

The Destruction of Palestine Is the Destruction of the Earth

*The last six months of genocide in Gaza have ushered in a new phase in a long history of colonization and extraction that reaches back to the nineteenth century. To truly understand the present crisis, [Andreas Malm](#) argues, requires a *longue durée* analysis of Palestine's subjugation to fossil empire.*

[Andreas Malm](#), Verso Books, 8 April 2024



*This essay is a lightly edited version of a lecture given at the American University of Beirut, The Center for Arts and Humanities in the frame of the [Critical Humanities for the Liberal Arts Program](#) on 4 April. We use the image above, *White Phosphorous #2*, with permission from the artist, [Rafat Asad](#). Rafat is a Palestinian artist based in Ramallah.*

So we are now clocking half a year of this [genocide](#). Half a year has passed since the resistance launched Toufan al-Aqsa and the occupation responded by declaring and executing genocide. It's been half a year, six months, 184 days of bombs picking off one family after another, one high-rise building after another, one residential district after another, relentlessly, methodically: half a year of the grey bones of children poking out under the rubble, of rows of tiny white body bags lined up on the ground, of a mutilated girl hanging from a window as if from a meat hook; half a year of parents bidding farewell to their children with eerie composure, as if their spirits have left them empty and blank, or in uncontrollable spasms of grief, as if they don't know how to ever again put one foot in front of the other and take a step on this Earth; half a year of a dozen massacres per day, summary executions, sniping, driving over the corpses with bulldozers and all the rest and it just doesn't stop, it goes on and it goes on and it doesn't stop and then it continues and proceeds apace and it won't come to an end and it just doesn't stop. One can go insane with despair watching this from a distance. If one feels that way, then one should try to imagine how the people feel who are still alive in Gaza.

The state of Israel is now committing the worst crime known to humanity, and this particular genocide has some unique characteristics that set it apart from others on the recent record. First of all: from its outset, this genocide has been [‘a transnational effort’](#), coordinated and organised by the advanced capitalist countries of the West together with the state of Israel. The US, the UK, Germany, France and most other EU members immediately rushed to participate in the bloodshed, sending arms to the

occupation as so many dishes to a banquet, flying over Gaza to share intelligence with the headquarters and pilots, rolling out the diplomatic defences around this state and, as if that were not enough, taking the last crumbs of sustenance out of the Palestinians' hands. Now that they are starving and have only the most minimal assistance from UNRWA to keep them alive, the US and the UK are cutting off that last lifeline too. One could be forgiven for thinking that they want the Palestinians to die.

This has been the picture during the first half year of this genocide. So far, it has been one monochrome scene of cooperation. No other genocide [on the list](#) since the Holocaust has presented such a picture. From Bangladesh to Guatemala, Sudan to Myanmar, genocides might have been perpetrated with varying degrees of complicity from the capitalist core: but here we are dealing with something qualitatively different. A useful comparison would be with the genocide against the Bosnian Muslims – an event that shaped my own political youth. With an arms embargo, the West denied that people the right to defend themselves; through their retreat from Srebrenica, the Dutch forces knowingly handed over that town to Ratko Mladić; in the four years of the war, the so-called international community stood by as Bosnian Muslims were decimated. But these were, primarily, acts of omission. The West did not arm Republika Srpska with the best bombs from its arsenals. Bill Clinton did not fly in to hug Slobodan Milošević. The slaughter was not accompanied by the constant refrain 'the Serbian nationalists have the right to defend themselves'. What we are seeing now might be the first advanced late capitalist genocide.

I must confess to some naivety here: I had not expected quite this voracious an appetite for Palestinian blood. Of course, I have not been surprised by the behaviour of the occupation. The second thing we said to each other on the morning of 7 October was: they will destroy Gaza. They will kill everyone. The first thing we said in these early hours consisted not so much of words as of cries of jubilation. Those of us who have lived our lives with and through the question of Palestine could not react in any other way to the scenes of the resistance storming the Erez checkpoint: this maze of concrete towers and pens and surveillance systems, this consummate installation of guns and scans and cameras – certainly the most monstrous monument to the domination of another people I have ever been inside – all of a sudden in the hands of Palestinian fighters who had overpowered the occupation soldiers and torn down their flag. How could we not scream with astonishment and joy? Same with the scenes of Palestinians breaking through the fence and the wall and streaming into the lands from which they had been expelled; same with the reports of the resistance seizing the police station in Sderot, the ethnically clean colony they built on top of the village of Najd, occupied since 1948.

These were the first reactions I shared with those closest to me. But the second: immense trepidation. We all knew how the state of Israel behaves and what to expect of it. What I, personally, did not fully count on was the extent to which the West would throw itself into the mass killings. Clearly, I should have known better. But whatever the naivety, the events of the past half year have raised anew the question of the nature of this alliance. What, exactly, is it

that ties the state of Israel and the rest of the West so closely together? What explains the willingness of countries like the US and the UK to join this genocide and why does the American empire share Israel's goal of destroying Palestine? One explanation, still as popular as ever on parts of the left, is the power of the Zionist lobby. I will come back to this.

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One component of the definition of genocide is the 'physical destruction in whole or in part' of the targeted group of people; and in Gaza, a central category is precisely that of physical destruction. Already in the two first months, Gaza was subjected to [utter](#) and [complete](#) destruction. Already before the end of December, the *Wall Street Journal* [reported](#) that the destruction of Gaza equalled or surpassed that of Dresden and other German cities during the Second World War. One of the bravest voices outside of Palestine is Francesca Albanese, the UN Special Rapporteur on the territories occupied in 1967. She begins her recent report with the observation that 'After five months of military operations, Israel has destroyed Gaza', before going on to detail how every foundation of life in Gaza has been 'completely sacked.'^[1] The emblematic image is that of a house smashed into pieces and survivors frantically digging through the rubble. If they are lucky, a boy or a girl all covered in dust might be pulled out from the mass of debris. The estimate now is that some 12,000 dead bodies remain to be extracted from the pulverised houses of Gaza.

While it has never before approached the scale we are now seeing, this is not exactly the first time the Palestinians have experienced

this sort of thing. The script can be found in the 1948 Plan Dalet, where Zionist forces were instructed in the art of ‘destroying villages (by setting fire to them, by blowing them up, and by planting mines in their rubble)’. [2] During the Nakba, it was commonplace for these forces to invade a village during the night and systematically dynamite one house after another with families still inside them.[3] A peculiarity of the Palestinian experience is that this has never come to an end. The original act of destroying the houses over the heads of their inhabitants is repeated again and again: in al-Majdal in 1950, from which the people were deported to Gaza; in Gaza in 2024; and in between, any number of eternal. To pick just one: Beirut in 1982, described by Liyana Badr in *A Balcony over the Fakihani*, with words that could fit any other instantiation:

I saw piles of concrete, stones, torn clothes scattered about, shattered glass, little pieces of cotton wool, fragments of metal, buildings destroyed or leaning crazily (...) White dust smothered the district, and through the gray of the smoke loomed the gutted shells of blocks and the debris of houses razed to the earth. (...) Everything there was mixed up together. Cars were upside down, papers whirling in the sky. Fire. And smoke. The end of the world.[4]

This is the end of the world that never ends: [fresh rubble](#) is always poured out over the Palestinians. Destruction is the constitutive experience of Palestinian life because the essence of the Zionist project is the destruction of Palestine.

This time, unlike in 1948 or 1950, however, the destruction of Palestine is playing out against the backdrop of a different, but related process of destruction: namely, that of the climate system of this planet. Climate breakdown is the process of ecosystems being physically destroyed, from the Arctic to Australia. In our book *The Long Heat: Climate Politics When It's Too Late*, forthcoming from Verso in 2025, my colleague Wim Carton and I discuss in some detail how rapidly this process is now unfolding. To take but one example, the Amazon is caught up in a spiral of dieback that might end with it becoming a treeless savanna. The Amazon rainforest has been standing for 65 million years. Now, in the span of a few short decades, global warming – together with deforestation, the original form of ecological destruction – is pushing the Amazon towards the tipping point beyond which it would cease to exist. Indeed, as I write, much recent research suggests that it is perched on that point.^[5] If the Amazon were to lose its forest cover – a dizzying thought, but entirely within the realm of a possible near future – it would be a different kind of Nakba. The immediate victims would, of course, be the indigenous and afrodescendent and other people of the Amazon, some 40 million in all, who would, in the most likely scenario, see fires rip through their forest and turn it into smoke and so live through the end of a world.

Sometimes, this process takes on a remarkable morphological similarity to the events in Gaza, even in geographical proximity. On the night of 11 September last year, less than a month before the start of the genocide, Storm Daniel hit Libya. In the eastern city of Derna, on the shores of the Mediterranean, about 1000 km from

Gaza, people were killed in their sleep. Suddenly a force from the sky destroyed their homes on top of them. Afterwards, reports described how random furniture and body parts poked up through pulverised buildings. ‘[Corpses](#) still litter the street, and drinkable water is in short supply. The storm has killed whole families’. [According](#) to one native of the town, it was ‘a catastrophe unlike anything we have ever seen. The residents are searching for the bodies of their loved ones by digging with their hands and simple agricultural tools’. There were Palestinian first responders rushing to the scene; [according](#) to one of them: ‘the devastation is beyond all imagination (...) You walk through the city and see nothing but mud, silt and demolished houses. The smell of corpses is everywhere. (...) Entire families have been erased from the civil registry. (...) You see death everywhere.’

During its 24-hour visit, Storm Daniel dropped a load of water – around 70 times larger than the average amount for the month of September. Derna was located at the mouth of a river, running through a wadi towards the sea, normally within narrow banks, if indeed it ran at all. This was desert country. But now suddenly the river rose, burst through two dams and crashed into Derna, the water, sediment, debris forming a bulldozer that ripped and roared through the city in the middle of the night to 11 September – a force of such speed and violence as to drive structures and streets into the Mediterranean and turn the former centre into a brownish, muddy bog. Using today’s refined methodologies of weather attribution, researchers could quickly [conclude](#) that the floods had been made fifty times more likely by the global warming experienced so far – mathematical code for the cause of the

disaster. Only this warming could have brought about that event. During the preceding summer months, the waters off North Africa had been no less than five and a half degrees warmer than the average from the previous two decades. And warm water holds heat energy that can get packed into a storm like fuel into a missile. Some 11,300 people were killed in one single night by Storm Daniel in Libya – the most intense event of mass killing by climate change so far in the decade, possibly the century.

These scenes formed a striking prefiguration of those that would begin to play out in Gaza 26 days later; but there were also direct connections between the places. Because rescue teams in Gaza have long been used to dealing with this kind of destruction, they moved swiftly into Derna to help out. At least a dozen Palestinians who had fled from Gaza to Derna were killed in the floods. One Palestinian, Fayeze Abu Amra, [told Reuters](#): ‘Two catastrophes took place, the catastrophe of the displacement and the storm in Libya’ – the Arabic word for catastrophe here, of course, being Nakba. So according to Fayeze Abu Amra, the first Nakba was the one of 1948, which drove his family and 800,000 other Palestinians out of their homeland; his family ended up in mukhayam Deir al-Balah, and then some members moved on to get away from the Israeli wars of aggression, to the town of Derna; and then came a second Nakba. Fayeze Abu Amra lost several relatives in the storm. He himself survived, because he had chosen to stay behind in Deir al-Balah, where mourning tents were erected for the victims. And then came, just a few weeks later, the genocide. God knows if Fayeze Abu Amra is still alive.

Now, as we recognise the similarities and entanglements of these processes of destruction, some significant differences also strike the eye. The forces that bombed Derna were of another nature than those bombing Gaza. The anonymous sower of death from the sky in the former case was not an air force, but the cumulative saturation of the atmosphere with carbon dioxide. No one had the specific intention to destroy Derna, like the state of Israel has had the express intention to destroy Gaza; there were no army spokesmen [announcing](#) the focus on ‘maximum damage’, no Likud MP [howling](#) ‘Bring down buildings!! Bomb without distinction!!’ When fossil fuel companies extract their goods and put them up for combustion, they do not intend to kill anyone in particular. They know, however, that these commodities will, as a matter of certainty, kill people – it might be people in Libya, or in Congo, or in Bangladesh, or in Peru; it is of no consequence to them.

This is not genocide. In our book, [*Overshoot: How the World Surrendered to Climate Breakdown*](#), which will be published by Verso in October this year, Wim and I toy with the term paupericide for what is going on here: the relentless expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure beyond all boundaries for a liveable planet. The initial purpose of the act per se is not to kill anyone. The goal of extracting coal or oil or gas is to make money. Once it becomes fully established that this form of money-making actually kills multitudes, however, the absence of intention begins to fill up. As a corollary of the basic insights of climate science, the knowledge is now more or less universally spread: fossil fuels kill people, randomly, blindly, indiscriminately, with a heavy concentration on poor people in the global South; and they kill in greater numbers

the longer business-as-usual continues. When the atmosphere is oversaturated with CO₂, the lethality of any additional quantum of CO₂ is high and on the rise. Mass casualties are then an ideologically and mentally processed, de facto accepted result of capital accumulation. ‘If you’re doing something that hurts somebody, and you know it, you’re doing it on purpose’, prosecutor Steve Schleicher said in his closing argument against Derek Chauvin, later convicted for the murder of George Floyd; *mutatis mutandis*, the same applies here. Indeed, the violence of fossil fuel production becomes more lethal and more purposeful for every passing year. Now compare this with one bombing in mukhayam Jabaliya on 25 October, which killed at least 126 civilians, including 69 children. The stated purpose of this act was the killing of a single Hamas commander. Did the occupation intend to also kill the 126 civilians, or was it just callously indifferent to that kind of mass collateral damage? Intentionality and indifference blur here. So, too, on the climate front – still qualitatively different from that of Palestine; but perhaps the difference is diminishing.

Are there any specific moments of articulation between the destruction of Palestine and the destruction of the Earth? By moments of articulation, I mean points where one process impacts and forms the other, in a reciprocating causation, a dialectic of determination. My answer is yes, indeed, such moments of articulation have linked up in a rather tight sequence for almost two centuries now. Because I am a history nerd, I will go back to the moment when it began: 1840. The events of that year have been a perennial obsession of mine. I have touched upon them here and there, but I have yet to write a coherent account. I began doing this

research eleven years ago, towards the end of my PhD, when I wrote *Fossil Capital* and realised that the topic required a study of its own, a sequel to be called *Fossil Empire*. In the past weeks, I have returned again to this moment in time with a view to developing a *longue durée* analysis of fossil empire in Palestine.

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1840 was a pivotal year in history, for both the Middle East and the climate system. It marked the first time the British Empire deployed steamboats in a major war. Steam-power was the technology through which dependence on fossil fuels came into being: steam-engines ran on coal, and it was their diffusion through the industries of Britain that turned this into the first fossil economy. But steam-power would never have made an imprint on the climate if it had stayed inside the British Isles. Only by exporting it to the rest of the world and drawing humanity into the spiral of large-scale fossil fuel combustion did Britain change the fate of this planet: the globalisation of steam was a necessary ignition. The key to this ignition, in turn, was the deployment of steamboats in war. It was through the projection of violence that Britain integrated other countries into the strange kind of economy it had created – by turning fossil capital, we might say, into fossil empire.

At this time, Britain was the largest empire the world had ever seen, built on naval supremacy, hitherto founded on the traditional motive power of wind. But in the 1820s, the Royal Navy began to consider steam propulsion – burning coal, that is, instead of sailing with the wind; wind being a ‘renewable’ source as we would call it today, inexhaustible, cheap, indeed free of cost, but with well-

known limitations. The captains could not take for granted that it blew as they wished it to. On the battlefield, ships might be held back by calms, or driven away from their targets by gusts and gales in the wrong direction, or allowed to advance only slowly. Freaks of the wind could give the enemy opportunities to slip away, regroup, hit back. In military action, when the mobilisation of energy was most urgently needed, wind was an unreliable force. Steam obeyed another logic. It derived its force from a source of energy that had no relation to the weather conditions, the winds, currents, waves, tides: coal came from the stock underground, a legacy of photosynthesis hundreds of millions of years old, and once brought above ground, it could be burnt at whatever point and whatever moment the owner demanded. The striking force of a steamer could be summoned at will. A fleet of such vessels could be arranged just as the captains wanted it – cannons pointed, troops landed, enemies chased down no matter how the wind blew. Such freedoms were particularly stressed by admiral Charles Napier, the most energetic champion of steam in the Royal Navy, who summed them up pithily: ‘steamers make the wind always fair’; or, ‘steam has gained such a complete conquest over the elements, it appears to me that we are now in possession of all that was required to make maritime war perfect’.^[6] The conquest of the elements was, ultimately, a function of the spatio-temporal profile of fossil fuels: because of their detachment from space and time on the surface of the Earth, they promised to liberate the empire from the coordinates in which boats had navigated since time immemorial.

The first time Napier got to practise this perfection was in 1840, right here, on the shores of Lebanon and Palestine. In that year,

Britain went to war against Muhammed Ali. Ali was the pasha of Egypt, nominally serving under the Ottoman Empire but in practise the ruler of his own realm, which, by now, was in a state of war with the sultan. Ali's forces had fanned out from Egypt and conquered the Hijaz and the Levant and formed an Arab proto-empire, on a collision course with the Porte and with London. Ali's rise threatened to bring down the Ottoman Empire, whose stability and integrity Britain, at this point in time, regarded as a strategic asset against Russia. If the Ottoman Empire disintegrated, Russia might expand south and east towards the crown colony of India, so Britain wanted to prop it up. Inter-imperialist rivalry, we might say, prompted Britain to intervene against Ali. So did, no less importantly, the dynamics of capitalist development inside Britain itself. The cotton industry was its spearhead, but in the 1830s, it had run so far ahead of every other branch as to suffer a crisis of overproduction: there were too large mountains of cotton thread and fabric coming out of the factories. Sources of demand were insufficient to absorb them all. Britain was, therefore, desperate for export markets; and thankfully, in 1838, the Ottoman Empire agreed to a fabulously advantageous free trade agreement, known as the Balta Liman treaty. This would open the territories under the sultan's control to essentially unlimited British exports. The problem, however, was that ever more of these territories were passing into the control of Muhammed Ali, who pursued the opposite economic policy: import substitution. He built his own cotton factories in Egypt. By the late 1830s, they had grown into the largest industry of its kind outside Europe and the US. Ali would have none of the British free trade: he put in place tariffs and

monopolies and other protective barriers around his cotton industry and promoted it so effectively that it could make incursions into markets hitherto dominated by Britain, as far away as in India itself.

Britain hated it. And no one hated it with more fervour than Lord Palmerston, the foreign secretary and chief architect of the British Empire in the middle of the nineteenth century. He would blurt out: ‘the best thing Mehemet could do would be to destroy all his manufactures and throw his machinery into the Nile.’^[7] He and the rest of the British government considered Ali’s refusal to accept the Balta Liman treaty a *casus belli*. Free trade had to be forced onto Ali and all the Arab lands he ruled. Otherwise the British cotton industry would remain suffocated, without the outlets it needed to keep expanding, potentially choked even further by this Egyptian upstart. Lord Palmerston did not conceal his foreign policy principles. ‘It was the duty of the Government to open new channels for the commerce of the country’; his ‘great object’ in ‘every quarter of the world’ was to prise open lands for trade, and this committed him to an all-out confrontation with Ali.^[8] He became obsessed with ‘the Eastern question’. ‘For my own part, I hate Mehemet Ali, whom I consider as nothing but an arrogant barbarian’, Palmerston wrote in 1839: ‘I look upon his boasted civilization of Egypt as the arrantest humbug.’^[9] London grew more belligerent by the month. ‘Know’, the consul-general in Alexandria warned the pasha, ‘it is in the power of England to *pulverize* you.’^[10] ‘We must strike at once rapidly and well’, Lord Ponsonby, the ambassador in Istanbul, sent home his advice, and ‘the whole tottering fabric of what is ridiculously called the Arab

Nationality will tumble to pieces.’^[11] With such words ringing through the corridors of Whitehall, Lord Palmerston ordered the Royal Navy to collect its best steamboats. In the late summer of 1840, a state-of-the-art squadron under the command of Napier set off towards the town of Beirut.

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Napier’s favourite vessel was called the *Gorgon*. Propelled by a 350 horsepower steam-engine, with room for 380 tons of coal, 1,600 soldiers and six guns, it was ‘the first true fighting steamship’, marking ‘a new era’.^[12] Napier took the *Gorgon* to reconnoitre the area around Beirut, running up and down the coast as he saw fit, in splendid disregard of the weather – but he did send out a pressing request to his fellow officers: ‘you must send me coal vessels here *at all costs*, because steamers without coal are useless.’^[13] On 9 September, the bombardment of Beirut commenced. *Gorgon* and three other steamers took the lead, a further 15 sailing-ships arrayed around them. Their funnels spewing smoke, the steamers had a distinctive ability to circle the bay of Beirut back and forth and harass the Egyptian defenders, commanded by Ali’s son Ibrahim Pasha. Other targets appear to have been hit as well. After a day of particularly severe shelling, on 11 September, the local general sent a letter of accusation to the British fleet:

For the sake of killing five of my soldiers, you have ruined and brought families into desolation; you have killed women, a tender infant and its mother, an old man, two unfortunate peasants, and doubtless, many others whose names have not yet reached me (...) Your fire, I say, became more vigorous and destructive for the

unfortunate peasants rather than for my soldiers. You appear decided to make yourselves masters of the town.[\[14\]](#)

Some sources from within Beirut claimed that around 1,000 people were killed in the bombardment, their bodies strewn about the streets. The crew on a US cruiser reported that ‘all the buildings, both private and public, were in a heap of ruins, the English fleet were firing upon the few buildings remaining, and were determined not to leave one stone upon another, and the town presents a scene of havoc and destruction.’[\[15\]](#)

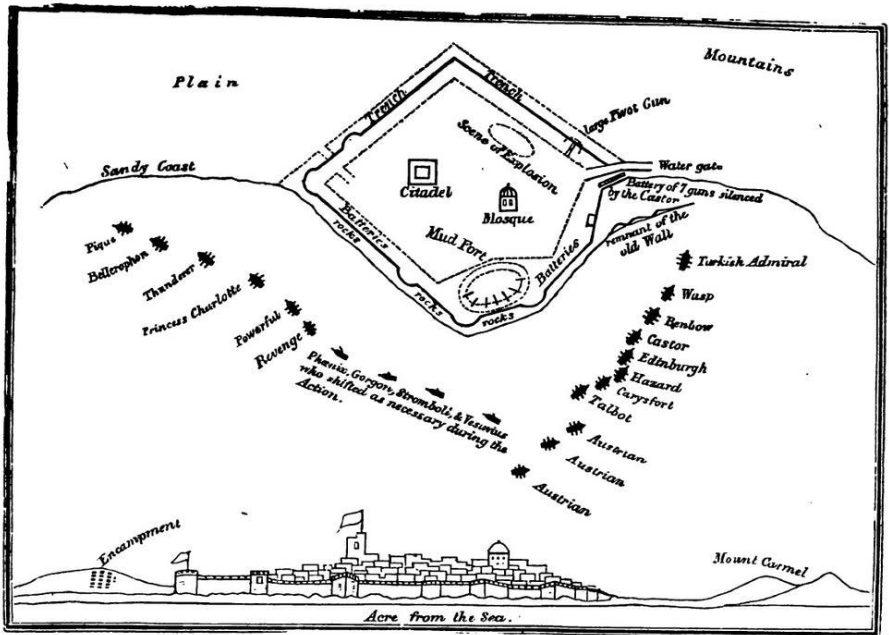
After this feat, the steamers chased Ibrahim Pasha’s troops along the coast. From Latakia in the north via Trablus and Sur to Haifa in the south, their positions fell like domines, the defenders withdrawing under the relentless, unpredictable attacks. ‘Steam gives us a great superiority, and we shall keep them moving’, Napier exulted: ‘Ibrahim must march very quick if he could beat steam’.[\[16\]](#) A gratified Lord Palmerston followed the news from the frontline, rapidly dispatched with steam packets to London, and wrote back: ‘The more force can be accumulated in Syria the better.’[\[17\]](#) Next he ordered an attack on the Palestinian town of Akka. Everyone knew that the decisive battle would stand there. Akka had, famously, held out for half a year against Napoleon in 1799, and then again for half a year in 1831, when Ibrahim Pasha laid siege to it. Since then, the Egyptians had repaired the walls of the old crusader capital, armed its ramparts with heavy guns and garrisoned it with thousands of troops, reinforcing the standing of Akka as by far the sturdiest fortress on the Levantine coast. A major

depot, it was filled to the brim with weapons and ammunitions, most of them in a central magazine. It was also a thriving town with a civilian population that had nothing to do with military affairs.

On 1 November 1840, *Gorgon* and the other three steamers appeared in front of Akka. They were alone; the sailing ships had been delayed by light winds. Napier called on the Egyptians to surrender. When they refused, the bombarding began. One report described the action:

The service of steam-ships in war was thus shewn: the steam division of the Allies having arrived in the Bay, immediately commenced throwing shot and shells into the town, which must have annoyed the garrison very much; as, although they returned a very brisk fire, *from the steamers constantly shifting their positions*, it was harmless.[\[18\]](#)

On the evening of 2 November, the wind-powered remainder of the fleet arrived. A proper line of battle was arranged. The special mobility of the new mode of propulsion would be fully utilised, the steamers forming the central prong of the assault:



'Plan of the battle of Acre.' Hunter, Narrative, 263.

In the afternoon of 3 November, the steamers resumed the pounding of Akka and the other ships joined in what was, according to Napier, 'a tremendous fire'.^[19] The defenders lobbed back their own shots. After two and a half hours, a deafening detonation ripped through the battlefield. From within Akka, 'a mass of fire and smoke suddenly ascended like a volcano into the sky, immediately followed by a shower of materials of all kinds, that had been carried up by its force. The smoke rested for a few

moments like an immense black dome, obscuring everything', read one of many accounts of the event, and further:

The dreadful crash was heard far above the tumult of the assault, and was immediately succeeded by a most awful pause. The firing on both sides was suddenly suspended, and for a few minutes nothing broke the fearful silence but the echoes of the mountains repeating the sound like the rumbling of distant thunder, and the occasional fall of some tottering building.'[\[20\]](#)



'The Bombardment and Capture of St. Jean D'Acree'. John Frederick Warre, 1841.

Akka's great powder magazine had been hit by a shell. *Gorgon* was dubbed the hero of the strike. In the confident words of one British

captain, the ‘magazine blew up in consequence of a well directed shell from the “Gorgon” steam-frigate.’[\[21\]](#) We cannot rule out that it was an accidental hit, but the British were clearly aware of the position of the magazine. Relaying fresh intelligence, Lord Minto, the highest commander of the Royal Navy, informed the command on the ground that ‘there is much powder stored about very insecurely at Acre’ and pointed it out as a suitable target, in a letter signed on 7 October.[\[22\]](#)

Whatever the exact degree of intentionality, the results of the strike from the first true fighting steamship are not in doubt. The Palestinian town of Akka turned into a mass of rubble. ‘Two entire regiments’, said a report to Lord Palmerston, ‘were annihilated, and every living creature within the area of 60,000 square yards ceased to exist; the loss of life being variously computed from 1,200 to 2000 persons.’[\[23\]](#) As night fell on 3 November, the few surviving Arab soldiers evacuated their last positions in Akka. When the British troops entered the town the next day, they were greeted by utter devastation. Here is one portrait:

Corpses of men, women, and children, blackened by the explosion of the magazine, and mutilated, in the most horrid manner, by the cannon shot, lay every where about, half buried among the ruins of the homes and fortifications: women were searching for the bodies of their husbands, children for their fathers.[\[24\]](#)

In a letter home to his wife, Charles Napier himself expressed unease and perhaps a pang of guilt. ‘I went on shore at Acre to see the havoc we have occasioned, and witnessed a sight that never can be effaced from my memory, and makes me at this time even

almost shudder to think of it.’ He saw hundreds of dead and dying lying in the ruins; ‘the beach for half a mile on each side was strewn with bodies’; after some days, the corpses ‘infected the air with an effluvia that was truly horrid.’^[25] Even in his official account of the *War in Syria*, Napier admitted that ‘nothing could be more shocking than to see the miserable wretches, sick and wounded, in all parts of this devoted town, which was almost entirely pulverized.’^[26] The British seemed taken aback by the scale of the destruction they had wrought. In a letter to Lord Minto, another admiral wrote: ‘I cannot describe to your Lordship the utter destruction of the works & the town from the fire of our ships.’^[27] A midshipman from one of the smaller steamers spoke of hands, arms and toes sticking out of the rubble.^[28]

Barely remembered today, this event attracted an enormous amount of fascination in early Victorian Britain. The fortress that held out for half a year against Napoleon went down in less than three days under the blows of the steamships – on the more popular count, less than three *hours* of concentrated bombing on 3 November. It was a sublime, awe-inspiring, miraculous manifestation of the power of Britain in general and steam in particular, rendered in a series of paintings – here is another one, where a steamboat, possibly the *Gorgon*, is pointing straight into Akka, its column of smoke communicating with the tremendous eruption from the magazine behind the walls and the minarets: coal on fire, town on fire.



'Bombardment of St. Jean d'Acre.' H. Winkles, 1840.

In this lithograph, purporting to describe the scene from the perspective of the Arab defenders, the smoke from a steamboat likewise rises in the centre, while to the left the whole town is blown sky-high:



'Bombardment of St. Jean d'Acre.' Schranz Brothers, 1841.

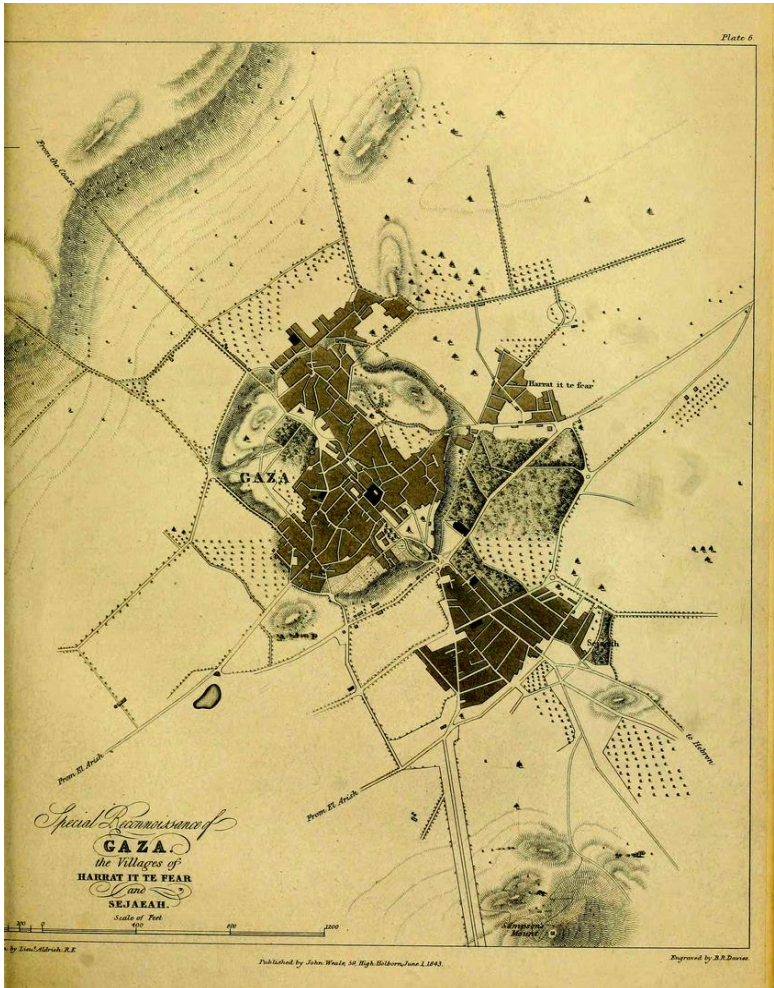
The explosion was the centrepiece of the action, but it went further. The steamers made use of their ability to manoeuvre freely in the waters near the walls of Akka, standing as close as 40 metres away when firing their projectiles, and then driving back out when needed. The bombardment could be more precise, and more devastating, and it went on for almost three days before the explosion. Did the British use this overwhelming power to target Ibrahim Pasha's forces with the utmost precision? In the most detailed recent reconstruction of the attack, four Israeli researchers write: 'The bombardment was rather aimed at the town itself. (...) In fact, the object of the bombardment was to compel the garrison to surrender, not by the injury which it might have sustained, but by the killing and misery which it inflicted upon non-combatants.'[\[29\]](#) We might recognise this kind of strategic thinking. Yet another admiral described how it worked: 'Every shot that

cleared the walls smashed the tops of houses, hurling walls and stones down on the heads of people below (...) there was no refuge anywhere.’[\[30\]](#)

Whatever compunctions the disembarking men may or may not have felt, back home in Whitehall, the happiness knew no bounds. Lord Palmerston congratulated the Royal Navy for capturing Akka and securing ‘the operation of the commercial treaties’.[\[31\]](#) The road to free trade in the Middle East had been cleared. This was the great achievement of the steamers, widely praised for their efficiency: they ‘continually shifted their positions during the action, and threw in shot and shells, whenever they saw the most effectual points for doing execution’, observed one report, noticing that ‘it is rather remarkable that not one of the four Steam ships had a single man either killed or wounded.’[\[32\]](#) If the men went through the action without a scratch, however, another resource was nearly exhausted: fuel. After the battle, not one of the four steamers had more than one day’s supply onboard. Practically all the stored coal had been burnt in the pulverisation of Akka.

The fall of the town determined the outcome of the war in one stroke. Ibrahim Pasha’s forces collapsed and beat a disorderly retreat through the coastal plains of Palestine. The steamers continued to harass them, landing at Jaffa and hovering off Gaza. On land, infantry troops moved into Gaza in January 1841, to ensure ‘the destruction of the enemy’s provisions’ – the first time British-led forces occupied this corner of Palestine, if only for a brief moment.[\[33\]](#) The Royal Engineers swiftly produced a map of Gaza, more precisely Gaza City; this is what it looked like in 1841.

You can see Shuja'iyya to the right. There is not much of this urban fabric left today.



Royal Engineers: map of Gaza, 1841 (published 1843).

While the British held Gaza and mapped it and destroyed the stores of food – presumably only to deny the Egyptian army its provisions – scattered columns of demoralised, thirsty, hungry soldiers drifted through the desert back into Egypt: less than one fourth of the army Ibrahim had commanded at the outbreak of the war. Before their arrival, Napier steamed onwards to the port of Alexandria, where he threatened to subject that town to the same treatment as Akka, unless Muhammed Ali accepted all British demands. Ali asked to at least keep the province of Palestine; but again, Napier warned that he would ‘lay Alexandria in ashes’.[\[34\]](#) That took Palestine off the table. By the same means, Napier pressed for an immediate implementation of the Balta Liman treaty in Egypt. Ali caved in on this point too.

Thus did Britain destroy the Arab proto-empire by means of steam. From Beirut to Alexandria, it was the steamers of the Royal Navy that formed the vanguard of the victory, more expert than their wind-powered partners in every manoeuvre that profited from mobility in space. In an article on the ‘Iron War Steamers’, the *Manchester Guardian* quoted an anonymous letter from a British subject in Alexandria:

So much has been done, of late, in the Levant by steam, that everybody is now alive to its capabilities as an element either of war or peace, and is ready to ask ‘What will it do next?’ Ibrahim Pasha can only account for his loss of the coast of Syria in a week by confessing that ‘the steam boats conveyed the enemy here, there, and everywhere, so suddenly that it would have required wings to keep up with them! One might as well think of fighting with a genii!’[\[35\]](#)

This power derived from fossil fuels: steam allowed the admirals and captains to plug their boats into a current from the past, a source of energy external to the space and time of the actual battle, through which the ships could therefore shoot as though they had wings of their own. Britain's military superiority was radically enhanced by its ability to mobilise the stock as a force for running the enemy down. Or, as the *Observer* noticed, with reference to Palestine: 'Steam, even now, almost realizes the idea of military omnipotence and military omnipresence; it is everywhere, and there is no withstanding it.'^[36] Britain was ready to project the power of fossil fuels across the globe, after having proved its mettle in Palestine.

*

The country whose fate was most immediately sealed by these events was Egypt. Muhammed Ali's cotton industry crumbled virtually overnight. When free trade was extended to his shrinking realm, the factories on the Nile could not hold out against the British exports, and the reason for this is fairly straightforward: Egypt had no modern prime movers. It didn't have water-power, because the Nile is a slowly meandering river with an almost imperceptible gradient, devoid of rapids and falls. Nor did it have steam-power. Instead, Egyptian manufacturing ran overwhelmingly on animate power – oxen or mules or even human muscles impelling machines. But these were sorely deficient sources of energy, compared to steam-engines. They were weak, uneven, disorderly. Why, then, did not Muhammed Ali adopt steam? He wanted nothing more. Closely attuned to the trends of capitalist industry, he developed, from the 1820s onwards, a preoccupation

with steam and coal bordering on fixation. He knew that he could stand up to Britain only by copying it, in foundries and factories and on the seas, in economic competition and warfare alike. ‘The English have made many great discoveries, but the best of their discoveries is that of steam navigation’, he would tell Lord Palmerston’s emissary.[\[37\]](#)

But steam demanded its fuel. Ali did not possess any reserves of it. He was acutely aware of this problem, so much so that he sent expeditions into Upper Egypt and Sudan and beyond to try to locate seams of coal. My PhD student Amr Ahmed recently defended his dissertation *Egypt Ignited: How Steam Power Arrived on the Nile and Integrated Egypt into Industrial Capitalism (1820s–76)*. There, he shows how the quest for coal drove the imperial expansion of Muhammed Ali. One of his motives for conquering Syria was the reports of coal in Mount Lebanon. And indeed, coal could be dug out of the hills from under the Druze and the Maronites: in 1837, the Egyptians managed to extract a volume equal to 2.5 per cent of total British output. Apparently, this Lebanese coal was of inferior quality, expensive, evidently not enough to power a shift to steam in the factories of Cairo before the British struck them down. The nascent coal industry in Mount Lebanon also generated trouble for Ali. People were forced into the mines and abhorred the labour, to the extent that they rose up against Ibrahim Pasha’s forces in 1840; and this uprising was exploited by the British for their own political purposes. The revolt against the coal dreams of Ali contributed to his downfall. His project was to create a fossil empire in the lands of the Arabs; like all builders of empire, he was a ruthless tyrant (in 1834, the people

of Nablus revolted against him). In the end, the project came to grief, largely because Ali failed to establish proper coal reserves as a foundation of empire. One can only speculate about what would have happened had the Turkish coal supplies, which we know today as very extensive, fallen into his hands. Shortly after the war in 1840, a declining Muhammed Ali exclaimed to a British visitor: ‘coal! coal! coal! That is the one thing needful for me!’[\[38\]](#)

In the 1830s, Egypt balanced on the edge between core and periphery. It embarked on a precocious industrialisation, for a moment the leading ‘emerging economy’, as it would be called today, outside Europe and the US. But this was a moment in time in which access to steam-power and the coal that fuelled it determined the fortunes of nation: without this ticket, and with a rough kick from above, Egypt fell down the stairs. The cotton factories on the Nile soon lay in ruins too. Egypt became an important market for British exports, and an even more important source of supply of raw cotton: a country locked into the position of a periphery. After 1840, it underwent the most extreme deindustrialisation experienced anywhere in the nineteenth century. Around 1900, somewhere between 93 and 100 per cent of its exports consisted of one single crop – an unusual degree of specialisation. By dint of Egypt’s position in the larger Arab world, this underdevelopment also placed the region as a whole in subordination to the advanced capitalist countries of the West: solidified only through the events of 1840, a power relation with very durable results. In *Egypt Ignited*, Amr continues this story in amazing granular detail and demonstrates how Egypt became subsumed under the fossil economy that revolved around Britain –

its economy was eventually permeated by coal and steam, but it was coal and steam imported from Britain, used for the production and transportation of raw materials. I hope his book will soon be published so you can read the full account.

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The second country whose fate was written in the stars at this time was Palestine. In 1840, the British Empire first proposed the colonisation of that country by Jews. More precisely, on 25 November, Palmerston wrote to Ponsonby, the ambassador in Istanbul: ‘This is a great triumph to us all’ – the fall of Akka, a few weeks old – ‘especially to you, who always maintained that Mehemet’s power would crumble under a European attack.’ And then he went on:

Pray try to do what you can about these Jews; you have no idea to what extent the interest felt about them goes; it would be extremely politic [if we could make] the Sultan give them every encouragement and facility for returning and buying lands in Palestine; and if they were allowed to make use of our consuls & ambassador as the channel of complaint, that is to say, place themselves virtually under our protection, they would come back in considerable numbers, and bring with them much wealth.[\[39\]](#)

57 years before the first Zionist congress, 77 years before the Balfour declaration, 107 years before the partition plan, the chief architect of the British Empire near the summits of its power here laid down the formula for the colonisation of Palestine. For some

reason, this particular document appears to have never been cited in the entire historiography. But it's all there, encapsulated in a missive sent in the euphoria after the pulverisation of Akka.

1840 saw the first mania for what we now know as the Zionist project. It had been in the making for a few years. As is fairly well-known, Britain in the late 1830s saw a surge of Christian Zionism, the doctrine that Jews must be gathered and 'restored' to Palestine, where they will convert to Christianity and precipitate the second coming of Christ and usher in the Last Days. The main evangelist of this gospel was the Earl of Shaftesbury, who was related through marriage to Lord Palmerston; he tried to make the most of this family bond, but when he spoke to the foreign secretary, he had to put his religious arguments to the side. Instead he peppered him with reports about 'the productive powers of the Holy Land' being 'for centuries altogether neglected'. If only Britain resolved to insert the Jews into it, Palestine could be turned into a supplier of raw cotton and a market for manufactured goods and 'our capitalists might be tempted to invest large sums in machinery & cultivation.'^[40] After a dinner with Palmerston on 1 August 1840, the godly but shrewd Shaftesbury noted in his diary that 'I am forced to argue politically, financially, commercially; these considerations strike him home'.^[41] But eschatology and empire were not incompatible. Shaftesbury succeeded in getting Britain to open a consulate in Jerusalem in 1838; not by coincidence, this was the same year as Britain pushed into the region through the signing of the Balta Liman treaty. God and Mammon mixed rather well. Lady Palmerston, the wife of the foreign secretary, together with

whom he apparently formed his opinions, read the fall of Akka through her Bible:

It *cannot* be an accident that all these things should have so turned out! My impression is that it is the restoration of the Jews and fulfilment of the Prophecies. (...) It is certainly very curious and Acre seems to have fallen down like the walls of Jericho, and Ibrahim's army dispersed like the countless hosts that were enemies of the Jews, as we see in the Old Testament.[\[42\]](#)

It should be pointed out already here that this was a wholly gentile, Christian, white Anglo-Saxon fantasy, in which actual Jews living in the Middle East or elsewhere played no active role.

Lord Palmerston himself clearly saw the pulverisation of Akka as a sign of not the end times, but a new era of prosperity. No longer would the cotton industry be cramped by a lack of markets. After what he called 'the prostration of Mehemet Ali', Palmerston restated his general philosophy:

We must unremittingly endeavour to find in other parts of the world new wants for the produce from our industry. The world is large enough, and the wants of the human race ample enough to afford a demand for all we can manufacture; but it is the business of the government to open and to secure the roads for the merchant.[\[43\]](#)

It was in this scheme the Jews had a role to play. In another letter – and this document has been cited relatively often – Palmerston told Ponsonby to convince the sultan 'to encourage the Jews to return and settle in Palestine because the wealth which they would

bring with them would increase the resources of the Sultan's dominions'; moreover, a Jewish settlement would serve 'as a check upon any future evil designs by Mehemet Ali or his successor.'^[44] Throughout the 'Eastern crisis', Palmerston again and again dictated the rationale in letters to his ambassador: a 'return' of the Jews to Palestine would implant 'a great number of wealthy capitalists'; if the Sultan would accept them, he would earn the friendship of 'powerful classes in this country' (in the UK, that is); 'the capital and the industry of the Jews would much increase his revenue and add greatly to the strength of his empire.'^[45] We can here see a kind of brain scan of imperialist Zionism. Because the Jews would be tied to the metropole, giving Palestine to them would help unfetter capitalist development and prevent the rise of new recalcitrant challengers in the region.

As a measure of just how mainstream this scheme had become, the *Times* ran an article on 17 August, while Charles Napier was running up and down the Lebanese coast on the *Gorgon*, explaining that a Jewish settlement of Palestine would function as 'a breastwork against the further encroachments of lawless tyranny and of social degeneracy' – in short, it would be 'advantageously employed for the interests of civilization in the East.'^[46] On the ground, the advance detachments of Zionism were formed by officers in the imperial bureaucracy. Some of them came fresh from the battlefield. A colonel by the name of Churchill – Charles Henry, distant relative of the more famous Winston – commanded the British forces that marched into Damascus in early 1841, assembled various dignitaries in a hall and gave a speech:

Yes, my friends! there was once a Jewish people! famous in arts and renowned in war. These beautiful plains and valleys, which are now tenanted by the wild and wandering Arab, on which desolation has fixed her iron stamp, once revelled in the luxuriance of their fertile and abundant crops, and resounded with the songs of the daughters of Zion. May the hour of Israel's deliverance be near at hand![\[47\]](#)

This Churchill was well aware that there was no, as he put it, 'strong notion among Europe's Jews to return to Palestine.'[\[48\]](#) The desire of Jews to stay where they lived frustrated him. Equally frustrating, his government stuck to the policy of keeping the Ottoman Empire intact, under British guardianship and custody. He wished to see it broken up, and Jewish colonisation of Palestine would be just the right hammer. In a long letter to Moses Montefiore, president of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, sent from Damascus, where he was installed as consul, Churchill exhorted him to convince his fellow Jews to go to Palestine, and perhaps Syria too:

you would end by obtaining the sovereignty of at least Palestine. (...) I am perfectly certain that these countries must be rescued from the grasp of ignorant and fanatical rulers, that the march of civilisation must progress, and its various elements of commercial prosperity must be developed. It is needless to observe that such will never be the case under the blundering and decrepit despotism of the Turks or the Egyptians. Syria and Palestine, in a word, must be taken under European protection and governed in the sense and according to the spirit of European administration. It must ultimately come to this.

Churchill envisioned a Jewish entity in Palestine under the protection of Britain and its allies, armed for 'defence against the incursions of Bedouin Arabs'.[\[49\]](#)

Another man who hurried into Palestine at this auspicious moment was George Gawler. Having just relocated from South Australia, where he had been governor, he penned a pamphlet called ‘Tranquilization of Syria and the East: Practical Suggestions in Furtherance of the Establishment of Jewish Colonies in Palestine, the Most Sober and Sensible Remedy for the Miseries of Asiatic Turkey’. He travelled in Palestine in the early 1840s and somehow managed to perceive it as ‘*a fertile country, nine tenths of which lie desolate.*’ The land was empty, save for a few ‘unlettered and restless Bedawy’ now and then encountered in ‘deserted cities, and thorn-covered plains’. Solution: ‘REPLENISH THE DESERTED TOWNS AND FIELDS OF PALESTINE WITH THE ENERGETIC PEOPLE’, the Jews, who would turn it into a flourishing marketplace under the watch of a ‘naval force frequently on the coast’ – the British steamers, that is.^[50] A friend of Palmerston, E. L. Mitford, likewise imagined Palestine as ‘barren and desolate’. Jewish colonisation would bring ‘blessings on England and be felt in the wretched hearts and homes of the poor manufacturers of Manchester, Birmingham and Glasgow’; of particular importance, it would facilitate fossil-fuelled entrenchment in the region and beyond.^[51] An independent Jewish state under British protection would ‘place the management of our steam communication entirely in our hands and would place us in a commanding position in the Levant from whence to check the process of encroachment, to overawe open enemies and, if necessary, to repel their advance.’^[52] Such was the formula printed out by the events of 1840.

This, then, was the moment of conception for two interrelated principles: one, no people exist in Palestine; two, the land must be

taken with the force of technology running on fossil fuels. As for the former, contemporary Zionists debate who first came up with the slogan ‘a land without a people for a people without a land’, but there is consensus that it happened around the year 1840. [Some point](#) to an article Shaftesbury wrote in the *Times* in 1839, where he used the phrase ‘Earth without people – people without land’, *Earth* without people sounding perhaps slightly more chilling today. [Others give](#) the honour to his fellow Christian Zionist Alexander Keith, who went on an expedition to Palestine in 1839 and somehow managed to return with the impression that this was a ‘country without a people’ crying out for the arrival of ‘a people without a country’. The cities and towns of Palestine were ‘desolate without an inhabitant’; from Gaza to al-Khalil, all Keith could observe were ‘deserted sites and ruined villages, not one of them being inhabited.’[\[53\]](#) But now a miracle had transpired. ‘As if commissioned by the Lord’, Keith wrote of Akka, ‘a bomb penetrated a magazine of powder stored up for defence, and raised the arsenal in the air, as if to show that the time was come that the last *fortress* in Palestine should *cease*, and strewed it stone by stone upon the ground’ – strewed it stone by stone upon the ground – ‘as if the times too were not distant when the hands of strangers should find other work, and build up the ruined walls in another form. (...) Acre fell to the lot of a tribe of Israel.’[\[54\]](#)

It now became a persistent theme of British commentary on Palestine that no people lived in that land. Shaftesbury informed Palmerston that Jewish colonisation would be ‘the cheapest and safest mode of supplying the wastes of those depopulated regions.’[\[55\]](#) *The Morning Post* published a typical article claiming

that ‘Syria and Palestine are depopulated’, voids in which the ‘sons’ of ‘the Arabian wilderness’ had failed to ‘establish themselves and maintain their nationality.’ The year 1840 was here calculated to match a Biblical prophecy of Jewish restoration.[\[56\]](#) Such fusion of eschatology and empire became very much in vogue after Akka, as in perhaps the most peculiar tract to emerge from this moment, an anonymously authored 350-pages mishmash of exegesis and realpolitik and steam fetishism called *‘The Kings of the East’*. Here too, Palestine was said to have ‘few’ inhabitants, and the fall of Akka was hailed as a divine intervention by means of steam, the pillar of British power.[\[57\]](#) As proof of the metaphysical significance of Akka, the author quoted a first-hand report of how ‘the town is a complete mass of ruins: not a house in the place, however small, has escaped the fury of our shot. (...) Everything bears the most ample witness of the matchless precision of our guns’ – praise the Lord: ‘thousands of her garrison numbered with the dying and the dead.’[\[58\]](#) Ergo, restoration was imminent. This author alleged that ‘the Jews are commencing to return to Judea’.[\[59\]](#)

Two verses of the Bible shed special light on this process. At the opening of the 18th chapter of Isaiah, in the King James version, we read: ‘Woe to the land shadowing with wings, which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia: That sendeth ambassadors by the sea, even in vessels of bulrushes upon the waters, saying, Go, ye swift messengers, to a nation scattered and peeled’ – what kind of vessels did the prophet talk about here? Patently, he must have had British steamboats in mind.[\[60\]](#) They were the ones sending ambassadors by the sea to open Palestine for the Jews. From this, the author

inferred a novel prophecy: Britain ‘WILL ISSUE A PROCLAMATION, guaranteeing to all Jews who will return to Syria their protection’.[\[61\]](#)

The mania also crossed the Atlantic and reached the United States of America. In the weeks before the fall of Akka, one influential, relatively progressive periodical, *The Western Messenger*, knew which way the wind was blowing. ‘Now that steam ships ride in the bay of Alexandria, and steamboats break the waters of the Nile, and the roar of steam cars, dashing over railways, is heard, is it not morally certain that the Moslem power has ceased?’ The time had come to ‘give the Jews possession of Palestine.’[\[62\]](#) They would take and defend the land with military might and send all sorts of profit flowing back to the West. But the first American Zionist of import, who, unlike nearly all of his British counterparts, also happened to be Jewish, was Mordecai Manuel Noah.[\[63\]](#) In 1844, he delivered a *Discourse on the Restoration of the Jews*. He never visited Palestine, but he seems to have learned from British travellers that ‘the land is now desolate’ – although he did relay that ‘olives and olive oil are everywhere found’, and wheat and corn and cotton and tobacco grow in the plains and hills, and ‘grapes of the largest kind flourish everywhere’. Now ‘great and important revolutions’ were underway in that land. Noah latched onto the view that the demise of Ali heralded ‘the organization of a powerful government in Judea’: and he implored the US to take it under its wings.[\[64\]](#)

Noah likewise read Isaiah 18. He deepened the exegesis one notch by reading it directly in Hebrew and finding that the prophet called the vessels *gomey*. This Hebrew word could also mean ‘an impetus, a forcible propelling power’ – further evidence that the prophet

referred to steam. But in Noah's reading, the steam-power would be American, not British. 'The land lying beyond the rivers of Ethiopia is America' and the vessels 'our steam vessels', with a divine mission to settle the Jews in Palestine.^[65] 'The discovery and application of steam will be found to be a great auxiliary in the promotion of this interesting experiment.' It placed American Jews 'within a few days' travel of Jerusalem. Our Mediterranean and Levant trade, hitherto much neglected, will be revived, affording facilities to reach Palestine from this country direct.'^[66] Reverting to the default view that no economic activities were occurring as of now, Noah anticipated that 'the ports of the Mediterranean will be again opened to the busy hum of commerce; the fields will again bear the fruitful harvest'.^[67] He looked forward to a future when

the whole territory surrounding Jerusalem, including the villages Hebron, Safat, Tyre, also Beyroot, Jaffa, and other ports of the Mediterranean, will be occupied by enterprising Jews. The valleys of the Jordan will be filled by agriculturists from the north of Germany, Poland, and Russia. Merchants will occupy the seaports, and the commanding positions within the walls of Jerusalem will be purchased by the wealthy and pious of our brethren.^[68]

Some prophecies do come true.

What do we make of all this? Here is the first moment of articulation: the moment that ignited the globalisation of steam, through its deployment in war, was also the moment that conceived the Zionist project. But there was no perfect synchrony. Zionism was as yet only an idea. No Jewish settlement in Palestine developed

in the wake of 1840; strictly speaking, the Palmerstons, Shaftesbury, Churchill, Gawler, Noah and the others all failed. They were ahead of their time, by half a century. But when the Zionist movement was eventually assembled, it was a wagon that could be placed on ready-made tracks, laid out by the British Empire after 1840: the dominant classes of the metropole had already constructed the logic of its satellite colony in Palestine, if only as a mental image. Zionism did not take material form in 1840, like the exercise of steam-powered violence did. We might conclude from this that the latter had causal primacy in history. Zionism first existed at the level of superstructure, on the base of the fossil empire.

I do not say this with a pretension to revolutionary discovery. The broad contours of this story can be found in the existing historiography, including the most recent sustained engagement with the period, *Promised Lands: The British and the Ottoman Middle East* by Jonathan Parry. He chronicles how the British thrust into the region by means of steam. ‘From the 1830s, steam power’, he writes, ‘was a valuable aid in intimidating Arabs into appreciating British might.’^[69] Beyond the Levant, two Arab lands in particular were subjected to this might: Yemen and Iraq. In 1839, Aden was occupied and annexed as a coaling station for steamboats; in the late 1830s, various experiments with steam communication were launched on the Euphrates. By 1841, when the British had done away with the main obstacle, ‘their regional naval supremacy was undisputed. Whether steam might civilise the Arabs was a question for the long term’, Parry coyly adds.^[70] He works in the tradition of gentlemanly, tea-sipping British history-writing and so refuses to draw out implications or follow lines; he also studiously ignores

political economy and represses the mountains of evidence for how the dynamics of capital accumulation propelled the expansion into the Middle East – evidence of which I have only here provided the tiniest sample. But the attentive reader can make out the narrative arc.

‘A large proportion of the things the British ever thought about the Middle East had already been thought by 1854’, states Parry.[\[71\]](#) We can sharpen this and state that a large proportion of the things the British and the Americans ever thought about Palestine had already been thought by 1844. And it began with extreme technological superiority, the penetration of the region by means of cutting-edge fossil-fuelled machines. That kind of subjugation would remain in place up to the present day; what happened in 1840 was no ephemeral intrusion, like Napoleon’s campaigns. The British would not let go of the Middle East – they moved only deeper and deeper into it, until in the last decade of the nineteenth century, having occupied Egypt, they had risen so high as to lay the Ottoman Empire low enough for colonisation of Palestine to get going. All the UK ever did was to share this power with and pass it on to the US. But as the ongoing bombardment of Yemen testifies, the British are still very much there.

A few more words on the dialectic of mind and matter may be in order. There is an odd spiral of reality and fantasy at work in the moment of 1840: the British really did turn one Palestinian town into ruins. Then they started imagining that all of Palestine was one landscape of ruins – desolate, deserted, depopulated; fanciful constructions at best, but rather adequate representations of what Akka seems to have looked like after 3 November. In the next coils

of the spiral, the ideational emptying of the land became a precursor to the real thing. ‘Earth without people’ read the prescription for a Nakba. Ever the pioneers, the British undertook a prefigurative elimination of the Palestinian people. At this moment in time, curiously, Jews still had a position rather symmetrical to the Palestinians: they existed as characters in the plot, but purely in the realm of the imagination. Actual Jews did not count. Jews did not clamour to abandon their homes for Palestine – rather, to the contrary, as even one Zionist scholar has noticed, ‘British Jewry was opposed to “anything that might seem to impugn its status as ‘wholly’ English.” English Jews could only be embarrassed by the suggestion that they were waiting to go back to Palestine’.[\[72\]](#) Before Zionism was Jewish, it was imperial.

But real Jews would, of course, in time be recruited into the Zionist project, and real Palestinians would be erased from physical existence in their land. Set in the context of this *longue durée*, the genocide in Gaza does not appear all that accidental. In her report to the UN, Albanese is brave enough to draw on the school of settler-colonial studies to explain it. She writes: ‘Israel’s actions have been driven by a genocidal logic integral to its settler-colonial project in Palestine, signalling a tragedy foretold.’ Genocidal extermination is the climax of settler colonialism, and in Palestine, from the moment of 1948, ‘displacing and erasing the Indigenous Arab presence has been an inevitable part of the forming of Israel as a “Jewish state”.’ [\[73\]](#) She is right, of course. But settler colonialism in Palestine never stood on its own feet and never could have. And the tragedy was foretold earlier than by Yosef Weitz and his likes. The Palestinians were figuratively spirited out of Palestine

already 183 years before this genocide; with some interruptions and fits and starts, the materialisation and escalation of the act have been in motion ever since. Consider the words from Isaac Herzog, president of the occupation, adduced by Albanese as one instance of genocidal intent: he affirmed in October and November that his entity fights on behalf of ‘all civilized states... and peoples’, against ‘a barbarism that has no place in the modern world’ – it will ‘uproot evil and it will be good for the entire region and the world.’[\[74\]](#) These words could have been put in his mouth by the Anglo-Zionists of 1840.

We might paraphrase the motto of the school of settler-colonial studies and say that imperial support for the Zionist entity is a structure, not an event. The structure was forged by the exceptional power accorded to those armed with fossil fuels and has continued to function that way, as I will now briefly argue, but before I do so, let me point out one last thing about 1840: the account I have given here is sketchy and partial. Most problematically, it relies exclusively on English sources. I do not read Arabic, so I cannot say whether there is an Arabic historiography of 1840. Nor does Parry read Arabic, but he tells us: ‘There are many non-English archives that seem not yet to have been fully used by anyone.’[\[75\]](#) Whatever Arabic sources from and about 1840 exist, and whatever they say about this original encounter with the power of steam and the notions of Zionism, they have not yet left a trace in the English literature. Deep research on this moment would begin with some digging outside the metropole.

*

Now I will be extremely sweeping and synoptic in what follows. When the first Zionist colonies were built, one could find excited reports in the Western press: ‘The Jews who are now going to Palestine take with them the progressive spirit of the century, and before long travellers in that country may hear the steam whistle, and the clatter of machinery, and see all around them the bustle of business instead of the traditional apathy and listlessness of the Orient’, the *National Repository* rejoiced in 1877.^[76] When the British Empire occupied Palestine and set about implementing the Balfour declaration, the fossil fuel of the day was not coal. It was oil. Promising deposits had been located in the countries bordering the Persian Gulf, and the central industrial project of the Mandate came to be the pipeline that brought crude oil all the way from Iraq, across the northern West Bank and the Galilee, to the refinery of Haifa. The Mandate as such cannot be understood outside the deepening control over the region in the pursuit of oil; and the Mandate used oil to reallocate land from Palestinians to Jews. In his forthcoming *Heat: A History*, a wonderfully rich history of high temperatures and fossil fuels in the Middle East, On Barak shows, among many other things, how the Yishuv wrested citrus production from Palestinians by linking up with the most modern circuits of technology: irrigating their orchards with fossil-fuelled pumps, loading their fruits on lorries, sending them over roads to ports, offloading them onto steamers to the European market – a symbiosis with the fossil empire by which the natives could be squeezed out of their iconic citriculture. The Mandate authorities systematically privileged the building of roads between colonies. Oil-based infrastructure tilted Palestine in the direction of the

settlements on the coastal plains and further towards their patrons on the other side of the ocean.

When Zionist forces began to terrorise the Palestinians of Haifa to drive them out of the city, Ilan Pappé tells us, ‘rivers of ignited oil and fuel [were] sent down the mountainside’.^[77] When the top echelons of the US empire discussed whether to throw in their lot with the Zionists during the Nakba, they had oil interests foremost in mind. Some argued that these would be better served by siding with the Arabs. But as Irene L. Gendzier has demonstrated in *Dying to Forget: Oil, Power, Palestine and the Foundations of U. S. Policy in the Middle East*, the government was swayed by the argument that a Palestinian victory would ‘increase Arab self-reliance, demands and bargaining power’, whereas the establishment of the state of Israel ‘would have a soothing effect on the Arabs and make them regain their right sense of proportion’; moreover, ‘the Yishuv is a Western progressive factor, which will be a great stimulant to any social progress in the Middle East, which will open new commercial markets’.^[78] The American oil companies seem to have converged on the view that control over deposits would be indirectly reinforced by having Israel as an ally in the region. And that is indeed what transpired during the 1950s and 60s, the golden age of the seven sisters and Gulf oil. When the US took over the role as the number one backer of Israel after 1967, the defence of this status quo was the paramount concern: in *The Global Offensive: The United States, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and the Making of the Post-Cold War Order*, Paul Thomas Chamberlin describes how the US regarded Palestinian liberation as a threat to the domination of the Middle East as a whole, with all its invaluable oil

reserves. Conversely, 'Israel was fast proving its value as a key strategic asset in the Middle East and a model regional policeman in the Third World.'^[79] Proof of this logic came from the event known as Black September, one of the eternal recurrences, depicted in a letter from Yassir Arafat on 22 September 1970: 'Amman is burning for the sixth day. (...) The bodies of thousands of our people are rotting beneath the rubble.'^[80]

All of this, it should now be clear, followed the script first laid down in 1840. If Plan Dalet was a settler-colonial script for the destruction of Palestine from 1948 onwards, it was preceded by – and had its conditions of existence in – the imperialist vision of an entity imposed on the land of Palestine for the protection of the interests of the core: access to raw materials and markets, prevention of subversive projects, buffer zones and counterweights against more distant rivals. In 1840, it was cotton, Muhammed Ali and Tsarist Russia. 127 years later, when the occupation was completed, it was petroleum, third world liberation and the Soviet Union. We are dealing here with an exceedingly deep structure, not an event or two; a ratcheting up and escalation across two centuries, a worsening and intensification of patterns first developed in the early nineteenth – also, not coincidentally, the temporal form of global warming itself. I have pointed very quickly and superficially to three further pivotal moments of articulation. In 1917 and after, the British occupation of Palestine was part of the transformation of the Middle East into a foundation for fossil capital, by dint of its oil resources. In 1947 and after, Western support for the new Zionist state was informed by the consummation of that order; in 1967 and after, by its defence. The steps along the way to the

destruction of Palestine were simultaneously steps along the way to that of the Earth.

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If we now jump to the present situation, we should first consider the role of the state of Israel in the ongoing fossil fuel frenzy. In [Overshoot](#), Wim and I show in some detail how the 2020s have so far seen an accelerated expansion of fossil fuel production, just when it had to be reined in and inverted into its opposite – a sustained dismantling – for the world to avoid a warming of more than 1.5 or 2 degrees. This expansion doesn't stop, it goes on and it goes on and it doesn't stop and then it continues and proceeds apace: as the *Guardian* [reported](#) just the other day, corporations and states are forging ahead with new oil and gas projects in ever-growing volumes. The country leading the expansion is, of course, the US; second on the list is Guyana, but that is only because ExxonMobil has found its most recent treasure trove in its waters. And for the first time, the Zionist entity is now directly involved. One of the many frontiers of oil and gas extraction is the Levant basin along the coast running from Beirut via Akka to Gaza. Two of the major gas fields discovered here, called Karish and Leviathan, are in waters claimed by Lebanon. What does the West think of this dispute? In 2015, Germany [sold](#) four warships to Israel so it could better defend its gas platforms against any eventualities. Seven years later, in 2022, as the war in Ukraine caused a crisis on the gas market, the state of Israel was for the first time [elevated](#) into a fossil fuel exporter of note, supplying Germany and other EU states with gas as well as [crude oil](#) from Leviathan and Karish,

which [came online](#) in October of that year. 2022 sealed the high status of Israel in this department.

A year later, Toufan al-Aqsa threw a spanner in the expansion. It posed a direct threat to the Tamar gas platform, which can be seen from northern Gaza on a clear day; in the range of rocket fire, the platform was [shut down](#). A major player on the Tamar field is Chevron. On 9 October, the *New York Times* [reported](#): ‘The fierce fighting could slow the pace of energy investment in the region, just as the eastern Mediterranean’s prospects as an energy center have gained momentum. Israel used to be one of the few countries in the Middle East without significant discovered petroleum resources. Now, natural gas has become a mainstay of its economy’, but the Palestinian resistance could upend this equation. Five weeks after 7 October, however, when most of northern Gaza had been comfortably turned into rubble, Chevron [resumed](#) operations at the Tamar gas field. In February, it [announced](#) another round of investment to further bolster output. In late October, the day after the ground invasion of Gaza began, the state of Israel [awarded](#) 12 licenses for the exploration of *new* gas fields – one of the companies picking them up being BP, the very same company that first discovered oil in the Middle East and built the Kirkuk-Haifa pipeline.

But the imbrications now go both ways. Israeli capital has in recent years become a major player in the expansion of oil and gas production in the North Sea. One of the companies based in Tel Aviv and spearheading extraction off Akka as well as the Shetland Islands is Ithaca Energy: it now owns one of the most destructive [carbon bombs](#) planted in the [British](#) sector of the North Sea, the

[Cambo](#) field, and one fifth of another, the [Rosebank](#) field, and it hungrily [explores](#) for more. When Ithaca entered the London stock exchange in 2022, it was the [largest](#) floatation of that year. BP is looking for gas in the waters of Palestine; Ithaca is looking for it in the waters of Britain: the harmony has never been greater. The genocide is unfolding at a time when the state of Israel is more deeply integrated in the primitive accumulation of fossil capital than it has ever been. The Palestinians, on the other hand, have zero stake in that process: no platforms, no rigs, no pipelines, no companies listed on the London Stock Exchange. But Arabs in the UAE and Egypt and Saudi Arabia do, of course. This is the political economy of the Abraham Accords and its expected sequels: a unification of Israeli and Gulf capital in the process of making money by producing oil and gas. This is the political ecology of normalisation: a sacralisation of the business-as-usual that destroys first Palestine and then the Earth.

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The destruction of Gaza is executed by tanks and fighter jets pouring out their projectiles over the land: the Merkavas and the F-16s sending their hellfire over the Palestinians, the rockets and bombs that turn everything into rubble – but only after the explosive force of fossil fuel combustion has put them on the right trajectory. All these military vehicles run on petroleum. So do the supply flights from the US, the Boeings that ferry the missiles over the permanent airbridge. An early, provisional, conservative [analysis](#) found that emissions caused during the first 60 days of the war equalled annual emissions of between 20 and 33 low-emitting countries: a sudden [spike](#), a plume of CO2 rising over the debris of

Gaza. If I repeat the point here, it is because the cycle is self-repeating, only growing in scale and size: Western forces pulverise the living quarters of Palestine by mobilising the boundless capacity for destruction only fossil fuels can give.

It is easy to forget just how central military violence has been and remains to business-as-usual. More than 5 per cent of annual CO2 emissions stem from the militaries around the world. We often talk about flying and how bad it is for the climate, and it is bad, but civil aviation accounts for about 3 per cent of the total. And the 5 that come from militaries precede actual war: these are peacetime emissions, made in the process of maintaining the logistical apparatuses and fighting capacities of armies before they go to the war. When they do go to battle, the fuel is set on fire and the bombs rain down in bursts of concentrated additional emissions. The US, of course, is at the centre of all this. The emissions from the occupation army during the war on Gaza might be counted as just another category of American emissions. The US outweighs every other country; indeed, as Neta C. Crawford notes, ‘the US military is the single largest institutional fossil fuel user in the world and thus the world’s single largest greenhouse gas emitter.’[\[81\]](#) In her book *The Pentagon, Climate Change, and War*, she brilliantly charts the development of what she calls ‘the deep cycle’. The militaries of first the UK and then the US found coal, followed by oil, to be indispensable for waging war: for manufacturing weapons, transporting soldiers into the battlefield, providing mobility once engaged, bringing firepower to bear on the enemy. By basing its operations on fossil fuels, the US military contributed to their spread throughout the economy; and when both military and

economy were thoroughly dependent on them, the protection of this essential commodity itself became an imperative of war. No part of the world has been so deeply formed and scarred by this cycle as the Middle East. Although Palestine is at its centre, the devastation clearly extends to other countries too: think only of Iraq and Yemen.

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Let us then revisit the question of the nature of the alliance and briefly reconsider the theory of the lobby. It says, in short, the following: the Zionist lobby in the US has amassed so much financial and electoral and media power as to hold American politics in an iron grip. Through its machinations and manipulations, it has compelled the US to support Israel, despite this not being in the real, rational, material interests of the country. The US backs Israel for reasons of domestic politics, which distort the preferences and standing of the US on the international arena. The theory is, of course, based on the work of John Mearsheimer, a man of the US military, a so-called realist with no ideological affinity to the left. I find the avid reception of his work on parts of the left rather surprising. Space does not allow for a comprehensive critique of either Mearsheimer or his echoes on the left: here I shall only point out some of the problems, in one representative rendition of the theory.

Married to Another Man: Israel's Dilemma in Palestine by [Ghada Karmi](#) is a fairly widely read and average statement of the case for Palestine in the early twenty-first century. She correctly observes that for Palestinians, understanding the nature of the alliance between the

US and Israel is ‘no intellectual game but a matter of life and death.’[\[82\]](#) She poses two alternative explanations: ‘Was US policy so controlled by Israel and its supporters that it was they who primarily dictated it, or was Israel but the imperialist arm of America (and the West) in the Middle East?’, and she comes down firmly on the side of the former.[\[83\]](#) She goes on an unclear rant about Jews in media and Hollywood and concludes that this country is the victim of ‘a foreign state’s penetration into the US system’. A typical counterfactual is constructed: ‘Had the situation been one of rational, pragmatic common sense, where the facts could be examined and the logical conclusions drawn, then the American national interest would ultimately have prevailed over the forces working on Israel’s behalf.’[\[84\]](#)

If only the US state were free to pick the policy that would best serve its interests, it would dump Israel. But the Zionist lobby denies the state that freedom. This distortionist explanation applies not only to Palestine, but to the region in its entirety. Everything the US does in the Middle East is dictated by Israel, against its true interests. ‘The real motivation for the invasion of Iraq’, we learn, was ‘the desire to protect the Jewish state’ foisted onto the US; there were no weapons of mass destruction, no al-Qaida, no terrorism in Iraq, so ‘it must have been Israel’s security that was the motive for attacking Iraq, in the absence of any other.’ This is a double *non sequitur*. It does not follow from the absence of these official *casus belli* that the real reason must have been the security of Israel; but it does follow from their absence that the security of Israel was not threatened by Saddam Hussein. Karmi wants us to believe that Israel was out for the Iraqi oil and sent businessmen

and advisors and intelligence agents into the country, whereas the US itself possessed none of these aggressive drives, dragged passively into the war by the lobby. We are asked to believe, in other words, that the most powerful empire in the history of the world has no interests and performs no aggressions of its own in the Middle East. It is the same with Syria and Iran, Karmi tells us: what the US does to those countries, it does slavishly on behalf of Israel.

Despite Karmi mentioning Shaftesbury and Palmerston in passing, but without any serious historical account, she aspires to this being a chronologically accurate explanation: ‘it was the arrival of Israel and the powerful lobbies working on its behalf that forced successive US administrations to find a way for it in their foreign policies.’[\[85\]](#) So, first came Israel and the Zionist lobby and then the empire was made to obey them. I think we can safely conclude that even the limited evidence presented here should be enough to rebut this theory. The historical evidence points to the validity of the opposite explanation. I think Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, whatever he has done or not done for Palestine in the past half year, gets it right when he says:

There is a misconception prevalent in the Arab world regarding Israeli-US relations. We keep hearing this lie about the Zionist lobby – that the Jews rule America and are the real decision-makers, and so on. No. America itself is the decision-maker. In America, you have the major corporations. You have a trinity of the oil companies, the weapons industry, and the so-called ‘Christian Zionism’. The decision-making is in the hands of this alliance. Israel used to be a tool at the hands of the British, and now it is a tool in the hands of America.[\[86\]](#)

This, of course, is the classical position taken by the Arab left and the keenest analyses from the Palestinian resistance. In *Strategy for the Liberation of Palestine*, the foundational document of PFLP from 1969, the enemy is defined as a dialectical unity of global imperialism and local settler colonialism: victories of the latter are ‘fundamental matters for the interests’ of the former. The entity is an imperialist ‘base on our land and is being used to stem the tide of revolution, to ensure our continued subjection and to maintain the process of pillage and exploitation’; Zionism is ‘an aggressive racial movement connected with imperialism, which has exploited the sufferings of the Jews as a stepping stone for the promotion of its interests (...) in this part of the world that possesses rich resources and provides a bridgehead into the countries of Africa and Asia.’^[87] This is the antithesis of the lobby theory. It can also be found in the best writings of Islamic Jihad, such as its political document from 2018, where we read that ‘the Zionist project is the project of a settler-colonial invasion’, but it is ‘based on the organic link with the forces of Western colonialism, which worked to get rid of the Jews and to solve the “Jewish problem” in Europe by planting an entity for the Jews in Palestine.’ The persistence of that entity ‘is essentially related to the role assigned to it. It is a tool’ – *pace* Karmi, a tool – ‘for the project of colonial domination’ and ‘derives all of its material and moral strength from the strength and capabilities of the West, in particular the United States of America’.^[88] Fathi al-Shiqaqi took the outlines of this analysis from none other than Izz al-Din al-Qassam. In the early 1930s, he opposed the Palestinian leaders who ‘regarded it as necessary to reason with Britain to make it stand with us against the Jews, thus forgetting

and ignoring that Zionism is no more than another imperialist face of Britain'.[\[89\]](#)

Unlike the distortionist theory of the lobby, the instrumentalist theory of empire and entity is confirmed by evidence from the deep past, as well as from the recent past and the present: Joe Biden could have stepped out of the pages of a Jabha or Jihad document. In 1986, this future president [told](#) Congress: 'There is no apology to be made for Israel. None! Israel is the best 3-billion-dollar investment we make. Were there not an Israel, the United States of America would have to *invent* an Israel to protect our interests in the region. The United States would have to go out and *invent* an Israel.' It couldn't be much clearer than that, nor more in line with the historical record of invention. In 2007, Biden [reaffirmed](#) that 'Israel is the single greatest strength America has in the Middle East (...) Imagine our circumstance in the world, were there no Israel'; and then in 2010, he [repeated](#) that 'there's simply no space between the United States and Israel'; but his most [oft-repeated](#) line was that about having to invent Israel if it didn't exist – most recently, he said this [again](#) in July 2023, in a meeting with Isaac Herzog in the White House. That was three months before the genocide began.

I think the left should make a sharp break with the lobby theory. That is not to suggest that we have a complete understanding of the relation between empire and entity – to the contrary, I think the remarkable thing here is that we do *not* have, for instance, and correct me if I'm wrong, a single good book in English about the how the structure works at present. Where is the US empire going? What is it doing in the Middle East? How does the state of Israel fit in? – I don't think we possess anything like a comprehensive,

updated, empirically and theoretically grounded set of answers to these questions, because the hard work of researching and thinking is yet to be done. There is a debilitating deficit of *an courant* analysis of American and other Western imperialism, perhaps because the left has found it a slightly embarrassing pursuit, too reminiscent of orthodox Leninism and campism and other sources of shame. I am personally unqualified to fill this gap, but let me just throw out the hypothesis that the share value of Israel as an investment rises proportionately to the challenge from Russia and China. When inter-imperialist rivalry intensifies again, in the 2020s much as in the 1830s or the 1910s, the entity becomes an invaluable asset. From the first moments of Toufan al-Aqsa, it was clear that a continuation of the earth-shattering Palestinian victories of that day would have boosted the axis extending from the resistance in Gaza to that in Lebanon and Yemen and Iraq, and further to Iran, and further to Russia and China – a counter-alliance that now has an objective existence in the theatres, although, it should be noted, it is far looser, less coordinated, less dedicated and, of course, less powerful than the Western alliance.

Lastly, let me point out one more error of the lobby theory, perhaps the most damning one. It posits as the counterfactual a situation where the US empire would be free to engage in rational deliberations and worry only about its own interests. Then it would ditch Israel, because how could it possibly stick up for something so destructive as the never-ending colonisation of Palestine, something that engenders such extensive and such endless destruction in that land, in the region, beyond, all over the place. Surely this can't be what the US would opt for of its own volition?

The error here is more than one, as it pertains to the natures of empire and capital and interest and rationality, but I will only point to one aspect. Considering how the US has consistently led the expansion of fossil fuel production and consumption around the world, after it took over the leadership from the UK, and leads the speed-up of that expansion in the very moment when its destructiveness is plain to see and increasing by the day, it doesn't appear as much of a mystery that it also advances the destruction of one little land between the river and the sea. And no one, I think, could seriously argue that the reason we use fossil fuels is that the fossil fuel lobby in the US is powerful. It is, of course. But lobbies are surface phenomena. However mighty they may be, the fossil fuel and Zionist lobbies are epiphenomenal excrescences from deep structures that have operated over a very *longue duree*.

On the final page of *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*, Pappé writes, prophetically: the Palestinians can never be part of the Zionist state and space and will continue to fight – and hopefully their struggle will be peaceful and successful. If not, it will be desperate and vengeful and, like a whirlwind, will suck all up in a huge perpetual sandstorm that will rage not only through the Arab and Muslim worlds, but also within Britain and the United States, the powers which, each in their turn, feed the tempest that threatens to ruin us all.[\[90\]](#)

We can now recognise this as more than an incidental metaphorical overlap, because climate breakdown is precisely a tempest that threatens to ruin us all, and the only thing the great powers have done to date is to feed it.

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Before I wrap this up, let me just propose some further moments of articulation in the present, in elliptical form:

The destruction of Palestine and the destruction of the Earth play out in broad daylight. There is a surfeit of documentation of both. Knowledge of the two processes and how they unfold in real time is superabundant: we know everything we need to know about the catastrophes, and yet the capitalist core keeps rushing fuel to the fireplaces and bombs to Gaza.

Destruction and construction are interpenetrating opposites that presuppose one another: the destruction of the planet is the construction of fossil fuel infrastructure; the destruction of Palestine is the construction of racial colonies – or, as Theodor Herzl put it in 1896: ‘If I wish to substitute a new building for an old one, I must demolish before I construct.’^[91] Limiting, stopping, reversing the destruction of Palestine and planet therefore require, as a logically unassailable condition, the destruction of fossil fuel infrastructure and racial colonies – not necessarily their physical destruction; but necessarily their decommissioning and repurposing, in the cases where that is possible, and where not, on the path to their abolition, yes, their physical destruction.

It is entirely evident that investment in fossil fuel infrastructure must end and indeed should have ended long ago. Yet we see more pipelines, more rigs, more platforms and terminals and mines planned and built, and the more of them there are, the more difficult it becomes to cut emissions, the more fixed capital is sunk

into the ground, the greater the imperative to maintain it and defend it against any transition away from fossil fuels. It is entirely evident that investment in racial colonies, too, must end and indeed should have ended long ago. Still, we see more settlements, ever more settlements planned and built on the West Bank and in Jerusalem, and perhaps soon in Gaza, again. And the more Palestinian land is confiscated, the more housing units are erected and reserved for Jews only, the more difficult it becomes to envision a withdrawal to the Green Line, the more immovable the occupation, the greater the interest in defending it against any scheme for a viable Palestinian state.

This analogy at the level of the material base – creating ever more facts on the ground that prolong and intensify business-as-usual – is reflected at the level of superstructure. We keep hearing governments in the West talking about one and a half or two degrees and about a two-state solution, while actually existing processes of investment work ceaselessly to make both goals physically impossible. Talk of two degrees or two states here takes on the character of ideological cover. The parallelism is quite astonishing when one juxtaposes the COP summits with the summits of what was once known as ‘the peace process’. Both commenced at the same moment in time, in the early 1990s, and both had the function of sustaining the illusion that the so-called international community was working to mitigate climate change and giving the Palestinians their own state, respectively. Both operated with the same vacuous diplomatic rituals and incantations. Both covered up for the continued investment in destruction. But today, of course, only one of them remains: later this year we will

have to suffer through the 29th edition of the COP circus, the next more vacated of meaning and substance than one before it; there are no longer any handshakes outside the White House. ‘The peace process’ ended in 2005, when the state of Israel reconfigured its occupation of Gaza into the operation of a concentration camp. All that then remained was the naked, never-ending *nakba*. Here too, the catastrophe of Palestine appears to adumbrate that of climate.

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The genocide in Gaza provides a useful object lesson in callousness. In the climate catastrophe, the lives of non-white multitudes in the global South do not count. They are expendable, valueless. We saw this playing out in the disaster that struck Derna: the more than 11,000 people killed over one single night left only the tiniest trace in the media of the West and none whatsoever in its politics. Just imagine if these had been 11,000 white Americans or Brits or Swedes killed over one night – imagine if it had been 11,000 of the people that really count: imagine the uproar! But here it was just the wretched of the earth, dying as they always do, in the Mediterranean and other graveyards of the world, their deaths being part of the natural order of things, no notice paid to the circumstance that the excess of carbon in the atmosphere that killed them was put there by the rich people of the global North. Instead, if there was any talk of blame and culpability in Western media, the Libyans themselves were held responsible: had they not built such weak dams on that river, Derna would have withstood the pressure.

In the land of Palestine, the lives of Palestinians do not count. They are completely expendable. They have no value, none at all. This is

the lesson we have learnt, once again, in the past half year – never has it been demonstrated with such extreme cruelty and indeed exterminationist bloodlust as now. Just imagine if it had been 40,000 Americans or Swedes or, most obviously, Israeli Jews that had been killed in this manner – no, I think this is not something that can be imagined. It defies the political imagination. It goes beyond anything that could happen inside the world as we know it. And then the death of the Palestinians is also their own fault, highlighted with particular insistence when the genocide took off: the mass killing happened because the Palestinians send their own rockets crashing into hospitals; because they use their civilians as human shields; because they place their weapons in or next to or under schools and residential buildings; because of what they did on 7 October.

The genocide then curves back on the warming world and reconfirms the expendability and valuelessness of non-white lives: another *sine qua non* for its continuation. It is very good for the business of ExxonMobil or BP that the US and the UK have decided that death of this kind is *de rigueur*. The advanced late capitalist genocide reproduces ammunition for the paupericide.

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Much more could be said – and, thankfully, much [superb](#) work is now being produced – about the political ecology of the settler-colonial project in Palestine and the tendencies to destruction of local nature that inhere in Zionism. In Gaza, where it has been going on for [decades](#), that destruction has now reached apocalyptic proportions: the people who have not yet died from the bombs live

in a [wasteland](#) of contaminated soil, undrinkable water, orchards and fields packed into dust, garbage and debris mixed in a hyper-polluted strip of land in which human life is being rendered impossible for the long term. Ecocide here fuse with genocide in a manner never seen before. Bosnia was not a less habitable land after 1995 than before 1992. Rwandan soil and water and air went relatively unscathed through the slaughter of hundreds of thousands of Tutsis. But will people ever be able to live again in Gaza? This dimension of the ongoing genocide blends with another, which has to do with the nature of the events on the morning of 7 October.

For empire and entity alike, the most shocking part of Toufan al-Aqsa was the way the resistance negated all the technological domination over Palestine in one fell swoop. All the walls of hardware built up over two centuries came down in a few hours. The *Jerusalem Post* composed a [lamentation](#):

How did an armed terrorist group succeed in overcoming the defenses of one of the most powerful militaries in the world? This is a question that will be asked for a long time. (...) The epic shock from this attack raises questions about Israel's ability to confront other enemies. On the border on October 6, there was all the best technology. There were observation towers and soldiers observing Gaza. Israel also has drones and observation balloons. (...) [but] all the smart technology Israel has was rendered almost useless by the massive attack.

Or, in the [words](#) of two experts in the Global Network on Extremism and Technology:

Home to leading military and defence engineering programmes, Israel watched its multimillion-dollar defence system struggle against forms of low-tech warfare. (...) The 7 October attacks show that technologically inferior actors remain highly capable and dextrous against better-equipped state adversaries. (...) High-tech defence means everything and nothing.

The importance of the instant and complete negation of technological superiority on the morning of 7 October can hardly be overstated. It has no precedent in the history of Palestine. There is, of course, a history of guerrilla struggle, going back to the days of Izz al-Din al-Qassam, inflicting minor defeats on the enemy every now and then. The resistance has always been aware of the factor: as the PFLP writes in the document I quoted, ‘one of the enemy’s basic points of strength is its scientific and technological superiority, and this superiority is reflected strongly in its military capabilities which we will face in our revolutionary war. How can we face and overcome this superiority?’^[92] Toufan al-Aqsa provided the most resounding answer to that question ever registered: never before had the resistance swept away the accumulated technological forces of empire and entity with such supreme celerity and facility and comprehensiveness, the asymmetry turned upside down along an entire section of southern Palestine. No Palestinian uprising had accomplished anything close to this. A common comparison is with the surprise strikes of the October war in 1973, but they were delivered by the standing armies of Arab states. When it set out from the refugee camps in Gaza on the morning of 7 October, the Palestinian resistance struck from a position of seemingly absolute technological inferiority – although, granted, some of that inferiority had been ameliorated

since the first intifada took off from the refugee camps of Gaza in December 1987. Back then, the Palestinians had only stones and at most a few knives; now they had rockets and RPGs and rifles and a handful of drones and the unforgettable paragliders – but still, nothing compared to the army they took on. For the first time, the formula in place since 1840 was ripped apart: Palestinians themselves smashed through the technological apparatus dominating and destroying them.

One searches in vain for a similarly sharp inversion of a similarly wide asymmetry in the annals of anti-colonial insurgency. The Tet Offensive has been invoked; but the Vietcong was a military force far better equipped than the Palestinian resistance. Guerrilla groups from Cuba to Kenya overwhelmed adversaries with superior resources, but their superiority was never anything like the Israeli on 6 October. The great affront of Toufan al-Aqsa was to shatter the complex of qualitatively superior military technology built up over two centuries: and because this must not be allowed, the punishment would have to be limitless. Those who think that Israel would have responded less ferociously had everyone who died on 7 October held a gun fool themselves about the nature of that state. The simplest proof is what happened here in 2006: Israel resolved to destroy Lebanon after three of its soldiers had been killed and two abducted. Then what would it do after the scenes on the morning of 7 October? But the blow was hard not only to Israel. The US could not accept that the resistance flashed through its primary base in the Middle East as if it were a spider's web; it could not afford to see its own military machinery so humiliated. Israel and the US shared the imperative of restored deterrence.

What they have done together since 7 October has an easily decoded meaning: once we have repulsed the first blow, we will roll out all the forces of destruction we have in our stores. After the initial rout, we must rehabilitate our technology by reactivating its full capacity for annihilating life. The only way to undo the negation is to overprove our full-spectrum dominance. This message is broadcast far beyond the borders of Palestine. It says: if you dare to pierce our armour like the Palestinian resistance did on 7 October, we will obliterate you and your people. The message is communicated not least clearly to Lebanon; like Charles Napier threatened to turn Alexandria into Akka, so has Yoav Gallant [repeated](#) that ‘[what](#) we did in Gaza can also be done in Beirut’. But at stake here is the position of the US empire and its allies wherever it might face some kind of subversion. This war has an element of performative defence of technological superiority, a disinhibited flaunting of its prowess – hence the film clips where soldiers gloat over their detonating family homes or schools.

Perhaps we can then specify this as the first technogenocide. A technogenocide would be defined as a genocide that is 1.) executed by means of the most advanced military technology, and 2.) at least partly animated by the drive to restore its supremacy after a humiliatingly successful challenge. The genocide against the Bosnian Muslims was largely carried out with handguns, which the Sarajevo republic owned as well, albeit too few. The genocide in Rwanda was mostly effectuated by machetes. The Daesh genocide against the Yazidi was another low-tech genocide; while the paradigmatic case of a high-tech genocide, the Shoah itself, was never in any way provoked by a Jewish sapping of German

technological power. Only the ongoing genocide in Gaza seems to fulfil both criteria. The Palestinians often refer to the ‘Israeli killing machine’, and that is precisely what it is: a machine for killing people, partly for the sake of rearming the reputation of the machine itself. The mass killing is mechanised and automated, as we know since the first [revelations](#) about the AI system called ‘the Gospel’ that processes enormous amounts of data about the civilian population and infrastructure to generate so-called ‘power targets’ for the occupation army – ‘a “mass assassination factory,” in which the “emphasis is on quantity and not on quality.”’ Sources from within the army said: “It really is like a factory. We work quickly and there is no time to delve deep into the target. The view is that we are judged according to how many targets we manage to generate.” This is the killing machine in action, combining the muscle of petroleum with the mind of algorithms. Then there were the second, recent [revelations](#) about the AI systems ‘Lavender’ and ‘Where’s Daddy?’ that mass produce kill lists with any number of civilians attached: as if the occupation decided to kill without inhibition and delegated to the killing machine itself the overseeing of the task. Because high-tech supremacy came to mean nothing on that morning, it had to become everything again.

But against it, the Palestinian resistance still stands. After half a year, the resistance is still struggling. After half a year, six months, 184 days, the resistance is still fighting back on all fronts, from Beit Hanoun to Rafah and, of course, beyond Gaza itself. After all this time, Izz al-Din al-Qassam and Mohammed Deif and Abu Obeida and their comrades in arms from Jihad and the DFLP and the PFLP are still in the tunnels, still dispatching one operation after another

– and this is what makes it possible to live another day. I work in the West, in the academia, in the department of the production of knowledge and ideas. An absurd situation prevails there. It is possible to ignore or condone or justify or praise the genocidal politics of Israel, without risking anything, without being disqualified from anything or losing any respectability. But supporting the resistance of the Palestinians – the armed resistance, the only force opposing the genocide on the ground – is prohibited. I, for one, refuse to go along with this. I think the real disgrace in the West is that the left cannot clearly and without equivocation support the Palestinian struggle for self-emancipation. This is a topic for another lecture and many texts, but I think we should say it loud: we stand with the resistance and we are proud.

Notes

[1] Francesca Albanese, 'Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territories Occupied since 1967', United Nations, 25 March 2024, 1, 11.

[2] Plan Dalet quoted in Ilan Pappé, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2007), 82; see further e.g. 64, 77–8, 88, 147.

[4] Liyana Badr, *A Balcony over the Fakihani* (New York: Interlink Books, 2002), 76, 81, 73.

[5] E.g. Thomas E. Lovejoy & Carlos Nobre, 'Amazon Tipping Point: Last Chance for Action', *Science Advances* (2019) 5: 1–2; Chris A. Boulton, Timothy M. Lenton & Niklas Boers, 'Pronounced Loss of Amazon Rainforest Resilience since the Early 2000s', *Nature Climate Change* (2022) 12: 271–8; James S. Albert, Ana C. Carnaval, Suzette G. A. Flantua et al., 'Human Impacts Outpace Natural Processes in the

Amazon', *Science* (2023) 379: 1–10; Meghie Rodrigues, 'The Amazon's Record-Setting Drought: How Bad Will It Be?', *Nature* (2023) 623: 675–6; and for further documentation and discussion, Wim Carton & Andreas Malm, *The Long Heat: Climate Politics When It's Too Late* (London: Verso, 2025).

[6] Charles Napier, *The Navy: Its Past and Present State* (London: John & Daniel A. Darling, 1851), 48. Note that only a minimum of references – mostly the sources of direct quotations – is included in what follows.

[7] F. S. Rodkey, 'Colonel Campbell's Report on Egypt in 1840, with Lord Palmerston's Comments', *Cambridge Historical Journal* (1929) 3: 112.

[8] Hansard, House of Commons, vol. 49, 6 August 1839, 1391–2.

[9] Quoted in C. K. Webster, *The Foreign Policy of Palmerston, 1830–41: Britain, the Liberal Movement and the Eastern Question* (London: Bell, 1951), 629.

[10] Colonel Hodges quoted in William Holt Yates, *The Modern History and Condition of Egypt, vol. 1* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1843), 428 (emphasis in original).

[11] Broadlands Archive: Lord Ponsonby quoted in 'Constantinople 22 March 1846: Secret Memorandum on the Syrian War of 1840–1841', by General Jochmus, MM/SY/1-3.

[12] David K. Brown, *Before the Ironclad: Development of Ship Design, Propulsion and Armament in the Royal Navy, 1815–60* (London: Conway Maritime Press, 1990), 61.

[13] Letter from Charles Napier to Colonel Hodges, 23 August 1840, in Elers Napier, *The Life and Correspondence of Admiral Sir Charles Napier, vol. II*. (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1862), 21 (emphasis in original).

[14] As included in W. P. Hunter, *Narrative of the Late Expedition to Syria, vol. I* (London: Henry Colburn, 1842), 69–70.

[15] Quoted in Letitia W. Ufford, *The Pasha: How Mehemet Ali Defied the West, 1839–1841* (Jefferson: McFarland, 2007), 141.

- [16] Letter sent 25 September, included in Charles Napier, *The War in Syria, vol. I* (London: John W. Parker, 1842), 83, 124.
- [17] Broadlands Archive: Lord Palmerston to Lord Ponsonby, 5 October 1840, GC/PO/755-769.
- [18] *The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction*, 'Burford's panorama', 13 February 1841, 107 (emphasis in original).
- [19] Napier, *The War*, 206.
- [20] Robert Burford, *Description of a View of the Bombardment of St. Jean D'Acre* (London: Geo. Nichols, 1841), 8, 3.
- [21] Captain Henderson quoted in Yates, *The Modern History*, 435.
- [22] Elliot Papers: Lord Minto to Robert Stopford, 7 October 1840, ELL/216.
- [23] Report by colonel Charles F. Smith to Lord Palmerston in 'Correspondence Relative to the Affairs of the Levant', Parliamentary Papers, 1841, VIII, 56.
- [24] *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine for 1841*, 'Political register', 1841, VIII, 65.
- [25] Letter from Charles Napier to Eliza Napier, 13 November 1840, included in Napier, *The Life and Correspondence*, 113.
- [26] Napier, *The War*, 211.
- [27] Elliot Papers: Robert Stopford to Lord Minto, 5 November 1840, ELL/214. Stopford was the top British commander during the battle at Akka.
- [28] Account of Mr. Hunt in W. P. Hunter, *Narrative of the Late Expedition to Syria, vol. I* (London: Henry Colburn, 1842), 310.
- [29] Yaacov Kahanov, Eliezer Stern, Deborah Cvikel & Yoav Me-Bar, 'Between Shoal and Wall: The Naval Bombardment of Akko, 1840', *The Mariner's Mirror* (2014) 100: 160.
- [30] Letter from H. J. Codrington to E. Codrington, 4 November 1840, in *Selections from the Letters (Private and Professional) of Sir Henry Codrington* (London: Spottiswoode & Co, 1880), 162.

- [31] Broadlands Archive: Lord Palmerston to Lord Ponsonby, 14 November 1840, GC/PO/755-769.
- [32] Yates, *The Modern History*, 474.
- [33] Letter from General Jochmus to Lord Ponsonby, 17 January 1841, in *August von Jochmus' Gesammelte Schriften, Erster Band: The Syrian War and the Decline of the Ottoman Empire, 1840–1848* (Berlin: Albert Cohn, 1883), 84 (cf. 178).
- [34] *Tait's*, 'Political register', 65.
- [35] *Manchester Guardian*, 'Iron War Steamers', 14 April 1841.
- [36] *The Observer*, 'The Recent Victories', 28 November 1842.
- [37] John Bowring, *Report on Egypt and Candia, Addressed to the Right Hon. Lord Viscount Palmerston* (London: W. Clowes and Sons, 1840), 147.
- [38] A. A. Paton, *A History of the Egyptian Revolution, vol. II* (London: Trübner & Co., 1863), 239.
- [39] Broadlands Archive: Lord Palmerston to Lord Ponsonby, 25 November 1840, GC/PO/755-769.
- [40] Broadlands Archive: Lord Ashley (later Earl of Shaftesbury) to Lord Palmerston, 19 April 1836, GC/SH/2-22. These commercial potentials of Palestine were also highlighted in another, more extensive report to Lord Palmerston: John Bowring, *Report on the Commercial Statistics of Syria, addressed to the Right Hon. Lord Viscount Palmerston* (London: William Clowes and Sons, 1840), e. g. 14–19, 30.
- [41] Quoted in Eitan Bar-Yosef, 'Christian Zionism and Victorian Culture', *Israel Studies* (2003) 8: 28.
- [42] Lady Palmerston on 3 December 1841, in Tresham Lever, *The Letters of Lady Palmerston* (London: John Murray, 1957), 243–4 (emphasis in original).
- [43] Broadlands Archive: Lord Palmerston to Lord Auckland, 22 January 1841, GC/AU/63/1.

[44] Quoted in e.g. Regina Sharif, 'Christians for Zion, 1600–1919', *Journal of Palestine Studies* (1976) 5: 130; Herbert A. Yoskowitz, 'British Zionistic Writings Revisited', *European Judaism* (1979) 13: 45; Shlomo Sand, *The Invention of the Land of Israel: From Holy Land to Homeland* (London: Verso, 2012), 153.

[45] First two letters quoted in Sharif, 'Christians for Zion', 130; Bar-Yosef, 'Christian Zionism', 29; third: Broadlands Archive: Lord Palmerston to Lord Ponsonby, 4 December 1840, GC/PO/755-769.

[46] *The Times*, 17 August 1840.

[47] *Morning Herald*, 'Syria', 3 May 1841.

[48] Quoted in Sharif, 'Christians for Zion', 132.

[49] Colonel Churchill to Sir Moses Montefiore, 14 June 1841, in Lucien Wolf, *Notes on the Diplomatic History of the Jewish Question, with Texts of Treaty Stipulations and other Official Documents* (London: Spottiswoode, Ballantyne & Co., 1919), 119–21 (emphasis in original).

[50] Quoted in *The Voice of Israel*, 'The Tranquilization of Syria and the East', 1 September 1845, 168 (emphasis and italics in original).

[51] Quoted in Albert M. Hyamson, 'British Projects for the Restoration of Jews to Palestine', *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* (1918) 26: 143.

[52] Quoted in Sharif, 'Christians for Zion', 131.

[53] Alexander Keith, *The Land of Israel, according to the Covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob* (Edinburgh: William Whyte & Co., 1843), 34, 382, 366.

[54] *Ibid.*, 382 (emphases in original).

[55] Quoted in Bar-Yosef, 'Christian Zionism', 29.

[56] *The Morning Post*, 'The Jews', 30 January 1841.

[57] Anon., *'The Kings of the East': An Exposition of the Prophecies Determining, from Scripture and from History, the Power for Whom the Mystical Euphrates Is Being 'Dried Up'; with an Explanation of Certain Other Prophecies Concerning the Restoration of Israel* (London: R. B.

Seeley and W. Burnside, 1842), 277; on steam as pillar of power, see 48–50.

[58] *Ibid.*, 209, 211 (report from the *Times*).

[59] *Ibid.*, 212.

[60] *Ibid.*, 204–6.

[61] *Ibid.*, 212 (italics in original).

[62] *The Western Messenger*, ‘Restoration of the Jews to Palestine’, October 1840, 264, 266.

[63] On this status of Noah, see Louis Ruchames, ‘Mordecai Manuel Noah and Early American Zionism’, *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* (1975) 64: 195–223. Coincidentally or not, Noah was also ‘among the most prominent opponents of the abolition of slavery, using his position as editor of the *New York Evening Star* to characterize African-

Americans as mentally inferior to whites, to support the so-called gag rule preventing the Senate from discussing slavery, and even to argue for a move “to make publication of antislavery literature a punishable

offence.” Joseph Phelan, “How Came They Here?": Longfellow’s “The Jewish Cemetary at Newport”, *Slavery, and Proto-Zionism*, *EHL* (2020) 87: 141.

[64] M. M. Noah, *Discourse on the Restoration of the Jews* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1845), 10, 35–6.

[65] *Ibid.*, 47–8.

[66] *Ibid.*, 39.

[67] *Ibid.*, 35.

[68] *Ibid.*, 38.

[69] Jonathan Parry, *Promised Lands: The British and the Ottoman Middle East* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2022), 376.

[70] *Ibid.*, 143.

[71] *Ibid.*, 15.

[72] Yoskowitz, ‘British Zionistic’, 45.

- [73] Albanese, 'Report of the Special', 2.
- [74] Quoted in *ibid.*, 14.
- [75] Parry, 13.
- [76] *National Repository*, 'The Jews', March 1877, 274.
- [77] Ilan Pappé, *The Ethnic*, 93.
- [78] Eliahu Epstein quoted in Irene L. Gendzier, *Dying to Forget: Oil, Power, Palestine, and the Foundations of U.S. Policy in the Middle East* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), 105.
- [79] Paul Thomas Chamberlin, *The Global Offensive: The United States, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and the Making of the Post-Cold War Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 138.
- [80] Quoted in *ibid.*, 125.
- [81] Neta C. Crawford, *The Pentagon, Climate Change, and War: Charting the Rise and Fall of U.S. Military Emissions* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2022), 7–8.
- [82] Ghada Karmi, *Married to Another Man: Israel's Dilemma in Palestine* (London: Pluto, 2007), 84.
- [83] *Ibid.*, 91.
- [84] *Ibid.*, 103.
- [85] *Ibid.*, 97-8.
- [86] Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, Al Manar 3 September 2012, translated by Memri.
- [87] PFLP, *Strategy for the Liberation of Palestine* (Utrecht: Foreign Language Press, 2017), 34, 101, 102.
- [88] 'Political Document of Palestinian Islamic Jihad', in Erik Skare (ed.), *Palestinian Islamic Jihad: Islamist Writings on Resistance and Religion* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2001 [2018]), 31–2.
- [89] Fatih al-Shiqaqi, 'The Palestinian Cause is the Central Question of the Islamic Movement...Why?' in *ibid.* [1980], 77.
- [90] Pappé, *The Ethnic Cleansing*, 261.

[91] Quoted in D. A. Jaber, 'Settler Colonialism and Ecocide: Case Study of Al-Khader, Palestine', *Settler Colonial Studies* (2019) 9: 135.

[92] PFLP, *Strategy*, 95.