

- [HOME](#)
- [NEWS](#)
- [OPINION](#)
- [CULTURE](#)
- [ACTIVISM](#)
- [MEDIA ANALYSIS](#)

**M**

We are shaping public opinion,  
with reporting you can trust.

**Donate**

[OPINION](#)

# Hopeful pathologies in the war for Palestine: a reply to Adam Shatz

When Western intellectuals express dismay at the "vengeful pathologies" of Palestinian violence on October 7, they ignore its underlying military, tactical, and political precipitants.

BY [ABDALJAWAD OMAR](#) [NOVEMBER 8, 2023](#) 4

[Share on Facebook](#) [Share on Twitter](#)



THIS FRONTISPIECE FROM THE 1802 NOVEL, “INCENDIE DU CAP, OU LE RÈGNE DE TOUSSAINT-LOUVERTURE” (“THE BURNING OF THE CAP, OR THE REIGN OF TOUSSAINT-LOUVERTURE”) BY FRENCH NOVELIST RENÉ PÉRIN, HAS BECOME ONE OF THE MOST RECOGNIZABLE DEPICTIONS OF THE HAITIAN REVOLUTION, BECOMING A PIECE OF PROPAGANDA THAT DELIGITIMIZED THE REVOLUTION AND ATTACKED ITS LEADER, TOUSSAINT LOUVERTURE, WHO PÉRIN DESCRIBED AS AN “ATROCIOUS NEGRO” OF WHOM HE WISHED TO “OFFER A PORTRAIT UPON WHICH, READER, YOU MAY BE FORCED TO SHED MANY TEARS!!!” THE ILLUSTRATION DEPICTS A WELL-DRESSED TOUSSAINT-LOUVERTURE PRESIDING OVER THE MERCILESS MASSACRE OF INNOCENT WHITES, MANY OF THEM WOMEN AND CHILDREN. (PHOTO: RACE.ED/UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH)

In Adam Shatz’s widely disseminated *London Review of Books* article, “[Vengeful Pathologies](#),” a narrative unfurls intricately

interweaving historical analogies and spurious comparisons in an endeavor to undermine the principles of decolonization and its accompanying tumult. Shatz lays out three major points of contention. The first is the assertion that vengeance has become the primary mode of interaction between Israelis and Palestinians, wherein the “vengeful pathologies” of both sides mirror the same primordial instincts. The second point is a critique of what he describes as the “decolonial left,” accusing it of willfully turning a blind eye to the “crimes” committed by the colonized and the childlike celebration of civilian deaths. The third and perhaps most important point involves his employment of historical analogies to underscore the veracity of the events of October 7, pinpointing the similarity between these events and a forgotten event in the Algerian war for liberation — the battle of Philippeville — in exacerbating the rise of fascism in the West. The essay is an embodiment of a more expansive intellectual labyrinth that haunts Western intellectuals. It characterizes the Palestinians as “necessary and inevitable victims,” rendering them visible only as archival footnotes in yet another efficacious settler colonial enterprise. Is it not curious, one might ask, that the very sympathy shown to Palestinians appears directly proportional to their perceived inability to confront the uniform machinery of settler colonialism? There is a hidden gratification in witnessing this tragic narrative from afar. Israel’s persistent upper hand serves as a powerful catalyst for Western intellectuals’ feel-good sympathy, a kind of pseudo-solidarity that whispers to Palestinians: “We are with you, but only so long as you remain tragic victims sinking graciously into your own abyss.” One might even argue that this sympathy is contingent upon the Palestinians’ maintenance of their tragic status quo.

There’s a safety in this for those intellectuals: the Palestinian experience, as heart-wrenching as it is, remains comfortably distant, a spectacle to be consumed. This pre-inscribed script becomes an eerie marker of the limitations of critical intellectual engagement with Palestine and the Palestinians.

**Signup for the Daily Headlines newsletter.** You'll get new stories delivered directly to your inbox every morning at 8am EST.

Subscribe

As a result, when Palestinians dare to rebel and challenge their imposed fate after years of oppression, the responses are predictably schizophrenic. The same intellectuals who once sobbed at our plight are now torn. Many become moral policemen, quickly brandishing the baton of condemnation, but even more importantly, readily “adopting” with full intensity Israel’s curated and sensationalized version of the events of October 7 in the so-called Gaza envelope (the Israeli settlements bordering Gaza).

Others, cloaked in a shroud of indifference, offer nothing but silence, many of whom are Palestinian intellectuals and historians. The collective voice, which once resonated with sympathy, now echoes with cautionary tales that warn against the wrath of the oppressed, which is barbaric, primordial, and awakens right-wing fascism. When some [do speak up](#), like Joseph Massad, they are subjected to a witch hunt meant to make an example of them and cow the rest into silence.

## **Israel’s vengeful pathology and breaking through the Iron Wall**

When one delves into the maze of Israel’s historical narrative, it becomes evident that vengeance is not just an abstract, fleeting emotion but is almost insidiously embedded in the very nerve center of Israeli militarism. Reflect upon events like the burning of [Turmusayya](#) and [Huwwara](#): they are not mere blips in Zionist history but indications that vengeance is its modus operandi. Here, the real paradox in Shatz’s narrative is his mistaken understanding of how Zionist vengeance works — it doesn’t

simply react to Palestinian actions, provocations, or even their capacity to invoke terror, but goes beyond the conventional realm of cause and effect and seeks to punish the audacity of mere Palestinian existence. Even a Palestinian like President Mahmoud Abbas, who allows Israel to continue expanding its settler colonies in the West Bank and serve its security and financial interests, is an affront to the settlers. All that the Palestinian Authority (PA) has received in return for its security and civil cooperation with Israel is financial sanctions and a hidden desire to get rid of Israel's dependency on the PA's security cooperation.

We are bearing witness to this genocidal manifestation in the Israeli social fabric — not only in the radical right but within state policy, and even among its liberal streams. The unraveling of this moment of truth touches upon the very essence of the Zionist problem. It is a moment in which the collective unconscious of Zionism, largely uttered by the likes of Bezlalel Smotirtich and Itamar Ben-Gvir, becomes the collective consciousness of the state in its various streams.

Shatz, in his myopia, might have overlooked the compelling transformation of the esteemed *Haaretz* (which he fawns over as “Israel's extraordinary daily newspaper”) into a propaganda mouthpiece as it resounded with cries for retribution and conflict. Israel, after 75 years, obstinately reiterates its foundational transgression: the very obliteration of Palestinians. Raining down 18,000 tons of explosives upon one of the world's most densely populated regions surpasses mere reaction to the events of October 7; it signifies Israel's weaponization of madness and assault [on a world](#) that dares to challenge the prevailing status quo of expansive settler colonialism and military occupation.

The sinister chants of “death to the Arabs” have not just manifested in state doctrine but have intriguingly resonated with American geopolitics. Shatz, blinded perhaps by his own prejudices or his genuine affinity for *Haaretz*, has tragically missed the intricate interplay of Israel's politics and identity. He errs by situating the Palestinian response as the progenitor of this

systemic erasure. In reality, Palestinian resistance, in its myriad manifestations, emerges as a dialectical antithesis to prolonged suppression but is not necessarily a mirror image of Israel's worst propensities. A better understanding of these dynamics requires that we look to Zionism's core ethos with respect to the "Arab problem."

The founding fathers of Zionism, such as Ze'ev Jabotinsky, held lucid views regarding the "necessary evils" Israel would need to commit to establish a state at the expense of Palestinian Arabs. Jabotinsky's "Iron Wall," in fact, mirrors Israel's current military doctrine, which is a profound commitment to military strength by erecting an "Iron Wall" with which Arabs would eventually be forced to reconcile.

The Iron Wall doctrine leads to the realization that Zionism culminates in a "zero-sum" game toward the natives — an existential equation of "either us or them." To break free from this cycle, it becomes imperative to dismantle this wall — to challenge Israel's confidence in perpetually crafting a "military solution" to a systemic and political predicament. Regardless of whether we condone or condemn, this is precisely what Palestinians set out to achieve on October 7.

## **Palestinian profanity and Israel's 'logical madness'**

We must take into account the pre-existing rules of military engagement, many of which Israel had already established during its 16-year Gaza blockade and counterinsurgency campaign, when evaluating the events of October 7. We must also consider the collection of political and social factors that also form the backdrop for the same event. Shatz refers to some of these factors in his narrative, but he seemingly casts them aside in favor of

imputing to Palestinians a sort of primordial vengefulness motivating their actions.

In Shatz's argument, we encounter the notion that had Palestinian fighters confined their attacks to solely military targets, they might have achieved a semblance of "legitimacy." This strategy could, perhaps, prevent the intense condemnation that typically accompanies the image of the profane Palestinian fighter in the Western collective imaginary, which Israel and the U.S. attempted to conflate with ISIS. But we should treat Shatz's suggestion with skepticism because it overlooks several crucial junctures in the history of Israel's military engagement with resistance.

Consider, for instance, Israel's 2006 ground incursion into Lebanon, where the distinction between military and civilian targets quickly disintegrated, leading to substantial Lebanese civilian casualties and more than 1,200 lives lost. And what was Israel responding to? The targeting of an Israeli military unit — a legitimate military target in Shatz's view.

Similarly, the kidnapping of Corporal Gilad Shalit in Gaza triggered a retaliatory military response that caused direct damage to Palestinian civilians, resulting in nearly 1,200 deaths. These instances underscore the intertwining of military targets and civilian populations within the theater of conflict. Neither the history of the conflict nor American and Israeli discourse has ever made these distinctions matter, and Hezbollah and Hamas remain terrorist organizations, whether they target soldiers or civilians. Nor is the intensity of the response truly different — the so-called "Dahiya doctrine," after all, was formulated in response to Hezbollah's capture and killing of Israeli soldiers.

The Dahiya doctrine is evident in Gaza today. Israel has declared that any attack on it that it deems significant will result in the comprehensive destruction of both civil and governmental infrastructure, including bombing villages, cities, and towns back

into the “stone age” through wholesale destruction. In other words, any form of resistance, regardless of the target, will be met with no less than a scorched earth policy from the air.

But what’s more significant in all of this is not so much the disproportionate Israeli military response (which remains the same even when fighters attack “legitimate” targets) as it is in the evolution of Israel’s style of warfare and counterinsurgency. These rules of military engagement, predominantly set by Israel, should form the crucial backdrop to any assessment of October 7.

In the past two decades, Israel has moved toward a form of warfare that attempts to [remove the battle from the war](#), in which Israel has opted to keep its soldiers and army at a distance while relying on its potent airpower as a means of offensive action. It has employed this strategy during its past wars in Gaza with the effect of preserving the lives of its soldiers while killing hundreds of Palestinians, mostly civilians. In 2021, Israel actually tried to deceive Palestinian fighters by announcing a ground operation, aiming to target underground tunnels and eliminate numerous Palestinian fighters. The so-called “metro operation” failed partially due to Palestinian disbelief that Israel would actually enter the Gaza Strip. For years, the reliance on airpower alongside intelligence turned Israel into a one-dimensional army that uses air control for counterinsurgency operations, with all its operational limitations and limited efficacy in targeting fighters, while wreaking havoc in Palestinian civilian spaces.

Israel has chosen a mode of killing without the *peril* of being killed. This strategy has spurred its adversaries to develop alternatives in response to Israel’s apparent reluctance for ground engagements — if you won’t come to us, we’ll come to you. War, as Clausewitz suggests, is inherently dialectical, akin to a “duel” in which each side employs technical expertise, determination, organizational structure, command and control, and intelligence to secure an upper hand. This is what happened on October 7; it was a



Palestinian response to the tactical status quo that Israel had imposed.

It is crucial to understand that Palestinian resistance in the Gaza Strip initiated the planning for this operation in 2022, merely a year after Israel's "metro operation" failed to achieve its intended outcomes. Palestinian military planners took into account several significant factors in their planning. One of them was Israel's recurrent reluctance to engage directly in Gaza, but there were also political and social pressures that pushed in the direction of October 7. They included the sluggish and limited improvements in living conditions on the strip and the absence of a clear political path forward. In other words, it was the exhaustion of political, diplomatic, and legal avenues.

Furthermore, Israel's deliberate efforts to delegitimize the PA by imposing financial sanctions have exacerbated the turn toward military solutions. The empowering of Israel's right-wing factions, as well as the attempts of hardline settlers to alter the status quo in Jerusalem and the expansion of illegal settlements in the West Bank, have added fuel to the fire. And when Palestinians engaged in demonstrations without posing a genuine threat during the [Great March of Return](#), they were met with a disproportionate and deadly response, as hundreds of demonstrators fell victim to sniper fire that debilitated them for life.

Shatz mentions some of these contextual circumstances without truly comprehending their implications. These circumstances highlight the audacity of expecting Palestinians to remain nonviolent given Israel's global status — a state seemingly able to practice symbolic, structural, and physical violence with impunity. A few years ago, the U.S. warned the ICC against pursuing any criminal claims against Israeli leaders accused of war crimes. Europe has neither recognized the state of Palestine nor imposed any sanctions on Israel. The world has sent a clear message to the Palestinians: there will be no legal respite, no political relief, only limited support for nonviolence, and occasional condemnations when and if Israel is perceived to commit crimes. In fact, there is

violence in this insistence on nonviolence by the international community because it is effectively an invitation for Palestinians to lie down and die.

## **The question of civilian death**

One might be generous to Shatz in assuming that he does not necessarily share in this dogmatic injunction against political violence and that his qualms lie more in the choice of target — civilians — and perhaps in the manner in which they were massacred. But here, Shatz already concedes too much to the official Israeli narrative, and more importantly, he ignores another set of contextual elements in the military planning for the Al-Aqsa Flood.

One of those elements pertains to Israeli society's distinct character. The various layers of Israel's defensive structure include the geographic proximity of its military installations and its civilian settlements, including the wide presence of military-trained police forces in civilian areas. The wide ownership of guns, specifically in frontier areas like the Gaza envelope, would also be an important consideration for any military planning or offensive operation.

This observation does not mean that all Israelis are soldiers and therefore legitimate targets. However, it plays a significant role in dictating a policy of “not taking chances” — a policy that many military organizations, whether West or East, civilized or barbaric, share in the conduct of their military operations. Israel's scorched earth policy, which includes the use of its multilayered firepower in its offensive maneuvers, creating “firebelts,” and moving slowly to avoid the death of its own soldiers, tells us as much.

The prevailing Israeli narrative holds that there was no underlying strategic objective for the October attack beyond mere vengeance

and wanton bloodshed. At times, it seems that, in spite of himself, Shatz has internalized this narrative. A more sober appraisal is needed.

With the available information, we can surmise that the operation had three main tactical goals: capturing Israeli soldiers in exchange for prisoners, getting information or weapons from Israel's many military bases, and making it hard for any police or military force to easily clear and retake the Gaza envelope (which they would probably do by negotiating over hostages they held in the settlements inside the Gaza envelope).

This meant that fighters set up camp inside Israeli settlements to try to delay the recapture of the envelope. They did this by fighting or negotiating for a long time to free the hostages while stopping civilians from resisting the deep maneuver within Israeli territory. The problem is that [growing evidence shows](#) that Israel wasn't interested in negotiating over hostages and instead prioritized retaking the Gaza envelope by shelling its own settlements, killing the fighters, and perhaps leading to the death of its own civilians. This, of course, doesn't imply that many fighters didn't exceed their orders or that all Palestinian fighters acted in unison, but it does suggest that the Palestinian military strategy aimed to delay and postpone, while Israel's strategy focused on the rapid recovery and reclamation of its territory. And it is highly unlikely that this policy did not at least exacerbate the extent of the civilian casualties. Numerous [testimonies from Israeli survivors](#) indicate that Israeli military and police units may not have exercised caution in the battles around the Gaza envelope. This evidence has encouraged a group of Israelis to [write an open letter](#) encouraging their fellow citizens to demand the truth of the events of October 7.

The primary difference, then, between when Israel commits its crimes against Palestinian civilians and when Palestinians do it stems from an international network that legitimizes, clarifies, and codifies the logic behind Israeli military actions. This gives it

an appearance of respectability, even when the underlying rationale appears deeply flawed or seemingly justifies the large-scale killing of Palestinian civilians in Gaza. When reviewing the literature of any Western and Israeli military think tank, it becomes evident that urban warfare, for example, is inherently complex. Such combat scenarios frequently lead to numerous civilian casualties and might necessitate striking civilian facilities, including hospitals, as highlighted in [certain research papers](#). Israel has often used this to prepare international audiences for the mass killing of Palestinians. These military justifications then trickle down to the mainstream media, where they are often cloaked in narratives that fault Palestinians for Israel's systematic lethal actions. This is also echoed by American spokespersons who shrug off these massacres by repeating the mantra that "war leads to civilian deaths" in Palestine, yet are horrified by the same conduct in the context of Russia's war on Ukraine.

Hamas can remain barbaric, and Israel can remain a strong "democratic and liberal" ally of the United States. The first engages in a mindless act of profane violence, while the second engages in calculated and methodical strikes, a sacred form of violence. And the whole dichotomy forestalls the question of whether there was any operative military rationale in the Palestinian offensive maneuver on October 7.

Adam Shatz, by not delving into the military logic of the attack, exemplifies an aversion to confronting the reality of violence and the logics that animate it, an avoidance that is endemic among certain intellectuals. It's not just about the refusal to bring these topics to light, but about what this refusal signifies about the problematics of dealing with the logic of Palestinian violence, especially in an environment that simply casts it as profane, detestable, and morally degraded. This is why Shatz's essay is all the more surprising: it attempts to decode Palestinian violence, often mentioning some of the political and social context, yet circles back to the instinctual desire for vengeance.

Perhaps what is central to any moral judgment is that these judgments need to be rigorously subjected to evidence, especially when Israel refuses to share much of the evidence it has. Did Hamas issue orders for the killing of civilians, or was the killing of civilians an excess on the part of the fighters? How many of the Israelis were killed in the exchange of fire with fighters? Did the Israeli military effort to retake the Gaza envelope take into consideration the presence of Israeli civilians? These questions are important, not only because they will provide us with a clearer picture, but because the official Israeli version of events was employed to justify the Dresden-like air campaign against Gaza and the mass murder of Palestinians. It goes beyond mere moral adjudication. It is about the weaponization of moral injury to commit massacres.

Delving into the military logic of the attack would also suggest that Shatz's historical analogy — equating Palestinian offensive actions with the Battle of Philippeville in French Algeria — isn't entirely accurate. The main objective of the Battle of Philippeville was the targeting of civilians, and to assume that this was the main objective of October 7 simply ignores the facts of what happened. Again, this does not mean that civilians were not killed, nor does it mean that Palestinian fighters did not engage in the outright killing of civilians, but it does tell us something about how their actions were received: Shatz seems to have internalized the widespread perception that Palestinian fighters are detestable, which is what prompted him to draw the comparison with Philippeville in the first place.

One of the most important consequences of the Battle of Philippeville was that it ended the prospects for a “third way” movement that bound Algerian Arabs with French settlers. In Palestine, that “third way” ended two decades ago, becoming a highly feeble coalition sustained by some human rights organizations and minoritarian voices in Israel with no real political impact. Nothing demonstrates this better than the

marked absence of any mention of Palestinians during the Israeli protest movement against the right-wing judicial overhaul.

Moreover, every war or battle is a unique event within its own historical conjuncture, and analogies to the past reveal more about those drawing such comparisons than they do facilitate a reading of the present.

## **The fallout from October 7**

Even Shatz must recognize that, after being dismissed for years as a non-issue in centers of power, including Biden's policy of non-engagement, Palestine has now returned to the international stage as a pressing matter. In addition, the way alliances now work makes it likely that there will be both regional and international conflict, as well as a severe economic backlash that could make it harder for the world economy to recover from inflationary pressures. Not to mention that [Biden's rhetoric](#) might manage to alienate enough under-thirty voters in his upcoming elections.

Biden might be unaware that, when it comes to Palestine, there is no consensus on a long and bloody war. Palestinians have built a network of support that includes civil society organizations, political movements, and various forms of intersectional struggles in the U.S. among progressives and the left — and even occasionally on the conservative right. These coalitions are beginning to create dissensus in Western countries in a way that does not exist for the Western consensus on supporting Ukraine, for example.

Yet all we get from Shatz on this score is an email comment from Shatz's correspondence with Palestinian scholar Yezid Sayigh, who has historically downplayed the Palestinian struggle and suggested its incapability of significantly impacting the international system. Sayigh's email to Shatz intimates his fears

that the fallout from October 7 will accelerate fascist trends, likening it to Sarajevo 1914 or Kristallnacht 1938. There is no question of how fascism is rising in the West in the first place, or perhaps more importantly, of how everyday life under an outright fascist government — whose Finance Minister publicly announced a “decisive plan” for Palestinians that amounted to ethnic cleansing long before October 7 — has brought us to this point.

But the glaring contradiction in Shatz’s essay is obvious, yet he seems blind to it: you can see it when he starts his essay by identifying the political objectives of the Palestinian offensive, but then diminishes them to mere “vengeful” pathologies. He dismisses specific historical analogies, such as the Tet Offensive in Vietnam, without explaining his rationale other than his aversion to violence. These observations are incongruous; either Palestinians had political objectives and indeed opened up a political space that had been shut for years, or they are irrational and barbaric actors driven by an overwhelming surge of emotion.

The meticulous planning, strategic “trickery,” and successful bypassing of Israel’s defenses all point to a more deliberate maneuver (which Shatz admits when decrying the “chilling” quality of the methodical nature of fighters’ excesses). The alliance system of Palestinian resistance provides significant leverage, complicating both the Israeli response and America’s position in the region. In fact, a prominent emerging perspective is that Israel’s reputation as a calculated, rational, and competent strategic actor [is facing severe scrutiny](#). The country is fighting to rebuild its image and is becoming increasingly reliant on NATO assets and power, which will also place it in a position where its U.S. ally, which does not share its exact interests vis-a-vis a regional escalation, can influence its policy decisions. As of now, it appears that Israel has not identified any specific goal other than “revenge.” Blinken’s visit a few days ago confirmed as much when the U.S. Secretary realized that [Netanyahu has no exit strategy](#).

Finally, why wouldn't an assault on Israel's primary nerve — its deterrence and military power — not lead to a humbling experience that might open new avenues for a new political solution? While such prospects seem distant in the heat of battle and in light of Israel's genocidal intent, the actual battle on the ground is what will decide the future. Shatz is particularly unconvincing here, since he already chooses to foreclose possibilities that might emerge from the aftermath of October 7.

By skirting their political utility and military logic and confining them to mere “vengeance,” Shatz ignores the fact that all wars and battles, no matter how horrific, bloody, and tragic, might ultimately create the space for new possibilities — even hopeful ones. He remains faithful to a dystopian interpretation, providing a darker undertone to the futurity of Palestine and the world. Perhaps he is right in this — that, ultimately, all will be losers, and that the metropole is not ready to deconstruct its ethno-religious and national power. Perhaps Shatz's essay itself is a sign of this. Maybe the insistence on maintaining dominance and hegemony will exacerbate the echoes of fascism across the West. But this line of thinking also ignores the world as Palestinians experience and perceive it — that is, as long as Israelis live in this assured certainty of their all-encompassing power, the will to change the reality of the Palestinians will remain absent.

And even if the Palestinian resistance fails to snatch a relative victory in this battle, the alternative would have been a slow death.

## **Violence and Fanon**

It would be remiss not to also mention Shatz's treatment of Fanon with respect to Palestinian violence. In *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon famously observes that violence on the part of the colonized results in a form of catharsis and self-recognition — “disintoxication,” as Shatz highlights — wherein violence isn't just



raw brutality, but a transformative rite that cleanses the stains of subjugation. Yet Shatz is quick to point out that Fanon did not necessarily celebrate this prospect, given the looming nightmare of a post-colonial future where the liberator becomes the oppressor, and patterns of colonial hierarchy are recreated within the nascent postcolonial state. Shatz is correct to point out Fanon's nuanced treatment of the role of violence within decolonization, which cautions against nihilistic celebrations of the psychological utility of violence, as it risks papering over the detrimental effect that violence has upon those who exercise it. But even as Shatz rightly points this out, he does not remain entirely faithful to the scope of Fanon's work. Fanon not only warned of the mirages of national consciousness but also championed a dialectical shift to a broader humanistic and socialist horizon. Regardless of the shadow cast by violence, Fanon ultimately viewed violence as a necessity within the confines of colonial oppression, and as a strategic and political tool that was indispensable for the dismantling of colonial structures. Shatz is undoubtedly aware of this, but he does not translate it to his reading of the Palestinian predicament.

Central to Fanon's discourse on liberation was that it was deeply rooted within the movement to which he genuinely belonged. He was not an outsider passing judgment or casting aspersions on the fighters with whom he interacted. His was an internal critique that was able to identify the potentials and pitfalls within the anti-colonial movement. More significantly, Fanon also wagered on the colony's ability not only to liberate itself from settler colonialism but to liberate the metropole from itself. This is where his ultimate radical imaginary lies.

This is the kind of genuine critical engagement with the Palestinian resistance that we require. It isn't solely about Palestine's stance against ethnic cleansing, or its own fight to reclaim Palestine — rather, it is a liberation movement with global resonance that represents a universal struggle. While figures like

Yezid Sayigh and Adam Shatz believe that the violence of October 7 will fuel fascism, it also has the potential to pave the way for a broader human horizon. Palestinian movements, despite their imperfections, require more than just passive critique, and the disengagement and harsh condemnations demonstrated by intellectuals often mask deeper reservations or outright rejections toward the Palestinian liberation struggle, if not simple disdain.

Should Palestinians simply accept the predetermined fate laid out for them by intellectuals in the West? If so, intellectuals should have the courage to state it outright. If their suggestion is the political annihilation of Palestine or its reduction to footnotes in articles and scholarly critiques of Israel, it should be said with conviction.

Perhaps the perception that the events of October 7 were nothing more than an expression of intra-Palestinian necrosis is more an indication of what intellectuals secretly wish for us. But we in Palestine desire and fight for a world that includes us, and a world that includes everyone else. Mourn us if you want, or don't. Condemn us, or don't. It's not like we have not heard the cries of condemnation before.