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Ilan Pappé in Ramallah:
While Jews de-link from Zionism,
Some Palestinians become Zionized

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It was the 59th anniversary of ethnic cleansing of Palestinians when Ilan Pappé, the neo, but real, Israeli historian delivered a speech in Ramallah explaining how he uncovered the actual and deliberate ethnic cleansing of most of the Palestinian people from Palestine in the 1948 war.

Pappé spoke openly, smoothly and fluently that the Zionist leadership evicted Palestinians by force, a fact which we did not learn by heart only through our history but also from the narrative of the victims. Unfortunately, we failed to explain and disseminate it to the world. Accordingly, the speaker's work was great not only because he uncovered the truth, but also because he is a Jew.

He referred to the deep pain and suffering of world media correspondents at that time who reported to their papers, radio stations and regimes the details of ethnic cleansing, but what was published was just the opposite: the stories of the Palestinian suffering were false.

Listening to Pappé, I truly wondered why he did not refer to the main aspect of the international position, which is that the world capitalist center supported the Ashkenazi Zionist regime (AZR) – Israel, and continue to support and feed it today. The point I am raising here is not eastern Marxist rhetoric, but a historical and current fact.

In the 59th anniversary of Palestinian Nakba, all Palestinians were very busy, "busy bees" to use the false description of the World Bank and IMF of their staff. Palestinian comprador and sub-contract capitalists were looking for the best dresses to attend Davos conference that is being held on the Jordanian side of the Dead Sea to do businesses with the same Jewish Israeli capitalists

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who stole Palestine.¹ Arab rulers and the PA leadership were embracing the Israeli Prime Minister Olmert, and apologized for the mistake of Hezbollah, which defeated him.

A smart friend phoned inquiring: "Are you going to join the national-Islamic organizations gathering in Ramallah at the day of al-Nakba?" I replied: "No. I neither participated in al-Nakba, nor did I say that "our goal is the termination of the effects of 1967 war". I have always been in support of the Palestinian Right of Return (ROR)." "Then, I guess, you will not even attend Ilan Pappé's speech" she continued. "Sure, I will", was my response.

A 'funny sign' awaited the guests as they entered the hall. The first row in the hall was vacant, reserved for the leaders, ministers and NGOs managers. To be treated as the elite! I have never sat in the row. But I decided to do so. Why not, I figured, since "business class ticket" is free!

As noted, the man spoke simply but sharply. He emphasized that he proved by facts that the Zionist leadership decided to evict the entire Palestinian people from its land, and to pretend that they left by themselves. He noted that other Israeli neo-historians saw and used the same documents he did, but justified ethnic cleansing. He did not mention Benny Morris by name. Pappé said openly that the "beast" will never be satisfied with 80% of Palestine, and that Palestinians will never get a state, a real state. The space for democracy is minimized in Israel and that is why he decided to leave. Those who are against the Zionist regime are just a few, but genuine. The struggle now should be for a one-state not for two-state solution, the Zionists will never agree on a two-state solution. We must approach the civil society in the west to support us. It is a difficult task, but it is necessary and will deliver. These were among the main points Pappé highlighted in his speech.

Listening to him, however, I wondered if the speaker knew the political attitudes of his audience. Most of the attendees were designers, supporters and beneficiaries of the Oslo Accords, of the "peace for capital". Many of them are supporters of the two-state solution, i.e. ignore the right of return for Palestinian refugees. Others were NGOs employees whose role was mainly to penetrate the leftist circles and deplete the national movement of its class content.

¹ For a detailed information on how Palestinian capitalists, like Abdelmalek Jabber, Talal Nassereddinn, Said Khoury were thirsty for business normalization with Israeli Jewish capitalists see: Israel Corp., Palestinian Deal Blocked, Plans China Car Maker, By Simon Clark <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601109&sid=abNkP3XU8o8M&refer=home>. According to al-Quds newspaper (13 May 2007), many Palestinians will attend the Davos conference including PA Chairman Abu Mazen, Minister of Finance Salam Fayyad, Muhammad Mustafa chairman of Palestine's Investment Fund, Munib al-Masri, Abdulmalek Jaber, Hasan Abu Libdah, Talal Nassereddinn, Samir Hilailah...and others.

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It was ironic that in the anniversary of al-Nakba, a progressive Jew is telling the Palestinians who support a two-state solution, that there is no workable solution without the ROR. They listened, but did not argue. It appeared as if the Jew became a Palestinian, and the Palestinians became Zionists.

Pappe concluded his speech with a call for tolerance and openness. He mentioned the late Edward Said and Ibrahim Abu-Lughod as examples of people who choose this approach.

In fact, this approach contains at least two main defects: (a) it is a form of post-colonial discourse that compromised with colonial crimes, and (b) it ignores class interests and class struggle.

There was no time to ask Pappe why he never touched on the role of the imperialist center in the Arab-Zionist conflict, and why he never mentioned neither the 'Zionist' Arabs who support the Ashkenazi Zionist regime (AZR) – Israel nor Arab popular classes, which represent the progressive and socialist future of the region. Is it because Pappe, like many leftist Jews, still blindly rejects Arab nationalism? But even if that the case and in spite of rejecting Arab nationalism, he must deal with the role of Arabs as a part of the conflict, and they should be mentioned in all cases.

I thanked the speaker for his clean research on the ethnic cleansing, but I noted that to avoid falling again into the same trap of peace for capital, the Oslo Accord, the one-solution of a Democratic State is a vague slogan. To make it a program, it must contain at least four main conditions or tasks to be achieved:

- 1- The implementation of the ROR of the Palestinian refugees of 1948.
- 2- The disintegration of the Zionist military establishment.
- 3- Nationalization of land.
- 4- Nationalization of the main developed economic acmes.

The speaker mentioned the boycotting of the apartheid regime in South Africa, as an effective pressure to be used against the AZR. I think that, in the Palestinian case, the ANC model is more applicable more than boycotting. The deep integration of the Zionist capital in the world capitalist order is deeper than that of the white South Africans. But even the most important argument (which is that the role of the AZR in the region is to block/terminate development and to maintain the region's subjugation to the theft of the capitalist center), doesn't encourage the globalized capital to boycott its own interest.

To talk about a one-state solution, and a similar struggle like that of the ANC, you do not become a target for the Zionist regime only, but also for many Palestinians who never thought that a Jew 'might' be non- Zionist. It is not strange, especially when we see many 'Zionist' Arabs!

None of the attendees argued for the two-state solution except a lady who said that Palestinians can no longer wait. That is why the best solution is to have their state and to continue the work for one-state at a later stage.

But, who cares about the Palestinians and whether they can or cannot wait, when they are fighting each other for a self-rule in Gaza, and when their capitalists are signing business contracts with Israeli Jewish capital on the warm shores of the Dead Sea, and when Arab regimes have designed a heavily compromising 'initiative' practically 'begging' Israel to accept their willingness to normalize relations with it...etc.

Finally, and to be absolutely clear, I must 'announce' that I was happily smiling throughout Pappé's speech. Not because I was watching a comedy, but because most of our guest's speech was a negation of the ideas and policies of most of those who attended the event but never argued. Is that due to an inferiority complex? No, I doubt. It is because they are loyal and adherents of the 'peace for capital'.

It was in the same hall, about ten years earlier, when the French structuralist Etienne Balibar spoke on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the *Communist Manifesto*. In contrast, the speaker of 1998 was invited by a renegade Israeli Marxist Jew who, and most of the Palestinian attendees were ex-communists, Marxist, leftists and progressive. Aren't all these good reasons to smile!

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