

Genocide in Gaza: Being a Spectator, or Bearing Witness

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They are watching us. At least, they were. Before they became overwhelmed with grief, before they collapsed, wounded, dazed by hunger, confusion and fear. By now, they must have completely given up on our world of voyeurs, including those taking a moment to glimpse that relentless slaughter day-after-day-after-day over there.

They know how we live—our pools and malls, our raucous ball games. Gazan graduates win scholarships to study here. Women and men locked in that smoldering prison have relatives in the US, families who managed to emigrate war-after-war since 1967. They know how determinedly relatives toiling overseas month-after-month send some savings back to Jabalia, back to Khan Younis, back to Rafah, back to Deir al-Balah, to Beit Lahia and Gaza City. They drink Fanta and Coke and Maxwell coffee; they buy foreign-made diapers for their infants and children's outfits embossed with American brand names. They welcome secondhand clothes shipped by charities from church-after-church, mosque-after-mosque, country-after-country. Mothers follow Arabic-dubbed Turkish series-after-series, while youngsters gather to cheer Mission Impossible's heroes-after-heroes. They huddle together to 'facetime' with uncles and cousins in Dearborn, in Austin, in Brooklyn, in Minneapolis, city-after-city. Before: at home and in the tea shops, they debate comments by senators and secretaries of state, quote their promise-after-promise and their excuse-after-excuse, list their AIPAC cash, election-after-election.

Now?

Palestinians under occupation perpetually looked to the United States. Not only because family members had settled and prospered here. They believed in American democratic ideals; they were beneficiaries of US charity; they watched the US government assume the leadership, brokering treaty-after-treaty – ostensibly to secure Palestinian sovereignty – with

Israel. They saw [one US president agonize over the trashing of the treaties he sponsored](#). Then they watched with renewed promise when a Black man occupied the White House, expecting that the history of his race would align him with their dispossession – only to be spurned by him.

Palestinians know better than anyone about the schemes and habits of Israel. So, when they lost faith in outside powers' ability to coerce, bribe or otherwise convince Israel to forge a real peace, their appeals to Allah were steadfast. This, even as they tried non-violent resistance alongside military strategies.

Now?

What percentage of Gaza and West Bank Palestinians celebrated the valiant attack by Hamas last October, I don't know. How prepared they were for the overwhelming Israeli military onslaught through these months, I doubt. Can they glimpse any light at the end of this endless corpse-after corpse-strewn fire-tunnel? Do they regret evacuating their home to trudge, naked and humiliated, mile-after-mile towards more danger, now wishing: 'better to have stayed, better to perish under our own crushed photos, books, potted plants, and furnishings'?

- 1) Haifa Massacre 1937
- 2) Jerusalem Massacre 1937
- 3) Haifa Massacre 1938
- 4) Balad al-Sheikh Massacre 1939
- 5) Haifa Massacre 1939
- 6) Haifa Massacre 1947
- 7) Abbasiya Massacre 1947
- 8) Al-Khisas Massacre 1947
- 9) Bab al-Amud Massacre 1947
- 10) Jerusalem Massacre 1947
- 11) Sheikh Bureik Massacre 1947
- 12) Jaffa Massacre 1948
- 13) Khan Yunis Massacre 1956
- 14) Jerusalem Massacre 1967
- 15) Sabra and Shatila Massacre 1982
- 16) Al-Aqsa Massacre 1990
- 17) Ibrahimi Mosque Massacre 1994
- 18) Jenin Refugee Camp April 2002
- 19) Gaza Massacre 2008-09
- 20) Gaza Massacre 2012
- 21) Gaza Massacre 2014
- 22) Gaza Massacre 2018-19
- 23) Gaza Massacre 2021
- 24) Gaza Genocide 2023 still ongoing

**DON'T LET
ANYONE TELL
YOU IT
STARTED ON
OCTOBER 7th
2023**

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However severe their hardships, they will fast in Ramadan and visit ancestors in quiet cemeteries – before. A few may still dream to perform Hajj. Once, if they survive this.

That every Palestinian killed in these seven months is embraced as a martyr – joining tens-of-thousands martyred in past assaults and assassinations – may help sustain those who still breathe. We've glimpsed snippets of their steadfast courage – exhausted medics, gritty journalists, wounded ambulance drivers, humble burial attendants, patient care-givers (some children themselves) and food distributors along with those boys scavenging through rubble for a trace of the untraceable. We receive horrific image-after-image direct from blood-soaked places where, through screams and prayers, men and women determinedly aim their phone cameras to show us unwelcome realities. Day-after-day, with journalists assassinated or banned from Gaza, with scanty IT connections, they insist on somehow delivering those agonizing images to the world.

Maybe, when they still had the means, those 2 million plus Palestinians under assault witnessed with some hope, South Africa's presentations to the ICJ. They may have heard

that unequivocal early condemnation of Israel by a sole Irish parliamentarian, then noted the steady rise day-by-day of other voices against genocide. Their expectations surely surged by what seemed to be a flood of protests city-after-city worldwide. Their Nakba became part of global vocabulary; even children learned the dreaded word 'genocide'. Their Palestinian flag-after-flag and keffiyeh scarf-after-scarf became symbols of victory.

Now?

They realize by now that one more massacre would make little difference to outsiders. One more sabotaged humanitarian shipment, another world court judgement, a further UN Security Council vote: none would deter Israel or shame Western leaders to do what they know is politically and morally right.

They know some of us are following the war. On our side, we – voyeurs are what we are, let's face it – gather some cash for humanitarian aid that has little chance of reaching its destination, share stories of another dead infant, cite further proof of genocide, post our heartfelt poems, declare how our eyes have been opened, sign another petition. We hail a college valedictorian for their strong words, we endorse the unequivocal statement of the [single American congressperson](#) who cries out so eloquently "I am never going to stop saying Palestinians deserve freedom, that we need to free Palestine... no armaments to kill Palestinians".

They are watching us, as, however modest or feeble our efforts, we cannot but turn our head away in shame. If not shame for our personal inadequacy, then shame for our membership in this government and our duplicitous press. A Palestinian youth of about 16, struggling through rubble, face streaked with ash and sweat, fist raised, shrieks at a camera: "We will get you; we will get you; you cannot destroy us".

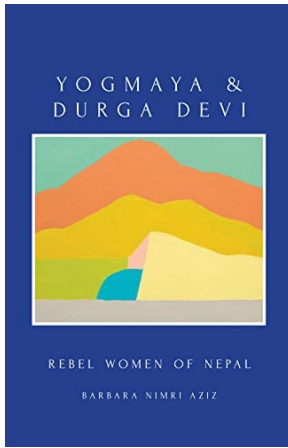
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Barbara Nimri Aziz whose anthropological research has focused on the peoples of the Himalayas is the author of the newly published ["Yogmaya and Durga Devi: Rebel Women of Nepal"](#), available on Amazon.

She is a regular contributor to Global Research.

Featured image is from the author



[“Yogmaya and Durga Devi: Rebel Women of Nepal”](#)

By Barbara Nimri Aziz

A century ago Yogmaya and Durga Devi, two women champions of justice, emerged from a remote corner of rural Nepal to offer solutions to their nation’s social and political ills. Then they were forgotten.

Years after their demise, in 1980 veteran anthropologist Barbara Nimri Aziz first uncovered their suppressed histories in her comprehensive and accessible biographies. Revelations from her decade of research led to the resurrection of these women and their entry into contemporary Nepali consciousness.

This book captures the daring political campaigns of these rebel women; at the same time it asks us to acknowledge their impact on contemporary feminist thinking. Like many revolutionaries who were vilified in their lifetimes, we learn about the true nature of these leaders’ intelligence, sacrifices, and vision during an era of social and economic oppression in this part of Asia.

After Nepal moved from absolute monarchy to a fledgling democracy and history re-evaluated these pioneers, Dr. Aziz explores their legacies in this book.

Psychologically provocative and astonishingly moving, “Yogmaya and Durga Devi” is a seminal contribution to women’s history.

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