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# The death-cult

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Translated into English for [Occupation Magazine](#) by George Malent

[Original Hebrew](#)

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Four of the seven Israeli soldiers who have been killed in the Gaza war as these lines are being written are wearers of knitted kippot,(1) graduates of Haredi/Religious/Nationalist yeshivot most of which are located in the Occupied Territories and immersed in religious zealotry. These guys already constitute a substantial part of the mid-level command echelon, and they are gradually infiltrating the senior command. If the Occupation continues, it is likely, nearly a certainty, that in a few years most of the General Staff will be comprised of wearers of knitted kippot, who obey their rabbis first and foremost, especially when they are faced with orders that contradict religious faith. Whoever wants to know how the spiritual world of a General Staff will look that is composed of those who were once disorderly, disturbed and deranged "Hilltop Youths", (2) would do well to listen to the eulogies that are delivered at the funerals. The newspaper Maariv dedicated its central two-page spread in the Sabbath Supplement (9 January 2009) to the eulogies. I will not repeat verbatim those eulogies, which are words of heresy to a secular person who believes in human rights, but I will quote some sentences so that the reader can understand what I'm talking about.

Rabbi Yerahmiel Weiss, head of the youth yeshivah that is next to the Merkaz Harav yeshiva, characterized the fallen as "people molded from the depths of faith to prepare the great perfection of the word of God in the world, through the struggle of study of the Torah and through the struggle in which we find ourselves".

Rabbi Reuven Natanel, who was the rabbi of the Atzmona settlement in Gaza (before the evacuation) said over the grave of one of the fallen: "your soul has returned to your Creator at a great time for the People of Israel, a time of awakening, of fortitude, when the nation stands tall. On the wings of that awakening your soul has returned to its transcendental source".

Rabbi Yosef Kellner of the pre-army program at the Eli settlement said in a eulogy "the slogan that motivated you was the call of Yoav, the army minister of the ancient Kingdom of Israel, that moved the spirit of the army of David. 'Let us be strong and resolute for the sake of our people and the land of our God', (3) for our people in its spiritual essence, in the identity of its soul". He referred to the Palestinian people as "that pseudo-nation and its flies of death".

Rabbi Amos Natanel of the Kedumim settlement, whose son Yoni was one of the fallen, said over the grave of his son "this is not a time for weeping and sadness. We are at the height of the battle and must continue with all our strength, fortitude and faith to fight on ... we must be prepared to make sacrifices, and I went to sleep with the feeling that I was ready for that".

In Maariv from 11 January 2009 Rabbi Amos Natanel was again featured. His son was killed in a "friendly fire" incident. The rabbi wrote to the soldiers of the tank crew that fired the ill-fated shell that he forgave them, and that his son "died in sanctification of the Name and you are the angels who put that into effect". The rabbi added that it was better that it was they who hit him "and not the impure hand of an enemy".

Those words reflect a terrible death-cult. A death caused by mistaken shooting turns into "sanctification of the Name". The savage bombardment of a civilian population that causes the deaths of hundreds of women and children, and shooting at medical staff, are described as "a courageous war".

This is a distorted and terrifying spiritual world of religious zealotry, a Jewish reflection of that same zealotry that is found on the other side among Hizbullah and Hamas, which recite similar mantras over the graves of their fallen. Religious zealotry is a plague that crosses national, geographical and religious borders. They all have - of course - a direct connection to The Almighty, though none of them can produce a power of attorney certificate to confirm that they are authorized to speak in His name.

Those who believe in God should pray to Him and ask for salvation from the hands of those zealots, who are leading us into continuous bloodshed at the end of which will be devastation.

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### **Democratic state? You make the Central Elections Committee laugh!**

The Central Elections Committee disqualified the Arab Balad and Ra'am-Ta'al parties from contending in the coming elections. Even the "leftist" Labour Party supported the disqualification. This is what democracy looks like in the Jewish democratic state. That decision, supported by a Jewish majority on the Committee, proves once again the discrimination that is implicit in the "Jewish democratic state". A state that does not take the name of democracy in vain is always the state of all its citizens.

The Committee decision accurately reflects sad Israeli reality in which Israel is a Jewish ethnocracy that practices discrimination against non-Jews, both in practical policy and sometimes also in legislation.

I assume that the two parties will petition the High Court of Justice to appeal against the decision. Based on past experience, there is a chance that the appeal will be successful; but such a ruling will not cleanse the name of the High Court of Justice, which in a series of decisions (like the ratification of the regulation of the citizenship law that prevents Arab citizens from being reunited in Israel with their spouses from the Occupied Territories) has proved that it is one of the most important and efficacious instruments for the consolidation of discrimination against Arab citizens.

If there is to be civil equality for all citizens in Israel, we need to do a lot more than just allow participation in elections. There is a need for a new conceptual framework, which will not happen without a process of de-Zionization.

If the High Court affirms the disqualification then it should be assumed that the overwhelming majority of Arab citizens will boycott the elections, and all who entertain themselves with the mantra of "the only democracy in the Middle East" will (perhaps) understand that Apartheid exists not only in the Occupied Territories but also within the Green Line.

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### **There's nothing new about the new Meretz**

The new Meretz emerged to much acclaim, and there were those who even entertained the hope that this would be a rebirth of the Zionist left. The Gaza war could have been the launching-pad for a new approach according to which it was possible to be a left-wing Zionist and also to stand against the national Zionist consensus in time of war.

The disappointment was bitter, especially for those who were expecting a new approach. Meretz did not pass the

test. The Zionist DNA defeated the left. Meretz acted like Mapam and Ratz before it: it rallied under the umbrella of the Israeli cult of force and supported that terrible war. Meretz thought it could have the best of both worlds, to be for the war and also, by virtue of its feeble support for a ceasefire after the war-crimes became evident, to receive the votes of those who opposed it. But that did not suffice to wash off the blood-stains.

The latest poll shows that Meretz will have difficulty even retaining what it has now - 5 seats the Knesset. I will not be surprised if Meretz ends up losing out both ways. Those who before the war were wavering between Meretz and Labour and were among the supporters of the war will vote for Labour, and those who were wavering between Meretz and Hadash and opposed the war will vote for Hadash.

An idea of where Meretz is headed can be discerned by looking at the Meretz faction in the Jerusalem city council, which joined the wall-to-wall coalition after the last election. It even has a paid deputy mayor. That supposedly left-wing faction sits in a coalition headed by Mayor Nir Barkat with supporters and twins of Lieberman from Shas, Likud, the National Religious Party and Agudat Israel, racists who have run the city on the basis of institutionalized racism: decent services for Jews and Third World services for Palestinian Jerusalem in all domains: education, housing, welfare and other municipal services. In many places Palestinian Jerusalem looks like a garbage dump. But the Palestinians pay the same property taxes as Jews.

Look what a paid deputy mayor portfolio can do. Principles are thrown in the garbage.

Yet again, Zionism has vanquished the left, just as the Jewish state has vanquished the democratic state.

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### **Imperviousness**

Israel's war-crimes in Gaza are visible to the whole world. The horrible images of hundreds of children killed, shooting at medical staff, the destruction of entire neighbourhoods by savage bombardments, wounded women carrying their wounded children to the hospital, all those arouse justified anger against Israel in viewers all over the world.

In Israel the images are filtered, but even the few that the television channels in Israel show are sufficient to shock those whose senses have not been deadened.

A substantial proportion of the Jews in Israel are now exposed in their full imperviousness.

Their hatred of Arabs has driven them insane, and that is particularly evident in talkbacks. So many of them express joy at the killing of children, demand more and more, to turn Gaza into Dresden, to destroy and to exterminate, there are no manifestations of empathy for the suffering of others. Complete dulling of the senses. Something terrible has happened to Israeli society. The hatred and imperviousness recall the indifferent attitude to the sufferings of the Jews in the various pogroms throughout history or the sufferings of the Blacks in Apartheid South Africa and the southern USA when the Ku Klux Klan ruled.

The phenomenon has also affected certain Jewish groups outside Israel. Not long ago there was a demonstration in support of Israel in New York. A correspondent for one of the networks mingled among the demonstrators with a microphone and asked them if Israel was doing right to bomb schools in which people had taken shelter and kill children, and the replies seemed to have been copied from the typical racist Israeli talkbacker: destroy Gaza,

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implement a final solution; there were those who said that they should get a holocaust. And then we are astonished that there are racists on the other side who call for revenge against the Jews. Racism crosses national and religious borders.

### Gideon Spiro

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1. Small skullcaps typically worn by Israeli Jewish men who support Israel's policy of colonizing the West Bank - trans.
2. Young extremists from the Jewish settlements in the West Bank, immersed in religious zealotry, who often clash with the Israeli military authorities due to their violations of the military laws and who often conduct pogroms against Palestinians. The name derives from their habit of establishing illegal settlements on top of hills in the West Bank - trans.
3. Samuel 10:12