

# Israel Shahak on Jewish Fundamentalism

For non-Jews (but really for every person eager to know the truth) to understand the Jewish mentality Israel Shahak brings forth a couple of main points, which otherwise are never heard of in mainstream media, or Western history books.

The following are quotes from his speech at MIT from 1994. Mostly quotes or near verbatim sentences by him. Available at Youtube.com (Noam Chomsky and Israel Shahak on Jewish Fundamentalism;

<http://bit.ly/13CnZJF> )

"Human rights and the alleviation of human suffering must come first."  
Israel Shahak

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How Israel Shahak characterizes himself:

"A Jew who in his own (very critical) way is devoted to Jewish culture and Jewish tradition of 3000 years, who indeed thinks is [that he is] more devoted to those traditions in a better sense of the word than all the orthodox rabbis taken together ('if you excuse me being a bit bold')."

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What will be shown is how Israeli/ Jewish fundamentalist theories and thinking affect the practices of the Israeli state in the "territories," this is the general subject of his presentation, and how this ideology, which is strictly followed by the secular state of Israel (influences the general politics).

## 1. The Problem of Land

As a background: The Oslo agreement led to 70% of the Westbank and 30% of the Gaza Strip to become the property of the Israeli state.

Land which is owned by the state of Israel is only for the benefit of Jews. - Not for other Israelis if they are non-Jews. "Land which belongs to the state of Israel is [and can only be] used only for the benefit of Jews."

"When you read in your newspapers etc. about Israeli settlements, it is not correct. They are not intended for all Israeli citizens, of whom 17% are Palestinians, the land is denied to [all except Jews].

Those 70% were not only confiscated from the Palestinian farmers [etc.], but also on this territory he cannot do anything, he cannot rent it [etc.], because the land is open - officially and legally - to all the Jews [alone].

This situation of the Gaza strip before and after Oslo is a situation of Apartheid.

## 2. The Problem of Water

Water is a crucial factor in agriculture and in development.

Palestinians are not allowed to dig wells on their own private property, or to increase the capacity of their existing pumps.

On the 30% of the Westbank which still belongs to the Palestinians, they are totally forbidden to dig wells since Sept. 1967, or to install new pumps [in order to get more water].

Of course the settlers are not prohibited to do this.

130.000 settlers on the Westbank use more water for agriculture than 1.5 million of Palestinians.

There are other manifestations of Apartheid in the territory.

## 3. The Rule of Law

From where did this ideology arise, come from?

[The law in Israel] is not a territorial law. Israeli Jews, or Israeli settlers, if they commit an offence in the territories, such as bad driving, will be tried inside Israel, by a civilian court. Not by the Israeli military courts, which are charging Palestinians for any offence.

But the Palestinian police has no power to arrest an Israeli Jew, if he committed a crime in the territories, just because he is an Israeli Jew.

"We are doing to Palestinians more or less what Christians and to a lesser degree Muslims have done to us ... It is quite common that the persecuted group becomes the persecutor ... We have to enquire how it happens," (we must not close up on it.)

(One expression used by Rabin and everybody else concerning [the eventual] freeing of Palestinian prisoners [was the talk] about "Jewish blood" and "Arab blood," [if they had shed ~, this] resembles the expressions used by anti-Semitic regimes against Jews.

Another example showing the true character of the Israeli regime: [which is] worse than the colonial rule - you won't find "any colony in the 20th century" in which murderers who are already caught (for 'non-security' murders) and sentenced are then sent home as a matter of policy." This is a most important mark of Apartheid.

#### 4. From Where Do These Policies Arise?

"You cannot understand the words Jew and Jewish, if you only look at modern Jews," or if you read your Bible and you make 'a quantum jump' from the 5th century BC to the 19th or 20th century AD. During this time the Jews had a religion very different from Biblical Judaism and very different from the Judaism of modern Western countries. "My book is to fill this hole."

He presents some social aspects of Judaism during the period of Classical Judaism (until about the 19th century) and explains the type of oppression Jews are inflicting on Palestinian, which is something very similar to what was inflicted upon Jews during about 2000 years.

Until the rise of the modern state, such as the US, or the Netherlands or England to some extent, no Jew paid taxes as individuals. Taxes were

usually imposed upon the Jews in the country as a lump sum, collected by the respective Jewish authority, which had the necessary coercive power. "They also had the power to punish Jewish members of their communities for all kinds of religious offenses."

This means that for about 2000 years "Judaism in its orthodox form was forced on Jews by the Jewish authorities," who "performed a necessary service for the ruling classes.

In some cities, Jews were not allowed to live. Then from around 1900 some liberalization (by Napoleon, which was opposed by Jewish rabbis), [people could] even say formerly forbidden things, for which they were earlier punished by the Jewish orthodoxy. Jews were "liberated by revolutions carried out by other peoples."

Now-a-days Jews are split into different denominations (sects).

- those who say Jewish tradition is more important than democracy and more important than state interest (in terms of profit) or state power, i.e. more important than any abstract idea (such as the idea of equality of citizens before the law.)

And also the idea that religious groups should not be allowed to punish its members, but [that this ought to be the] sole right of the state, [then this] goes against Jewish tradition, because of those 2000 years or more during which the tradition served a completely different system.

Because of this at the present, more than 90% of Israeli Jews, when asked a simple question, if the treatment of Palestinians in the territories is undemocratic, or if such a treatment will serve the goals of the state of Israel, or if this treatment would serve the permanent occupation, would say all those questions are not relevant.

Relevant is that the "Jewish land" in Israel will be redeemed, and when redeemed, it should never go back to be unredeemed.

He then draws several comparisons with South African apartheid. (The one was based on colour, the other one based on religion, and you can convert to Judaism.)

Why , compared with Warshaw or Paris which was closed to Jews until the French revolution, (except for royal agents for a limited time.)

Conversion [made it possible for the person to move to Paris or Warshaw), if [he was] more interested in profit [than religion] and he became automatically a nobelman [more than a peasant of course].

The situation in the territories is exactly the same [as it was for the Jews in medieval Europe].

He compares the Westbank with Alaska:

54% of the territory of the Westbank is empty, but [only] devoted to Jews, for this is the official policy of the state of Israel, [which states that it] is not allowed for a Palestinian to live there, unless he will convert [to Judaism] - unless he will do the same thing as Jews did before the modern era and could benefit.

So here you see, how - because of conversion -- because of this exception to the rule - it really shows how we (Israeli) Jews - on this point I want to disagree a little with Noam Chomsky - whatever is the American responsibility, which however I don't deny - the first and full responsibility of what is done in the territories falls on us Israeli Jews.

"By imbibing (internalizing) the values of our oppressors we are now doing - this is my view\* - to others what was done to us in the past."

"There is in my opinion only one way out of this impasse. ...The 'peace process,' which is based on apartheid will therefore never succeed. ...

"85% of all Israelis oppose the formation of a Palestinian state under any conditions."

Some opinions in Israel have changed - not concerning the Palestinians - but about modernity and democracy. One of the tragedies of the Palestinians is that for us they are foreign affairs. Every society is mostly interested in domestic affairs.

For example (there was recently in the Israeli media an intense discussion about) the prohibition of importing non-kosher meat. [As an example of the priority of domestic issues over foreign such.]

But this among other issues has shown that the forces of [Jewish] tradition are not as strong as they were 30 or 40 or for sure 50 years ago.

Therefore there is a (maybe not a strong) possibility, that by strengthening and enforcing the first principles of democracy at home in the state of Israel, we can also change - to some but significant extent - our foreign policies, in this respect toward the Palestinians, which I tried to show [as] you are ideologically[?] biased.

Americans have a part to play in changing the policies of their country.

1st role:

"To see what we (Israeli Jews) are doing and what we are."

and in other words,

"To obtain accurate information about Israel and Israeli Jews."

"In this respect one thing is very crucial:

"To distinguish between an Israeli Jew of whatever opinion and the opinion of "supporters of Israel" in the US. There is a crucial difference:

"Your policies are leading to war, and in the process many Israeli Jews will lose their lives."

But the (Jewish and other) supporters of Israel [outside Israel itself don't have to take the consequences (or the risk) of their (pro-Zionist) opinions.] If there will be a war because of the policies that they advocate, "they will at the most weep in front of their tv-sets."

[Those right-wing supporters of Israel outside Israel itself] "are compensating their guilt feelings by very much greater fanaticism than if present among the great majority of Israeli Jews.

"Therefore it is your duty - I think - of whatever are your opinions of Israel, not to be fooled by the supporters of Israel in this country [USA, Europe], but to go to the source."

"Even when you support Israel, ask what Israeli Jews of various opinions are thinking, and only after this form your opinion."

"The supporters of Israel in this country [USA] are for this reason not telling the truth even on this matter."

2nd:

"The second thing is that if you help democracy, you will help the rights of the Palestinians. You will help also the right of justice all over the world."

(Israeli foreign policy towards f ex Guatemala or Palestinian Arabs is therefore the same.)

(Increasing (even pre-)democracy in Israel will also help to change our [Israeli] foreign policy.)

Inform yourself 1st of all about what Palestinians are suffering ... the main purpose of my speech was to alert you that the Palestinians in the territories are suffering, and their suffering is increasing, but after this I'm also requesting you that after learning about the situation you will support also those forces within the Israeli Jewish community, who are in favour of democracy, who put democracy above Jewish tradition."

END

Do to main page on Zionist Israel: [http://www.livingislam.org/m/fozi\\_e.html](http://www.livingislam.org/m/fozi_e.html)