



Lecture by

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Education or mind infection?

I would like to dedicate these words to all the Palestinian boys and girls, who have been massacred by mind-infected Israeli boys, and who have recently joined the underground kingdom of dead children, which is growing under the holy land as I speak. I would like to tell them not to worry: “You will be well received there, children, and no one will hurt you just because you wandered off on your way to school or because you wore a scarf on your head or because you lived in a certain house or near a certain house. Rest in peace, everyone is equally worthy in your new world, underneath Israel and Palestine. This is where Israeli children lay side by side with Palestinian children whose parents, for the most part, have never held a gun and have never obeyed orders to kill anyone.

All of you dead children were deceived, because the world goes on living as if your blood had never been shed. Because all our so-called leaders keep playing their murderous games, using you as their puppets and our grief as fuel for their killing machines. Because Children are abstract entities for the military and grief is a political tool.

Living at both sides, that of the victims and that of the killers, I keep asking myself, what are the means by which our good Israeli children are turned into murdering monsters, what are the means by which they are so mind-infected as to kill and torture and humiliate other children, their parents and grandparents, and sacrifice their own life for nothing but the folly and megalomania of their chiefs.



In the so-called Western enlightened world everyone feels very well-founded when they blame Islam for suicide bombing and terror. But who would ever blame Judaism for the massacre in Gaza? Or Christianity for the ongoing massacre in Iraq?

Neither Judaism nor Islam nor any religion for that matter is the cause for murder and terror. Racist education is. American imperialism is, and Israeli cruel regime of occupation is.

The women and children who suffer most from state violence today are Muslim but racism has its way and the blame for their suffering is attributed to their being Muslim. The western world today is infected with fear of Islam and Muslims. Great France of *liberté égalité* and *fraternité* is scared of little head-scarfed girls, Jewish Israel is afraid of the Muslim womb, calling it a demographic threat. America believes it is Islam that destroyed its peaceful righteous life. This, in spite of the fact that the people who are actually bombarding the world, day after day, are not Muslims, but Christians, Anglicans and Jews. It is they who send their children to fight these ruthless useless wars in the name of democracy and freedom which are only cover names for greed and megalomania. Israeli, American, and European mothers raise their children with all the love and care in order to sacrifice them to the god of death, as if their uterus was a national or rather an international asset, and fathers urge their children to commit themselves to murderous armies. And when these children die for the profits of somebody else their mind-infected parents bear it with dignity, put their photographs on the mantelpiece and sigh: He was so handsome in uniform. It is time to tell these parents that no-one is handsome in the uniform of brutality. In the uniform that permits 18 year olds force women to give birth at checkpoint to still-born babies and to bar their way to a near-by hospital. The uniform that saves our generals and pilots from jail after bombing of hundreds of families is not beautiful. The ranks and medals these warriors receive for their crimes are ugly.

And these are the people who dare call themselves enlightened, humanists, liberals, democrats. These are the people who permit American soldiers to rape and kill Iraqis by



thousands , who permits Israeli soldiers to order Palestinian women to strip in front of their children for security reasons, jailers to keep them without trial for indefinite spans of time, in inhuman conditions, without necessary hygienic aids, without clean water or clean mattresses and separate them from their breast-fed babies and toddlers.

In the Jewish democracy of Israel 324 children, most of them kidnapped from their beds in the middle of the night by fully armed soldiers, are held in inhuman conditions, deprived of visits and care. In the Jewish democracy of Israel no-one is ever punished for killing Palestinian children; Israeli governments trade in human life and in human blood, in a market where non-Jewish blood and bones are worth much than Jewish ones; Israeli candidates who wish to be elected to the office of PM have to outscore their rivals in the killing of Palestinians, and make grand promises to kill and expel more and more and more; In the Jewish democracy of Israel 20% of the citizens of the state are labeled in schoolbooks a demographic problem, threat and even a demographic nightmare; their language, their culture, their rights and their hopes are erased from the face of the earth both physically and symbolically.

Israeli attitude towards its Palestinian non-citizens has found its most horrifying expression in the ongoing pogrom that is still being carried out by the thugs of the Occupation army against the residents of the Gaza Strip. This is known to everyone and yet the world is powerless against it. The people of Gaza are still locked up in this immense prison, hungry, unemployed, ill and poor, with no means to escape or to better their lives in any way.

Israeli children who actually perform massacres of 'Arabs' - Palestinians or Lebanese - may never see a Palestinian human face until they are drafted to the army, but they learn, for 12 long years, that these people are primitive, bear children in order to send them to the streets and blow themselves up and throw stones at our peace-keeping soldiers, uneducated because they don't receive our education. And most of all, that Muslim women's uterus is our national worst enemy. Hence one should not wonder at the inscription of soldiers' T-shirts showing a pregnant woman, and declaring "Two birds in one shot." No one has ever told these inhuman



brats that Muslim women are mothers like their mothers, like me. And when they lose a child, even if it is one of 12, their pain is equal to mine. But now, in addition to losing their children they also lose their status as human beings because the world does not listen to their grief. Their pleas are not heard in any court, their lives are dispensable with impunity. They are not invited to international forums, and their centuries-old ways of life are disregarded or despised.

Palestinians are defined in Israeli History schoolbooks as a 'problem to be solved'. No Israeli schoolbook ever portrays them as modern, productive, individual human beings. Their only representation is the caricaturistic racist icons of primitive nomads and the stereotypical image of the primitive farmers. They are always bare-foot, riding camels, and wear traditional Arab dress, Kafieh or scarf. Arab women represented in Israeli schoolbooks are always squatting or sitting on the ground in what is called "Oriental position", surrounded by numerous indistinct children. They are qualified, as third world people are often qualified in European books, as clannish, unwilling to contribute to the public good, refusing to become modern.

Palestinians who live under Israeli military occupation and cannot find their livelihood but as cheap labor in Israel are called in Israeli textbooks "foreign workers"– namely illegal invaders or temporary human labour force in their own land.

Israeli children are kept from knowing their immediate neighbours, their history and their culture and their merits. Israeli children are educated to see their neighbours as a menace we should get rid of. To aspire to live in an Arab-less country. They are deprived from knowing the geopolitical facts of their country, for there is not one map in their schoolbooks or on the walls of their schools that show the internationally recognized borders of the state. This is not education, this is mind infection. Israeli children are mind-infected from a very early age. By the time they are old enough to become real soldiers, they have already learned to be good soldiers, which means their minds are totally infected and they are incapable of questioning the 'truth' that has been inculcated to them. This is part of the explanation one can give to the



terrible deeds that are committed today by good Israeli boys and girls, who are characterized once and again as "people of values". What values are these? These are the value that made the massacre of Deir Yassin possible, the massacre of Kibya and Kafer Kassem possible, the massacres in Lebanon possible and the massacre of Gaza possible. These are neither Jewish nor universal human values.

How else can one explain young people who were educated to love their neighbour as they love themselves killing their neighbours, uprooting their olive trees and their vines, demolishing their houses, poisoning their wells, destroying their educational institutions, their libraries and their hospitals, for no apparent reason other than their being neighbours? The only explanation is that their minds are infected by parents, teachers and leaders, who convince them that the others are not as human as we are, and therefore killing them is not a crime; and indeed the killing of Palestinians always has other legitimating names such as "purifying", "punishment", "operation", "mission", "campaign" and "war".

Although I speak about Israeli boys and girls this is not an Israeli affair because, as you know, the epidemic is worldwide. My American nephew, Doroni, at 7 years old, came home on Halloween day and said he wanted to be a soldier, and then to go to Iraq and save America. How many American young men, ignorant as he is of the absurdity of this statement, actually went to Iraq and died there without knowing why, but with the words "save America" on their lips? The question is, how were these false values imprinted on their minds and how can they be erased?

The human psyche, says Dawkins, has two great sicknesses: the urge to carry vendetta across generations and the tendency to fasten group labels on people rather than see them as individuals.

We are all suffering to death because of labels, our parents and grandparents went to the Gas chambers because of labels, died in Pogroms because of labels, In Rwanda, in Sri-Lanka, in Iraq people lose their life and their loved ones for nothing but labels, and yet only few of us would dare to refuse labels.



The viruses of the mind are only partially weakened by young people like Israeli refusniks, soldiers who break the silence and 'Combatants for Peace'. But most of our mind infected children would not be free of the grip of those viruses until they find their final rest in the ever-growing, underground kingdom of dead children. It is only there they will realize that it doesn't matter whether their head was bare or not in a synagogue or a church or a mosque, whether they were circumcised or not, whether they pronounced forbidden words, or ate pig or cow or whether they had a hot chocolate after their salami pizza just before they were blown up by someone who didn't.

If I speak to you today it is because I believe Change should come from conscientious adults, teachers and parents. The children of today are the parents, the teachers, the politicians and the generals of tomorrow, just as the generals and politicians, the mothers and fathers of today were the school children of yesterday.

It is time to teach our children to be skeptic, to mistrust words of 'value', words such as loyalty and patriotism, obedience to authority and nationalism, which actually mean collaboration in crimes against other people, other children; words such as security and safety which are used as an excuse for murder and for the very profitable construction of ghettos. It is time to tell Jewish children that the only way to discourage anti-Semitism is by condemning the only government in the world who divides its population into Jews and non-Jews, depriving the non-Jews from social, cultural and political rights, while calling itself a democracy, who persecutes to the point of genocide a whole Semitic nation; explain to them that it is the Jewish government and the actions of its army, not some primordial hatred for the Jewish race, which are the reasons for the invention of the new sign we often see in pro-Palestinian demonstrations, where the Star of David is equated with the swastika.

It is a terribly hard task for people who were educated in Israel or in any other 'western' 'democratic' country, to admit we were raised on false values. The only thing that can enhance such a change of spirit is the constant image of the mutilated small bodies of the victims of these values. Only by looking at them can we realize we must ask their forgiveness for not refusing the evil viruses before, and for letting them be the victims of the horrible, mental



infection we are all suffering from, to look at their innocent, astonished, disillusioned small faces and remember the words of our great poet Bialik who wrote after the pogrom against Jews in Kishniev: "Satan has not yet created Vengeance for the blood of a small child." Bialik could not have imagined the child might be a Palestinian child and his slaughterers - Jewish soldiers.

Today, the cry of Bialik from more than a century ago still reverberates:

*"And I, my heart is dead, no longer is there prayer
on my lips;
All strength is gone, and
hope is no more.
Until when,
How much longer,
Until when?"*

