

# ***NEW*** OBSERVATIONS

*From the River to the Sea, Palestine  
will be FREE!*

**Contributors:**

Jihad Abdulmumit  
Alaa Albaba  
Amiri Baraka  
Rehaf Al Batniji  
Reem Alnatsheh  
Mia Feroletto  
Samar Ghattas  
Chris Hedges  
Ahmed Hmeedat  
Haya Kaabneh  
Dr Martin Luther King Jr  
Ati Maier  
Lucio Pozzi  
Mazin Qumsiyeh  
Jamie Stern-Weiner  
Ahmad Thaher  
Allicette Torres  
Amir Toumie  
James Tunney  
Annie Wenger-Nabigon



# **GAZA**

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## *From the River to the Sea, Palestine will be FREE!*

# GAZA

**Editor and Publisher: Mia Feroletto**



*The Eschaton of the Golden Records* by Alicette Torres, 2023  
35" width x 42" length. Wood, gold leaf, acrylic, metal, dirt, plastic, rocks, dirt, and enamel

**Alicette Torres Artist Statement:** We are teetering on the precipice of history's next great chapter. A species in conflict, we are a dichotomy between dreamers and those entrenched in the muck and mire of wars and divisiveness. There exists within us a primal urge for survival, deeply rooted in our DNA, a whisper of wisdom passed down through countless generations. Yet we cannot escape the gravitational pull of tribalism, a relentless focus on what distinguishes rather than what unites. We hover on the brink of a precipice; the ominous specter of global war looms overhead. My wreath symbolizes this volatile landscape, the potential for an explosion, for destruction that could reshape our world in unforeseeable ways. Yet, instead of facing our concrete problems head-on, we yearn for distant realms

like Mars, a tantalizing escape from our earthly woes. But could this turbulent juncture not be an impending doom but a rebirth, a painful but necessary rite of passage for our young and evolving species? It's the crucible where we test our mettle, where we must first fail before triumphing in some distant future. The question that haunts our thoughts is whether we will even reach that point. Will our children inherit a world marred by the scars of our divisions, or will they rise above, steering us toward a brighter, more unified destiny?

Alicette Torres, *Visual Artist, Curator & Creative Director*  
[@allicette](http://allicette.com); *Curator Revolú Gallery* [revolugallery.com](http://revolugallery.com)  
[@revolugallery](https://www.instagram.com/revolugallery); *Regional Chair Northeast, Women's Caucus for Art* [nationalwca.org](http://nationalwca.org), [wcainternationalcaucus.org/](http://wcainternationalcaucus.org/)

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# The Gaza Strip lights the way globally as colonizer masks all fall

By Mazin Qumsiyeh

My ancestors are the indigenous people of the Land of Canaan, the area that human ancestors first settled in their migration out of Africa. Then they moved on to other parts of Asia and then other continents. Humans migrated as hunter-gatherers but first settled and domesticated plants and animals here in the Fertile Crescent some 12 millennia ago. Developing agriculture and domesticating animals gave our ancestors food security which allowed increase in number and first civilizations here in Western Asia. This also allowed development of law and language (first writing, alphabet, first music etc). We are proud of this heritage. For millennia, Palestine was multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, multi-religious, and even multi-lingual society. People lived in relative harmony with the land. After all even the conquering Hebrews in their bible called Canaan “Land of Milk and Honey.” Conflict was rare compared to many other countries. For comparison, check how many wars any country in Europe had in the past 3-4,000 years. Further these conflicts in Canaan were mostly initiated by invasions from abroad (Roman Empire, Byzantium, Crusaders, Egyptian, Persian). Some of these conflicts were to expand an empire and gather resources. But in the past 2000 years, two conflicts were colonial in nature (to displace the local people and reshape a new country filled with settler colonialists). Those were the Crusaders and the Zionists. Israel’s expansionism, like the crusaders, was rooted in genocide and ethnic cleansing and is built on ideology of superiority and racism rooted in Messianic beliefs derived from a mythological past. What is this ideology (Zionism) and what is the future in light of what happened in the past 126 years since the first World Zionist Congress?

## A bit of history

Britain and France competed in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century to expand their empires into Western Asia, an area of crucial value as a link of Europe to Asia including overseeing trade routes and sea routes. The UK was especially intent in connecting seamlessly to the Jewel of the Crown of the empire: INDIA. They thus contracted Lt. Col. George Gawler to study the situation and the guy wrote a report issued 1845 titled “Tranquilization of Syria and the East: Observations and Practical Suggestions, in Furtherance of the Establishment of Jewish Colonies in Palestine, the Most Sober and Sensible Remedy for the Miseries of Asiatic Turkey”.<sup>1</sup> His contention was that you have to convince enough Christians and Jews to agree and this took awhile.

The first two colonies (not Jewish “settlements” since there were native Jews in Palestine) were established 1880 (Petah Tikva and Rishon L’Tzion). Hibat Zion (lovers of Zion) was formalized as a group in 1881 justified by the Russian pogroms. Nathan Birnbaum coined the term *Zionism* in 1891

<sup>1</sup> See Mohameden Ould-Mey, *The non-Jewish Origin of Zionism*, The Arab World Geographer, Vol. 5, pp. 34--52,( 2002)

and Theodore Hertzl took up the cause after his father by calling for a first “World Zionist Congress” in 1897. Because Palestine and all of Canaan was under Ottoman rule, Zionists pushed the Ottoman Empire to allow colonial settlements in Palestine. Since the Zionist movement had partial success, they moved their fourth congress to London in 1900 to effect policy of the British Empire. It took the opportunity of the Great War and the Zionist help to get the U.S. to enter the war on behalf of the allies in a quid-pro-quo to get the Balfour and Cambon declarations in 1917. To effect implementation, the British Empire ruled Palestine after the war by bringing in the first Zionist ruler Herbert Samuels, who instituted laws of segregation and colonial monopoly of many natural resources and other economic interests.

The state of Israel was created by overwhelming power of the Zionist terror militia, by massacres and by ethnic cleansing and with the collusion of the Western governments and the subservient Arab leaders in nearby countries. Palestinians were left on their own and most became refugees.<sup>2</sup> I remember my late mother telling us of the 33 massacres that happened during the *Nakba* of 1948 and the ethnic cleansing she witnessed at the tender age of 16 where 850,000 Palestinians were forcibly removed or escaped from the Zionist onslaught, intended to create a Jewish state where there was a pluralistic society in Palestine before. 530 villages and towns were ethnically cleansed. She remembered her friend and school mate Hayah Balbisi (a teacher murdered by the Zionists with her students in Deir Yassin 9 April 1948). She remembered the refugees who came to Bethlehem area (later set-up in three refugee camps). She remembered the American Friends Service Committee and then UNRWA who helped them. My mother died in April this year at almost 91. In a way, it is a blessing that she did not live to witness the carnage and genocide in Gaza. In number of people displaced and those killed a bigger *Nakba/Catastrophe* than the one she witnessed in 1948. Yet her life after 1948 was not the same as before 1948. Thus, at 16 she became a lifelong activist. She died having lived all her 91 years on earth with what they used to call in Northern Ireland “The troubles” and what we call in Palestine the ongoing *Nakba* (catastrophe). I myself witnessed conflict that killed many Palestinian civilians in 1967, 1970, 1973, 1979, 1982, 1987-91, 200-2005, 208-2009, 2014, 2019-2020, 2021, and most recently October 2023 to date. Few of those gave us some temporary hope of being the last conflict.

The surprise October 1973 war when Syria and Egypt tried to reclaim their land from Israel showed that Israel does not have an invincible army and that only the direct intervention of the U.S. (led by Zionist Secretary of State Henry

<sup>2</sup> Pappé, Ilan. *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*. Oneworld Publications (2007); Edward Said, *The Question of Palestine*, Vintage Books, New York, 1979; Ilan Pappé, *The Making of the Arab Israeli Conflict 1947-1951*, New York: I. B. Tauris, 1992

Kissinger) was able to save Israel. Fifty years later, there is a similar attempt to save Israel from facing the music and having to compromise following the surprise attack by the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) but Zionist Secretary of State Anthony Blinken is playing with a different deck of cards. He will not succeed. The October 1973 war as we know now was a way to move diplomacy not to liberate the areas. It succeeded in that. As the Soviet Union was threatened and backed down due to direct intervention in the war that strengthened Israeli and US hegemony in our region.

The so-called Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty allowed Israel to neutralize the largest Arab country and keep its tentacles in the Sinai. Side ramification included strengthening the capitulation parts of the PLO that led to the 10-point program of 1974 which in turn led to the 1988 PLO acceptance of partition of Palestine declaring a fictional statehood and effectively ending the liberation phase especially in the so called Oslo Process.<sup>3</sup> This is what opened the space for new liberation resistance movements to emerge including the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) and Islamic Jihad.

The PLO was decimated and replaced by the Palestinian Authority whose main tasks were reduced to 1) civil administration (healthcare, education, etc.), removing the burden on the occupation, and 2) suppressing all acts of resistance. From 1993 to 2023 settler population mushroomed, Palestinians were squeezed, and Israel normalized its relations with dozens of countries (including Arab countries). The Gaza strip was blockaded and impoverished much more than the West Bank since 2006, until there was a ghetto uprising in October 2023. Since then over 3.5% of the 2.3 million people in Gaza were killed or injured by the Israeli occupation authorities and a majority of all buildings in the strip were leveled by bombings. 65,000 tons of bombs — equivalent to two nuclear bombs — were dropped on an area of 360 square kilometers. This, combined with denying food, water, medicine, fuel, and electricity created a system of genocide. Israel also intensified its apartheid system with laws like the “nation-state” law which codifies racism against non-Jewish population (the indigenous people).<sup>4</sup>

South Africa petitioned the International Court of Justice (ICJ) charging Israel based on the International Convention on Genocide. On 26 January 2024 (after 112 days of carnage), the ICJ issued a decision /injunction. The interim decision had six provisional measures to attempt to stop the carnage.<sup>5</sup> The resolution opened with a summary of the conflict from 7 October and the contentions of South Africa and Israel about what transpired since. The most reputable court on earth has effectively ruled and with a huge majority that: 1) there is plausible evidence of genocidal acts re-

<sup>3</sup> Petter Bauk and Mohammed Omer (editors). *The Oslo Accords: A critical Assessment*, American University in Cairo Press 2013; Mandy Turner (editor), *From the River to the Sea: Palestine and Israel in the Shadow of “Peace”*. Lexington Books, Lanham, Maryland, 2019.

<sup>4</sup> Jabareen, Yousef. “The nation-state Law and Jewish supremacy.” *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics, and Culture* 23, no. 4 (2018): 16-22

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/192/192-20240126-ord-01-00-en.pdf>

quiring immediate intervention justifying taking the case, 2) that Palestinians are at grave risk of genocide (warranting six injunctions noted above). The decision constitutes an undermining of the persistent use of the Jewish holocaust to justify another holocaust and that Israel is above the law having proclaimed itself (falsely) as representing Jews. Yet, there is a growing rebellion especially among young Jews who oppose Zionism. *Jewish Voice for Peace* and *Not in My Name* groups are growing faster than the traditional Jewish organizations in the West.<sup>6</sup>

This must be built upon and strengthened in a global popular effort (growing global movement) not only to force compliance of ending the genocide per the ICJ’s order (pending final ruling which might take months). The resolution implicitly but not explicitly stipulates a ceasefire. But the decision orders refraining from killing Palestinian civilians and refraining from causing any physical or psychological harm under Article Two of the convention. The decision demands the immediate provision of basic services and humanitarian aid (food, water, medicine, fuel) denied by the Israeli army since 7 October 2023 and demands a report by the occupier regime within one month.

## Geopolitics

The horrors of WWII on all sides led to formation of a “United Nations” to replace the “League of Nations.” However, the UN suffered from the same weakness which is a dominance by the winners of the war and their insistence on dominance (e.g. veto power at the UN SC). Thus, the U.S., France, and Britain push for “partition” produced a weak UN General Assembly resolution 181 in favor a partition in 1947 (the first violation of the UN Charter which spoke of self-determination of indigenous people away from colonial dictates). While not implemented and not supported by the UN Security Council, the resolution was taken as an excuse to ethnically cleanse Palestine in a war started by the Zionist movement.<sup>7</sup> The refugee rights were recognized in UNGA 194 which was not implemented despite being feasible and possible and denied only on racist grounds.<sup>8</sup> The public relations campaign was that a Jewish state is needed as an affirmative action kind of recompense for the Jewish victims. The reality hidden was not only who will pay the price (Palestinian natives) but also about the collaboration of the Zionists with the Nazis.<sup>9</sup> That the Zionist project was only able to flourish with lies is now well established.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Jews led and were arrested in congress in Washington DC and blocking Grand Central station in New York <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/10/28/protesters-shut-new-yorks-grand-central-station-demanding-gaza-ceasefire> as they opposed the genocide

<sup>7</sup> Nur Masalha, “Expulsion of the Palestinians: The Concept of ‘Transfer’; in *Zionist Political Thought, 1882-1948*”, Institute for Palestine Studies, 1992

<sup>8</sup> Salman Abu Sitta, “From Refugees to Citizens at Home”, *Palestine Land Society and the Palestinian Return Centre*, London, September 2001.

<sup>9</sup> Edwin Black, *The Transfer Agreement: The Dramatic Story of the Pact Between the Third Reich and Jewish Palestine* (New York : Carroll & Graf, 2001); Marc H. Ellis, *Israel and Palestine: Out of the Ashes*, (London: Pluto Press, 2003); Naem Giladi, *Ben Gurion’s Scandals* (Flushing: Gilit Pub. Co., 1995); Lenni Brenner, *The Iron Wall: Zionist Revisionism from Jabotinsky to Shamir* (London: Zed Books, 1984).

<sup>10</sup> Shlomo Sand., *The Invention of the Jewish People*, Verso, NY 2009; see also <https://>

Since it was founded with Western imperial support in 1948, these same countries continued to funnel what now amounts to hundreds of billions of dollars to keep the Zionist project going. For a very brief period, the Soviet Union stopped supporting Israel and challenged NATO/US structures in the Middle East (1950s to 1970s).

The US government is now leading in financing, arming, and protecting Israel's ethnic cleansing and genocide of the native Palestinians. This is not surprising considering the strength of the Zionist lobby<sup>11</sup> and also the history of the U.S. after having committed a number of genocides itself: native Americans, Blacks with slavery, Cambodia, Vietnam, Iraq, Yemen, and many other countries, and its leadership in spreading unfettered consumerism globally that destroyed our planet with climate change. These accumulated sins will not allow the state to remain a superpower and its might is declining. The U.S. is now reduced to being a hired gunman to defend the thug. Hence, it has Navy ships in the Mediterranean and the Red Sea to attack any country that is trying to stop attempts to end the genocide and illegal blockade of Gaza.

This is not far-fetched. The war machine is only succeeding in killing civilians (nearly 30,000 so far including about 9000 children) and injuring some 55,000 civilians, which they bomb from the air. In the land battle against resistance forces, they are losing<sup>12</sup> or at best it is a stalemate since 7 October. The Israeli army is losing soldiers by the hundreds. Over 1100 military vehicles (tanks, APCs, bulldozers) have been damaged or destroyed. Their economy and social order cannot sustain the prolonged war that their government keeps talking about. The resistance now says they will not discuss prisoner swaps (139 Israelis vs 11,500 Palestinians) until a complete ceasefire. The Netanyahu regime is not willing to accept it, because that would mean he and his other corrupt lieutenants will end up in jail. More and more Jews around the world now openly oppose Zionism. Political Zionism is a racist movement that is intended to transform Palestine (multi-ethnic, multi-religious, multilingual) to a monolithic Jewish state.

While 94% of Israelis supported the killings in Gaza in a poll conducted in November, there is now growing disillusionment. Most Israelis no longer believe their government (military or political leadership). After all, they lied about what happened 7 October 2023 (including beheaded babies, rapes, etc. read [ongaza.org](http://ongaza.org)). The most remarkable transformation is that the truth is coming out about the history of Palestine, about the Nakba, about the genocide, about the statements of Israeli leaders, and about the impact on the globe of a massive fraud. This despite the hundreds of millions spent, and the hundreds of thousands of agents working for Israel in other countries. The truth spread through [hundreds of billions of posts on social media \(Facebook, X/](https://popular-resistance.blogspot.com/2023/11/does-truth-matter.html)

11 <https://popular-resistance.blogspot.com/2023/11/israel-lobby-in-usa.html>

12 [https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/dec/21/](https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/dec/21/israel-losing-war-against-hamas-netanyahu-idf)

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Twitter, Telegram, Instagram etc.) cannot be silenced by the money being spent by the rich Zionist movement. We say in Arabic "*Ma Bitghati AlShams biGhorbal*" (you cannot cover the sun with a sieve).

### Concluding remarks

Palestinians have been victimized for the past 76 years, and now eight million are refugees/ displaced people, millions who remain in Palestine stored in ghettos/Bantustans/ concentration camps. Palestinians and their supporters asking for human rights are also dehumanized and defamed as hating Jews, etc. (ironic since thousands of Jews were willing to be arrested and even brutalized for their support of Palestinian rights). I

t is an existential struggle as you know: we either allow subjugation of people or we all achieve freedom and peace. As many of us predicted before, these pains are the birth pains of a new era. It always happens when empires collapse and new powers come to be. The U.S./Israeli Empire is waning. The Western Roman Empire declined in the 5th century AD. Every empire declines, and the U.S. decline is accelerating because both Democratic and Republican parties are under the thumb of the Zionist lobby that puts racism and greed first. Corruption is rampant at the highest levels (Netanyahu, Biden, Trump). Many are starting to realize that and to realize that the repercussions of this allowed genocide is not just local but regional and global. Israel/USA are destabilizing the whole world.

A new multi-polar world is emerging and cannot be stopped. Our task is to shape it so that it is more just. We the people of earth cannot continue to let the greedy 0.1% control our lives. Only love of all humanity and all nature that can work the miracles needed. So let us talk of that.

While our hearts go to all who lost loved ones we must thank the millions who did not remain silent. Those who fought against Nakba denial. Those who worked for human rights and justice. Those millions like Greta Thunberg who understand the connection between climate justice, environmental justice, and land justice. Thousands of organizations (*Jewish Voice for Peace, CodePink*, etc.) engaged in civil disobedience, in boycotts, divestments, and sanctions. People of all faiths and no religious faith mobilized and acted. We thank you all. You are the love that conquers the fear and gives us hope of a better humanity and a sustainable earth. Of course, it will not be easy and no worthy cause is easy.

We must muster all our resources, all our will, all our energy to stop this genocide, stop all wars, seriously tackle climate change, reshape the failing world order to not allow any future silence on genocide, and remove the rampant capitalist/consumerist system that exploits people. We must all stop being consumers of (mis)information and of products to become engaged, compassionate, caring people. This is not easy for any of us. After all, we are all fragile "human beings" and doubts and fears and the devil on one shoulder keep nagging at us. Let me to give you a small example from

myself. If they want to be saved, they should sit with the resistance forces (Hamas, Islamic Jihad etc), with Iran, Russia, Brazil, Venezuela, and China to implement return of Palestinian refugees per UNGA 194, democracy (right of self-determination), and end apartheid and militarism locally and globally. They must also address creating a truth and reconciliation committee and tribunals to address war crimes and crimes against humanity along the same trajectory that happened in South Africa.<sup>13</sup>

There are eight million Palestinian refugees or displaced Palestinians in the world. Their spirit of resilience seems stronger than ever (many led the millions who protested the war on Gaza). There are some two billion Muslims and even more Christians in the world. This Holy Land is holy to them as it is to Jews, Samaritans, and Bahai and others. Twenty years ago in my book *Sharing the Land of Canaan*, I documented the rational way to stop the onslaught on people and nature in historic Palestine (now under the boot of Israel), a solution supported by vast majority of Palestinians and some Israelis, a process of ending apartheid and decolonization (the same happened in South Africa).<sup>14</sup> And, despite the well documented carnage in the occupied Palestinian territories,<sup>15</sup> there are still 15 million dedicated Palestinians globally.

I wrote a message to the people of Gaza apologizing as a fellow Palestinian and fellow human being for failing them I stated, "We can't imagine the terror all 2.4 million of you face. I am not sure if some of you who still have Internet will see this and I am sure you definitely have more urgent things on your mind (like your children's starvation) than to read this note of contrition/ note of regret. We are all so ashamed and feel we let you down. .... The UN failed. WE ALL FAILED. We failed even after we saw five other wars waged on you, the people of Gaza each more horrific than those before. We failed as we saw your economy destroyed by 17 years of a cruel siege, which now evolved to blockade for thirst and starvation. We failed when we did not act against the fascist government of Israel strong enough at the time it was elected. The collusion of so many who shook hands and normalized your tormentors will haunt them forever. The Western governments who were complicit in killing you delegitimized themselves. They also drop the last remaining fig leaf of international law (now it is social Darwinism and might makes right that rules). Did they also kill the last vestige of humanity?... Yet, your heroism and dignity as you die in your hundreds every day and the living risk their lives and with their bare hands extract the dead and the living. I will never forget one medic's haunting prayer lullaby to a girl who lost her entire family. You teach us humanity which so many millions have forgotten. Please teach us the living dead more. I would gladly exchange what is left of my life to let one child in Gaza live a decent life. Please continue to teach us about

13 Sonneborn, Liz. *The end of apartheid in South Africa*. Infobase Publishing, 2010

14 Mazin Qumsiyeh, *Sharing the Land of Canaan*, London, Pluto Press, 2004

15 <https://www.ochaopt.org>

life and death. Will you teach us about the imminent death of 'international law,' death of decency in many, or death of humanity? But maybe you can also teach us about life, what we call *sumud*, how miraculously you always rise from the ashes, how you will transcend this horror. You and I are after all descendants of Canaanites who gave the world the alphabet and agriculture who fought and triumphed over many invaders (Persians, Crusaders etc.) and how you will triumph over these newest invaders."<sup>16</sup>

Our history is not only a prolonged history of oppression,<sup>17</sup> but a history of resistance, hope, and empowerment.<sup>18</sup> In this long history what we chose to emphasize determines our future. And our future is linked to the future not just of our small (but highly charged) corner of the world but of the whole global order. If the Western world governments persist in demolishing international law and human rights for the sake of a strong Zionist lobby,<sup>19</sup> that means they are jeopardizing the future for all of us. Here we recall Martin Luther King Jr, who stated that his government (the U.S.) is the biggest purveyor of violence in the world and that "we either live together as fellow human beings or die together as fools." And we must act on knowledge.<sup>20</sup>

### I end with a quote from Howard Zinn related to hope:

"There is a tendency to think that what we see in the present moment we will continue to see. We forget how often in this century we have been astonished by the sudden crumbling of institutions, by extraordinary changes in people's thoughts, by unexpected eruptions of rebellion against tyrannies, by the quick collapse of systems of power that seemed invincible. To be hopeful in bad times is not just foolishly romantic. It is based on the fact that human history is a history not only of cruelty, but also compassion, sacrifice, courage, kindness. What we choose to emphasize in this complex history will determine our lives. If we see only the worst, it destroys our capacity to do something. If we remember those times and places — and there are so many — where people behaved magnificently, this gives us the energy to act, and at least the possibility of sending this spinning top of a world in a different direction. And if we do act, in however small a way, we don't have to wait for some grand Utopian future. The future is an infinite succession of presents, and to live now as we think human beings should live, in defiance of all that is bad around us, is itself a marvelous victory."<sup>21</sup>

16 <https://popular-resistance.blogspot.com/2023/10/letter-to-gaza.html>

17 Massad, Joseph. "The persistence of the Palestinian Question." *Cultural Critique* 59 (2005): 1-23; Inbar, Efraim, and Eitan Shamir. "Mowing the Grass: Israel's Strategy for Protracted Intractable Conflict." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 37, no. 1 (2014): 65-90

18 Qumsiyeh, Mazin *Popular Resistance in Palestine: A History of Hope and Empowerment*. Pluto Press (2012).

19 <https://popular-resistance.blogspot.com/2023/11/israel-lobby-in-usa.html>

20 <https://popular-resistance.blogspot.com/2023/11/are-we-being-duped-to-focus-only-on.html>

21 Howard Zinn, *You Can't Be Neutral on a Moving Train: A Personal History of Our Times*, Beacon Press, 2010