

Anti-Fascism and the Fall of Atlanticist Liberalism - Gaza genocidal war's turning point

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Today, the liberal mask has finally fallen from the Atlanticist ideology through the solidarity and collusion manifested by its leaders with an Israeli state ruled by neo-fascist and neo-Nazi factions of Zionism - a state that is committing in the Gaza Strip the most heinous deliberate genocidal war waged by an industrialized state since the Nazi genocide.

The French historian François Furet, a communist in his youth turned anti-communist, is the author of a famous explanation for the popularity of communism after World War II, especially among intellectuals, attributing it to anti-fascism as highlighted by the major role played by the Soviet Union in defeating Nazism during the war. Stalinism thus turned from a twin of Nazism in their common affiliation with totalitarianism, the highest stage of dictatorship, to its archenemy - a change of image that allowed Stalinism to reach the peak of its ideological influence in the decade following the complete defeat of the fascist Axis. Anti-fascism continued to play a central role in Soviet ideology, but with a diminishing influence due to the relative marginalization of fascism in the decades immediately following the world war, up until the time when the Soviet system entered its death throes.

This interpretation of the fate of Soviet ideology is undoubtedly correct, as the role of the Soviet Union in defeating Nazism was indeed the communist movement's strongest ideological argument after World War II, far exceeding the reference to the Bolshevik legacy of the Russian Revolution. However, what Furet and other anti-communists overlooked is that the liberalism to which they claimed to belong, just as the Stalinists claimed to belong to Marxism, was also based on anti-fascism, the difference being that it combined fascism with Stalinism under the category of totalitarianism. This was and remains the central claim of the Atlanticist type of liberalism, inaugurated by the Atlantic Charter that the United States and Britain concluded in 1941 to cement their alliance in World War II, and which became the basis of the Atlantic Alliance (NATO) established against the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

This Atlanticist ideology turned a blind eye, however, to the imperialist colonial roots of fascism as analysed by the great German-American Jewish thinker Hannah Arendt, for the obvious reason that NATO was established while its member states still ruled over colonial empires throughout the Global South. So much so that the postwar colonial fascist regime of Portugal itself was one of NATO's founders. As the world entered the age of decolonization, the Atlanticist ideology focused on opposing Soviet communism without abandoning its opposition to fascism, but almost limiting the latter to Nazism and the genocide of European Jews that it perpetrated. Thus, the Atlanticist ideology was able to claim a monopoly on representing the values of political freedom and democracy upheld by historical liberalism, while it was trampling and continues to trample these very values in the Global South.

We have reached today a historical turning point in which the liberal claim that NATO has been wearing as a mask has fallen, at a time when that claim had just reached a new peak with the Alliance's opposition to the Russian invasion of Ukraine and its claim to represent liberal values against Vladimir Putin's neo-fascist rule. This latter claim was made despite the rise of neo-fascism within the ranks of NATO itself and its arrival to power in some of its member states, including the United States under the presidency of Donald Trump. Atlanticist liberals continued nevertheless to use anti-totalitarianism, including opposition to fascism and neo-fascism, as the basis of their own ideology, portraying their struggle as a modern version of the struggle of (imperialist) liberalism against fascism in the 1930s, which took place in various countries of the Global North.

Today, the liberal mask has finally fallen from the Atlanticist ideology through the solidarity and collusion manifested by its leaders with an Israeli state ruled by neo-fascist and neo-Nazi factions of the Zionist colonialist movement - a state that is committing in the Gaza Strip the most heinous deliberate genocidal war waged by an industrialized state since the Nazi genocide, along with ongoing criminal abuses against the Palestinian people in the West Bank as well as in Israeli prisons, thus revealing a violent racist hostility towards the Palestinians relegated to the rank of subhuman beings (Untermenschen) like the Nazis did to the Jews.

In light of this position of the Atlanticists, their liberal claim in opposing the Russian invasion of Ukraine has lost any credibility, just as their liberal claim to oppose fascism and genocide, and uphold other pillars of the ideology formulated by their predecessors after World War II and enshrined in the 1945 United Nations Charter, has become worthless. The great paradox in this historical shift is that the Atlanticists are using concern for the Jewish victims of Nazism as a pretext to justify their stance. They draw from the history of the struggle against Nazism a lesson impregnated with racist colonial logic, choosing solidarity with those who claim to represent all Jews, and whom the Atlanticists have come to see as part of their "white" world, even when they have themselves become criminal perpetrators of genocide, over solidarity with their non-"white" victims.

Thus, Hannah Arendt's theory of the origins of totalitarianism has been proven correct, since an anti-totalitarianism that only sees antisemitic hostility towards Jews as the evil's root, while ignoring the colonial legacy that is no less horrific than the crimes committed by Nazism, such an incomplete anti-totalitarianism is doomed to collapse, marred by an inability to overcome the white supremacist complex that presided over the greatest crimes of the modern era, including the Nazi extermination of European Jews, whom the Nazis saw as non-white intruders in their "living space" (Lebensraum) of white Nordic Europe.

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P.S.

• Gilbert Achcar. 8/13/2024:

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