

## **A SELECTION OF LINKS TO PERSONAL WRITINGS ABOUT PALESTINE/ISRAEL**

Some of my reviews of books I have called 'responses' because to review can imply making a judgment and I wanted to emphasise the effect that a book had on my thinking.

Today the intention of the government of Israel to throw off all restraints upon its actions has made it more urgent that the governments of other countries colluding in this are brought to their senses and held to account.

I am not expecting agreement with my views and I do make mistakes that I am willing to have pointed out.

Cliff Jones 8<sup>th</sup>. September 2017

### **ONE**

At the time of writing our politicians were making much use of the word 'deficit' to justify their policies. They were, however, very happy to live in denial about the growing moral deficit caused by their support for Zionism.

### ***America's Role in Creating a Massive Moral Deficit***

### **Against Our Better Judgment**

**By**

**Alison Weir**

***My response to a very significant book***

<http://www.criticalprofessionallearning.co.uk/assets/AlisonWeir.pdf>

### **TWO**

One of the things that struck me when reading this book was that people such as Benny Morris were not entitled to have membership of the union of historians. The same applies to Israel's legitimacy.

At one point in this response my Latin lets me down: I write 'pace' when I ought to have written 'pacem'.

## ***Legitimate Membership Rights: a response to***

### **THE IDEA OF ISRAEL**

#### **A HISTORY OF POWER AND KNOWLEDGE**

**BY**

**ILAN PAPPE**

[http://www.criticalprofessionallearning.co.uk/assets/Ilan\\_Pappe\\_Response.pdf](http://www.criticalprofessionallearning.co.uk/assets/Ilan_Pappe_Response.pdf)

#### **THREE**

I say more about Miko and his book under **FIVE** below.

### **The General's Son, Journey of an Israeli in Palestine**

**By Miko Peled**

[http://www.criticalprofessionallearning.co.uk/assets/CliffWeb\\_General's\\_Son.pdf](http://www.criticalprofessionallearning.co.uk/assets/CliffWeb_General's_Son.pdf)

#### **FOUR**

Most of my eight hundred students in Israel were schoolteachers. Nurit worked on the programme for a while. Recently Nick Gibb, the Schools Minister, attempted to interfere in the writing of our new A-Level Politics syllabus. Fortunately, his interference was countered. Often, under the radar, much of the history we are taught is selective and even biased. In Israel, however, the official narrative in school textbooks is just that: official. Imagine an officially approved politics syllabus, textbook and examination.

At the time of writing I believed that Tony Blair had not visited Gaza. Apparently he had then, once. Nurit has used the review.

## ***National narrative under scholarly analysis***

### **Palestine in Israeli School Books Ideology and Propaganda in Education**

**By Nurit Peled-Elhanan**

<http://www.criticalprofessionallearning.co.uk/assets/webNurit.pdf>

#### **FIVE**

I was asked by a Facebook friend to write this for circulation among a number of groups. I am happy to say that Miko liked it as well. At the end there is a further link to the review at **THREE** above.

### **MIKO PELED**

#### **An Appreciation**

<http://www.criticalprofessionallearning.co.uk/assets/MikoPeled.pdf>

#### **SIX**

This is a personal reflection on my professional development. I was teaching and working with people from many different backgrounds in a country whose government was not only increasingly antagonistic towards a specific group but also harming the efforts of those attempting to work inclusively. Writing the policy of the University of Liverpool for assessing in languages other than English (and convincing the University to accept it) helped because we were then able to work in a mixture of English, Modern Hebrew and Arabic. I have not included the policy but being able to submit more than two thirds of their work in Arabic helped to sustain many Palestinian students. By the way, I based the policy upon how examination boards in England work in Welsh. The quality assurance measures were very thorough.

I have included my reflection here because I hope it offers a different perspective.

Including the links within it the piece is rather long.

## Reflections of a professional educator in Israel

<http://www.criticalprofessionallearning.co.uk/assets/AProfessionalEducatorInIsrael.pdf>

### SEVEN

I wrote this for a group of professional educators. It is about assessment but I used as an example a former student who is now a headteacher in East Jerusalem. We are still in contact but I avoid mentioning names because life is so difficult for people like her. She received an international prize for her masters dissertation on the self esteem of girls and I was so pleased to be able to hand her the prize in Jerusalem.

## REFLECTION ON FEEDING BACK, FEEDING FORWARD, WINNING A PRIZE, PRACTISING A PROFESSION

<http://www.criticalprofessionallearning.co.uk/assets/WebFeeding.pdf>

### EIGHT

This is another piece written for colleagues in education. I wanted to make the point that education has contexts that broaden our minds. Again, I have not named the former student.

## *Thoughts on examining an education masters dissertation on*

## **A divided Palestinian village**

<http://www.criticalprofessionallearning.co.uk/assets/HarshReality.pdf>

### NINE

The Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Commons called for submissions on this issue. This is mine. It is on the list of received documents. The General Election and pre-occupation with Brexit have delayed the re-constitution of commons committees and I am unaware

of any response to the submissions that were made. The format was a given.

This time my Latin is better. I am afraid that I was thinking of our Foreign Secretary when I inserted it. When he was Mayor of London he visited Tel Aviv and its Mayor, Ron Huldai. He was asked about the letter from UK academics supporting a boycott of Israeli educational institutions. He dismissed the signatories as a bunch of corduroy-wearing lefties. I am happy to report that when I signed I was wearing corduroy.

# **The UK's policy towards the Middle East Peace Process**

## **Introduction**

**My name is Cliff Jones. For thirteen years I visited and worked in Israel in the field of education across all social, political and religious boundaries. I am astonished to find such a high level of ignorance among policy makers.**

## **Executive Summary**

- **Misuse of the word 'Semitic'**
  - **Ignorance of history**
  - **Failure to engage with knowledgeable Israeli academics and campaigners**
  - **A perverse notion of UK interests in the region**
  - **A disgraceful disdain for human rights**
1. **The word 'Semitic' refers to a family of languages spoken on a daily basis. It has nothing to do with race or with artificially constructed notions of race. Arabic and Aramaic are Semitic languages as are others. The everyday languages spoken by European and American Jews are not Semitic. It is wrong to use the term 'anti-Semitic' to describe anti-Jewish behaviour towards all Jews and insulting to Palestinians and also to Arabs and Arabic speaking Jews who may be truly described as Semitic.**
  2. **My only explanation for the behaviour of successive British governments towards Israel is that they somehow believe that the Romans expelled the Jewish people from Palestine and that they are now exercising a right to return. All the evidence is that this did not happen and not even the most enthusiastically Zionist historian (Benny Morris for example) can produce evidence that it did apart from the selling of some slaves after the Bar Kokhba**

Revolt, for example. The British historian Tom Holland's book *In The Shadow of the Sword* (2013) is merely one book that makes this clear.

3. I see little evidence of policy makers engaging with people such as Nurit Peled-Elhanen, Miko Peled, Tom Segev, Avi Shlaim, Ilan Pappé, Shlomo Sand or reading people such as the late Naeim Giladi. All of them are Jewish Israelis who have much to say that should be of value to policy makers. You might, in particular, look at Nurit Peled-Elhanen's book, *Palestine in Israeli School Books, Ideology and Propaganda in Education*. I also suggest looking at *Against Our Better Judgement* by Alison Weir for a US perspective. Jonathon Schneer's, *The Balfour Declaration* (2010) is also important and could prevent our government committing the huge foolishness of celebrating the Balfour Declaration.
4. It is not in the interests of our government or of our country to support an apartheid state. Let there be no avoidance of reality, no manipulation of language, Israel actually declares itself to be a racially defined state with borders it does not itself recognise. Have we forgotten that the Golan is part of Syria?
5. Is our government happy to support a state that bombs hospitals and schools, that kidnaps children, that imprisons poets and lawyers speaking up for humanity; that steals land and resources and that demolishes the houses and villages of indigenous people? I wonder if any policy maker has read *GAZA, when the sky rained white fire* by Mushier El Farrar (2012). He lives in the UK. Why not talk to him?

## Recommendations

1. I believe that policy makers should remember when Harold Macmillan went into the Parliament of apartheid South Africa and delivered his Wind of Change speech in 1960 and also, in 1961, John Diefenbaker's speech at the Commonwealth Conference that effectively expelled apartheid South Africa.
2. So-called 'British Values' ought never to support and encourage injustice, colonisation, inhumanity, racism and the falsification of history.
3. Policy makers should go back to their Tacitus and be aware that the policy of the government of Israel is 'Ubi solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant.'

Cliff Jones, 30<sup>th</sup> March 2017