On Gaza And Human Consciousness

by **Caitlin Johnstone**
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It gets harder and harder for the imperial propagandists to frame empire-targeted powers like Hamas as Evil Villains who are simply Evil because they are Evil. As our society gains a better and better collective understanding of psychology and trauma and why individuals do what they do, fewer and fewer people are swallowing such infantile propagandistic frameworks. When something scary and traumatizing happens, more and more people are beginning to ask, "Why? Why did that happen? What were the antecedents which led those people to do what they did?"

When people start asking such questions, answers are revealed which are very inconvenient for the information interests of the western empire. Oh it turns out Israel is an abusive apartheid state and Gaza is a giant concentration camp where Palestinians are deprived of basic human needs. Oh it turns out NATO was amassing war machinery near Russia's border in ways the United States would never in a million years permit near its own borders. Oh it turns out western powers were funneling weapons to murderous extremist groups in Syria with the goal of ousting Assad and installing a puppet regime in Damascus.

More and more people understand that nobody is just plain evil because they are evil; if they're doing something violent and scary, it's a safe bet that something violent and scary was

done to them, either immediately before or in their formative years. You see this expanding awareness manifest today in popular movies and shows with the rise of the anti-hero and complex villains with traumatic pasts that you can understand and sympathize with. Modern storytelling has largely abandoned the Virtuous Protagonist vs Villainous Antagonist model, simply because audiences are too conscious to buy it anymore. It loses their interest and attention.

And of course this expanded awareness extends to Israel as well. A people who had just suffered an unfathomable collective trauma were told they have a place that they can call their own in the Holy Land where they can feel safe, and then we saw the kind of violence and abuse we'd expect to see from a highly traumatized population who suddenly had power over the indigenous people who were living there previously. That trauma went into the psyches of the Palestinians, who sometimes do things only highly traumatized people would do.

And round and round it goes.

Really we're all just lost little kids stumbling around from jump scare to jump scare in a frightening world that we do not understand. Some of us are better at faking self-assuredness than others, but really none of us know what this big mysterious world is all about and we only do what we do because we are whipped around by forces within ourselves we can't really see, which were put there when we were too young to understand the trauma that was happening to us.

That's all this really is. It comes out in some ugly, horrifying ways, like what we're seeing in Gaza right now, but underneath it all it's ultimately just scared little kids frozen in grown adult bodies trying to feel like they have a little bit of control in this wild chaotic world so they maybe won't get hurt and scared again.

It comes out in some dark, dark ways and leads our species

down some dark, dark paths. It might even get us all killed in a nuclear holocaust one day. But underneath it all we were always just a bunch of scared little primates, getting thrown around by psychological forces we hadn't made conscious in a world our newly evolved brains aren't equipped to comprehend.

I don't know where our strange adventure is taking us or what we'll endure on the remainder of our winding road together. But there does seem to be a light growing, even amid all the violence and the screams. Maybe we'll wake up one day and stop acting out these terrible patterns. Maybe we'll wake up one day and build a healthy world.

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