follow Avrum Burg's example and support the predominantly Arab Joint List. The potential of that list to mobilize Jewish liberals, doves, and progressives is substantial. We all know many Jews who voted Meretz only out of nostalgia but whose hearts were with the Joint List. When that alliance has twenty to twenty-five seats, change will come to Israel. After all, can anyone imagine a Democratic president in Washington without a genuine working alliance between liberals, African Americans, and Latinos?

On the international plane, we should strongly support the BDS movement's focus on the Occupation and all the evils associated with it. From boycotts against German companies in the thirties, white segregationists in the fifties, and South African apartheid in the nineties, Jews have traditionally upheld economic sanctions as a powerful tool for direct action and transforming consciousness. Palestinian efforts to secure international condemnation of and sanctions against Israel at the International Criminal Court, the UN Security Council, and elsewhere should also be supported, including efforts to prevent an American veto of new and binding UN Security Council resolutions for Palestinian political and human rights.

None of this contradicts Michael Lerner's world-transforming strategies—a Global Marshall Plan and a radically democratizing amendment to the U.S. Constitution. But we must not sacrifice what else can be accomplished with respect to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, or let it spiral into uglier and uglier forms of oppression, by focusing our limited energies on tasks that require boundless reserves of effort and dedication. Nor can we evade the truth that we have opponents in this struggle and that they must lose if we are to prevail. As shown in Birmingham and Selma, in the movement against the Vietnam War, and even by Zionism itself, change of the profound sort required to make peace between Israel and the Palestinians is only achievable when alternatives to that change become intolerable. That is our job. We must use our commitment to toleration to make intolerance intolerable for those who practice it. ■

Creative Commons/Israel Defense Forces

Women from the Jewish settlement of Neve Dekalim refuse to be evacuated by Israeli soldiers during Israel's disengagement from Gaza in 2005. The extremism of the new Israeli government ensures that settlements like these will continue to expand.

Moving Beyond the One-State/Two-State Debate

BY ANDREW ARATO

THE CURRENT Israeli government has no interest in any plausible version of a two-state solution. The current government also has no intention whatsoever of affirming equal citizenship of the Arab inhabitants of the West Bank within the overall Israeli control system. So what now?

The inclusion of Isaac Herzog in a unity government would not have altered Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's interest in the perpetuation of the current state of affairs, which can best be described as either indefinite occupation or a system tending toward apartheid. Neither is acceptable either morally or in current international law.

I agree with Michael Lerner's creative proposal in this issue of *Tikkun*: the notion that liberal and progressive Jews should continue to imagine and support *both* a viable two-state solution and an egalitarian one within the territorial boundaries of the current control system, the old Palestinian Mandate. There is no need to make a definitive choice between them. Though both outcomes are unlikely in the short or middle term, both remain within the realm of possibility. Depending on the nature of the solutions, either could be just, and there is no moral reason why a larger state of all its citizens would be preferable to two smaller states.

In their best versions, the two-state and one-state solutions could be seen as converging in some form of federal association of two peoples within the larger territory, as Hannah Arendt once proposed. To overcome doubts about the one-state, majoritarian solution, it is desirable to think of the one-state arrangement once again as a federal system that would involve a high degree of autonomy for both peoples, as in the UN Special Committee Minority Proposal of 1947. Conversely, to overcome doubts about the viability of the two-state solution, it would be important to revive, at the very least, the UN General Assembly's Partition Plan for an economic union that could become the foundation for some form of political federation as well.

We cannot tell today, from a strategic point of view, which of the two options would have more chances of realization or be less utopian in the long term. What is clear, however, is that they would require two different political strategies and two different international roles. A two-state solution would require a political bargain between an Israeli government and a plausible Palestinian partner that included all major forces, otherwise no credible commitments could be guaranteed. Moreover, without very strong international pressure, even the relevant negotiations would not take place. Thus one political strategy would involve ratcheting up the pressure on the Israeli government and also on the intransigent elements on the Palestinian side. This strategy could also include agitating for increased international recognition of the Palestinian State by individual states, as well as passing detailed resolutions aiming at a solution in various international bodies.

A grassroots program of boycotts, divestment, and sanctions aiming at targeted sectors of the Israeli economy—for example, sectors engaged in war production and settlement financing, as well as companies based in West Bank settlements—could also be effective. Boycotting Israeli cultural and academic institutions would be unwise in this context, since calls for academic boycott can result in the advocates of all forms of boycott—including more narrowly targeted boycotts—being branded as anti-Semitic.

Supporting movement toward a federal system within a single territorial state in Israel/Palestine would require a different but certainly not incompatible political strategy. Here the South African example of dealing with a system of legal apartheid could be helpful. After all, the goal of this strategy would be equal citizenship within an entirely new political design, and that very thing was accomplished through a comprehensive set of negotiations among an inclusive set of political actors in South Africa. Local political groups such as the African National Congress were the driving forces behind this accomplishment, with external boycotts playing a relatively minor role in moving toward that outcome. Nevertheless, the pressure exerted by the international community—and especially the international community's open condemnation of apartheid and its delegitimation of the regime based on the apartheid system—was important.

The politics of a campaign to end legal apartheid within the current Israeli control system would require an analogous form of political agency. The recent elections in Israel were disastrous overall, but they did allow for the emergence

ANDREW ARATO is the D. Hirshon Professor in Political and Social Theory at the New School for Social Research.

of one encouraging new development: the Joint List, now in the Knesset, which could play a similar role to the one the African National Congress played in South Africa. The Joint List as a whole is an Arab-Jewish formation. Its membership is mixed, and the leader of the Hadash political party (an Israeli political party with communist roots) has become a preeminent figure within the group.

I believe that the Joint List could become an effective political actor if its Arab-Jewish character and its secular component grow stronger. The Joint List could greatly benefit from external Jewish support: Jewish groups globally should encourage an alliance between the Joint List and organizations on the left of the Israeli spectrum, such as Peace Now and Meretz, however weak they have become.

Let me end by stressing that for an Arab-Jewish politics aiming at the refoundation of Israel/Palestine, the encouragement of violent insurgency would be disastrous. The late Edward Said, toward the end of his life, realized the disastrous role violent tactics played in pushing Israeli opinion to the right.

I also believe that the nonviolent push for cultural boycotts could have counterproductive effects. Rather than be boycotted, Israeli artists, intellectuals, and academics should be encouraged to produce a better binational politics. Only more, rather than less, discussion can help move them toward such a goal. Even though Palestinian activists have issued a call for people worldwide to engage in cultural and academic boycotts, we each have a responsibility to differentiate to the best of our abilities between tactics that can have a productive role and those whose results will be exactly the opposite of an imaginable scenario of peace and reconciliation. ■

Israel's Human Shields Defense

Shielding Israeli War Crimes

BY OVADIA EZRA

The Israeli-Palestinian confrontation has reached the phase where no one seems to care any longer about *jus in bello* (justice in the course of warfare), let alone reducing the levels of brutality. Restoring trust or fidelity between the belligerents seems irrelevant to the parties concerned—the most we can hope for is restoring sanity, especially with regard to mercy and sensitivity toward human life and suffering. However, such a process requires sincere and honest efforts currently unavailable, so it seems the only way to restore a semblance of restraint is to force both sides to follow the requirements of international law. In this category I include the Geneva Conventions (and their additional protocols), the Hague Conventions, and first and foremost, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

I concern myself here with one particular example of the aggression and brutality of the conflict: the Israeli accusation that Palestinians used civilians as human shields during "Operation Protective Edge," the Israeli military's code name for the confrontation that raged in the summer of 2014. This accusation, and the actions that the Israeli army attempted to justify with it, make clear the desperate need for belligerents in Israel/Palestine to abide by *jus in bello* as it is defined by international humanitarian law.

There is no doubt about the most conspicuous and disturbing characteristic of Operation Protective Edge: both sides totally ignored noncombatant immunity. There was, however, no symmetry, no moral equivalence. The Palestinians routinely lobbed mortar shells and primitive missiles toward Israeli towns, cities, and settlements. By way of stark contrast, Israelis used the latest fighter-bombers, assault helicopters, artillery, tanks, and gunboats against Palestinian targets. Both sides acted indiscriminately. However, Israeli citizens were somewhat protected by bomb shelters and other secure spaces. In addition, a very efficient antimissile system known as the "Iron Dome" intercepted over 90 percent of the primitive Palestinian weapons. Civilians in Gaza, on the other hand, were totally exposed to bombing and shooting.

Not surprisingly, the numbers and proportions of casualties sustained by each side are significantly different. According to the UN (BBC, September 1, 2014), seventy-two Israelis (sixty-six soldiers and six civilians) and one Thai citizen were killed. The UN also reported that at least 2,104 Palestinians died, including 1,462 civilians (among them 495 children and

OVADIA EZRA is a professor of philosophy at Tel Aviv University. He thanks Ron Hirschbein, his friend, fellow peace seeker, and professor emeritus at California State University, Chico, for his immense contribution to this article.

A man stands in front of his destroyed home in Beit Hanoun, a part of Gaza that Israel bombarded in summer 2014. The destruction left approximately 180,000 Gazans homeless.

Muhammad Sabah/B'Tselem

253 women). Although an Israeli government official told the BBC that 1,000 "terrorists" were killed, the UN figures suggest that 69 percent of Palestinian deaths were of civilians.

In short, by ignoring noncombatant immunity, Israeli operations indiscriminately destroyed much of Gaza's life-sustaining infrastructure. The UN estimates that around 18,000 housing units were destroyed or severely damaged, leaving 108,000 Palestinians homeless. These events merit a separate discussion, one devoted to determining the circumstances that compelled the Palestinian decision to attack civilian targets first (for example, the lack of discriminate or accurate weapons, particularly for long distances, or their complete military inferiority, which caused them to choose guerrilla fighting tactics, etc.). However, I am interested here in analyzing just one part of this broader picture: the political context of the Israeli accusation that Palestinian insurgents used civilians—if not the Gazan infrastructure itself—as a human shield. The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs claimed that Palestinians tried "to prevent the Israeli Air Force from attacking operatives' houses" and from attacking other targets of military value by resorting to the use of human shields.

Human Shields: A Brief History

Before returning to a consideration of Operation Protective Edge and Israeli allegations about the use of human shields, a brief survey of the origins of this tactic in combat will be helpful for understanding the prohibition against using human shields in warfare, and the limitations and restraints this prohibition imposes on combat.

The logic of using a human shield is grounded on the assumption that your enemy respects the conventions of war. These conventions, according to Michael Walzer's *Just and Unjust Wars*, "rest more deeply on a certain view of noncombatants, which holds that they are men and women with rights and that they cannot be used for some military purpose, even if it is a legitimate purpose." This idea requires, first and foremost, that "noncombatants cannot be attacked at any time. They can never be the objects or the targets of military activity."

Walzer's view is a reasonable interpretation of Article 51 of the Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Convention, adopted June 8, 1977, which declares that 1) "the civilian population and individual civilians shall enjoy general protection against dangers arising from military operations," and 2) "the civilian population as such, as well as individual civilians, shall not be the object of attack." Article 13 of Additional Protocol II reiterates both of these injunctions.

An exception is sometimes claimed to these international accords: in the event that noncombatant immunity is strictly respected by one belligerent, the other belligerent—especially when it suffers from military inferiority—may use civilians as human shields, to prevent the other side from attacking targets whose damage or destruction might cause noncombatant injury. In my view, such a use of civilians is one of the most blatant violations of the declaration of the 1899 Hague Convention, which refers to noncombatant immunity. This exception exploits noncombatants.

The prohibition against using civilians as human shields is anchored in several other legal sources, such as the Third

Geneva Convention, Article 23, which mandates that "no prisoner of war may at any time be sent to, or detained in areas where he may be exposed to the fire of the combat zone, nor may his presence be used to render certain points or areas immune from military operations." Additionally, the Fourth Geneva Convention, Article 28, mandates that "the presence of a protected person may not be used to render certain points or areas immune from military operations." Finally, Article 12 of additional Protocol I to the Geneva Convention insists, "Under no circumstances shall medical units be used in an attempt to shield military objectives from attack."

Moreover, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, Article 8, states that it is a war crime to utilize "the presence of a civilian or other protected person to render certain points, areas or military forces immune from military operations." Perhaps the most relevant prohibition regarding the use of civilians as human shields in a military operation is Article 51 of Additional Protocol I. This paragraph states:

> The presence or movements of the civilian population or individual civilians shall not be used to render certain points or areas immune from military operations, in particular in attempts to shield military objectives from attacks or to shield, favour or impede military operations. The Parties to the conflict shall not direct the movement of the civilian population or individual civilians in order to attempt to shield military objectives from attacks or to shield military operations.

Moreover, the Customary International Humanitarian Law, Rule 97, specifically refers to human shields and prohibits their use. Accordingly, such tactics are condemned.

Disputed Accusations

But did the Palestinians actually use civilians as human shields? Reporters in Gaza at that time said they did not see any evidence that would have supported Israeli accusations in this regard. Anne Barnard and Jodi Rudoren wrote in *The New York Times* (July 24, 2014), "Nothing is ever so clear in the complex and often brutal calculus of urban warfare. There is no evidence that Hamas and other militants force civilians to stay in areas that are under attack." A similar claim was raised by Jeremy Bowen (*The New Statesman,* July 22, 2014), who "saw no evidence during [his] week in Gaza of Israel's accusation that Hamas uses Palestinians as human shields." On the other hand, Barnard and Rudoren admit that "it is indisputable that Gaza militants operate in civilian areas, draw return fire to civilian structures, and on some level benefit in the diplomatic arena from the rising casualties. They also have at times encouraged residents not to flee their homes when alerted by Israel to a pending strike and, having prepared extensively for war, did not build civilian bomb shelters."

At this juncture, I will not dig deeper into the legal dispute about whether civilians should be coerced into becoming human shields. At this point, a neglected question emerges: could Hamas have used open spaces or unpopulated areas for its military forces to reduce the huge number of casualties? Israeli forces failed to ask: did Gazan civilians have anywhere to escape while Hamas launched missiles from their neighborhoods?

The answers to these questions may be found by examining a map. The population of the Gaza strip is approximately 1.8 million people, and its total area is 360 square kilometers. For the sake of comparison, the largest U.S. military base, Fort Bragg, occupies 163,000 acres, or about 650 square kilometers—nearly twice the area of Gaza. Forty-three percent of this dense population is composed of children under fourteen. These data, together with some other details (for example, there is no airport or naval port from which civilians can leave the area) demonstrate a tragic situation in which people cannot find shelter or escape to a safer place. They are, de facto, confined to their houses and neighborhoods. In Gaza City, for example, the only open space to which people can escape is the beach. According to Reuters (July 16, 2014), children playing soccer on Gaza's beach were bombed by an Israeli ship. Four of them died.

What's salient is that the people in Gaza were not moved or forced by anybody to serve as human shields. What's tragically overlooked is that they could not move anywhere else while Hamas launched missiles and rockets from their vicinity. In some sense they became virtual hostages of Hamas—there were no other options. However, they could have been relatively safe if Israeli attacks had been discriminate and precise. A reasonable and precautionary response by the Israeli military forces could easily have reduced the number of noncombatant casualties. The fact that the Israeli army (according to *Haaretz*, August 15, 2014) indiscriminately fired at least 32,000 artillery shells shows that the Israelis ignored thousands of civilian casualties. Likewise, Israeli forces cavalierly demolished houses and civilian infrastructure. Gaza civilians were de facto hostages—helpless victims of indiscriminate Israeli tactics.

Could Israel's indiscriminate tactics be justified by those who accept the doctrine of "military necessity"? Walzer explains that this doctrine "justifies not only whatever is necessary to win the war, but also whatever is necessary to reduce the risk of losing, or simply to reduce losses or the likelihood of losses in the course of the war." However, the overall number of casualties and losses cannot be justified by saving the lives of Israeli troops. There was no existential threat to Israel.

Another possible justification for Israel's indiscriminate tactics could have been "the doctrine of double effect." As Walzer explains,

Israeli civilians duck and cover to protect themselves from an incoming rocket. While the civilian casualties of Israel's wars with Hamas have been overwhelmingly Palestinian, the sense of danger and insecurity felt by Israelis continues to push Israeli voters to the right.

Kobi Gideon/FLASHgo

> It is permitted to perform an act likely to have evil consequences (the killing of noncombatants) provided the following four conditions hold:
>
> 1) The act is good in itself or at least indifferent, which means, for our purposes, that it is a legitimate act of war.
>
> 2) The direct effect is morally acceptable—the destruction of military supplies, for example, or the killing of enemy soldiers.
>
> 3) The intention of the actor is good, that is, he aims only at the acceptable effect; the evil effect is not one of his ends, nor is it a means to his ends.
>
> 4) The good effect is sufficiently good to compensate for allowing the evil effect.

The Israelis may claim that the direct effect they anticipated was destroying the launchers and putting an end to the launching of missiles toward Israel. However, reference to missile launch statistics reveals no significant changes in the numbers of missiles launched toward Israel over the fifty days of the operation. So this justification fails. Another possible effect may have been the killing of Hamas fighters, but this claim is not consistent with the Israeli assertion that most of the fighters and commanders were hiding in underground bunkers and shelters. The only vulnerable victims were the noncombatants.

The Case for Israeli War Crimes

With no good justification, Israel tried to blame the Palestinians for the disastrous killing of civilians by arguing that they were used as human shields. As I have pointed out, this is an unfair accusation, given Gaza's geography and demography. And even if it were the case, the Israelis should have restrained their reaction and used more discriminating weapons during the course of warfare. The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court could thus be used to accuse Israel of causing war crimes by failing to do so. For example, Article 8, Section 2 (b) in part defines as war crimes any actions of

> (i) Intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population as such or against individual civilians not taking direct part in hostilities;
>
> (ii) Intentionally directing attacks against civilian objects, that is, objects which are not military objectives . . . ;
>
> (iv) Intentionally launching an attack in the knowledge that such attack will cause incidental loss of life or injury to civilians or damage to civilian objects . . . ;
>
> (v) Attacking or bombarding, by whatever means, towns, villages, dwellings or buildings which are undefended and which are not military objectives . . . ;

To be sure, these are not the only protocols that could be used to define the Israeli indiscriminate bombing as war crimes. Even if we accept the accusation that Palestinian civilians were exploited as human shields, a question remains: what should the Israelis have done? As Asa Kasher, the author of the IDF ethics code, argues in the *Jewish Review of Books* (Fall 2014), "Human shields may be attacked together with the terrorists, but attempts should be made to minimize collateral damage among them, even though those who act willingly are, in fact, accomplices of Hamas."

And what of the claim that Hamas was the first to violate the war conventions? Even if this were the case, a simple precept of ethics should be clear: two wrongs do not make a right. Using human shields does not justify another violation of the conventions of war in response. Both violations should be judged, but I think that the number of noncombatant casualties on the Palestinian side strongly suggests that Israelis intentionally hit civilian targets—a crime worthy of the World Court's attention. ■

Children of the bilingual, binational Wahat al-Salam–Neve Shalom community hold a sign demanding peace. Founded in 1969, this oasis of peace offers proof that harmonious coexistence is possible.

Wahat al-Salam-Neve Shalom

A New Horizon for Peace

An Israel-Palestine Union

BY OREN YIFTACHEL

In light of the total deadlock on the question of Palestine, a group of Israelis and Palestinians is developing an original vision of peace, which under the current circumstance is becoming more relevant than ever: "two states, one homeland."

Following Netanyahu's return to power, a sense of despair engulfed the peace camp in Israel, Palestine, and beyond. Indeed, the Likud Party's policy of strongly supporting Jewish colonization of the West Bank and recent vicious Israeli attacks on Gaza make peace based on the two-state solution seem like a disappearing mirage. Deep divisions among the Palestinians and waves of Hamas-inspired violence against Israeli civilians further this impression.

Moreover, even if a Palestinian state is miraculously established in the near future, it is likely to become a small "ghetto state" with severely limited sovereignty and a source of constant grievance. Further, the "divorce" model between Israel and Palestine is likely to heighten conflict over core issues such as Jerusalem (to be redivided), settlements (to be mostly forcefully removed, causing havoc in Jewish society), the Palestinian right of return (to be ignored, causing major tensions in Palestinian society), and the status of the Palestinians in Israel (to remain dangerously marginal). Hence, even if an agreement is achieved, there remains high likelihood of new eruptions between two disgruntled ethnocratic states.

Some people believe that the failure of the two-state solution will "naturally" lead to a one-state solution. But these calls, increasingly popular among Palestinians, appear to be simplistic, expressing wishful thinking for possibilities outside the political field. Let us remember that no state is likely to give up its independence and sovereignty, least of all Israel. Why would Israelis support merging with Palestine and the creation of a single state with a future Arab majority? Why would Israel, a state of refugees itself, give up its hard-earned sovereignty?

Hence, neither a two-state nor a one-state solution appears to offer a feasible, let alone desirable, end to the conflict. Given this deadlock, what now?

Oren Yiftachel teaches political geography at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. He has been active in several human rights organizations and served as chair of the board of B'Tselem. His opinions do not represent the policies of any of the above organizations.

In an attempt to think "outside the box," a group of Palestinians and Israelis recently arrived at a new vision, which we titled, "two states, one homeland." We propose that Palestine and Israel function as a union or confederation: two sovereign entities that agree to cooperate on certain matters, with open borders to all citizens of the member states. This path to peace will better address most core issues of the conflict and bypass many of the huge obstacles and dislocations deriving from either a two-state or a one-state solution.

We believe that the whole land, from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea, is the national homeland for both Jews and Palestinians. This strong attachment is central to mutual recognition and progress toward reconciliation. Such recognition will allay many Israeli fears and allow the establishment of a fully sovereign Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza.

In the union that we envision, Jewish settlements willing to keep the peace and pay for their land will be allowed to remain under Palestinian sovereignty. Jerusalem will become a genuinely united and equal city and the capital of both states under a special regime, resembling the Brussels model. The city will be jointly governed by Israelis and Palestinians with strong international and interreligious involvement.

The Palestinian right of return will be recognized, but implemented only within Palestine. Yet when refugees receive Palestinian citizenship, the principle of freedom of movement will enable their reconnection to places from which they have been evicted. The Palestinians in Israel will receive national minority status, with appropriate collective rights. Israel and Palestine will establish a series of joint institutions to manage joint concerns such as environmental threats, natural resources, economic development, labor movements, and human rights.

Such a vision allows for Israeli and Palestinian self-determination while creating a more stable and decolonized binational setting, as well as a geographical and legal platform for prosperity. These can be achieved in the union without compromising the rights of either Israelis or Palestinians.

The new movement has gathered support from grassroots action and organization, and now has several hundred members. It aims to work from below and capture the minds and hearts of Palestinians, Israelis, and international communities. It offers fresh and original answers to many of the profound problems ignored by the solutions "on the table." It also draws on successful confederational agreements in past areas of conflict, such as Canada, Bosnia, and most famously, the European Union.

We believe that this vision can instill hope for reformulating a significant joint movement of Israelis and Palestinians working politically to end Israeli colonization and finally move seriously toward a reachable, just, and stable peace.

International pressure and support are critical to the possible success of an Israeli-Palestinian union. We hence reach out to diaspora Jews and Palestinians to join the movement or promote the initiative's just, realistic, and progressive ideas. To learn more, visit tikkun.org/yiftachel. ■

State-Building Can Pave the Way to Statehood

Lessons from Kurdistan

BY REUVEN KIMELMAN

How did the Palestinians' odds for statehood and those of the Kurds get reversed in twenty years? The Kurds have spent several decades, especially the last, constructing the educational, economic, military, and political institutions for statehood. Most telling is the growth in women's rights and the decline in family honor killings. Turning from killing women and Turks to building Kurdish autonomy, the Kurds are achieving growing international support for their bid for statehood.

Similarly, the case for Palestinian statehood will not be made by bashing Israel, by arguing for the moral superiority of one's narrative and one's victimhood, or by asking what is good for Israel alone. The real question is what is good for the Palestinians. A people slaughtered by Arab Jordanians and Lebanese Christians in the 1970s, expelled by Kuwaitis in the 1990s, and massacred by Syrian Muslims in our day deserve better. They deserve a modern, democratic state.

REUVEN KIMELMAN is a professor of Near Eastern and Judaic studies at Brandeis University.

What would it take to create a modern, democratic Palestine? First, periodic free elections (why tolerate a reality where once elected there are no elections again?). However, for elections to foster a democratic society, there must be a supporting political culture and civil society. Otherwise, it will remain one-man-one-vote-one-time. This entails public education (especially for women), freedom of the press and speech, the right to strike and to bargain collectively, opposition political parties, an independent judiciary, and transparency in government budgets and outside funding. It entails demanding an answer to why, after twenty years of billion-dollar handouts, there is still a need for 100 million dollars from Qatar to bankroll the payroll of the Palestinian government. In addition, to win widespread international support for Palestinian statehood there needs to be a reduction in the rate of domestic violence, especially family honor killings; of government corruption; and of the persecution and decline of Christians. The Palestinian entities are not only *Judenrein* ("cleansed" of Jews) but threaten to be *Christianrein*, as well. Why should Israel be the sole Middle Eastern country that is safe for Christians and where the Christian population is actually growing?

International support will play a major role in determining whether Palestinians win their bid for statehood, just as it did for Israel. Top: David Ben-Gurion signs the Israeli Declaration of Independence in 1948. Bottom: Mahmoud Abbas celebrates after the UN General Assembly votes to grant Palestine observer state status in 2012.

Since the absence of minority rights paves the way for the absence of majority rights, namely the rights of individuals comprising the majority, a contingent of Jews must remain to guarantee the collective and individual rights of Christians and others. One thing is clear: blaming Israel is not the path to statehood. Were the Kurds to continue to blame their woes, legitimately or otherwise, exclusively on Iraq or Syria, they would be wallowing in the same no-win situation. The last thing the Middle East needs is another failed state that blames others for its flaws.

The number of Israelis who advocate holding all of Judea and Samaria for security reasons far exceeds the number of those who want to do so for cultural, historical, and ideological reasons. Progress on Palestinian state-building would ease their fears, creating more flexibility on the political front. What greater boon for Israelis and Palestinians than a viable, peaceful, democratic state along their longest border? ■

Top: Creative Commons/Government Press Office of Israel Bottom: UN Photo/Rick Bajornas

Israeli Elections Won't End Oppression in Palestine/Israel

BY AMER SHURRAB

Counting on a "left-wing" election victory to produce change in Israeli policy is naïve. A quick review of history reveals that Labor governments not only have led most of Israel's wars against its neighbors, but also spearheaded settlement expansion in the West Bank. Labor leaders, including David Ben-Gurion and Shimon Peres, have presided over countless massacres and war crimes. Moreover, Israeli society has been shifting to the far right, so much so that Ariel Sharon became a centrist figure and Tzipi Livni is now a left-wing leader. It is therefore critical to understand the core issues of the conflict in order to move forward in a productive way.

Before one begins to explore solutions to any given issue, one must explore all dimensions of the problem: not only how it manifests on the surface, but also the structural framework that allows the problem to persist. The past twenty-five years of the "peace process" provide ample evidence of the devastating effect of haphazard solutions that are not based on a proper understanding of the nature of the conflict. A just and sustainable resolution for the conflict in Palestine/Israel requires recognizing the underlying issues at its heart. Only by addressing them can peace building begin.

Israel's founding in 1948 was a coronation of the Zionist Organization's efforts. As a colonial enterprise, the Zionist Organization and subsequently Israel have always relied on the support of a major power patron: Britain at first, then France, and currently the United States. The self-proclaimed Jewish State was founded on ethnic cleansing and the removal of the indigenous population to make way for Jewish immigrants. It started with the forced removal of over 700,000 indigenous Palestinians from their land and the destruction of more than 400 villages in 1948.

This destruction is still ongoing. Today, about 4.5 million Palestinians live under the Israeli Occupation in the West Bank and Gaza. They have no voting rights and Israel deprives them of their basic human rights. Palestinians with Israeli citizenship are treated as third-class citizens and Sephardic Jews are considered second-class citizens. Thus, over 70 percent of the people under Israel's rule have either no rights or are, at best, subject to constant, systematic discrimination.

The way forward must be for the world and the Israeli public to recognize the apartheid regime in Israel and act to end it. Boycott, divestment, sanctions, trade embargo, and a ban on arms exports would send a clear message to Israeli leaders and the public at large. Once Israeli politicians lose their foreign patrons and oversee economic decline and isolation, they will be under tremendous pressure—internal and external—to work to end oppression and apartheid and to accept equal rights for Palestinians. ■

Post (Visit Palestine) or The Guillotine by Amer Shomali is a satirical adaptation of a 1936 tourism poster designed by Franz Kraus. Here, the separation wall blocks the view of Jerusalem that Kraus had hoped would entice tourists to visit Palestine.

Amer Shomali (amershomali.info)

AMER SHURRAB is a human rights advocate from Gaza, Palestine, based in New York. He has spoken on college campuses and in communities across the United States about the atrocities and oppression of the Israeli Occupation in Palestine.

Closing Thoughts on "What's Next for Israel/Palestine?"

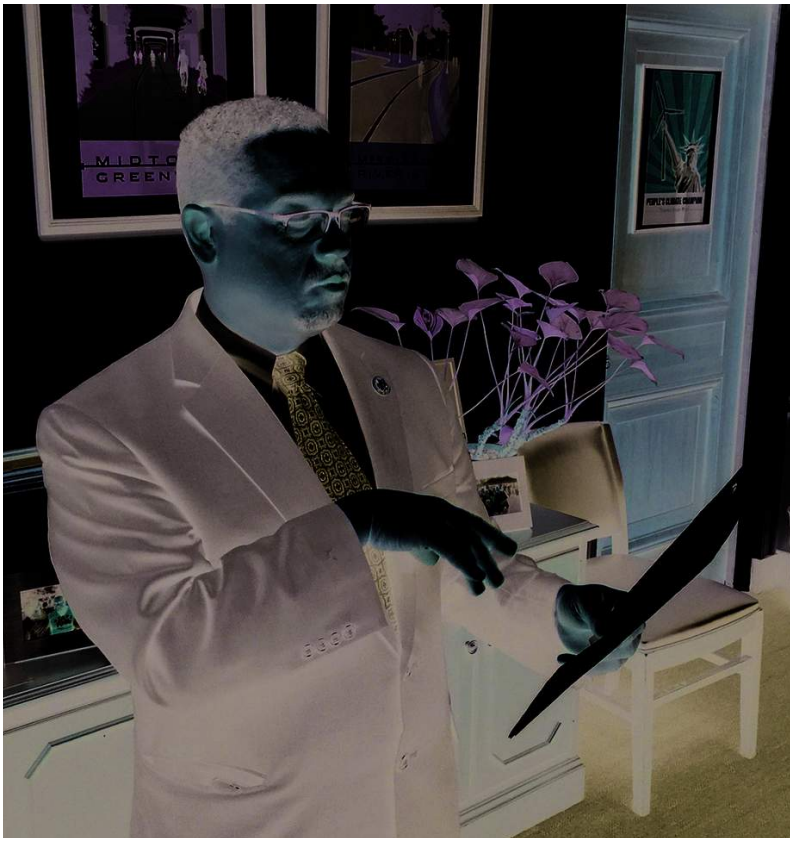
BY MICHAEL LERNER

King Solomon, reputed to be one of the wisest ancient kings, decided to create a ring for himself bearing a message that would always be true. The message he chose? "This too will pass."

The conflict between Israel and Palestine will also pass. A new generation will arise that is no longer traumatized by the past and no longer believes that its interests are served by engaging in this struggle.

We, sadly, live "in the meantime."

And we have a huge responsibility to hasten the day when trauma will be replaced by mutual affirmation and reconciliation, or steps in that direction sufficient to make it possible for that new generation to grow up without the traumas of the past.



Congressman Keith Ellison (D-Minn.) studies a copy of the Global Marshall Plan. Rep. Ellison has endorsed *Tikkun*'s plan to shift from a strategy of domination to a strategy of generosity and plans to introduce a new House resolution in support of it.

Congressman Keith Ellison

As you can see by reading the articles we gathered for this section, there are wide differences in fundamental understandings of what caused the current situation and what will heal or transform it.

I made clear in my introduction to this section the position of *Tikkun*: that change in the Middle East may require change in the West on a fundamental level so that people come to recognize that "homeland security" is more likely to be achieved through generosity (for example, through a Global Marshall Plan like the one described at tikkun.org/gmp) than through a strategy of domination. Yet it is difficult to persuade others of this, because strategies of domination have been the status quo for the past 10,000 years, roughly corresponding to the years of class oppression, having emerged with patriarchal societies. We pray that these strategies of militarism and domination will pass in the way that patriarchal societies are beginning to pass in the contemporary world, bit by bit.

But *Tikkun* doesn't seek ideological unity among our authors. We seek to create a "big tent" in which the most important issues facing humanity can be discussed with mutual respectfulness and humility. I think we achieved that in this section, and I'll be happy to read your letters to the editor in response, some of which we might decide to publish in the magazine or on our website. You can send them to letters@tikkun.org and share additional responses with me at rabbilerner.tikkun@gmail.com.

Tikkun has an activist arm, the Network of Spiritual Progressives, which seeks to generate a new public discussion to challenge strategies of domination. You can help by joining our campaign for the Global Marshall Plan: please urge your own professional organization, union, church, synagogue, mosque, political party, social change organization, civic group, student organization, city council, state legislature, or congressional representatives to endorse it. Doing so will start conversations that are the first important steps in challenging the dominant discourse. Join us at: **spiritualprogressives.org/join**. ■

Making Amends

Healing from Individual and Collective Trauma and Loss

BY WENDY ELISHEVA SOMERSON

When the photos of Tariq Abu Khdeir's bloated face with blackened and swollen eyes first appeared on my Facebook feed in the summer of 2014, I quickly scrolled away from them. I had read his story: I knew he was a fifteen-year-old Palestinian American who was beaten and kicked unconscious by the police while protesting the murder and abduction of his cousin in East Jerusalem. I knew his story was not unusual, but that it had reached the mainstream media because he was an American citizen whose attack was caught on video.

When I finally watched the video of the police beating Tariq, I was snatched out of the present and into a particularly violent incident from my childhood.

Flashback to Childhood

It is 3 am. My sixteen-year-old sister is lying on her side on the carpeted living room floor. The dark gold carpet is divided into puffy sections separated by flat lines, which look like little roads winding through golden fields.

My dad is standing over her, kicking her. A scar marks the northeast corner of my dad's forehead, which turns a deeper red than the rest of his face when he is angry.

Driving back to our house after a late night, my sister had crashed our family car, a Dodge Dart, into a parked car. Metal collided with metal, crumpling the Dart until it was totaled. My sister was unharmed—that is, until my dad got to her.

My sister is now curling up into a ball to protect herself, while my dad kicks her in the side again and again. Blood soaks into the golden fields, but when I see the stains the next day, the blood looks as though it has seeped out of the land beneath it—evidence of violent crimes committed deep within the earth.

I am watching, curled up in a dark gold– and olive-striped chair, afraid he is going to kill my sister. I don't know how to stop the violence, and for this, I feel ashamed. Gnawing at my cuticles until they bleed, I try to rip myself out of the scene unfolding before me. I transport myself through parted olive drapes, out the bay window, and into the front yard. Squinting into the freckled sun under the shade of the oak tree, I am touching the mossy hollows in the enormous tree roots where I often created dwellings for my Fisher Price play people.

Although I managed to drift away from the violence as it was occurring, this image of my dad kicking my sister tracks me down well into the future, insisting that I bear it full witness. The most recent time I was jerked back to that gold carpet scene was when I saw the image of Tariq's bloody face.

After being pulled back into this memory of family violence, I kept experiencing an intense feeling of dread connected to my dad's violence but also to the current violence in Palestine. As I watched atrocities unfold in Gaza, I felt frozen in a helpless witness role, forced to watch violence that was out of my control but for which I felt responsible.

To take action around Gaza, I had to work through this memory of being unable to prevent the violence that I witnessed as a kid. I had to face the dread that was pulling me into a response from the past rather than allowing me to feel deeply connected to the current crisis in Gaza and to act from that place of feeling.

Healing from Childhood Violence

My healing process has been structured by my dad's absence. How do you grieve the loss of someone who has hurt you deeply and violently? My dad has been dead for half my life now, but his violence lives in me, impacting how I inhabit my body, navigate intimacy, and even respond to the political world around me.

While we often think of personal healing as completely separate from social justice work, in truth the two are deeply intertwined. My efforts to heal from my father's violence have deeply impacted my political activism.

When I was in my twenties, I refused to consciously acknowledge my dad's impact, telling myself he had nothing to do with my chronic insomnia, nightmares, or pain. At some point on the day of his *yahrtzeit* (the anniversary of his death), I would feel nauseated, remember what day it was, and quickly try to forget I had remembered.

WENDY ELISHEVA SOMERSON, one of the founders of the Seattle chapter of Jewish Voice for Peace, believes that art, activism, and ritual help us envision and create the world to come. She is a somatic practitioner in Seattle.

Eventually in my thirties, as I began reclaiming my Jewish identity, I started to observe his yahrtzeit with a conscious remembrance. I began by sharing positive memories of him. Talking with friends over a Shabbat dinner, I would describe the good qualities that I inherited from my father—his work ethic, sense of humor, and love of cats. I thought this might help me "forgive" him, which is what we are often told that we must do in order to heal and move on. Yet as I dove deeper into my healing through somatic therapy (a type of therapy that addresses how we hold trauma in our whole selves—body, mind, and spirit), I realized that the idea of healing through forgiveness was a ruse: jumping to forgiveness was a way to bypass my feelings and rush to resolution without doing the hard work of confronting trauma and pain. I needed, instead, to truly mourn this double loss—the loss of an idealized father who would have protected instead of violated me, as well as the loss of my actual father.

By encouraging us to forgive and forget and by offering strategies to numb our feelings, our society reinforces our own survival mechanisms, which often encourage us to dissociate from traumatic experiences. But when we turn away from our pain, we end up practically dead ourselves—going through the motions of living without deeply feeling anything. As I began acknowledging how deeply affected I was by this relationship, I started using my dad's yahrtzeit as a time to grapple with the raw and bewildering feeling of deeply missing someone who had caused me harm.

This past year, on my dad's yahrtzeit, I came to the realization that my goal was not to forgive (or G-d forbid, forget) my dad's violence, but to do enough healing to allow me to hold his full humanity, even as I recognized that he often treated me as less than human. Extending his humanity back to him through time is a gift I am working on giving him as I move into the next phase of my life, during which my dad will have been physically absent for longer than he was present.

A few years ago, during the High Holy Days, when I was reflecting about healing, I realized that there is a Jewish precedent for facing trauma as part of a spiritual process. One of the central concepts of the Days of Awe, *teshuvah*, which can be translated as a turn or return, asks that we turn to face our past. As we review our actions over the past year, we look into the gap that often exists between who we are and who we hope to be in the world. This return can be thought of as a turn away from denial and toward the painful places within and outside ourselves. When we ignore what exists in that gap, we end up being haunted and controlled by it. When we shine light on the painful places, we can begin to heal and make amends with others and within ourselves.

Until I turned and faced my father's violence, I felt haunted by it, unable to shake it, but unable to fully feel it either. As a trauma survivor, I oscillated between suppressing all feeling and feeling like I was reliving the violence through a painful memory or flashback.

Confronting Israeli State Violence

My personal healing and political work collided during Israel's devastating attacks on Gaza in the summer of 2014. As a non-Zionist Jewish activist who has spent the last decade organizing against the Occupation of Palestinian land, I was horrified to witness the killing of over 2,000 Palestinians in Gaza. Entire extended families were destroyed as Israeli forces attacked Gaza, which is effectively an open-air prison less than five miles wide with borders controlled by Israel. Gaza's infrastructure was decimated, and nearly 500 children were killed.

During the summer of these attacks on Gaza, I oscillated between numbness and painful flashbacks as I deepened my somatic healing work. When the Israeli attacks began, I felt horrified but numb. I couldn't connect to my feelings about the violence being done in my name as a Jew. At other times a particularly violent image from Palestine would spin me into an episode from my childhood.

And while there are clearly huge differences between the experience of violence in my Jewish family and Israeli state violence against Palestinians, these forms of violence are also interconnected.

When I was a kid, my grandmom used to advise me repeatedly that, while friends are nice, you can only count on your family. I didn't understand until I was an adult that her distrust grew out of her experiences as a Jewish immigrant whose family had fled pogroms in Lithuania, where all of their "friends" and

"To break free of feeling numb and powerless around Gaza," Somerson writes, "I needed to confront my memories of being unable to prevent the violence that I witnessed as a child." Illustration by Travis Jaworski.

Travis Jaworski (tjaworksi.com)

neighbors had turned against them. Being told as a child that I should never trust people outside the boundary of my family contributed to my isolation and reinforced the idea that it was normal and safe to live with an unpredictably violent father.

A parallel notion of safety is passed down in Jewish families and communities when we are told that the nation-state of Israel will keep us safe when anti-Jewish oppression arises. Jewish historical trauma has left many Jews so fearful that we cannot see that we are using Jewish identity as the grounds to oppress Palestinians. This does not make Jews safer. Instead, it encourages people everywhere to conflate Jews with oppressive behavior, and it inflicts incredible trauma on Palestinians. It damages our collective Jewish soul by making Israelis into occupiers and the Jewish State synonymous with ethnic cleansing.

In both instances, I am told that the boundaries of my family or the nation-state of Israel will keep me safe, and in both cases, the threat of violence is actually being created within these boundaries. This is the cycle of trauma; individuals or collectives of people who have not faced or healed from trauma end up lashing out at those who are not responsible for that trauma. Unable to escape the victim role, we believe we are still protecting ourselves, even when we end up in a dominant position of power and cause great harm. This is certainly the case with Israel, which was founded right after the trauma of the Nazi Holocaust. Forces such as European colonialism and racism contributed to the founding of the Israeli state, but Jewish leaders also channeled their outrage at the Holocaust into aggression against Palestinians.

Healing Through the Body

To break free of feeling numb and powerless around Gaza, I needed to confront my memories of being unable to prevent the violence that I witnessed as a child. My younger self needed to see that there was a way out—I was no longer stuck in that timeless place of trauma. Nathan, my somatic practitioner, helped me travel back to that memory. Our somatic session began with bodywork to help me feel my way into the story held in my muscles and bones. As I lay on the table, Nathan made contact with the band of dread across my diaphragm, which began squeezing painfully toward my center. Nathan moved us into the scene of trauma by describing that moment when my dad was kicking my sister. He yelled "Stop it" at my dad. But nothing happened; my dad wouldn't stop. I watched once again as my dad kicked my sister over and over. I felt frozen, and I asked Nathan to intervene.

Nathan described running over to my dad, yelling, "Get off her," and then pulling my dad away from my sister and throwing him against the wall. In response, I rose from the striped chair, ran across the room to my sister, and put my arms around her. My sister and I were both kneeling on the gold carpet, crying in the past, as I comforted her. I was also weeping in the present. I felt the band of dread begin to loosen.

Nathan asked me to send the powerful love I held in my heart for my sister down into my diaphragm. As I streamed energy from my heart into the constricted band, my diaphragm began humming, vibrating, and opening. I felt my shoulders drop on each side. I began to release some of the shame I had been holding about being unable to stop my dad from harming my sister.

It was a relief to experience my love and care for my sister without my dad between us. While I consciously knew that my dad's violence wasn't my fault, I got to actually experience what should have happened that day: an adult stepping in to stop the violence.

Bringing the present to bear on that scene from my past allowed me to move from feeling like a powerless, isolated witness to feeling deeply connected to my sister. Feeling less powerless helped me become an active participant in my present, so that I could show up to speak out against Israel's violence and no longer feel frozen in shame and horror.

Activism and Ritual as Collective Healing

What is the collective equivalent of this healing process for Jews? We must turn to face and heal from Jewish historical trauma while simultaneously fighting Israel's historical and ongoing oppression of Palestinians through education, ritual, and protests. Channeling our Jewish outrage into making teshuvah is not only politically crucial, it is also imperative for our healing. Although as Jews, we have been treated as less than human in the past, we must not let our trauma dictate how we treat other people. We are reasserting our full humanity by making amends to honor and fight for the full humanity of the Palestinian people.

During the summer of 2014, I helped organize and participate in acts of civil disobedience and acts of ritual, to protest the Israeli attacks on Gaza and commemorate the Palestinian victims. Our Seattle chapter of Jewish Voice for Peace staged a die-in at Boeing, a major supplier of weapons to the Israeli Defense Forces, to draw attention to the way that Boeing profited from the attacks on Gaza. Nine activists, locked to one another, lay down across the crosswalk to block the entrance to Boeing while fifty others lay down on the sidewalk.

Earlier that morning, we met up at a park to prepare for the protest. I led us in a somatic centering practice to feel our deep connections to one another and to our collective commitment to Palestinian liberation. As we blocked the entrance and watched the police gather in their riot gear, many

of us found it helpful to return to the place in our bodies where we could feel our collective center—our larger purpose for being there.

When I recited the names of over one thousand Palestinians who had been killed since the attacks on Gaza began, I looked down at the bodies lying on the ground and felt both the enormity of my grief and the power embodied in this small gesture of commemoration. Being present in our bodies and connected to each other was vital to our action.

Later in the fall, I had a chance to participate in a different kind of ritual with thirty-six artists in Connecticut for a weekend of remembrance and collaboration at the first-ever convening of the national Jewish Voice for Peace Artists and Cultural Workers Council. The theme of our gathering was facing the Nakba—the catastrophe of ethnic cleansing and displacement that began with the founding of the Israeli state in 1948 and continues with the ongoing displacement and destruction of Palestinian lives and homes. Being asked to face the Nakba before the High Holy Days was personally meaningful to me because we were being asked to make collective teshuvah—to turn to face the violence upon which the Israeli state was founded.

One day during the retreat, the facilitators took pictures and descriptions of Palestinians who died in the most recent attacks on Gaza and laid them out on the floor of the synagogue. I felt the contradiction of trying to mourn Palestinian lives in a Jewish religious space, which, at best, tends to ignore Palestinian deaths and, at worst, justifies them in the name of "self-defense."

Looking at the face of a young Palestinian girl who had loved to sing, I was shocked by how hard it was for me stay present. I felt the urge to turn away, to leave the space, to numb out. It was hard to feel the weight of responsibility for these precious lives taken by a state that claims to speak for me and that is funded by a government that claims to represent me.

But I managed to stay present by noticing the people around me also struggling to make sense of these deaths. The facilitators helped make connection possible by inviting our emotions into this holy space. One of the facilitators cried upon introducing the display, and as I looked around the room of artists grappling with these deaths, I felt a kinship among us. I realized that what makes turning to face tragedy possible is that we do so together with feeling and hope in our hearts.

Healing Through Time

I have learned that taking responsibility and making amends is possible for me only when I have done enough personal and collective healing to no longer feel like I am moving through the world solely as a victim. As I face my past, grieve my losses, and come to terms with my own power, I am able to face the ways that I, too, am fully human with the capacity to prevent, fight, and even cause harm. This is as true for me as an individual as it is true for our Jewish people.

The powerful force of healing is not linear; it moves backward in time to heal my relationship with my dad by acknowledging his humanity. Healing enables me to experience myself more fully in the present, and it helps me envision a different future both for myself and for my people. It is only through finding compassion for my dad—and realizing that he must have endured some harm that stripped away his capacity for positive connection—that I am able to embrace the fullness of my own humanity, including the part of him that lives inside me.

On my dad's yahrtzeit this year, I looked closely at a familiar photo of him and my mom smiling hopefully into the camera, about to depart for their honeymoon on Cape Cod. As I met my dad's gaze, my heart filled with sadness because I recognized that he didn't set out with an intention to hurt his family. He, too, longed for connection. And as I kept reaching back for him, attempting to feel his hopes and his dreams, I felt my chest cavity widen. Tears spilled down my face, and I felt his heart; it is still beating inside mine. ■

"I Still Can't Breathe"

Artists Decry Racism from the Watts Rebellion to the Present

BY PAUL VON BLUM

Several racially charged urban uprisings rocked the United States half a century ago, drawing attention to the substantive injustices unresolved by the gains of the modern Civil Rights movement. Among the most traumatic was the rebellion in the Watts district of Los Angeles, where six days of violence caused thirty-four deaths, over a thousand injuries, more than 3,000 arrests, and 40 million dollars in property damage. Catalyzed by an incident of questionable police conduct, the underlying causes reflected the glaring poverty, lack of economic opportunity, police brutality, and intractable racism that African Americans faced in the Los Angeles area.

Fifty years later, many of the same problems endure. Despite the symbolically meaningful election of President Barack Obama and other high-profile gains, widespread economic disparities persist, and the incarceration rate of African Americans remains scandalously high. The glaring problem of police misconduct, especially the recent killings of unarmed young black men and children (in Ferguson, Missouri; Cleveland, Ohio; New York City; and elsewhere) has generated massive nationwide protests inspired by the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag created by Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi after Trayvon Martin's killer was acquitted. Though less often publicized, protests against the violence faced by black women have also begun to spread.

Left to right: *Death at the Hands of Police* and *I Can't Breathe* by Toni Scott.

Toni Scott (toniscott.com), courtesy of Michael Massenburg

PAUL VON BLUM is senior lecturer in African American studies and communication studies at UCLA. He is the author of eight books and over 100 articles. His new book, *The Civil Rights Movement For Beginners*, will be published later in 2015.

Nineteen Sixty-Five by Michael Massenburg.

Michael Massenburg (michaelmassenburg.com)

These protests have in turn caused millions of Americans to reflect on the problem of institutional racism, particularly as it affects the entire criminal justice system. Many have begun to understand the deep racial divide on this issue. People of color and whites often perceive the law and legal institutions in dramatically different, even opposite, ways. To many whites, these institutions, especially the police, are protectors. For many African Americans, the same institutions are oppressive, reinforcing racial hierarchies and maintaining white privilege.

The Role of Art in Social Protest

An ongoing exhibition at the Watts Towers Arts Center dramatically highlights these issues, presenting one of the most compelling shows of socially conscious art in California in many years. Curated by Arts Center Director Rosie Lee Hooks and artist Michael Massenburg, "50 Years and I Still Can't Breathe" is a stunning collection of visual works addressing themes of legal and police injustice against minority communities. With contributions by African American and other artists, the exhibition focuses on the distressing absence of progress despite the gains of the Civil Rights and Black Power movements.

The exhibition features original documentation of the 1965 Watts Rebellion, much of it from the collection of community archivist and activist Alden Kimbrough. It also includes media accounts of the traumatic events of that August, as well as key primary source documents, such as the governor's McCone Commission's report on the "riots." A salient headline from the *Los Angeles Times*, "Negro Riots Rage On: Death Toll 21," sets the tone for the socially conscious art that makes up the exhibition: it reveals the sentiment of the dominant white population of the era, an attitude, these artists suggest, that scarcely seems to have dissipated in the intervening years.

The centerpiece of this show, immediately visible to visitors who enter the exhibition, is Toni Scott's majestically disconcerting installation, "Death at the Hands of Police." Situated in the middle of the main exhibition space, this three-dimensional work features a plaster cast of a black man mounted on wood with a conspicuous target on his chest, emblematic of the deeper peril facing young black men today. Over his face is a cloth reading, "I Can't Breathe." On both sides of the plaster figure, the artist has written an unnerving list of eighty-two names of people of color who have died in police custody from 1999 through 2014. Handwritten in chalk, the list contains familiar names: Amadou Diallo, Oscar Grant, Michael Brown, Tamir Rice, and Ezell Ford. It also compiles the all too many names of lesser-known victims, such as Kenneth Harding, 19, killed in San Francisco in 2011.

This work is overpowering in its impact, and reveals the power of art to contest social injustice. It compels viewers to grasp, swiftly and viscerally, the human tragedy of police murders and the brutal reality of the slogan "Black Lives Matter." The chalk text suggests that the list remains provisional and incomplete, indicating that there have been many more victims in the past fifteen years than those listed—and many more to come, as the months since the exhibition's opening have tragically confirmed. On April 4, 2015, fifty-year-old African American Walter Scott was shot in the back by a Charleston, South Carolina police officer. This installation adds magnificently to Toni Scott's growing reputation as one of the premier African American artists of the early twenty-first century.

Augmenting Scott's presence in this exhibition are two smaller casts entitled "I Can't Breathe." These sculptures draw poignantly on Eric Garner's last words as he died during a chokehold by New York City police officers on July 17, 2014. Once again, Scott humanizes this horrific event with

this horrific event with her sculptural vision. These works remind viewers that a widely repeated national slogan represents a tragic and personal reality: Eric Garner was a human being with a family, with feelings, and with hopes and aspirations for the future, whose murder should never be forgotten.

Michael Massenburg's collage "Nineteen Sixty-Five," situated near Scott's introductory installation, sets the historical context for the exhibition. Here he addresses the Watts Rebellion of that year. A young man with outstretched arms is surrounded by symbols of those turbulent days. Among them is a distorted U.S. flag, implying accurately that many of the underlying issues of race, class, and economic inequality have hardly disappeared. Viewers are invited to use this mixed-media work to consider the half-century historical perspective that pervades the entire exhibition. This richly detailed effort follows the long tradition of African American visual historical commentary and extends its tradition of trenchant social protest into the present context.

Noni Olabisi, one of the most talented African American muralists in Los Angeles, continues the historical narrative. Her painting "Freedom Won't Wait" carries the same title as one of the militant murals she created in South Los Angeles in 1992, following the second major urban rebellion in that city. Like the events of 1965, this rebellion also began with a police action, this time the egregious beating of Rodney King. A substantial detail from her painting "Freedom Won't Wait" depicts several anguished and determined African Americans in this painting, reflecting the community's despair that so little had changed between 1965 and 1992, especially in the area of police relationships with (and brutality against) African Americans and other communities of color.

Contesting a Legacy of Lynching

Olabisi's work also highlights an image of historical lynching, expressing her view that contemporary police practices like racial profiling, as represented in the lower left of the composition, are inextricably linked in America's sad history of mistreating its citizens of African ancestry. The work likewise emphasizes the dominant slogans of the 1990s: "Freedom Won't Wait" and "No Justice, No Peace," both phrases that have resurged in the nationwide protests that began in Ferguson, Missouri, after the homicide of Michael Brown in August 2014. Olabisi joins the long tradition of black visual artists whose works are inseparable from the broader struggles of their people for justice and dignity.

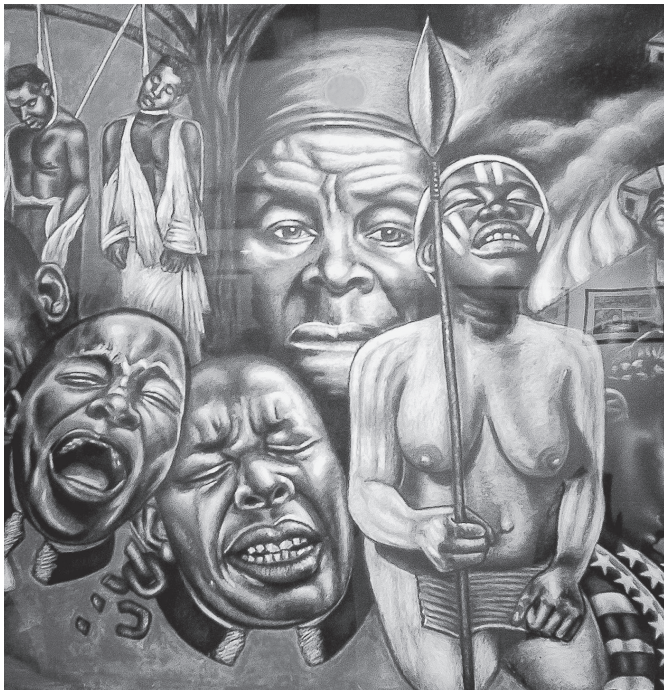
Dale Brockman Davis, an iconic figure of Southern California African American art, adds another exemplary sculpture to this exhibition. "Still" reflects Davis's career-long dedication to combining technical excellence with insightful social and historical commentary and criticism. In this work, he uses his familiar assemblage style to link the recent police murders of young African Americans to the long and disgraceful history of lynching.

In his assemblage sculpture, Davis skillfully combines several materials to weave a vision of historical violence that still manages to offer modest hope for the future. At the left of the assemblage is a strip of caution tape usually found at construction or police sites. Here it serves as a general historical warning, urging viewers to pay close and critical attention to the antecedents of the contemporary spike in police killings of young black men. To the right is the ugly symbol of the noose, still a potent signifier of racial hatred and violence. These elements bracket the disembodied black arms and hand entangled in ropes, a painful reminder that contemporary racial oppression is inextricably tied to the nation's history. Yet Davis also dangles a peace symbol on the arm at the left of the artwork, implying that there is "still" the opportunity for reconciliation and justice—if police authorities and others in power fully recognize the gravity of past injustice and work assiduously to provide equal and humane treatment for all citizens.

Diverse Expressions of Protest

One such cause for hope has been the cultural and ethnic diversity of the recent protests. Such diversity is reflected in "50 Years and I Still Can't Breathe," and is one of the major strengths of the exhibition. An outstanding contributor is nationally known Chicano writer and cartoonist Lalo Alcaraz, the creator of the syndicated comic strip "La Cucaracha." His piece, entitled "Hands Up, Don't Shoot," appropriates the widely repeated slogan of the Ferguson protests following the death of Michael Brown, who reportedly had his hands up when Officer Darren Wilson fatally shot him.

This drawing mimics Alcaraz's comic and cartoon style,



Detail from *Freedom Won't Wait* by Noni Obalisi, courtesy of Michael Massenburg.

Hands Up, Don't Shoot by Lalo Alcarez, courtesy of Michael Massenburg.

making his point clearly and unambiguously. The central figure, like Brown, has his hands in the air, a universal gesture of acquiescence to authority. Surrounded by firepower, his act of surrender is irrelevant. Alcaraz's contribution is especially significant in this exhibition because Latinos, like African Americans, are also targets of racial profiling. His work, like his cartoons and comics generally, adds to Alcaraz's stature as a major American visual social critic.

Betye Saar, one of the most internationally recognized and accomplished artists in this exhibition, contributed an intriguing effort titled "National Racism: We Was Mostly 'Bout Survival," a serigraph from 1997. Throughout her long career, Saar has focused on metaphysics and spirituality in addition to social and historical themes in her artwork. Using found objects, she is a pioneering figure in the tradition of African American assemblage art and is universally acknowledged as a master sculptor and printmaker. Saar's piece addresses intersectionality by attacking both racism and sexism. The image of a female African American domestic worker appears underneath text reading "National Racism," signaling the centuries of degrading work that black women have endured in America. At the bottom, the work's subtitle reveals that despite the pervasive, even unyielding racial and gender bias, African American women have survived.

Indeed, women's contributions to the liberation struggles of people of color have been crucial, though still insufficiently acknowledged. Saar's artwork reminds viewers that African American women must not only survive but also thrive if the gap between American ideals and American reality is to be closed. Her work in this exhibition adds a broader thematic element and places the specific issue of police profiling and violence in the historical framework of racial, gender, and social class resistance and liberation.

Memories of the Past, Visions of Hope

The modern Civil Rights movement has generated cultural expressions that both emerged from and contributed to African American freedom and resistance activities. African Americans and their supporters from other racial and ethnic backgrounds have created a huge body of music, literature, visual art, and film dealing with the historical and contemporary struggles for liberation and dignity. These creative products have traditionally been viewed alone, outside the political and social conflicts from which they have emerged. But they have regularly been a central part of the broad Civil Rights movements. They are much more than mere adjuncts to the cause; indeed, they are integral features of the movements themselves. Without these powerful and engaging expressions of protest and social memory, whatever successes such movements achieve would be diminished, and sometimes forgotten.

"50 Years and I Still Can't Breathe" once again demonstrates that the visual arts play an integral and vital part of the long tradition of resistance. The protests that began in Ferguson, Missouri, in the summer of 2014 and now continue across the country herald a new phase of the struggle. As people mobilize, artists will continue to assume a central role in the activism. They memorialize and mourn victims of the struggle, remind us of the historical arc of the movements, and offer a hopeful vision of a more humane future for all people in a democratic, nonracist United States of America. ■

The Power of Service

BY CHARLES EISENSTEIN

I HAVE NEVER BEEN comfortable with leadership. Nevertheless, there I was, leading a five-day retreat with twenty-something seasoned leaders, activists, counselors, and other people more qualified than I was to lead it. On day four it cracked. Diverse expressions of a seething dissatisfaction rose to the surface—a cacophony of unmet needs.

Many of their expressed needs seemed contradictory: some wanted more physical activity; others more deep intellectual discussion or more on practical applications. Some requested more structure and leadership from me; others wanted less from me and more from other people. One person said that she felt that imposing a structure upon a group and taking it upon myself to administer that structure was an inherently violent expression of patriarchy. Another was in anguish that as we sat in that room, rain forests were being cut down—and what were we doing about it?

I won't pretend that I masterfully held space for all the conflict to arise, for the hidden to become visible, for the group to pass through that inevitable stage that precedes real intimacy. The best I can say is that I listened to everyone without getting defensive and tried on each criticism like a piece of clothing. But I had no idea what to say, who was right, or what to do next.

Notwithstanding my having no idea what to do, something larger than any of us held us all in its hands. After the storm passed, we entered an activity that took on a transformative power I'd never seen it have before. I felt like the servant of that activity, not its leader, even as I "led" it. Afterward, the earlier conflicts felt resolved, even though none had been met directly.

Significantly, that activity never would have happened at all were it not for a stroke of extraordinary luck that contributed to my feeling of being held by something larger than our separate selves. At a key moment, a woman who had been mostly silent said, "I see a lot of egos flying around the room. I came here to spend time with Charles and I trust him to offer what is right." She spoke with a simple humility that totally shifted the energy of the room. This woman had actually walked out, intending to go home, but by chance had encountered one of the organizers, who at that exact moment

CHARLES EISENSTEIN is a speaker and writer. His most recent books are *Sacred Economics* and *The More Beautiful World Our Hearts Know is Possible*.

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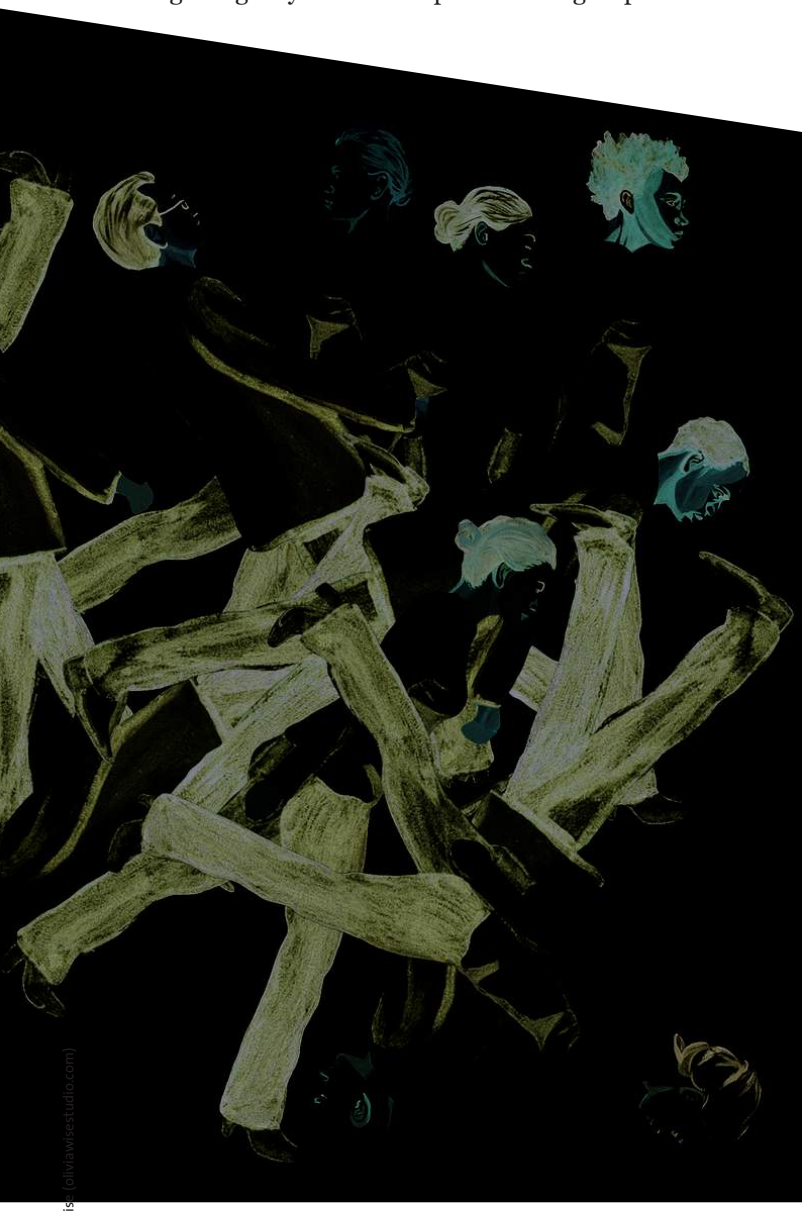
was cut off from an urgent phone call and was thus able to encourage her to return and share her opinion.

I recount this story because it illuminates and personalizes some of the themes of Miki Kashtan's new book, *Reweaving Our Human Fabric*. One of these themes is the issue of power and how it is mediated through organizational structures. Kashtan, who is a prominent figure in the Nonviolent Communication (NVC) movement founded by Marshall Rosenberg, questions certain values long in vogue in the nonviolent world: nonhierarchy, leaderlessness, egalitarianism, and radical inclusivity. In a provocative chapter entitled "Myths of Power-with," she describes the frustration of activist groups that devolve into endless meetings devoted to "process," attending to the needs of everyone in the group, but getting very little accomplished. The group or movement is very fair, inclusive, and egalitarian, but fails to achieve any concrete, external goals. Is there a way to replicate the efficiency and effectiveness of, say, business organizations (or for that matter, the hierarchical, leader-driven movements of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr.), without replicating the abuses that seem inherent in that mode of organization?



Olivia Wise (oliviawisestudio.com)

"The deficiencies of the leaderless, structureless ideal became apparent a long time ago," Eisenstein writes. *Leaderless* by Olivia Wise.

The Pitfalls of Leaderless Movements

The deficiencies of the leaderless, structureless ideal became apparent a long time ago in the feminist movement, which, drawing on earlier roots in leftist political theory, explored various alternatives to the "patriarchal" norm. The results were often disappointing. As Jo Freeman described so precisely in her classic essay, "The Tyranny of Structurelessness," what masquerades as egalitarian collaboration often hides informal power dynamics that are all the more oppressive for being hidden. This became quickly apparent in the breakdown phase of that day at my retreat, when, at the moment that the leader was toppled, it was the loudest and most manipulative personalities that quickly began to take charge. No agreed-upon power structure was in place, yet the quiet people felt no more empowered—perhaps even less so—than they had before.

A related paradox, which Kashtan discusses in some depth, is that radical inclusivity creates a kind of exclusivity; for example, when abrasive or disruptive people who would ordinarily be excluded create an environment in which quiet, sensitive, or results-oriented people feel uncomfortable. This phenomenon (apparent in many Occupy Wall Street encampments) illustrates her point that it is impossible to meet everyone's needs and still get much accomplished. To address this in the context of NVC, she draws a valuable distinction between "empathy circles," which are dedicated to healing, and "action circles," groups that are dedicated to an external purpose. Her discussion of power-with explores how to facilitate such a group, that is, how to utilize the power of hierarchy and structure with minimal violence to any of its members.

Power-with, as described by Mary Parker Follett, who coined the term, is "jointly developed power, a co-active, not a coercive power." She offered it in contradistinction to power-over, which implies domination: to coerce the choices of another through force, whether physical, psychological, or economic. While Follett was not a feminist herself, the distinction was taken up by feminists in the 1970s who disputed the equation of power with male-associated behaviors. They sought to expand the word beyond its associations with dominance and control to denote the capacity to act, a capacity not necessarily diminished by another's capacity and perhaps synergistic with it. This expanded notion of power, they believed, was more consistent with feminine qualities like nurture and empathy.

Yet I wonder whether the whole concept of power-with, and beyond that, the concept of nonviolence, entails a kind of distancing from uncomfortable truths about the material world and human relationships. Is there any way to assert ourselves as creative beings in the world without imposing something of ourselves upon it? Is power-with ever possible in pure form?

Equivalently, we might ask, can we ever escape the play of dominance and submission that pervades human relationships (and those in the animal kingdom as well)? Can we ever truly be nonviolent? Nonviolence is an elusive concept, framed as it is in English as a negation: an absence, not a presence. We can say what it is not, but can we say what it *is*? Furthermore, it isn't even obvious what it is *not*. Violence connotes that which violates. Even if I don't do you physical harm, even if I have no intent to cause you pain, a simple statement of what is true for me or what injustice I have witnessed might violate your worldview, your self-image, or your comfort. Whatever our underlying oneness, we are bounded beings; any act of self-assertion—to eat, to move, even to breathe—may in some way violate the boundary of another. Nature is rife with violence.

From Nonviolence to Service

Perhaps the avoidance of violence is not a coherent aim. In fact, Kashtan offers an alternative lens that I find much more illuminative of my own successes and failures in leadership. It is the lens of service. What mission, what purpose, does the group serve? A leader is someone who holds this purpose on behalf of the group and who creates conditions for others to serve it. Kashtan points out that this purpose may not be helped by various "myths of power-with" like "everyone should participate in all decisions," or "everyone's needs are equally important."

Understanding the leader as steward of a vision and servant of a purpose cuts through the tangle of principles, rationalizations, and paradoxes surrounding the creation of structure, with its implications of arrogance and violence. The leader is not imposing her ego onto others, nor is she using others for her own ends. Of course, most tyrants have justified their exercise of power by claiming that it is in service to a greater good. That is why channels of feedback and accountability are so important (and Kashtan discusses these at length). However, to shrink from leadership in an effort to conform to fashionable ideals of inclusivity and egalitarianism is not an act of compassion at all. It is an act of cowardice and an abdication of one's duty to serve a calling.

In my case, sometimes "letting the group decide" is a cover for my own fear or a capitulation to my desire to get people to like me. It is therefore a means of manipulation, all the more dangerous for being covert. In some situations a show of inclusivity seems like an empty gesture by which one seeks to demonstrate allegiance to the values of the in-group. I know that at the retreat, my clarity of purpose was severely compromised by my desire for approval and by the shame-inducing associations of leadership with patriarchal violence.

There is a time to shrink from leadership: when you don't know what you serve. In the absence of a mission beyond oneself, the leader becomes nothing more than an institutional functionary, serving the aggrandizement of a power structure in which he enjoys special privileges. This explains the state of many of the dominant political institutions of our time: as their motivating ideologies become obsolete, they are aligned with no compelling purpose except careerism, ambition, and muddling through. At best, we get technocratic managers; rarely in our moribund system will a visionary leader be attracted to politics. In that context, the deconstruction of power, structure, and authority is a necessary step to enter the space between purpose-generating narratives, a space where a new purpose becomes visible. But there is another step after that, one that Kashtan takes in this book: to explore whether old structures and hierarchies may contain something of value in empowering a renewed self-assertiveness, in service to our planet's healing.

Shrinking back from leadership, letting the group decide, and refusing to exercise power are quite understandable reactions to centuries of patriarchal domination and exploitation of the Other. We want nothing to do with that, and so retreat sometimes to its antipode: self-abnegation. Perhaps recasting the next paradigm of leadership in terms of service rather than nonviolence (itself a negation) will remedy this tendency. A more beautiful world is calling us, and we need people to bow into its service as leaders. ■

Radically horizontal structures put a check on leaders' authority—but at what cost? Here, protesters at Occupy Sydney in 2011 take part in a consensus-building exercise.

Structure Without Hierarchy

Effective Leadership in Social Change Movements

BY STARHAWK

Occupy San Francisco is meeting in Justin Herman Plaza. The group is engaged in another long and painful consensus meeting, made more painful by a lack of skills on the part of our brave but inexperienced facilitators. I raise my hand and make a suggestion.

"Maybe instead of all of us trying to order the agenda, the facilitators could just take a few minutes and do that for us."

Behind me, a young man so agitated that he appears to be jumping out of his skin turns and glares at me.

"I haven't seen you here in the camp before! I don't see you here at night! Why should we listen to you?" he shouts.

I bite back the retort, "Oh yeah? I haven't seen you in the forty years I've been organizing in this town!"

It wouldn't do any good. The meeting limps on in its painful way, so embroiled in ineffective process that nothing of substance gets decided, and I stand there more and more frustrated—not least because for many of those forty or more years, I have worked in groups that also defined themselves

Starhawk is a lifelong activist, a leader in the earth-based spirituality movement, and a teacher of Earth Activist Trainings (earthactivisttraining.org/). Her writing includes the visionary novel *The Fifth Sacred Thing* and many books on the intersection of activism, spirit, and group dynamics, including *The Empowerment Manual: A Guide for Collaborative Groups*. Her website is starhawk.org.

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as horizontal and egalitarian yet were able to organize efficiently and create empowering experiences for their members.

And so I eagerly read both Miki Kashtan's new book, *Reweaving Our Human Fabric*, and the commentary on leadership it elicited from Charles Eisenstein in this issue of *Tikkun*. Issues of power, leadership, and group conflict have been key interests of mine for decades, so I'm delighted to offer my own response to the ideas raised by both Kashtan and Eisenstein.

Since the early days of the second wave of feminism back in the '70s, I've been involved in groups that consciously defined themselves as "nonhierarchical" and have often been in the uncomfortable position of serving in leadership roles in nominally "leaderless" groups. I've seen many groups undergo intense struggles, and I've also been part of large-scale mobilizations that organized quite effectively without central control.

What makes the difference? While there are thousands of books and trainings and MBA programs that will teach you to manage a hierarchy, there are few models and little theory about how to nonmanage a nonhierarchy. And yet the issue is crucial. The simple problem of how to get along in groups is probably the most constraining factor in challenging the overarching structures of oppressive power. Struggling with these issues led me to write *Truth or Dare: Encounters with Power, Authority, and Mystery* back in the '80s, and more recently, *The Empowerment Manual: A Guide for Collaborative Groups*.

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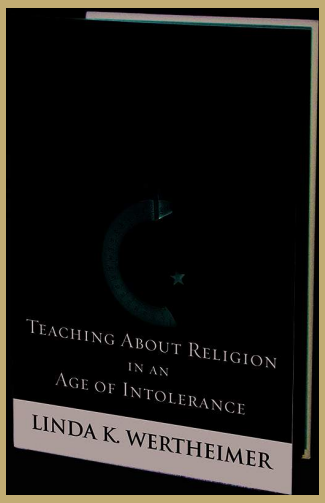

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Understanding Social Power

Kashtan differentiates between "power-over" and "power-with." But to work both collaboratively and effectively, we need an even more nuanced understanding of power, for the word can mean many different things. Power-over is something we are all familiar with: the ability of one person or a group to control resources, set standards, use force, or impose punishment on others.

Power-from-within is the term I prefer for that sense of power that means ability, skill, confidence, and proficiency; our creative and spiritual power; or our courage to take risks or to speak truth. *Empowerment* is another term we might use, and one goal of our egalitarian groups might be to empower one another: to help each member feel a greater sense of agency and potentiality, and gain skills, confidence, and courage.

But there is a third type of power that arises in groups, however they are structured. *Social power* is the level of influence and respect a person holds, apart from whatever structural power the person may have. Understanding social power is crucial to addressing complex questions of inclusion, equality, and effectiveness.

For social power itself comes in two basic flavors: earned and unearned. *Unearned social power*—the respect automatically accorded to someone because of some factor such as race or gender or good looks or family background—is a form of privilege, something progressive groups oppose.

Earned social power means the respect and influence that come from taking on responsibilities and fulfilling them, from having a track record, from making long-standing commitments to a group or mission, from helping the group function smoothly, and from making real contributions. It may also come from making mistakes and admitting them so that they become part of the group's collective learning. Earned social power may derive from having experience and expertise around a certain issue.

The division between earned and unearned social power is often murky and includes much overlap. Joe may have a strategic mind and make brilliant contributions to the group, *and* his confidence in speaking out may come from being a white male in a culture that, since childhood, has assured him that his contributions will be heard and valued. Jane's PhD may represent both the privilege to be able to attend a university *and* a lot of real work, research, and grueling hours spent writing up her results.

Social power—the respect and esteem of our friends and community—is one of the basic human needs that nonviolent communication addresses. It is also one of the main draws to group membership and one of the primary rewards we get from voluntary groups that don't offer us payment or the opportunity to earn other tangible rewards.

Acknowledging Different Paths to Power

Yet social power is never entirely equal in groups, even those that award everyone equal structural power. Some people will always command more respect and wield more influence than others, because as human beings we are different. We bring different levels of skill and commitment into a group. We also bring a variety of talents and limitations. In other words, we have differing abilities to help the group function. We can't legislate those differences away. What we can do is acknowledge them. Then we can make clear, conscious choices about how and when social power confers decision-making power or other structural power. And we can create structures that allow people fair opportunities to earn social power by making real contributions to the group in a variety of ways.

The diversity of paths to social power is important, because if social power can be gained in only one way, no matter how fair, some people will be excluded. The incident at Occupy with which I began offers an example. In many of the Occupy groups, social power rapidly became concentrated amongst those who could spend the most time in the encampments, sleeping and living there. They exhibited the most commitment and shared the highest degree of risk, so that was, in a sense, only fair. Yet there were many like me, lifelong activists with decades of experience who simply could not drop their lives to live on the streets, in part because we had already built lives full of commitments to social change actions and organizations. While at times I succeeded in bringing my experience to bear on meetings or trainings, the major avenue to gaining social power was closed.

Fairly allocating social power is always a balancing act. Those who found a group, make long-term commitments to it, and build a track record of responsibility may fairly accrue huge social power—but if they monopolize all the power available, there's no room for new people to enter and gain a voice.

As Kashtan points out, inclusion is never total. In a section titled "The Myth of Inclusion," she writes, "The explicit inclusion of all so often leads to the implicit exclusion of those who cannot bear the behaviors of some." I would suggest that, rather than framing the question as "Who do we need to include or exclude?" groups would do better to ask, "What standards of behavior do we want to uphold? What paths to social power do we prefer? What boundaries do we want to set?"

A group cannot avoid the responsibility of setting standards and boundaries, as refusing to do so itself becomes a standard. Again, to use Occupy as an example, many groups were unwilling to prohibit illegal drugs or alcohol in the camps because they didn't want to exclude those who were dependent on alcohol or drugs. Yet the presence of heavy drinkers and active users created a level of danger in the camps that excluded many other people.

To be effective, a group also needs a governance structure that conforms to its vision and purpose. Nonhierarchical groups often say, "We work by consensus." Yet consensus is a decision-making method. It doesn't tell us, as Kashtan points out, who makes which decision about what. No group that attempts anything of complexity can make every required decision by a full consensus of the whole. There simply is not enough time for that! Every group needs to delegate responsibilities and allocate power to those who need it in order to function. "Structure" is not the same as "top-down hierarchy."

Cues from Effective Movements

Kashtan looks at King and Gandhi as models of movements based on centralized leadership, but they are not the only models for effective social movements. The antinuclear movement in the '70s and '80s was organized around a simple structure that functioned well overall and set a pattern for many movements that followed, including the anti-intervention groups of the '80s, and the forest defense groups and the global justice mobilizations of the '90s and early 2000s.

Everyone who joined one of these mobilizations became part of a small group, called an affinity group, and made decisions together about how they would participate in the action. The groups allowed for many roles, from risking arrest to doing home support. Groups that took on specific tasks, such as running the medical clinic or doing outreach, formed working groups. Both working groups and affinity groups sent representatives to spokescouncils, which made overall decisions for the action as a whole. Working groups might also send representatives to coordinating councils that dealt with all the logistics and preparations for the actions. We rapidly learned that facilitating large and sometimes contentious meetings by consensus required skill and experience, and we made conscious efforts to provide training for new people and to develop a pool of skilled facilitators.

This model allowed us to mobilize thousands of people to face real dangers and act together in empowering ways. It gave everyone a voice and offered many ways to contribute. The Occupy movement, because it sprang up so quickly and spread so rapidly, often via social media rather than direct

contact, took pieces of this model but left out some of the crucial elements—affinity groups, governance structure, agreed-upon standards of behavior, and training, to name a few—that might have allowed it to function more effectively and build the internal cohesion necessary to withstand attack.

Kashtan and Eisenstein reframe "leadership" as service, and I agree with this framing. Empowering leaders are comfortable with the social power they have fairly earned, aware of the privilege they have not earned, and accountable for the structural power they wield. Groups that are "leaderful" rather than leaderless *can* function effectively and still allow us each to find our voice, express our creativity, and come together to realize our vision for a just and thriving world. ■

To Transform the World, Think Like a Gardener

BY ISAAC LURIA

In the last few seconds before my son was born, the midwife had a hard time finding his heartbeat.

Everything happened so fast that I didn't have time for fear, and I'm certain my wife's mind was focused on delivering the baby. What I do remember is how the birth team got quiet, and a call to prep a pediatrician in the next room.

When the baby came out, he cried vigorously, and was rushed out of the room to that waiting pediatrician.

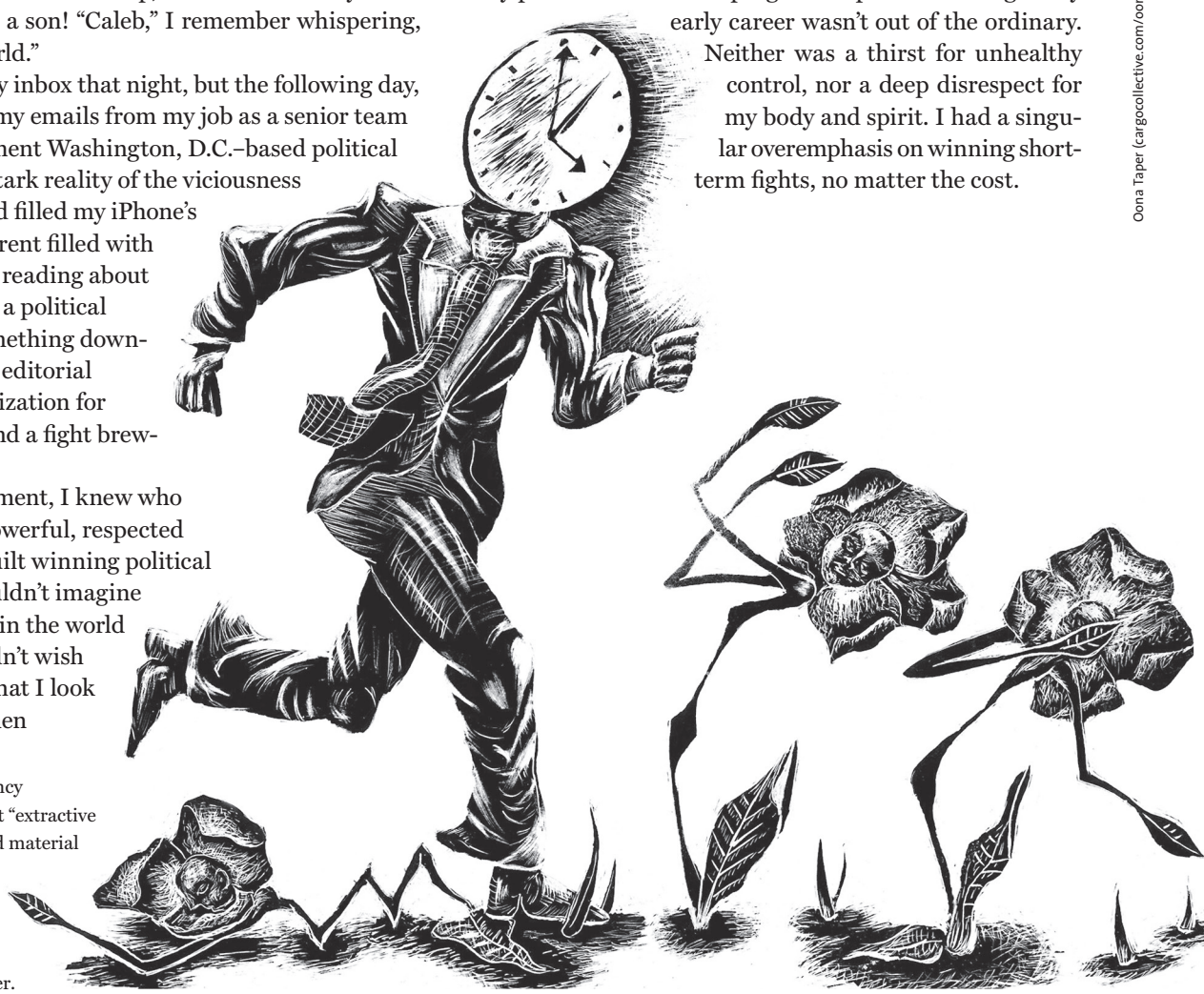
The pediatrician cleaned him up, and handed me my child. He was alive! I had a son! "Caleb," I remember whispering, "welcome to the world."

I didn't look at my inbox that night, but the following day, I scanned through my emails from my job as a senior team member at a prominent Washington, D.C.–based political organization. The stark reality of the viciousness of my political world filled my iPhone's screen. As a new parent filled with love, I got whiplash reading about an angry colleague, a political opponent doing something downright mean, a nasty editorial attacking my organization for something I said, and a fight brewing at the office.

Up until that moment, I knew who I wanted to be: a powerful, respected professional who built winning political machines. But I couldn't imagine my son growing up in the world I was creating. I didn't wish that for him. Now that I look back on it, that's when I knew I had to try to change what my kids might encounter when their time to lead comes.

For much of my career, I respected activists who were the hardest working, most professional, smartest, most disciplined, and most strategic. Heart didn't even enter into the equation.

Before I had children, it was easier for me to turn a blind eye to the way that we worked and how we treated each other in my particular corner of progressive politics. Yelling in my early career wasn't out of the ordinary. Neither was a thirst for unhealthy control, nor a deep disrespect for my body and spirit. I had a singular overemphasis on winning short-term fights, no matter the cost.



Oona Taper (cargocollective.com/oonataper)

Corporate ideas of efficiency pressure activists to adopt "extractive approaches to human and material resources," Luria writes. The alternative? A permacultural approach to social movements. Illustration by Oona Taper.

ISAAC LURIA is a father, husband, aspiring agrarian, and digital organizer living in Brooklyn. At Auburn Seminary, he helps faith leaders use modern prophetic communications for social change, and is the lead strategist for the multifaith action network Groundswell.

If I took time for self-care at all, it was entirely in service of the work. I'd talk to co-workers about how we needed to "recharge our batteries," despite the fact that we are humans, not power drills.

The Bankrupt Currency of "Now"

Since the birth of my son, I've been searching for different ways to understand movement work. How can we make change without strip-mining our souls and bodies for whatever ounce of strength we have left? How can we live full lives, be present parents and partners, and fight for what is right? Is martyrdom ever the right path? How can we integrate our spirits and minds—bringing deep knowledge from other disciplines such as organic farming, spirituality, and faith practices—into our movement work?

These questions have only become more urgent as a new activist generation comes into its own. Many in my movement community, especially those who are younger, tell me that they cannot, in good faith, participate any longer in movements that expect people to give up their lives, souls, and spark of the divine in order to pursue a phantom image of social change.

They see that our work, organized in an extractive, urgency-driven way, only reinforces mainstream culture's degradation of human value and spirit, reflecting the broader progression from healthy and comprehensive movements toward a focus on temporary, hollow victories that has led to long-term community evisceration and economic destruction over the past thirty years. Reversing this process doesn't require "going soft," or indulging in too much "self-care." But to address such deep-seated worry about the efficacy of transactional models of justice making, we need to make an honest assessment of where we stand today, and where we'd like to go.

Our have-it-now culture reinforces the demand for short-term results. Delivering these results has meant taking a painful shortcut around the hard stuff of deep strategy, relationship building, and community rootedness. Our funders and conflict-driven media pressure us to look for the hot new tweet or message, the flashy image, or new program—and we're too happy to oblige. But organizations with limited resources—for example, nonprofits—quickly go bankrupt on the currency of now. In this system, it's no wonder that many activist leaders find themselves in friction with natural allies over limited resources and thirsty for more control over the sector.

Given the size of our budgets compared to those committed to extractive modes of existence, social change organizations cannot afford to lack broader vision and shared purpose, or allow a dominant, extractive, short-term mindset to upend our movements, short-circuit our capacity for moral imagination, and undermine our best asset: the people involved in the work.

Part of this loss occurs when we, as activists, deny ourselves love in our own lives. It's disappointing that so many of us leave the movements we care about when we see that love—real love of self, of family, of people—cannot exist alongside certain kinds of activism, especially when people are treated like disposable commodities such as lumber or oil.

The Great Binding Law of the Iroquois Nations says a society must meet the needs and aspirations of those "whose faces are yet beneath the surface of the ground—the unborn of the future Nation." I doubt many of us change makers are looking much farther than the next year or funding cycle in our work—if we're lucky. This short-term thinking may allow us to win a battle here or there. But we are losing the war for our humanity, and in some cases, we may even be complicit in creating conditions that impede human flourishing.

The degree to which talented change makers have internalized inhumane, consumerist, anti-environmentalist, individualist modes of thinking about our work and our souls is deeply saddening. It stunts our capacity to envision a world that values all people equally.

None of this is cause for individual blame or guilt. We should blame the unhealthy "disaster capitalist" system we're trying to change. We are conditioned to understand runaway, extractive, market-obsessed thinking as the only possible reality within both our economy and social change work. It is very difficult to break out of a dominant mental model to envision radically different paths from those currently presented to each of us as possible within the dominant paradigm.

A Permacultural Approach to Change

As I was growing more comfortable with this critique of the state of affairs, I started gardening more seriously. I was drawn to watching life unfold in front of me, nurturing sustenance, and doing *something* in the face of the ecological destruction we are living through.

Somewhere along this journey, I realized that my two callings—movement building and gardening—were meant to thrive together. By drawing on the wisdom of ecology and sustainable farming, we might relate more sustainably to each other as individuals and organizations—and steward our resources wisely for future generations.

With a different movement model borne out of ecological understandings of the world, I am hopeful that we can spark and sustain thriving communities of resistance that will heal individuals, communities, and the world. Organizations and movements need not be machines. They can be overflowing, abundant gardens tended with care,

where each human being is encouraged to live a full life and strive for a just world.

How might we get started?

First, we can reconsider the ecology of social change movements through the lens of *permaculture*, a term that encompasses a vast and growing body of thought and practice in organic agriculture and sustainable development.

An organic farmer's first step is to observe the natural world, then carefully design farming systems to take advantage of natural processes. What areas get the best sun? Where does water come from, and how often? Which plants and animals are already here and doing well? Which plants and animals are not here? Why?

As activists and movement makers, we must do the same. We can listen to the ways in which our movements make human flourishing more difficult and learn from those who are experimenting with more life-giving models of movement work. Observing and remembering what creates loving communities, helps heal human souls, and provides for human flourishing will enable organizations and movements to transform into living, ecologically responsible workplaces. We can "hear each other into speech," as Parker Palmer says, and find a different way of working.

For instance, why is it that we expect employees to turn on like a machine at 9 AM and shut off at 5 PM? Instead, if we observe when and how we are most productive and creative—and what prevents productive or creative moments—we may find that a more efficient use of resources and increased productivity are possible.

What is a "human-friendly" workplace and how does it look and feel? How can we shift the way we are working to embody our human-friendly commitments to social justice? What isn't working well about our workplaces?

We may also recognize larger systems that pressure us to value and depend on extractive approaches to human and material resources, top-down decision-making structures, hyperprofessionalization of staff roles, short-termism, "non-native" funding from sources far from the problems we are trying to solve, corporate efficiency models, and biases against locally rooted, place-based change efforts.

It will take time to listen and observe. Yet if we don't make time, we'll miss potential solutions that might be staring us in the face. Once we take the time to see the problems, we can start to pull the weeds we have allowed to flourish from our movement gardens, and refuse to reinforce dominant cultural paradigms of radical individualism and inhumane, unnatural mechanical thinking in our work and lives. We can untie the mental and emotional binds that hold us to these mechanical systems of death and dying: unnatural consumerist approaches to movement building, and their logic of extraction.

We may realize that the traditional workday doesn't make sense. We may realize that meals are sacred. We may also realize the necessity of ritual to crack open our shuttered hearts as the day begins. We may as meeting facilitators note the power of meditation and silence in meetings dominated by so much speaking. We may observe that not everyone wants a single job for forty-plus hours a week—or that talented thinkers will lead us to integrate a new expertise we otherwise never would have imagined.

We may recognize that advocating for healthy communities means we must have a healthy community in our organizations. We may realize that the ways that power typically flows are actually counterproductive to the goals we have in mind (for example, from funders to executives to program staff to those we serve). We may even realize that we carry trauma of many kinds, including traditionally understood forms of trauma and trauma delivered by the scourges of radical individualism and ecological destruction.

Next, we can compost what is dead and dying so it can empower new life.

As more leaders understand the necessity of imagining a new organizational structure for a new world, we can reform and reinvent movement organizations to be more in tune with human beings. We can listen to the agrarian prophet Wendell Berry's hopes for humanity, and his exhortation to leave what we have better than we found it. We can help those with resources see the power in this new model through strategic storytelling of our victories and deep relational work, and by helping them experience the vitality, presence, and success of powerful movement cultivators.

This shift will be difficult yet essential to building a world where true human flourishing is possible. The nonliving approach to movement work is deeply ingrained in our movements, our leaders, our economic system, and our culture. But if we care to heal and repair this world, we'll need to find a more compelling vision that allows a deeply committed social-change sector to model and lead the way in creating a new kind of integrated, life-giving mode of existence where justice and the good life are considered equal parts of the same equation.

Finally, we can empower those experimenting with new models and practices of rooted movement building with our attention, investment, and faith.

Life-Giving Movements Are All Around Us

A wonderful thing about life is that no matter how much pavement is poured over the ground, life always finds a way to break through. Our job today is to love where life is bursting forth and help these new friends grow and flourish.

Transformational calls for spiritually motivated social justice, like *Tikkun*'s New Bottom Line, are pushing the boundaries of how we measure success in society, compelling us to judge "the rationality, efficiency, and productivity of our

institutions, corporations, legislation, social practices, health care system, schools, legal system, and social policies by how much love, compassion, kindness, generosity, and ethical and ecological sensitivity they inculcate within us."

The Rockwood Leadership Institute, Transformative Action Institute, the Movement Strategy Center, Generative Somatics, and many other wonderful organizers, trainers, educators, and organizations are engaging transformational techniques and practices to help leaders lead in collaborative, healing ways. Instead of having a leader atop a pyramid who adopts a military-style chain of command, we can lean in to Ella Baker's style of collaborative leaderful movements that unlock the potential of every participant.

The heart beating deep within the Black Lives Matter movement is one borne out of listening to how the systems around us dehumanize and devalue black lives—and many of their strategies and tactics of collaboration and direct action are more rooted in human-friendly, collaborative, and organic approaches.

Auburn Seminary, where I work as a cultivator of faith-rooted justice movements, is helping faith leaders and organizers imagine a multifaith movement for justice that heals and repairs the world—and heals each of us in the process. Other organizers are envisioning new faith-rooted models of community organizing that put our values and faith at the center of the table.

Through emergent and new practices, movement leaders—and many subscribers to this magazine—are trying to envision a healthier and more collaborative social-justice movement by reaching for what feels right and human. While we might not use agricultural language, our guiding metaphor can be to work as gardeners, rather than factory foremen.

This approach still feels radical, new, countercultural. We still have work to do to inspire movement makers and organizers to throw off the chains of extractive thinking, and embrace roles as movement cultivators.

Of course, this is not to underestimate the questions of financial viability, potential for scale, and the ability of a so-called "slow activism" approach to face urgent dilemmas that cannot wait for seeds to sprout and mature.

Yet the organics movement has a lot to teach us. Despite decades of Chicken Little warnings from industrial agriculture, organic alternatives have yet to cause the sky to fall. Despite alarmist rhetoric, we are witnessing a major shift in our food systems that is helping more people have access to good, real food. We didn't know exactly *how* this would happen until millions of people put themselves to work on the problem. Today, we have clearer indications that modern agriculture that respects the environment is indeed possible. The same is true in the context of organizations and movements. We need only start down the path to realize that we can build more human-friendly movement workplaces that cultivate the best of the human spirit.

As with organic food consumption, privilege matters. Those who wish to make the shift to deeper work might not be those who feel the immediate gnawing of a scarcity of resources. This may be true today, yet just as the environmental and food movements are shifting to put marginalized people at the center of our movements, so too can this ecological approach to social movements. An organic farmer looks to the edges of the garden for zones of fertile growth and places to learn from diversity.

With a dose of humility and a soulful commitment to observation, the human capacity for adaptation and transformation makes far-reaching change possible. Seven generations from now—hopefully sooner—our descendants will thank us for the change we were able to make. ■

Culture

BOOKS

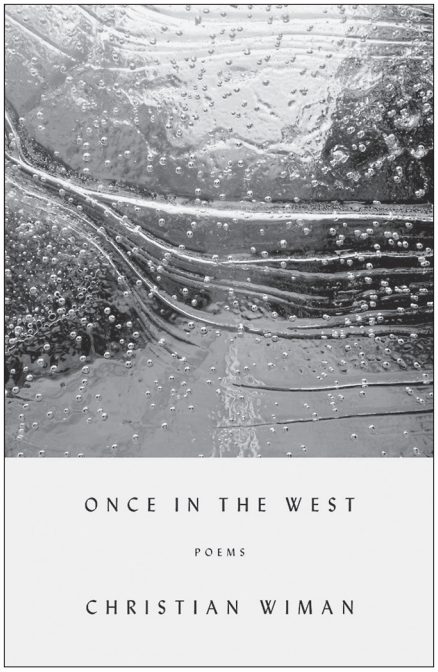
Words of Devotion

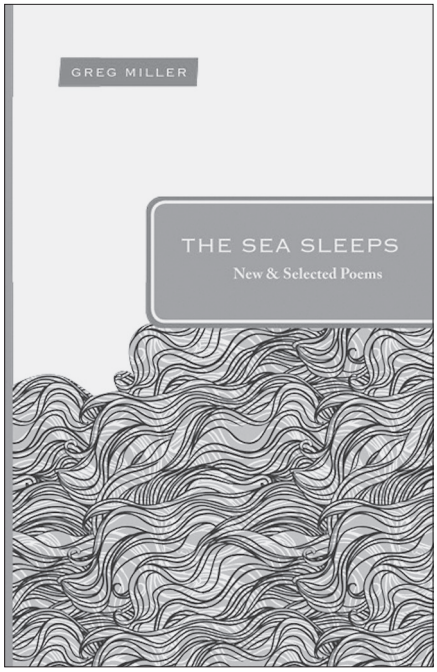
REVIEW BY DAVID DANOFF

Before the Door of God
edited by Jay Hopler and Kimberly Johnson
Yale University Press, 2013

The Sea Sleeps: New and Selected Poems
by Greg Miller
Paraclete Press, 2014

Once in the West
by Christian Wiman
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2014





Poetry and prayer have been tangled up from the start. For most cultures, the earliest extant poetry is a mixture of psalms and spells: language intended to do something supernatural, to bring forth blessings or curses, bridging the divide between the human and the divine. As Sir Philip Sidney reminds us in his *A Defence of Poesie and Poems*, the Romans called the poet "*vates*, which is as much as a diviner, foreseer, or prophet," and other ancient cultures had similar terminology. The mysterious "inspiration" that yielded poems was not far removed from that which yielded visions or oracles.

But this relationship, even as it has continued to the present day, is not without its problems. Does a prayer need to be well written? Does it matter if it's beautiful? Will God be more likely to listen if it is? Is God really the audience, or is the devotional poem intended for one's fellow mortals, eavesdropping as it were on the poet's performance? Is addressing a poem to God just another literary convention—like the Petrarchan beloved, only bigger? To what degree does sincerity matter? What is a devotional poem really meant to do?

A new anthology from Yale University Press, *Before the Door of God*, edited by Jay Hopler and Kimberly Johnson, surveys English-language devotional poetry from its roots in the Hebrew psalms, Greek Homeric hymns, and early Christian lyrics, up through a variety of twentieth- and twenty-first-century practitioners. It's a beautifully produced volume, with

high-quality paper, attractive layouts, and generous margins. (Compared with the tissue-thin paper and miniscule print size of some anthologies, this one is designed for pleasurable reading.) Brief but thought-provoking essays introduce each section, and cogent headnotes introduce each author. In the early sections, the original Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and Old English texts are provided alongside the translations.

One of the pleasures of this collection is the way it illustrates changes in poetic style through the centuries. The choppy, alliterative lilt of Cædmon's *Hymn* (modernized by Kimberly Johnson), written in the seventh century,

> Now must we praise heaven-kingdom's guardian,
> the measurer's might and his mind-thoughts,
> the work of the Gloryfather, how he of each wonder,
> Eternal Lord, established a beginning.

gives way to the honeyed Elizabethan eloquence of George Gascoigne's version of Psalm 130, *De Profundis*:

> From depth of doole wherein my soule doth dwell,
> From heauy heart which harbours in my brest,
> From troubled sprite which sildome taketh rest.
> From hope to heauen, from dreade of darkesome hell.
> O gracious God, to thee I crye and yell.

which in turn yields to the Cavalier playfulness of Robert Herrick's "To God":

> Lord, I am like to mistletoe,
> Which has no root, and cannot grow
> Or prosper, but by that same tree
> It clings about; so I by Thee.

which in time is succeeded by the earnest emotionalism of Christina Rossetti's "A Better Resurrection":

> My life is like a broken bowl,
> A broken bowl that cannot hold
> One drop of water for my soul
> Or cordial in the searching cold;
> Cast in the fire the perish'd thing;
> Melt and remould it, till it be
> A royal cup for Him, my King:
> O Jesus, drink of me.

and so on, up through the plainspoken directness of Marie Howe's "Prayer":

> Every day I want to speak with you.
> And every day something more important
> calls for my attention—the drugstore, the beauty products, the luggage
> I need to buy for the trip.

By the turn of the twentieth century, with traditional religious observance on the decline and spiritual practices taking a wider variety of forms, the distinction between religious and antireligious poetry begins to blur.

Along with stylistic shifts, there's a notable change in the poets' relation to the divine. In the first quarter or so of the anthology, there's a sense of corporate orthodoxy. The poems are expressions of communal values more than individual experience, and their truths seem delivered ready-made rather than discovered or worked out in the course of the poem. This begins to change in the late sixteenth century with Sidney, and even more a few decades later with George Herbert and John Donne, whose "Goodfriday, 1613. Riding Westward" depicts spiritual struggle in brutally tactile terms:

> I turne my backe to thee, but to receive
> Corrections, till thy mercies bid thee leave.
> O thinke mee worth thine anger, punish mee,
> Burne off my rusts, and my deformity,
> Restore thine Image, so much, by thy grace,
> That thou may'st know mee, and I'll turne my face.

Donne's poems have the sense of personal investment, of a subjective consciousness expressing private emotions, not to mention a more acute sensuality, often tinged with masochism, that we associate with so much subsequent lyric poetry. An emotional drama is enacted, spiritual truths are embodied in physical reality, and the intensity of expression draws the reader's attention more to the humanity of the poet than to any external divinity.

Communal orthodoxy returns with a selection of eighteenth-century hymns (Isaac Watts, Charles Wesley, and others), but then we come to the doctrinal idiosyncrasies of Christopher Smart, William Blake, and Emily Dickinson. And the scope of belief expands to encompass the deism of Alexander Pope ("The Universal Prayer"), the pantheism of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Walt Whitman ("A Noiseless Patient Spider"), and the pained agnosticism of Thomas Hardy ("To the Unknown God"). Under the influence of the Romantic movement, devotional poetry is increasingly a mode to investigate possible truths, to probe at inner doubts and fears, and to challenge metaphysical boundaries—like Whitman's spider launching "filament, filament, filament, out of itself," seeking a connection somewhere.

By the turn of the twentieth century, with traditional religious observance

on the decline and spiritual practices taking a wider variety of forms, the distinction between religious and antireligious poetry begins to blur. Paeans to nature could be an assertion of faith—or just the opposite. A spiritualist writer like Yeats could be seen as extending—or completely breaking with—the old traditions of religious poetry. At this point, the anthology begins to include quite a few poems that may or may not be devotional at all, depending on how one reads them.

For many modernists, the devotional impulse expressed itself in attention to physical things, a sense of worship via pure description. Turning away from traditional observances, paradoxically, could bring one closer to God (just as rebellion against the traditional strictures of meter and rhyme could bring one closer to authentic poetry). In "Sunday," William Carlos Williams juxtaposes a series of small sounds and scraps of overheard conversation with the unstated fact that the people he describes are not going to church; and yet, for Williams, this unadorned reality is the church:

> Small barking sounds
> Clatter of metal in a pan
> A high fretting voice
> and a low voice musical
> as a string twanged—

Among contemporary postmodernists, eclecticism, fragmentation, indirectness, and irony have become so pervasive that it's hard to distinguish devotional poetry from poetry on any other subject—or every other subject. For instance, each of Josh Bell's sequence of "Zombie Sunday" poems begins with an identical invocation: "Gentle handed holy father, or whomever." Then, by a series of associative leaps, they meander through nature, personal gripes, literary history (often profanely funny), and bursts of surreal imagery. He's talking to God, he's talking to a friend, or lover, or enemy, or possibly a muse figure, or probably some combination of all of these at once, and the references to God are on the same level as references to T.S. Eliot, a cartoon gopher, and a list of flowers whose names begin with the letter *d*. One subject is as good as another; God is just another trope, another dip into inherited texts.

That's not to say there aren't more traditional religious poets still at work. Two recent collections demonstrate very different uses for the divine in contemporary poetry. For Greg Miller, religion and poetry both seem to function primarily as soothing agents, softening the rough contours of the world, asserting harmony and design where at first one sees only pain or ugliness. In *The Sea Sleeps: New and Selected Poems*, Miller writes with a measured, thoughtful tone about people he's known, places he's visited, artworks he's seen, and subjects he's read about, and a quiet spirituality is everywhere apparent. It seems to be inherent in his mildness of manner.

"For many modernists, the devotional impulse expressed itself in attention to physical things, a sense of worship via pure description."

There is devotion in the clear-eyed, undeceived, yet still optimistic witness Miller pays to everything around him—and in the refusal to indulge in hysterics. Even during Hurricane Katrina ("Wake"), his lines retain their stately pace and well-balanced clarity:

> In the wake of the eye, our oak cracks
> one thick
> limb on a pivot, then lifts, about to split.
> From the dark we watch the neighbor's
> pear splay,
> wind fling green pecans, wires block
> the driveway,
> one low black wire (alive?) swinging
> the road.

A number of poems examine the traumatic experiences of a group of South Sudanese refugees who were relocated to his region of Mississippi and taken in by his church. In "Forgiveness," the example of a Sudanese priest challenges Miller to struggle against anger and fear, against the "reptilian / root of the brain." The lineation is unusually skittish for Miller, but the message is one of rock-solid grace:

> The young priest
> in the Khartoum camps
> buried so many
> with his own hands
> that for a while he was driven mad.
> He has come
> to teach the priests
> to make their hearts clean.

A key element of faith for Miller is music, particularly choral singing. Many of his poems speak of the way people from disparate backgrounds can merge into something greater. In "Broken Consort," the private histories and preoccupations of a group of amateur singers are briefly enumerated, before they come together to perform Brahms:

> breaking repetition and
> variation, praise echoing
> shaped praise,
> making me feel whole, held
> in how I'm not.

Miller's poems of faith may be a means to access something he's not—something more serene and thoughtful and decent than anyone really could be. Raising his songs of "shaped praise," he finds ways to make from an unruly, often unbearable world

something beautiful and whole, pouring balm on the ugliness he sees with the measured cadences of poetry.

For Christian Wiman on the other hand, nothing is soothing, least of all poetry or religion. The poems in his new collection, *Once in the West*, struggle to understand the place of God in a world filled with suffering and loss. In the face of illness and premature death, when nothing remains but bittersweet memory and more painful days to come, faith—and the beauties of art, of poetry—can offer some comfort, but only a very cold comfort. The more intensely Wiman's poems peer into the divine, the more troubled they seem to become.

In 2005, at the age of thirty-nine, less than a year after getting married and two years after taking over the editorship of *Poetry* magazine, Wiman was diagnosed with a rare, incurable blood cancer. Around that time, having left behind the Baptist faith of his childhood years earlier, he and his wife began praying and attending church together. He became a believer and he began writing religiously oriented poetry. Today, he has two young daughters and teaches at the Yale Divinity School. In interviews, he talks of his cancer being in remission and a feeling of joy in his life. But his poems have, if anything, become more anguished, more restless and searching. The new book opens with a tentative "Prayer":

> even now,
> my prayer
>
> is that a mind
> blurred
>
> by anxiety
> or despair
>
> might find
> here
>
> a trace
> of peace.

Wiman's new poems are emaciated—almost skeletal at times, with just a word or two per line—and for long stretches they withdraw into a shadowy world of memories, into the attenuated lives of people he grew up with and the barren West Texas landscape he remembers, as in "Sunday School":

> A city of loss lit in me.
>
> Childhood: all the good
> Godcoddled children
>
> chiming past
> the valley of the shadow:
>
> old pews, old views
> of the cotton fields
>
> north, south,
> east, west,
>
> foreverness
> sifting down like dust

There are intermittent rhymes, and sometimes the lines seem possessed by a sort of rhyming tic that generates new ideas from the play of sounds ("I fear I swear I tear open / what heart I have left // to keep it from being / and beating and bearing down on me"). There are frequent compound words ("stabdazzling darkness," "icequiet," "blacksleek streets"), as well as sharp enjambments that break words across the line breaks ("little up- / ruptures re- / settling / as of dust," "in that back- // seat, sweat- / soaked, skin- // habited heaven / of days"). The language alternately inches along, squeezing out each word with difficulty, or tumbles headlong in a blur, as though driven by powerful compulsions.

There are a handful of more expansive poems in the book, even gentle or tender ones, and some that find glimmers of hope or joy in unlikely places. In "My Stop is Grand," the poet describes a cold morning on the Chicago El when the train

> screechingly peacocked
> a grace of sparks
> so far out and above
> the fast curve that jostled
> and fastened us
> into a single shock of—
> I will not call it love

Wiman's work represents a tireless, often agonizing quest to understand the darkest truths of life—as well as a few of the brightest, sometimes where they're least expected. He uses faith as a tool, alongside the music of poetry and the workings of the intellect, to peer ever further. His temperament is that of a seeker, for whom no previous answer is ever quite complete, and his poems refuse any easy solutions or obvious resting places.

Taken together, these books demonstrate a variety of strategies still available to the contemporary writer to engage with age-old matters of faith without abandoning the imperative of modern verse to "make it new." One of the oldest tasks of poetry remains vital, even if the results are sometimes veiled or ambivalent or slippery: to reach for the divine and to investigate the place of humanity in a vast, hard, and often inscrutable world. ■

DAVID DANOFF is a writer and editor living near Washington, D.C. His poems and reviews have appeared in *Tikkun* and a number of other publications.

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Beyond Self-Blame

Destigmatizing Unemployment

REVIEW BY AMY MAZUR

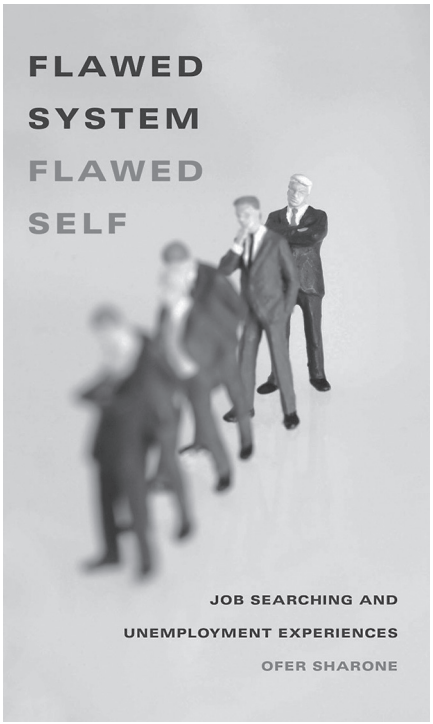
Flawed System/Flawed Self: Job Searching and Unemployment Experiences
by Ofer Sharone
University of Chicago Press, 2013

As a career-development specialist in the Boston area, I watch my clients translate who they are into what they do and then experience the satisfaction of meaningful employment. The process can be deeply fulfilling for both the job seeker and the career counselor. But I have recently come to realize that this work can also be damaging: I see now that for years I unknowingly perpetuated self-blame among those who, despite their best efforts, remain unemployed or underemployed.

Ofer Sharone's book *Flawed System/Flawed Self: Job Searching and Unemployment Experiences* gave me a new framework for understanding the damaging effects of a fundamental premise behind most job search assistance: the idea that unemployment is the result of remediable failings in an individual's job search strategy, rather than a systemic failure created by the structure of our economic system.

Sharone's book helped me realize that I have been repeating the messages that keep job seekers in a position of isolation and distress. How often have I focused primarily on an individual's "fit" for a job, minimizing the role that broader economic forces play in keeping many people unemployed for the long term? Using Sharone's book as a guide, I have come to understand more clearly how the individual and the system are intimately connected, and I can work to interrupt the troubling patterns of self-blame I have been supporting in my role as a helping professional.

> **"Job seekers need a vehicle for safe expression of these feelings of shame and embarrassment.**



The Emotional Toll of Unemployment

Individuals who once thought that a college education, a solid record of work experience, and a positive work attitude would ensure economic security are finding this is no longer true. Those with limited educations or spotty work histories, meanwhile, are having an even harder time supporting themselves. Many hardworking individuals are struggling to support themselves and retire with any semblance of financial security.

While statistics indicate that the economy is improving, the long-term unemployed continue to experience the effects of being out of work for longer periods of time—effects that take a very serious toll on their emotional and physical health.

At first being out of work may feel like an opportunity, a time to take a break or explore new paths. But after about six months of constant rejection, with no positive responses from potential employers, individuals start to take it personally. They ask, "What is wrong with me that I am not getting a job?"

Sharone explores this move toward self-blame with a critical eye, showing how the career-management industry's focus on improving individual job seekers' strategies contributes to this problem of self-blame. He describes how the career industry conveys the idea that if only you rework your resume one more time, say this specific phrase with this tone in your interview, mention this when you follow up, and network, network, network, you will fix your

problem. This mentality leads job seekers to see their individual efforts as the only problem, rather than blaming the economic system.

When caught in the grip of self-blame, job seekers can feel so isolated and incapacitated that they fail to reach out to their communities of support. Our best solutions come to us when we are fully connected. At those times, we realize our whole selves, innovate, express our best creative ideas, and discover our vocational intentions. Self-blame shuts out this vital sense of connection and possibility.

The Trap of Self-Blame

How can a job seeker feel anything other than self-blame if they do not get a job?

Sharone describes how "the same discourses and practices that produced the initial sense of control . . . lead job seekers to blame themselves for their difficulties and make it hard to continue searching."

In the United States, he writes, white-collar workers who are struggling with long-term unemployment contend with a chemistry game, or a "game of fit." He compares this system to the very different system that exists in Israel, where white-collar workers contend with a "specs game" (or a game requiring that specific qualifications be met). He argues that the game of fit in the United States is much more likely to produce patterns of self-blame than the specs game in Israel, where workers tend to see employment decisions as a result of supply and demand for specific objective skills.

The game of fit can be translated to mean that every time you apply for a job, you are not only having your relevant skills and experience evaluated, but you are also putting your whole identity out there to be evaluated. When you keep hearing, "You are not what we are looking for" in response, it is easy to start feeling like there's something wrong with you as a person—that you are not a good person. Sharone captures this idea succinctly when he writes that "the increasing blame of one's inner self—as opposed to one's external *self-presentation*—reflects a direct hit to precisely the area of vulnerability created by the emotional labor of self-subjectification."

Sharone also notes that in cases of long-term unemployment, all of the blame is placed on the job seeker. Stepping into the shadows of self-blame, lone job seekers usually blame themselves rather than the systems that make long-term unemployment a chronic and necessary part of the U.S. economy. Employers, hiring managers, and our culture as a whole reinforce the idea that job seekers are to blame because they do not "fit" or they are not good enough.

"Unemployment continues to be understood as a matter that is private rather than public, and individual rather than structural," Sharone writes. To the extent that workers focus blame on themselves, he adds, "American society escapes the consequences of its own contradictions. The social order is thus protected, however, only at the psychological expense of those who have failed."

Disrupting the Culture of Shame

It is extremely difficult to reframe long-term unemployment in a way that disrupts job seekers' patterns of self-blame. To do so, job seekers need a vehicle for safe expression of these feelings of shame and embarrassment, an acknowledgement that these feelings are normal given the rules of the game, and an acknowledgement that individual job seekers are not the only players in the game.

Sharone's work has inspired the creation of one institution that is at the forefront of current efforts to disrupt the pervasive culture of self-blame and disconnection, reframe the job-seeking process, and provide connection and support: the Institute for Career Transitions (instituteforcareertransitions.org). In addition to gathering qualitative data on the plight of the long-term unemployed, the institute invites career-management professionals to provide free career coaching, career counseling, and group meetings for people facing long-term unemployment. In these meetings, the job seekers are not seen as at fault for their unemployment; rather, they

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are supported and encouraged to see themselves as engaged in a strategically played game in which other players make the rules and have a very large stake in how the game is played.

Many career professionals have stepped up to support the work of the Institute for Career Transitions because we do not want to perpetuate a game that is a constant uphill climb for the job seeker. Some of us are joining job seekers to argue that this game is not working, and some are pledging to change the system itself by fighting to increase the minimum wage, secure support for contingent workers, guarantee annual income for all workers, and build union power and engagement. On the legislative front, we need to campaign for the passage and implementation of policies that increase the rights of workers at all levels. We must also support the enforcement of initiatives introduced by the Obama administration to punish employers for discriminatory hiring practices and restructure the hiring system. And we need to support the many social change activists who are working to build a new economic system based on worker-owned cooperatives, socially responsible firms, and the aim of shared prosperity and ecological health for all.

Sharone's book and the work of the Institute for Career Transitions play an important role in these efforts because they rethink where the responsibility for chronic unemployment falls. Sharone's work may at first seem only to address the dynamics of the job search, but it actually extends much further in scope, encouraging us to rethink the profound effect that unchecked self-blame can have, both on those who experience it and on those who collude in exacting it. ■

AMY MAZUR is a career-development specialist and counselor educator in the Greater Boston area who helps individuals begin, renew, and advance their careers while reflecting on the meaning of work in their lives.

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The Psyche in Psychedelic

REVIEW BY STEPHEN MO HANAN

Entheogens, Society & Law: Towards a Politics of Consciousness, Autonomy & Responsibility
by Daniel Waterman
Melrose Books, 2013

EARLIER THIS YEAR I joined some friends at a performance by the New York Philharmonic of Verdi's *Requiem Mass*. Not one of us was Catholic or professed any creed threatening an afterlife of eternal suffering for the wicked. No perpetual willies over Judgment Day. Nevertheless, when the massed voices of chorus and orchestra unleashed their frenzy in the climactic "Dies irae" section, we four, like everyone in the packed house, were awestruck, transfixed, energized with a terror deeper than anything you could glean from Bible class. No knowledge of Latin was required to register the urgent pleading of "Libera me," the joy of the "Sanctus," or the profound serenity of the "Agnus Dei." Music like this bypasses the thinking, querulous mind into a realm of pure experience. The depth of feeling curbs any need to interpret.

I thought of this often while plowing through Daniel Waterman's *Entheogens, Society & Law*, an epic exploration of consciousness, the substances that alter it, the traditions that investigate it, and the scientistic and moralistic interpretations that misconstrue it. Like Verdi, Waterman wants to break through the conceptual frames that confine our experience of reality, in search of elemental truths housed in some private interior chamber. That his method relies on sentences and not sounds is both an aid and a limitation. He may lack the dramatic genius that fuels Verdi's musical power, but his mind is as comprehensive as Bucky Fuller's, as densely detailed as Derrida's, and as erudite as Diderot's. His book offers more footnotes than the Talmud, some of them spellbinding, others interminable. By the time he reaches his sublime "Afterword," he has examined so minutely, digressed so encyclopedically, written so densely (and, I regret to report, proofread so atrociously) that the clarity and succinct force of his conclusions are as welcome as any miracle. But what a slog!

"Entheogens" (if you haven't already consulted a dictionary) is the more recent term for what British psychiatrist Humphry Osmond christened "psychedelics" back in 1957, when he and a Canadian colleague initiated a series of long-term studies of hallucinogenic drugs, LSD and psilocybin among them. Similar research in the United States and Europe was, despite intriguing discoveries, almost completely halted by various legislative bodies starting in the late sixties. Waterman has entrusted his book with a task no less arduous than creating a historical (and even prehistoric) context for the human investigation of mind-altering substances, probing the deep psychological roots of taboos enforced by authoritarian institutions, and proposing that without a shared commitment to individual inner growth, our species is unlikely to endure.

Not everybody is persuaded that we will, or should. Waterman offers a fascinating analysis of apocalyptic cults past and present, portraying belief in a coming end of the world as the ego's apprehension of personal death writ large. He is unsparing in his critique of Christianism (my preferred term for the "get saved or be damned" theology that worships Jesus but ignores his advice), pointing out that the doctrine of original sin, with its "particularly insidious effect on the psyche," has been a gift to authoritarian elites from its inception, fostering an archetype of unfitness and justifying the maintenance of strict social control. When so-called conservatives invoke "human nature" to scold the idealistic, they are merely rebranding Saint Paul for the post-Freudian market.

Entheogens, Society & Law makes a persuasive case that alternative answers to the dilemma of "fallen man" not only exist but have always existed and can be accessed directly through a person's mental system without reference to external authority, be it church, state, or media. Waterman isn't shy about his own extensive entheogenic experiences, and he gives them credit for confirming a more generous view: we're not only sinless, we are blessed. "The kingdom of heaven is within you" is a metaphoric summation of an observed condition. As he explains, ". . . our alienated state is fundamentally an illusion and spiritual awakening consists of nothing more than a dispelling of that illusion and the compulsive acting out of its implications."

Of course, that "nothing more" can happen in a sudden flash of cosmic insight, or demand a lifetime of therapy and contemplation, or both.

"The archetype of dread is implanted deep in every one of us and plays a huge part in the way humanity behaves.

But when the illusion-compelled acting-out reaches the level of violence exhibited by the guys who boss our world, it's clear that said illusion needs urgently to be examined. What is it? Where does it come from?

Transforming a Violent World

Violence breeds alienation which breeds more violence, ad infinitum. But Waterman offers another clue, drawn from data by researchers like Stanislav Grof, who have observed, when regressing patients under entheogenic supervision, strikingly similar recollections of the birth trauma. The imprint that expulsion from the womb makes on our pre-verbal minds, stored in the unconscious and once thought irretrievable, now turns out to usher us into life with a fearful psychic upheaval that may indeed be the DNA of "original sin." It will have violent repercussions if not addressed and healed. But if everyone feels the wound, who will do the healing?

It seems we all leave the warm and familiar womb and enter this bright, noisy life scared shitless. PTSD is our birthright, and we soon enough learn that at the far end of the journey lurks death. In between we must contend with accident, illness, pain, and even cruelty. This is why you don't have to be Catholic, or even Christianist, to tremble at the "Dies irae." The archetype of dread is implanted deep in every one of us and plays a huge part in the way humanity behaves.

The newborn's instinctive bonding with its mother is nature's way not only of compensating for the birth trauma, but of hinting at a future course that cherishes connection, intimacy, and love in place of fear and confusion. Unfortunately, not everyone takes the hint.

Given enough of life's basic necessities, the vast majority of humankind is content to live in fellowship with our neighbors and kin. Two forces erode this. One is an insufficiency of the basics. The other is an unrestrained concept of "enough." The first gives rise to conflict, but also to social movements requiring empathy, cohesion, and justice. As for the second, just take a look around.

The world is a dangerous place, as Fox News never tires of reminding us. Yet pundits seldom stop to ask why this is, or if it must perpetually continue. *Entheogens, Society & Law* isn't afraid to ask. A veteran of the "counter-cultural (r)evolution of the 1960s," the author was present as

> Western authorities reacted by seeking to repress or eradicate any intimation of a link between psychedelics, non-ordinary states of consciousness, religious or mystical experience, (mental) health and the ethical problems of Western society.

Though clearly of the left, he shares the view of many from his era that political reform is insufficient (if not useless) without some corresponding development in consciousness and in values. And likewise, the sign of transformed consciousness is an ego-busting concern for the world around us, both social and planetary: a paradigm shift simultaneously among masses and elites, of the sort that the late sixties so notably spawned.

As a member of that generation (which a friend once called the "Aquarian Age shock troops"), I find myself more than occasionally wondering what went haywire. Were the prophets of a transformed world somewhat premature or completely deluded? Or did we simply underestimate the threat we posed and the tenacity of the resistance? Was "hippie spirituality"—a cosmic panorama shrunk into two words—merely the product of drug-addled, New Age nitwits, or a visionary revolt against the sociopolitical morbidity spawned by the relentless, egoistic money lust of capitalism in our time?

Time will unfold its answer, which depends on our willingness to merge the external world with the interior one that perceives and responds to it. The odds are interesting. I like the paradox in the idea of a politics of meaning. Meaning is an interpretation we locate inside ourselves, while politics is typically located in the world without. But it's a chicken-or-egg proposition. It seems to me that the meaning of life appears only when it derives from relating to something more than ourselves, and politics matter only when they either reinforce or challenge our inner values.

Is it for me to judge if people use entheogens to get high rather than deep? No more than if they practice yoga for physical fitness rather than spiritual development. Waterman likes the analogy of tools, which can be used, misused, or left alone. If an LSD trip can make you a saint or a psychotic, so can reading the Bible or Qur'an. It's all in the interpreting. All in the interpreting. A free society allows everyone to weigh the pros and cons and decide for themselves, without coercion or prohibition. The true paradigm shift is one from authoritarianism to imagination, from *should* to *could*.

Such a shift flies directly in the face of competitive consumerism, to say nothing of militarism and environmental plunder. The few who profit hugely from all three do so because they have hypnotized the many into accepting their interpretation of the scene that life perpetually unfolds before us, commonly known as reality. This interpretation favors scientific reductionism over spiritual inquiry, habit over spontaneity, calculation over wonder, mechanism over intuition, alarm over serenity, and so forth. To challenge this, or any approved interpretation, is perilous, as history repeats and repeats.

To Vietnam-era upholders of the status quo, mescaline was definitely a poison. To redwood-hugging hippies it was a remedy.

Embracing Holistic Medicine

Every culture on every continent has had its own version of tribal indoctrination, but there have also everywhere been shamans, *curanderas*, medicine men, prophets, and contrarians, often with knowledge of mind-altering plants whose personal and social effects Waterman vividly (if exhaustingly) documents: teachers who offered, openly or in secret, a rival, radical interpretation to counter the prevailing one. They taught paths of peace and amity, creativity and bliss, to be encountered within. Teachers remembered and forgotten, sometimes esteemed, more often spurned.

"Must then a Christ perish in torment in every age to save those that have no imagination?" asks George Bernard Shaw's Saint Joan. Her partner in a flaming death, Lt. Muath al-Kasasbeh, is only the latest sacrifice to Moloch, the dread god who imagines only the worst. Can we even begin to imagine a world where such cruelty ceases? Do we have it within us? What would the entheogenist John Lennon say?

Waterman was raised in a secular leftist family of Holocaust survivors who settled in Holland after the war. His first entheogenic experiences were profound though not religious, except perhaps in the Tom Paine sense: "The word of God is the creation we behold." By comparison, my Orthodox background culminated in fiery Hebrew letters streaming through space. Waterman is less inclined than I am to think of the encountered place as divinity, but it manifests through him no less for that, as loving attention to the world and society and a call to healing.

Early in the book, Waterman expounds (at perhaps unnecessary length) on the varied meanings of the Greek word *pharmakon*, from which we derive pharmacist, Big Pharma, etc. It can be translated as "medicine," "remedy," and even "poison." He uses this to transition into the theme of interpretation that runs throughout. To Vietnam-era upholders of the status quo, mescaline was definitely a poison. To redwood-hugging hippies it was a remedy. Each would have viewed the other as insane.

But surely there's middle ground, a place where meeting is possible. Everyone can see the world humanity has created since the Industrial and

American Revolutions is altered materially almost beyond recognition. But the psychological system that undergirds the material one is where the changes begin. Today's world is a product of ideas that began in the minds of countless individuals: Thomas Edison and Adolf Hitler, Clara Barton and Samuel Colt, Steve Jobs and Mao Zedong. If the intelligence of our species is to outlast its destructive tendencies, we must turn to therapeutic intervention. If there exist medicines in our world that can restore a perplexed mind to clarity in ways that forge deep connections with others and with the natural world, wouldn't we be fools to overlook them?

Change is in the air. Johns Hopkins, NYU, the University of New Mexico, and schools in London and Zurich are sponsoring clinical trials of the palliative effects of psilocybin—a compound found in some species of entheogenic mushrooms—for alcoholics and cancer patients. Results are encouraging, outstandingly so in terms of curing alcoholism and helping the terminally ill live joyously and face death fearlessly. Leading neuroscientists have begun to consider and appreciate aspects of the mind that overrule scientism itself, implying that the mystics may have been right all along. Only this moment is real.

Forty-five years ago Ram Dass proposed in *Be Here Now* that the rational mind is "a perfect servant and a lousy master." Where is the better master that the mind is designed to serve? Waterman finds it in the maze of the unconscious, a maze complicated by false starts, dead ends, surges of panic and terror. Yet in due course the maze leads to where the ultimate mystery awaits, a mystery that has no name because, like music, it defies reason:

> We desperately need to evolve a deeper, more empowering understanding of human nature and history with which to meet the challenges we face . . . a radical awakening to the powers of the human heart/mind/spirit that is potentially available to every human being, precisely because it comes from within, and not from some mystical external source that we cannot question.

I hope Daniel Waterman keeps these questions coming. The arc of the moral universe is indeed long, but it calls on every one of us to make it shorter. ■

STEPHEN MO HANAN performed on Broadway and London's West End in some of the most conspicuous musicals of the eighties. Now a playwright, his latest, *Hush Money*, was a semifinalist for the O'Neill Playwrights Conference and the Bay Area Playwrights Festival.

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Dante's Politics

The decorative mosaic adorning the ancient synagogue floor
is innocent of its future. *Good luck*, it means to say, or

my swastika hands miming perpetual motion wish you
everlasting peace and prosperity. And what coincidence

sends my son running across the plaza, blowing again
and again on his precious pinwheel toy? *Say what you mean*,

I want to shout. I am listening to the politicians
in the courtyard, excavating for small truths buried

beneath thick stratum of tedious lies. And when I am dust
who will interpret these few odd poems addressed

to family and friends? When I am gone who will explain
Dante's politics to my child? Exiled during the war

of the Blacks and the Whites, did his writings
favor empire or church? Sometimes I forget

even my own lust for small temporary power. *Good luck*.
is my wish for my son who briefly holds his breath

as if contemplating his future, and the pinwheel of words
he will spin into the world to disguise or uncover his meanings.

—Richard Michelson

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