Endless Night

Ashok Agrwaal
Endless Night

There is no doubt that the Israelis have learnt their lessons well. Their teachers were Europeans/Christians, without exception. The Nazis of Germany and other places only provided the finishing touch to a very lengthy and thorough indoctrination. Current expressions of protest against Israeli excesses in Palestine/Gaza also make it clear that it would be foolish to imagine that Christian anti-semitism is dead. It is merely layered over by the hubris of the gas chambers and the concentration camps. Arab/Palestinian/Muslim vituperation and violence is nothing, not even a pale imitation of what the Jews have experienced at the hands of the Europeans/Christians.

I sometimes wonder how both - European/American support for Israel and widespread anti-semitism - can co-exist. One explanation is that the European/American/Christian population is divided on the issue. But I think this is only a partial explanation, at best. The real answer lies in the peculiar juxtaposition of Christian anti-semitism with guilt at the "excesses" of the Nazi version; both coupled with the real politic "needs" of the post colonial empire of Europe and America (Europe as Russell Means describes it.).

Israel is a complex symbol, signifying more than one thing; and contradictory things. It symbolises "Europe's" efforts to come out of the dark ages of bigotry, persecution and genocide (not only of the Jews but of all the non-European people of the world), which (ages) go under the misnomers of 'Age of Reason' or 'Age of Enlightenment'.

The complexity of Euro Christian attitudes to Israel is perhaps best symbolised by the life of Alma Mahler, Austrian beauty, simultaneously an "unrepentant Anti-Semite and the widow of two famous Jews who, it is said, entered into relationships with talented Jewish men, while simultaneously reviling them and, even, her children with them. It is said that she was most pleased (almost felt blessed) when she heard someone say that by her influence she had drawn Mahler away from Judaism. Even as Euro-Christian anti-Semitism continues to flourish, the state of Israel is undisputedly emblematic of European superiority, racial and otherwise. Israel is without question a European state. The treatment of non-white Jews inside Israel is witness. As if by prolonged contact (persecution) with the white races the (European) Jews stand redeemed to some extent. Clearly, a prosperous and militarily powerful Ashkenazi Israel is proof that European-ness, which is a racial concept, is superior to other -nesses.

A second order of complexity relates back to the thousand year plus Christian-Muslim rivalry. This rivalry played itself out over centuries of battle for control over Palestine, and then over control of Europe itself. The final blow, bringing political Islam to its knees, was struck by the dismemberment of the Ottoman empire at the end of the war of 1914--18. Note how this ties in with the notion of the superiority of European-ness, which was at its peak at the end of that war. The whole world was prostrate before "Europe". To top it all, the signs of European fatigue were more than compensated by the rise of Europe's alter ego, doppelganger, sword arm, or whatever you may choose to call it, the United States of America. What did it matter if the race had become a

---

1 I will call them "efforts" notwithstanding that they are mostly half-hearted, and frequently insincere.
relay. With the passing of the baton, European superiority was assured for centuries to come, or so it seemed then.

The collaboration between the Jewish people and Christian "Europe" is itself a complex phenomenon, imbued with a good measure of the Stockholm syndrome. Zionism is the Jewish equivalent of the Reformation, the Renaissance and the (so called) Enlightenment, all rolled into one, and compressed into a few decades. It took the Jews several centuries of severe thrashing to learn the lesson but they did learn it in the end. (The lesson came almost too late. Given a little more time Hitlerarian Europe would have rendered it academic.) Seen thus, Israeli excesses against the hapless Palestinians make sense as learned atavism. The rise of Zionism was perhaps also a signal at the sub conscious (or unconscious) level to the "Europeans" that the Jews were ready to play a role in the European "race".

The ultimate semiotic complication arises, of course, from the imperatives of imperialism. "Europe" needed a Gibraltar in the Middle East. Not just collaborators and allies among the Arabs, who were, after all, fundamentally untrustworthy (and unworthy) to be European allies, but a solid, dependable extension of "Europe". What better than an Ashkenazi (that the last four letters of the label read the same as the name of the most lethal Jewish nemesis of all times is pure coincidence) dominated Israel? The presence of a massive (relatively), and immensely influential Jewish community in America made the arrangement palatable to even those who might have balked at it otherwise, on account of their deep rooted antipathy towards the Jews. (Evangelical, puritanical America was more tolerant - or less intolerant - of the Jews than any other Christian polity.) The stability of the arrangement is thus assured by a host of interlinked factors; of mutual benefit to "Europe" and Israel.

Coming now to the ground situation. Given the fait accompli that was the creation of Israel in 1948, given the overwhelming "European" superiority and dominance of world affairs, given that "Europe" had been carving up (and out) the world for centuries, treating populated lands as "empty", operating on the principle that all other racial types were sub-human savages whose souls were redeemed by being slaughtered at the hands of Christian zealots (In the context of Darwinian selection, the extermination of whole peoples acquired an unmatchable bio-historical validity, as being part of the process of "natural" selection.), given that the Arabs had been comprehensively defeated by the "Europeans", it seems reasonable to think (in hindsight at least) that the Arabs and Palestinians would have been better off negotiating a peaceful co-existence with the Jewish state, rather than screaming death and destruction.

Instead, the Arabs have tom tom-ed from the rooftops that given a chance (militarily) they will dismember Israel with equal (if not more) ferocity as the Israelis display towards the Palestinians. There are other facts that point to Arab (and Palestinian) foolishness, playing into the hands of a combination of European cunning and a feral Israeli instinct for survival. These foolishnesses have generated enormous justifications for otherwise unpardonable Israeli conduct. It is well known that Palestinians have been used by the richer, more powerful Arabs, whipping them into frenzies, and keeping them
in abject states of displacement; thereby making it possible to argue that the current plight of the Palestinians contains a marked degree of deliberate victim hood.

Thus, notwithstanding the pictures of horror in Gaza (We are so saturated with visuals (and text) of Israeli barbarity upon its Palestinian neighbours for the last several decades that one often does not even look at the pictures to know what they contain) the situation does not resolve into a simple tyrant-underdog binary. The special history of persecution of the Jews is only a small part of the reason for this. It is obvious that Arab implacability against Israel is a function of several factors, in which their collective anger at the humiliation meted out to them by white, Christian, Europeans is a matter of some significance. The Palestinians are as much victims of wounded Arab pride as "European" machiavellianism and Israeli brutality.

In the circumstances, how should I, a non European, a non Arab, a non Jew, a non Muslim, view the endless, ongoing war in Palestine? Of course it affects me. But the question is what, if anything, should I do about it. In order to make sense of the mess, I must fall back upon the larger picture rationalisation. I rely upon truths that are at least as patent as those of the Palestinians and the Israelis for my arguments. I must hold the current world order, and its masters, responsible for the mess. I look to the history of how our current masters came to their position. The Palestinian-Israeli combat lock is not the only one that our masters have engineered; it is merely the most prominent, high profile one. One merely has to look at what is still happening in Africa to know this truth. One has to read how the two Koreas were divided, and then the two Vietnams were created, to know who unleashes (and reigns in) the dogs of war. There is more but I have said enough for my purpose.

So, I say, I call upon both the Palestinians and the Israelis to show some sense. To recognise that they are both the losers in this game. (Ultimately Israel must also lose.) If they do not heed my message (and why should they, I am nobody) I then choose to stand on the sidelines and watch. I choose not to take sides because I see the larger picture. If it comes to the crunch I will defend my land, my people, my life. Why should I tax my emotions over two people who refuse to see reason and over whom I have no power? After all, it is not my fight.

And, since I reject globalisation, globality and all other varieties of planet wide hegemony, by whatever name called, I reject calls for taking sides by invoking Martin Neimuller. Those who do so, misunderstand him. He meant it for the community and not everything that is appropriate for a community lends itself to transliteration on a global scale, notwithstanding that the definition of community has gone global.

Israel is an outpost of the "western empire". Hence, the Palestinian-Israeli war may continue till a clear winner (in the global sweepstakes) emerges. I am likely to find myself in the position of opposing whoever wins.

Ashok Agrwaal