History in the Making

Volume 16  Article 19

2023

Shireen Abu Akleh

Devin Gillen

CSUSB

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/history-in-the-making

Recommended Citation

Gillen, Devin (2023) "Shireen Abu Akleh," History in the Making: Vol. 16, Article 19. Available at: https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/history-in-the-making/vol16/iss1/19

This In Memoriam is brought to you for free and open access by the History at CSUSB ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in History in the Making by an authorized editor of CSUSB ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@csusb.edu.
Shireen Abu Akleh

By Devin Gillen

She went into the hearts of every single Palestinian, and I dare say every Arab household because of her touching reporting and the way that she had of bringing to life the reality of Israel’s brutal occupation.

- Diana Buttu, Human Rights Lawyer.


I think like every, maybe almost every single Arab person in the Middle East grew up watching her for decades. It just felt like every girl wanted to be her.

- Dalia Hatuqa, reporter and friend of Abu Akleh.³

Shireen Abu Akleh (1971-2022), a senior Palestinian-American journalist at Al Jazeera (AJ), was an iconic Palestinian voice and a household name in the region through her decades of coverage of the Israeli apartheid state. In the early morning of May 11, 2022, Akleh was shot in the back of the head and killed by the Israeli Defense/Occupation Forces (IDF/IOF) shortly after arriving on the scene of a raid in a Jenin refugee camp. At the time of the shooting, Abu Akleh and her colleagues wore helmets and vests that clearly marked them as PRESS. While she was celebrated by and inspired many in the region, especially women, she remained a humble and kind spirit. According to her fellow reporter and friend, Dalia Hatuqa, “Covering what Amnesty International (AI) and others call clear human rights abuses in the occupied Palestinian territories never broke her. It never stopped her from appreciating and enjoying life.”⁴

Born on April 3, 1971, to a Catholic family in East Jerusalem, Shireen’s parents died early, but she pursued an education in Jordan and graduated with a bachelor’s degree in journalism after initially considering architecture.⁵ On her switch

³ Dalia Hatuqa, interview by What Next, The Killing of Shireen Abu Akleh, Slate, June 14, 2022, https://slate.com/transcripts/Tm5KNVFBBbHVQVVA1aXIIFRkpNcVZiWSi1RzJHbTFJeHYySk45Yk8zWGU4Zz0=.
to journalism, Abu Akleh said, “I chose journalism to be close to
the people…It might not be easy to change the reality, but at least I
was able to bring their voice to the world.”\textsuperscript{6} Shortly after
graduating, she joined the \textit{Voice of Palestine} radio and The
Amman Satellite Channel.\textsuperscript{7} She gained American citizenship at a
young age staying with family on her mother’s side in New Jersey,
and later returned to the United States while producing mini-
documentaries for \textit{Al Jazeera} on American society, particularly
highlighting the plight of minorities from Washington D.C. to New
Mexico.\textsuperscript{8} Her popularity reached international audiences, Hatuqa
recalls,

\begin{quote}
Even in DC, people would stop her in the street
asking for a selfie, to which she would happily
oblige. She was down to earth and oozed modesty
and humility. Of course, it would be impossible for
her to not know what she meant to so many people,
but she never let it get to her or go to her head.
\end{quote}

Abu Akleh joined \textit{Al Jazeera} in 1997 as one of the
network’s first field correspondents and quickly became a
prominent feature in everyday Arab homes during the Second
Intifada (2000-2005).\textsuperscript{9} Nidaa Ibrahim, a fellow \textit{Al Jazeera}
English correspondent, remembers the time and Shireen’s popularity,

\begin{quote}
I grew up as a teenager in the second Palestinian
Intifada…Shireen [and other \textit{Al Jazeera} journalists]
brought us a new sense, a new meaning and a new
feeling when it comes to news coverage of people
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{6} Kingsley, “Killing of Palestinian Journalist: Israeli Police Attack Mourners.”
\textsuperscript{7} Kingsley, “Killing of Palestinian Journalist: Israeli Police Attack Mourners.”
\textsuperscript{8} Kingsley, “Killing of Palestinian Journalist: Israeli Police Attack Mourners.”
\textsuperscript{9} “\textit{Al Jazeera}’s Shireen Abu Akleh: pioneering Palestinian reporter,” \textit{France24},
living under occupation…that our narrative was being carried to the whole world. The very fact that they were reporting the Palestinian narrative to the world made them celebrities.10

Her reporting was sympathetic to the Palestinian plight under occupation, Boudoir Hassan, a freelance journalist in Jerusalem, said,

She was the voice that actually conveyed what was going on, that broke all the divisions that the Israelis tried to create, when there were systematic attempts to divide Palestinians…she was one of those who helped shape our country, our political consciousness.11

Shireen Abu Akleh’s sign-off, ending each report with her name and the city she was reporting from, became so iconic many young Palestinian girls emulated her style and practiced it in the mirror.12 As Fayha Shalash, a journalist for Al Aqsa Radio, recounts, “because we were under Israeli attack. I was in 9th grade when I started watching the news, and remember seeing her reports. I used to mimic her style and tone in front of my family.”13 Shalash chose to follow in Shireen’s footsteps, becoming a journalist herself, as did many others “influenced by Shireen’s reporting or inspired by her journalism classes at Birzeit University.”14

Beyond inspiring many young women and hopeful reporters to imitate her words, apparently even the IDF knew of her iconic sign-off and likely mocked her words themselves. As Hatuqa reports, “when Israeli forces slapped curfews on us in

---

11 “Al-Jazeera’s Shireen Abu Akleh: pioneering Palestinian reporter.”
12 “Al-Jazeera’s Shireen Abu Akleh: pioneering Palestinian reporter.”
13 “Al-Jazeera’s Shireen Abu Akleh: pioneering Palestinian reporter.”
14 “Al-Jazeera’s Shireen Abu Akleh: pioneering Palestinian reporter.”
2002, they would go around in their jeeps and mimic her through a bullhorn: “Stay inside. This is Shireen Abu Akleh, Al Jazeera, Ramallah.”¹⁵ Twenty-one years before lodging a precisely placed bullet in her skull, the occupation force reportedly recognized some degree of Shireen Abu Akleh’s importance to the Palestinian people. Their use of her call-off can either be charitably interpreted as some genuine attempt to convince Palestinians to stay out of the danger the occupation force represented (i.e., don’t come outside or we will shoot you) or a purposeful mockery of a prominent journalist whose name it was understood would be widely recognized amongst the Palestinian population.

She is survived by her niece, Lina Abu Akleh, who got her Master’s degree in International Studies from the University of San Francisco, and now focuses on human rights, governance, and justice to advocate for justice for Shireen.¹⁶ Lina remembers her aunt fondly, like Hatuqa; she says, “she was a very fun person—not as serious as she appeared on TV.”¹⁷ Despite her aversion to violence and gore, she liked crime shows, murder mysteries, and the Netflix show Black Mirror; as Lina recounts, “She even had this thing where she would skip all the way towards the end so she would know it’s gonna be a happy ending.”¹⁸

Shireen is widely recognized for gaining prestige during her coverage of the Second Intifada, but to understand the roots of that conflict and the ongoing humanitarian crisis that ultimately took her life, the history of the preceding Intifada must be understood.

---

¹⁵ Hatuqa, “Opinion: My Friend Shireen Abu Akleh told the stories no one else wanted to tell.”
¹⁷ Mansoor, “Niece of Slain Al Jazeera Journalist Shireen Abu Akleh on Justice for Her Family.”
¹⁸ Mansoor, “Niece of Slain Al Jazeera Journalist.”
The First Intifada (1987-1993)

The roots of the First Intifada stemmed from Israeli Prime Minister, and founder of the right-wing Likud Party, Menachem Begin’s (1913-1992) intensification of settlement construction in the West Bank, occupied by Israeli forces since the end of the Six Day War (1967). These policies increased the Israeli settler population from roughly 770 to 5,960 annual immigrants, as well as changed the locations of the settlements; “Now they were often deliberately planned to abut Arab communities and to take their lands, visible threats designed from Ariel Sharon’s [1928-2004] point of view to intimidate Arabs to force them to leave.”

The seizure of land in the occupied West Bank for Israeli settlement—a process of annexation—was illegal under the spirit of 1967 United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 242, which called for the “withdrawal of Israel from territories occupied in the recent conflict” and a “just settlement of the [Palestinian] refugee problem.” However, the absence of a definitive “the” prefacing the “territories occupied” allowed Israel to argue that as long as it leaves some of the occupied territories, then it is in compliance with the law as it has withdrawn from “territories occupied” but not the territories occupied.

Meanwhile, new generations of Palestinians in the 1980s—born under occupation—”questioned their parents’ submission to the daily humiliations they witnessed” while economic recession tightened belts, and, from 1985 onward, demonstrations increased. In response, Israel reinstated the demolition of Palestinian homes of “suspected rioters,” increased indefinite detention without trial up to six months, doubling the number of Palestinians under such detention, many of whom the IDF likely

---

21 Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 308.
23 Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 400.
beat confessions out of, according to an Israeli lawyer.\textsuperscript{24} This escalation of tensions is “in retrospect, a turning point for many younger Palestinians in the territories,” for previously, “Arab terrorism [was] initiated from the outside...Starting in 1985, Arab violence in the territories was more likely to be inspired from within.”\textsuperscript{25}

During this period Palestinians in the West Bank began to feel the harsher realities of occupation which, “until 1977, Israeli occupation did not seem particularly onerous to most Arabs in the territories.”\textsuperscript{26} However, Gaza, long under harsher siege than the West Bank, “had a long tradition of opposing Israeli rule” with a much stronger Islamic presence that stemmed from the Gaza branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, which advocated for “personal reform (jihad) as the dominant moral imperative.”\textsuperscript{27} An offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, Islamic Jihad advocated aggressive militant rhetoric, “that armed resistance against Israel was the only path to liberation.”\textsuperscript{28} Ironically, Israel initially fostered the development of the Muslim Brotherhood, hoping its religious elements would splinter support away from the secular Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO).\textsuperscript{29}

The First Intifada began on December 8, 1987, as a “spontaneous eruption of hatred and frustration, directed mostly at Israel but to some extent the external Palestinian leadership,” after an Israeli military transport killed four Palestinians and injured others after crashing “into several Arab cars in Gaza.”\textsuperscript{30} Rumors quickly spread that the crash was an intentional act of revenge—by a relative of an Israeli stabbed to death by a Gazan the day prior—and the funerals of the victims in Gaza launched simultaneous

\textsuperscript{24} Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 400.
\textsuperscript{25} Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 400-401.
\textsuperscript{26} Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 398.
\textsuperscript{27} Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 403.
\textsuperscript{28} Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 403.
\textsuperscript{29} Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 403.
\textsuperscript{30} Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 398.
uprisings in the West Bank. Initially undirected by a higher command, “the intifada was a rebellion of the poor and the young, the less advantaged sectors of the population.” The PLO somewhat successfully co-opted the organic uprisings.

The demonstrators decided against widespread armed struggle, in the spirit of other non-violent movements, “the image of the Palestinian populace with stones confronting armed Israeli troops who shot to kill was one that would affect world opinion.” Israeli strategy proved predictable, as Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin (1922-1995) affirmed “shooting at demonstrators, was acceptable,” and, “the beating of prisoners to ‘teach them a lesson’ was encouraged.” In the first five weeks thirty-three Palestinians were killed, and roughly 2,000 imprisoned while no Israelis were killed. Violence continued to escalate as the uprising stretched over years; “By the end of 1989, an estimated 626 Palestinians and forty-three Israelis had been killed, 37,439 Arabs wounded, and between 35,000 and 40,000 arrested.” Likely contributing to the lethal disparity, Israel also began to permit plain clothed snipers to assassinate stone throwers—with such an incident as recent as 2018 captured on film and referenced in the conclusion of this paper. Rather than crushing the Palestinian uprising as Rabin hoped, “Israeli repression unified it” and even many women became political activists and demonstrators in the generally secular attitude of the early intifada.

The failure to convene a United Nations Security Conference—called for by the PLO in April, 1987—along with the perceived weakness of the exiled PLO leadership, hurt their

---

33 Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 404.
34 Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 404.
36 Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 405.
38 Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 408.
40 Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 407-408.
While the PLO advocated for a two-state solution, an independent Palestine that coexists with Israel, “as a result of their failed diplomacy, the appeal of Islamic groups increased. They alone appeared determined to achieve the goal of Palestinian independence, albeit to create a religious instead of secular state.” Islamic Jihad advocated for a one-state solution necessitating an armed struggle to overthrow the Israeli state and create an Islamic state, inspired by the Islamic Revolution of 1979 in Iran, as opposed to the PLO’s ostensible goals of a democratic secular state. Hamas, or the Islamic Resistance Movement, “was a direct outgrowth of the intifada” that also called for the restitution of all of former Palestine.

In Geneva on May 25, 1990, Yasser Arafat (1929-2004), the leader of the PLO, appealed to the United Nations (UN) in an attempt to legitimize diplomatic efforts as a worthwhile cause to the increasingly disaffected, occupied and displaced Palestinians. Pleading for an investigation into an Israeli murder of a Gazan five days earlier—which prompted further demonstrations injuring another six to seven hundred—“a request that received backing from fourteen of the fifteen members; the United States alone opposed it because Israel would not accept it.” As would become status quo, the United States used its superpower status and veto power as a permanent member of the UNSC to defend Israel, and act in defiance of the majority of the UN member states and the spirit of the international democratic institution.

Despite Arafat’s previous courtship of the United States in 1988, when he gained Washington D.C.’s recognition of “the democratic Palestinian state which [the PLO] seeks to establish in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip” from Secretary of State George Schultz (1920-1921), by renouncing terrorism and accepting

---

40 Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 409.
41 Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 409.
42 Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 409.
43 Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 409.
44 Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 411.
45 Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 411.
UNSC Resolution 242 (a UN resolution calling for Arab aggressor states in the 1967 Six Days War to recognize Israel’s right to exist). The United States’ commitment to Palestinian statehood quickly faltered before flatlining the 1990 UN investigation, where it accepted the Israeli Likud Prime Minister, Yitzhak Shamir’s, underhanded plans for elections in the Palestinian territories as a substitute for the investigation. These planned elections bestowed upon Palestinians the mighty honor of unspecified “affairs of daily life,” while Israel retained “control of security, foreign affairs, and all aspects of policy pertaining to the settlers in the territory.”

The absurdity of these sham elections was not lost on the Palestinians, who rejected it, but not draconian enough for Israeli right-wingers like Sharon, who had to be assured by Shamir that, “We will not give the Arabs one inch of our land, even if we have to negotiate for ten years.” America accepted this, giving Israel one year to find Palestinian leaders for the West Bank and Gaza—of which none ultimately came, which “gave Israel another year to suppress the intifada and add more settlements.”

After these failed attempts to win Western support—and with his own popularity amongst Palestinians faltering—Arafat forged unfortunate ties to Iraq for he believed, “only Baghdad could pose the credible military threat necessary to force Israeli concessions.” In roughly a year, the United States “destroyed much of Iraq’s military and civilian infrastructure” after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990. A massive regiment of Arafat’s supposed “credible [Iraqi] military threat” was neutralized by American bombs while retreating from Kuwait, in the now infamous Highway of Death where, “the retreating Iraqi soldiers (as well as milk vans, fire trucks, limousines, and a bulldozer) had been trapped. They were frozen in a traffic jam, blocked off by the

46 Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 409.
47 Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 410.
48 Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 410.
49 Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 410-411.
50 Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 412.
51 Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 412.
Americans, near Mutla Ridge, by a minefield.” Arafat’s defense of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait continued his fall from grace and many other Arab heads of state cut off funding for the PLO, leading to losses of at least $100 million annually. The PLO’s decline also increased the legitimacy of more militant groups like Hamas, their popularity also a consequence of Israeli policy that promoted Islamic groups against the secular PLO in the 1980s.

Though many Arab leaders disagreed with Arafat, they also recognized the hypocrisy of the United States using its UNSC veto to protect Israeli mistreatment of Palestinians while using the UN to legitimize its own attacks on Iraq, but other states saw opportunity in a pacified Iraq. Syria considered the intervention an attempt to appeal to the United States for a brokered peace agreement with Israel, in return President of Syria, Hafiz Assad (1930-2000), “received U.S. assurances that it considered Israel’s 1981 annexation of the Golan Heights to be illegal and that Security Council Resolution 242 applied to the Golan and the West Bank.”

Syrians, like the Palestinians, would come to find the United States, nor the United Nations, can be trusted to uphold their assurances or adjudicate international law even handedly.

By the late 1990s, Arafat and the PLO, in an attempt to regain legitimacy, began to hold a patchwork of secret meetings with Rabin referred to as The Oslo Processes, that laid the groundwork for the Camp David Summit in July of 2000 and ancillary peace talks. In these meetings the desperate Arafat gave concessions that angered the Palestinian population, and Rabin’s diplomatic efforts to strengthen the PLO in opposition to Hamas angered right-wing Israelis—leading Yigal Amir (b.1970) to

53 Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 415.
54 Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 419.
55 Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 415.
56 Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 415.
57 Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 475.
assassinate Rabin on November 4, 1995.\textsuperscript{58} By 2001 the Clinton Administration (1993-2001) that pushed for the Camp David Summit and ancillary negotiations was replaced by George W. Bush (b.1946), a hawkish neoconservative who “greatly admired [the new Israeli right-wing Prime Minister] Sharon,” and negotiations broke down while violence erupted.\textsuperscript{59}

**Second Intifada 2000-2005**

The Second Intifada was ultimately a much more violent and bloody conflict than the first. The Palestinian population was disillusioned in the lack of progress from negotiations, rebelling against both Arafat and the occupation, and the Israeli government was pushed further to the right, emboldened by renewed support from the United States.\textsuperscript{60} Shireen Abu Akleh rose to prominence covering these violent, tumultuous, and complicated webs of events, necessarily abbreviated here. Jenin, the city Shireen Abu Akleh was ultimately killed in, was a major flashpoint of tension throughout the uprisings.

While a potential peace process was still clinging to life in late 2000, current Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak (b.1942), “had virtually no control over the military. Led by Likud sympathizers, the army’s massive retaliation helped to undermine any chances of reconciliation.”\textsuperscript{61} The uprising began similarly to the first Intifada, Palestinian stone throwers and tire burners were quickly met with Israeli gunfire: between September 28, 2000 to the year’s end 325 Palestinians were killed and roughly 10,600 injured, to thirty-six Israeli deaths and 362 injured.\textsuperscript{62} According to official Israeli military records, it was estimated Palestinians used firearms in “27.6 percent of these demonstrations, whereas Israeli troops invariably used live ammunition and often altered crowd-

\textsuperscript{58} Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 444.
\textsuperscript{59} Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 473.
\textsuperscript{60} Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 485.
\textsuperscript{61} Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 486.
\textsuperscript{62} Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 484.
control rubber bullets to make them more lethal.” This mirrors Israel’s contemporary use of internationally banned “exploding bullets,” detailed later.64

By Sharon’s election in 2001, Palestinian suicide bombings against Israeli settlements became a common form of retaliation to the Israeli soldiers that increasingly harassed, beat, and killed Palestinians for “ambiguous reasons,” most of which were never investigated by the IDF.65 The increase in secular, and even female suicide bombers undermined the religious fundamentalist sect of the opposition’s message, but also demonstrated the widespread discontent amongst a wide swarth of Palestinian society.66 In 2002, Sharon erected a wall up to twenty feet high to divide the West Bank that ostensibly followed the 1967 border, but effectively seized more Palestinian land incorporating illegal Israeli settlements—which the International Court of Justice has ruled violated international law.67 Along with an eventual truce called by Hamas in 2005, the cyclical escalation of violence slowed down.68 From 2000 to early 2006 over 3,300 Palestinians were killed by Israeli forces (while those killed by settlers is unknown) and 1,030 Israelis were killed by Palestinians or Arab Israelis.69

Hamas’ calls for a ceasefire proved strategically useful, for they won a 2005 democratic election of the Palestinian parliamentary—an election the United States and Israeli government-backed but had supported the secular PLO aligned Fatah.70 The United States responded by rejecting the election and

63 Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 485.
65 Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 487.
66 Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 487.
67 Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 488.
68 Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 488.
69 Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 489.
70 Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 499.
In Memoriam

blocked aid to Palestinians. This set the stage for ongoing spats of violence between Palestinians and Israel, especially in Gaza—whose residents were already malnourished and impoverished, now under ever harsher economic sanctions that continue to this day. Israeli policy continues to confiscate Palestinian land throughout the West Bank and East Jerusalem, despite further UNSC Resolutions such as the 2016 Resolution 2334, “Condemning all measures aimed at altering the demographic composition…of the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967…including the construction and expansion of settlements, transfer of Israeli settlers, confiscation of land, demolition of homes, and displacement of Palestinian civilians” as a violation of international humanitarian law. One such displacement campaign in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood, that the UN reaffirmed as a “violation of international law,” escalated into a violent confrontation between Gazan militants and Israeli police forces in May 2021.

**History of Danger for Journalists and Activists in Israel**

Covering the Israeli occupation of Palestine has historically been a dangerous endeavor for journalists and activists. When interviewed by *Time Magazine*, Lina Abu Akleh noted that Shireen’s death is not an isolated incident and referred to a 2018 report by the U.N. Independent Commission of Inquiry that stated, “Israeli forces target civilians, paramedics, and journalists.” American activist Rachel Corrie (1979-2003) was killed on March 16, 2003,

---

71 Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 499.
74 Mansoor, “Niece of Slain Al Jazeera Journalist.”
defending a Palestinian family’s home she had been staying with from demolition to clear the way for further Israeli settlement. Corrie sat defiantly in front of the house, likely assuming her white skin and American citizenship would protect her from the Israeli savagery regularly dispensed to Palestinians. Wearing a bright orange vest and climbing on top of a dirt mound to make herself clearly visible, she was deliberately crushed by an Israeli bulldozer that then backed up, “effectively crushing her twice,”—recorded in broad daylight. In 2022, Rachel Corrie’s parents, Cindy and Craig, shared the Hope and Resilience: Benefit for Palestinian Rights & Direct Aid’s Parrhesia Award with Abu Akleh’s family.

In a little under a month after Corrie’s killing, British photojournalist and activist Tom Hurndall (1981-2004) was fatally shot in the head by an Israeli sniper on April 11, 2003, and succumbed to the trauma the following year. His crime, “according to a first-hand account by the local coordinator of the International Solidarity Movement,” was an attempt to save a young boy and girl from the sniper firing at them. In 2010, Israeli soldiers descended from a helicopter onto the Turkish ship, the Mavi Marmara, destined for Gaza to provide aid to the besieged and impoverished, and promptly killed nine peace activists, including one Turkish American, Furkan Dogan.

---


79 O’Hagan, “Tom Hurndall: a remarkable man’s photographs of the Middle East.”

Beyond individual acts of murder, Israel has been accused of purposely targeting journalistic institutions as a whole. In May of 2021, Israel bombed the offices of the Associated Press and Al Jazeera in Gaza. One year later, Pierre Haski, President of Reporters Without Borders, on the international response to hold Israel accountable for the bombing of the building, said:

There has been no progress, to be honest, that can be spoken of because Israel says it’s the mist of the war. It doesn’t take into account that targeting a media building is considered a war crime and is contradicting every international law resolution that exists, particularly resolution 2222 of the UN Security Council from 2015, which states clearly that journalists should be treated as civilians and therefore cannot be a target in a war.

In this supposed war of 2021, fourteen Israeli civilians and one soldier were killed, while 256 Palestinians were killed and roughly 2,000 were wounded by “hundreds of Israeli air strikes” that also hit “commercial buildings, residential towers and private houses across the Gaza strip, where two million people live.” Only one year later, the IDF killed Shireen, arguably the figurehead of Al Jazeera in Palestine, “known by many as the daughter of Palestine.”

The Committee to Protect Journalists says, twenty-four [journalists], not including Shireen Abu Akleh, have been killed in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory, since 2002. Other press

---

81 Jamjoom, “Who was Al Jazeera’s slain journalist Shireen Abu Akleh?,” 4:20.
82 Jamjoom, “Who was Al Jazeera’s slain journalist Shireen Abu Akleh?, 9:20.
84 Jamjoom, “Who was Al Jazeera’s slain journalist Shireen Abu Akleh?,” 0:15.
freedom advocates have reported even higher numbers while Israel systematically targets journalists, including *Al Jazeera*, has been the finding of several human rights groups.\(^85\)

**Death and Funeral**

Shireen and her colleagues got wind of an IOF raid taking place in the refugee camps of Jenin in the early morning of May 11, 2022, part of the larger Israeli campaign of night-time raids to clear Palestinian encampments and buildings for demolition, called Operation Breakwater.\(^86\) Shireen was quick to jump on the story, despite other suggestions that the lead may not be worth her time; Hatuqa says this zeal was emblematic of Abu Akleh, modest with no “story too small for her.”\(^87\) Video footage from fellow *AJ* journalists and civilians shows that when the journalists arrived, the scene was calm, and they walked slowly down the street from an IOF patrol inside multiple heavy transport vehicles. This was a common practice of the journalists, intended to make themselves known to the soldiers as non-threatening; Hatuqa says of Shireen, she was “always careful, never putting herself, or her team, in harm’s way. She always wore her helmet and blue flak jacket emblazoned with the word “PRESS.”\(^88\) She did everything she was supposed to do as a journalist to mitigate risks while doing her job— but she still didn’t make it out of the Jenin refugee camp alive that day. A bullet, according to eyewitnesses, struck her in the neck, in those few inches that wouldn’t have been covered by

---

\(^{85}\) Jamjoom, “Who was Al Jazeera’s slain journalist Shireen Abu Akleh?,” 3:45.


\(^{87}\) Hatuqa, interview by What Next, *The Killing of Shireen Abu Akleh*.

\(^{88}\) Hatuqa, “Opinion: My Friend Shireen Abu Akleh told the stories no one else wanted to tell.”
her protective gear. Shireen said herself, “I don’t throw myself at death….I search for a safe place to stand and how to protect my crew before worrying about the footage.” On Jenin, the city she unfortunately, lost her life in, Abu Akleh wrote that it was not just “one ephemeral story in my career or even in my personal life…It is the city that can raise my morale and help me fly. It embodies the Palestinian spirit that sometimes trembles and falls but, beyond all expectations, rises to pursue its flights and dreams.”

Video footage shows the moments directly before the shooting remained calm and that the journalists were not provocative or with any individuals hostile to the IOF patrol. It was not until Shireen and three others, in their protective gear clearly marked as journalists, came into view of the IOF convoy that the shooting broke out. *Al Jazeera* and a 3D geomodelling company using aerial drone footage to reconstruct the events demonstrated that from the vantage point of the Israeli convoy, the shooter was determined that whenever someone appeared in his field of vision, he targeted them immediately.

After the first round of shooting, the video showed Shireen laying on the ground while her colleagues hid behind cover and fellow journalist and *AJ* correspondent, Ali al-Samoudi, was shot and hit in the shoulder moments before Akleh, her last words, “Ali has been wounded!” Shooting continued intermittently as any attempts to reach Abu Akleh were met with more targeted fire, which the 3D modeling showed to be a direct response to any visible movement. After a bystander named Sharif was able to pull another reporter and Shireen away from the line of fire, others

---

90 “Al-Jazeera’s Shireen Abu Akleh: pioneering Palestinian reporter.”
91 “Al-Jazeera’s Shireen Abu Akleh: pioneering Palestinian reporter.”
grabbed her and dragged her limp body into a car. Sharif described watching her eyes fluttering as they carried her in what was perhaps her final heartbeats. As they arrived at the hospital, the video shows her colleagues crying out her name in pain while others pleaded desperately with her body to wake up.

Two days after her death, Shireen Abu Akleh’s Christian funeral procession through East Jerusalem brought together thousands in the Occupied West Bank. Masses of mourners were united by the loss of an iconic media figure, perhaps the most prominent and consistent representation of the Palestinian plight. As was the case in life, Shireen’s ability to unite Palestinians, as well as draw attention to the realities of Israeli occupation, was true of her death. A simple funeral procession required a massive show of force by the Israeli police, “beating and kicking pallbearers carrying the coffin that contained the body of the journalist, Shireen Abu Akleh, striking other mourners with batons, and forcing one man to the ground. During the commotion, the pallbearers were pushed backward, causing them to briefly lose control of one end of the coffin.” It would seem that even granting respect in death represented a potential threat to the Israeli state, akin to a post hoc reification of Abu Akleh’s condemnatory reporting. Israeli police justified their actions as a response to mourners chanting “nationalist incitement” and throwing bottles at them. Secretary of State Anthony Blinken (b.1962), supposedly “deeply troubled,” described the Israeli police’s actions as simply “intruding” and failed to firmly condemn the actions. Shireen’s niece, Lina Abu Akleh, says of the funeral, “Shireen wasn’t killed

100 Kingsley, “Killing of Palestinian Journalist: Israeli Police Attack Mourners.”
In Memoriam

once. She was killed twice. Once in Jenin and once in Jerusalem when her funeral was attacked by the Israeli riot police. The way they attacked us was barbaric.”

The assault of her pallbearers outside of a hospital en route to a Christian church exposes contradictions often found rattling around the tin-can-remains of brains riddled with a cognitive and psychic degeneration typical of subscribers to the clash of civilizations myth that so many Westerners, and their leaders, wish to propagate. As United States Representative Rashida Talib (b.1976) noted, calling on the State Department to condemn Israeli brutality, “does being Palestinian make you less American?”

Marginalizing Arab and Palestinian Christian communities, like the one Shireen was a part of, allows Western Christian Evangelicals to evoke little, if any, sympathy for the people ancestrally linked to their prophet; and continue their march towards an apocalyptic prophecy of Jesus’ second coming that neoconservative policymakers have exploited. The history of Christian antisemitism is conveniently dismissed with unrepentant support of a Zionist state that even Israeli rights groups like B’Tselem consider an apartheid “regime of Jewish supremacy from the Jordan River to the Sea.”

102 Mansoor, “Niece of Slain Al Jazeera Journalist.”
In Memoriam

**Investigation**

*Al Jazeera* and eyewitnesses quickly blamed the IDF, claiming that Shireen and the other journalists were targeted by Israel and that her death was an apparent assassination. A fellow *Al Jazeera* reporter present during the shooting, Mujahid Al Saadi, claimed that Shireen was shot in a part of her head under the ear not covered by her helmet, suggesting that with such precision, it was a deliberate shot by a sniper. Independent investigative group, Bellingcat later claimed that Israeli fire was likely responsible and the shooting was “slow and deliberate, suggesting targeting rather than a spray of bullets aimed at another object or person.” *Al Jazeera* filed a claim against Israel at the International Criminal Court (ICC); however, Israel—like the United States—is not a signatory to the ICC, leaving the motion largely symbolic.

Less than three hours after Shireen was killed, The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs posted a video on Twitter that supposedly showed the Palestinian gunmen responsible for the killing, which was then retweeted by then-Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennet (b. 1972), amongst other ranking Israeli officials. However, Israeli human rights group B’Tselem quickly documented the location of the video and reaffirmed it is impossible that the shots fired in the video reached Shireen’s location, as the two were separated by multiple buildings and

---

106 Mujahid Al Saadi, “Shireen Abu Akleh killing: Journalist recounts moment Al Jazeera journalist was shot dead,” Middle East Eye, May 11, 2022, video, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GP-5K4DLtKk&ab_channel=MiddleEastEye.


109 Ahmed, “The Killing of Shireen Abu Akleh: what one morning in the West Bank reveals about the occupation.”
wells. The Israeli military spokesman, former air defense commander Ran Kochav, claimed on the day of the shooting that Abu Akleh had been “filming and working for a media outlet amidst armed Palestinians.” According to Bellingcat, “there is no available footage or imagery that suggests any Palestinian combatants were stationed between the IDF soldiers and Abu Akleh at any stage.” The day Shireen Abu Akleh was killed, then-State Department spokesman, Ned Price (b.1982), suggested her killer should be, “prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law,” and that, “Israelis have the wherewithal and capabilities to conduct a thorough investigation.”

By May 26th, fifteen days after her death, CNN published a finding of “an investigation by CNN [that] offers new evidence—including two videos of the scene of the shooting—that there was no active combat, nor any Palestinian militants, near Abu Akleh in the moments leading up to her death.” Videos obtained by CNN, corroborated by testimony from eight eyewitnesses, an audio forensic analyst and an explosive weapons expert, suggest that Abu Akleh was shot dead in a targeted attack by Israeli forces.” In the next month, the Washington Post and the New York Times concluded that the IDF likely shot her and that there were no Palestinian militants in the area or exchanges of gunfire prior to

---

111 Zeena Saifi et al, “‘They were shooting directly at journalists’: New evidence suggests Shireen Abu Akleh was killed in targeted attack by Israeli forces,” CNN World, CNN, last updated May 26, 2022, https://www.cnn.com/2022/05/24/middleeast/shireen-abu-akleh-jenin-killing-investigation-cmd-intl/index.html.
112 Bellingcat, “Unravelling the Killing of Shireen Abu Akleh.”
113 Harb, “Timeline: How US stance shifted on killing of Shireen Abu Akleh.”
114 Saifi, “‘They were shooting directly at journalists’: New evidence suggests Shireen Abu Akleh was killed in targeted attack by Israeli forces.”
115 Saifi, “‘They were shooting directly at journalists.’”
her killing.\textsuperscript{116} On June 7th, when confronted by journalist Abby Martin, Blinken called for an “independent, credible” investigation, but only two days later, a State Department email backtracked on the independent angle, only mentioning a “credible” investigation.\textsuperscript{117} June 24th, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights concluded that Abu Akleh was killed by the IDF, claiming, “It is deeply disturbing that Israeli authorities have not conducted a criminal investigation.”\textsuperscript{118}

As evidence piled up against Israel’s initial claims, they changed their stance and later accepted the possibility that an IDF soldier could have accidentally hit Shireen but maintained plausible deniability, insisted that there was an “exchange of gunfire,” and refused to pursue criminal charges of any kind against any of the soldiers involved.\textsuperscript{119} The IDF eventually opened an investigation, but \textit{Al Jazeera} maintains that the delay of over 100 days “is intended to evade the criminal responsibility it bears for the killings of Shireen Abu Akleh.”\textsuperscript{120} On September 5, 2022, the IDF announced that “it is not possible to unequivocally determine the source of the gunfire which hit and killed Ms. Abu Akleh. However, there is a high possibility that Ms. Abu Akleh was accidentally hit by IDF gunfire fired toward suspects identified as armed Palestinian gunmen.”\textsuperscript{121} The conclusion leaves open the possibility that Abu Akleh was hit “by bullets fired by

\begin{itemize}
\item[117] Harb, “Timeline: How US stance shifted on killing of Shireen Abu Akleh.”
\item[118] Rubin, “U.N. rights body says Israeli soldiers killed American journalist in West Bank.”
\item[119] Rubin, “U.N. rights body says Israeli soldiers killed American journalist in West Bank.”
\item[120] Rubin, “U.N. rights body says Israeli soldiers killed American journalist in West Bank.”
\item[121] Rubin, “U.N. rights body says Israeli soldiers killed American journalist in West Bank.”
\end{itemize}
armed Palestinian gunmen toward the direction of the area in which she was present.”

The vague language potentially blaming Palestinians for the shooting, wherein all other investigations point to the contrary, is a gross manipulation of language and fact that will allow Israel to point to the finding as inconclusive to coldly brush off this killing when (if) any future condemnation is allowed to be levied against Israel. That is if the United States doesn’t block international inquiries, or Israeli politicians and lobbying groups don’t cry antisemitism at criticism of a sovereign nation-state, as they habitually do. Britannica refers to “semite” as a language grouping that “came to include Arabs” among others—holding nearly two million Semitic people under draconian siege in the Gaza Strip, often referred to as the world’s largest open-air prison, is interestingly not considered such an instance of antisemitism by Zionist forces, though it resembles the worst forms of it Europe ever produced in forms of racialized ghettos.

The same day it was issued, September 5, 2022, the United States “welcome[d] Israel’s review of this tragic event,” and the next day dropped Price’s initial demand for prosecution. Shireen Abu Akleh’s family rejected the IDF investigation’s findings, and claimed Israel:

Refused to take responsibility for murdering Shireen, and called for an independent investigation. They claim the report “tried to obscure the truth and avoid responsibility for killing Shireen Abu Akleh, our aunt, sister, best friend, journalist, and a Palestinian American…We’ve known for over four months now that an Israeli soldier shot and killed Shireen as countless

---

122 Rubin, “U.N. rights body says Israeli soldiers killed American journalist in West Bank.”
investigations conducted by CNN, the Associated Press, the New York Times, Al Jazeera, Al-Haq, B’tselem, the United Nations, and others have all concluded. And yet, as expected, Israel has refused to take responsibility for murdering Shireen. Our family is not surprised by this outcome since it’s obvious to anyone that Israeli war criminals cannot investigate their own crimes. However, we remain deeply hurt, frustrated, and disappointed.125

While the family called for an investigation by the United States (which they call “the bare minimum the U.S. government should do for one of their own citizens”), the State Department spokesperson, Ned Price, welcomed the dubious IDF review—childish or malevolent enough to believe the offending party can hold itself to account.126 While Price talks out of both sides of his reptilian mouth, accepting the IDF finding but claiming that “not only was Shireen an American citizen, she was a fearless reporter whose journalism and pursuit of truth earned her the respect of audiences around the world,” the family remains committed to justice, “we will continue to demand that the U.S. government follow through with its stated commitments to accountability.”127 But Price only offers the family “thoughts” while the United States government offers Israel a near-endless supply of weaponry and aid.128

On the anniversary of Shireen Abu Akleh’s death, May 11, 2023, Daniel Hagari, an Israeli army spokesman, told CNN, “I think it’s an opportunity for me to say here we are very sorry of the death of the late Shireen Abu Akleh.”129 Note the passive

---

125 Saifi, “‘They were shooting directly at journalists’.”
126 Saifi, “‘They were shooting directly at journalists’.”
127 Saifi, “‘They were shooting directly at journalists’.”
128 Saifi, “‘They were shooting directly at journalists’.”
language, apologizing for the death without any mention of how she died and no acknowledgment of the previous lies spread by ranking Israeli officials. Lina Abu Akleh, from outside the United States Capitol in Washington D.C., rejected this, “To be very clear: The Israeli army did not admit or apologize for murdering Shireen. To us, we don’t consider that an apology…It’s honestly a slap in the face to Shireen’s legacy and to our family. An apology—which that was not—is not accountability.”

**International Hypocrisy**

Pierre Haski, President of Reporters Without Borders, said on May 15, 2022, to *Al Jazeera* that “without an international presence there will be no accountability, we have to be very clear about that…for the past twenty years for the thirty-five journalists who have been killed…there has been no accountability, never, not for a single case.” Haski also notes interesting disparities in the coverage of the Russian-Ukrainian war that began in February of 2022. The differences in response to Shireen Abu Akleh’s death and Brent Renaud (1971-2022), another American journalist killed in Ukraine, demonstrate the overt biases against Palestine and in favor of Israel. Headlines from *The Guardian* directly mention that Brent Renaud was a “U.S. film-maker” who was “reportedly killed by Russian forces,” while Shireen Abu Akleh was a “journalist in the West Bank” that *Al Jazeera* “accuses Israeli forces of killing;” authoritatively condemning Russia for killing an American but does not even mention Shireen was a United States

---

130 Harb, “‘Upsetting’: Shireen Abu Akleh family rejects Israel’s ‘sorry’.”
131 Jamjoom, “Who was Al Jazeera’s slain journalist Shireen Abu Akleh?,” 4:40-8:00.
132 Jamjoom, “Who was Al Jazeera’s slain journalist Shireen Abu Akleh?,” 8:00.
In Memoriam

Citizen.\textsuperscript{134} The New York Times ran headlines that read “American journalist, is killed” for Renaud, and for Shireen, “Palestinian Journalist, Dies, Aged 51,” again rejecting to mention she is American while suggesting the bullet that cut down Abu Akleh was a natural occurrence, akin to an American keeling over from heart failure after a life of Big Macs, oxycontin, and supersized Coca Cola.\textsuperscript{135} As Jamil Dakwar, a Palestinian American human rights lawyer that advised the Corrie family, stated, “Had it been any other foreign government, there would already be a Shireen Abu Akleh and Rachel Corrie Accountability Act.”\textsuperscript{136}

These headlines demonstrate media bias in favor of American allies and against those branded enemy states, in this case, Russia. The continued deference of American leaders and media to Israel is evidence of blatant hypocrisy regarding the supposedly sacrosanct nature of human rights—which is unfortunately only a concern when committed by United States branded enemy states. Russia’s criminality of homosexuality is often maligned, while the United States has long allied itself with Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, where homosexuality is punishable by death. Israel is free to annex Palestinian and Syrian territory, but Russia’s claims on Crimea represent a supposedly unprecedented attack on the UN charter?

The ICC moved relatively quickly to issue an arrest warrant for Vladimir Putin (b.1952) over accusations of “unlawful deportation of people, in particular children” in the war in Ukraine, while similar accusations could be levied against Israel’s displacement of Palestinians against multiple UNSC Resolutions it is not similarly condemned.\textsuperscript{137} The American elite responsible for

\textsuperscript{134} Al Bawaba, “Shireen Abu Akleh and Brent Renaud: Same Death, Different Headlines.”
\textsuperscript{135} Al Bawaba, “Shireen Abu Akleh and Brent Renaud: Same Death, Different Headlines.”
\textsuperscript{136} Speri, “Israeli Forces Keep Killing Americans While U.S. Officials Give Them a Pass.”
\textsuperscript{137} Al Jazeera, “All you need to know about the ICC’s arrest warrant for Putin,” Al Jazeera, March 17, 2023,
worse conflicts, in terms of deaths and length, are also free of consequence. Republican President George H.W. Bush’s (1924-2018) relentless bombing campaign of Iraq in 1991 wrought “a rather highly urbanized and mechanized society [to] a pre-industrial age nation,” according to a UN survey.138 Or consider his demon spawn, George W. Bush’s (b.1946) 2003 war in Iraq which, according to “Senior U.S Defense Intelligence Agency officers,” killed more civilians in its first day than the Ukrainian war killed in one month.139 Americans remain self-righteous, “more likely to accept official justifications, when they hear that civilians were killed by U.S. forces or American weapons,” due to controlled media that shows “corpses in Ukraine and the wails of their loved ones, but shields us from equally disturbing images of people killed by U.S. or allied forces.”140

Ex-Central Intelligence Agency and imperial cleanup man, Ned Price, who so graciously offered thoughts to the Abu Akleh family one year earlier, stuck the knife of lawfare into the back of those he’d later claim sympathy for. In response to the ICC declaring jurisdiction to investigate claims in the Palestinian West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza, Price was clear, “we do not believe the Palestinians qualify as a sovereign state, and therefore are not qualified to obtain membership as a state, or participate as a state in international entities, or conferences, including the ICC.”141 Months after offering his thoughts, on December 6th,


139 Benjamin, “Will Russia’s war crimes in Ukraine convince the U.S. to consider its recent past?”

140 Benjamin, “Will Russia’s war crimes in Ukraine convince the U.S. to consider its recent past?”

141 Henry Austin, Adela Suliman, “U.S. has ‘serious concerns’ about International Criminal Court decision on Israeli war crimes probe,” NBC News, last updated February 6, 2021,
Price affirmed the United States’ opposition to Al Jazeera’s push for the ICC to investigate Akleh’s death, “We oppose it in this case… We maintain our longstanding objections to the ICC’s investigation into the Palestinian situation.”  

It is interesting, as previously mentioned, neither the United States nor Israel are members of the ICC, yet rather than demonstrating some lower status apparent in the case of Palestinians, who are excluded because they are not a sovereign state, it appears the United States and Israeli exclusion from the ICC marks a level of supranational dominance and control.

Price’s words continue to illuminate the situation, “We have serious concerns about the ICC’s attempts to exercise its jurisdiction over Israeli personnel. The United States has always taken the position that the court’s jurisdiction should be reserved for countries that consent to it, or are referred to by the UN Security council.”  

This makes the earlier suggestion hardly subtext. The idea the ICC should only be reserved to prosecute those who sign up to it (excluding the United States and Israel) or those condemned by the UNSC (which the United States has unlimited veto power over and unrepentantly uses to defend Israel) but can be dictated to by the non-member United States, is a clear indication that these international bodies are not even-handed adjudicators. To make this perfectly clear, the “Hague Invasion Act,” formally known as the American Servicemembers Protection Act of 2002, “authorizes the use of military force to liberate any American or citizen of a U.S.-allied country [emphasis added] being held by the court… In addition, the law… restricts U.S.


142 Harb, “Timeline: How U.S. stance shifted on killing of Shireen Abu Akleh.”
participation in United Nations peacekeeping unless the United States obtains immunity from prosecution.\textsuperscript{144}

Well aware the consequences for inhumanity are beyond them, whispers from the NATO allies ponder the potential for depleted uranium rounds to soon be shipped to Ukraine to assist against the Russians—dubious if not criminal when considering the lasting effects of these radioactive rounds on future children (generations of horribly disfigured and defected infants—Google search ‘Fallujah birth defects’).\textsuperscript{145} Forgetting pathos, “The United Nations classifies Depleted Uranium munitions as illegal Weapons of Mass Destruction because of their long-term impact on the land over which they are used and the long-term health problems they cause.”\textsuperscript{146} As described by a statement from Iraq Veterans Against War:

Depleted Uranium (DU) is a toxic, radioactive heavy metal that is the waste byproduct of the uranium enrichment process when producing nuclear weapons and uranium for nuclear reactors. Because this radioactive waste is plentiful and 1.7 times more dense than lead, the United States government uses DU in munitions/ammunition, which are extremely effective at piercing armored vehicles. However, every round of DU ammunition

\textsuperscript{145} The Associated Press, “What are depleted uranium munitions? U.K. plans to provide them to Ukraine and Russia isn’t happy,” \textit{CBC News}, March 23, 2023, \url{https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/ukraine-depleted-uranium-weapons-1.6788364#-:text=The%20British%20Defence%20Ministry%20on%20Monday%20confirmed%20it%20to%20break%20through%20a%20stalemate%20in%20the%20east}.
leaves a residue of DU dust on everything it hits, contaminating the surrounding area with toxic waste that has a half-life of 4.5 billion years, the age of our solar system, and turns every battlefield and firing range into a toxic waste site that poisons everyone in such areas. DU dust can be inhaled, ingested, or absorbed through scratches in the skin. DU is linked to DNA damage, cancer, birth defects, and multiple other problems.\textsuperscript{147}

The children of Fallujah must be jumping for joy that Ukrainians will soon be blessed with such similar afflictions by their Western saviors and rejoicing that the evil Putin will be arrested by the same international institution that the United States threatened to invade if any American were to be tried for their myriad of war crimes.

Of course, the United States is not alone in this brand of bioterror; Israel deployed depleted uranium munitions during its ceaseless bombardment of Syria, as reported by \textit{The Jerusalem Post}.\textsuperscript{148} Israel also openly used other chemical agents such as white phosphorus, as Human Rights Watch documents in its scathing article, \textit{“Rain of Fire: Israel’s Unlawful Use of White Phosphorus in Gaza,”} reporting:

Their [chemical] use in densely populated neighborhoods, including downtown Gaza City, violated international humanitarian law (the laws of war) which requires taking all feasible precautions to avoid civilian harm and prohibits indiscriminate attacks. The unlawful use of white phosphorus was neither incidental nor accidental. It was repeated

\textsuperscript{147} Swanson, “New Study Documents Depleted Uranium Impacts on Children in Iraq.”

over time and in different locations…the IDF’s repeated firing of air-burst white phosphorus shells from 155mm artillery into densely populated areas was indiscriminate and indicates the commission of war crimes.\textsuperscript{149}

Furthermore, an Israeli professor, Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian, the Lawrence D. Biele Chair in Law at Israel’s Hebrew University, confirmed that Israel routinely uses the captive Palestinian population as a testing ground for new weapons.\textsuperscript{150} Israel’s practices of “surveying, imprisoning, torturing, and killing can be used as a laboratory for states, arms, companies, and security agencies to market their technologies as ‘combat proven.’”\textsuperscript{151} Beyond weaponry and overt population control, “Israeli occupation authorities issue permits to large pharmaceutical firms, which then carry out tests on Palestinian prisoners.”\textsuperscript{152}

\textbf{Conclusion}

As seen in Abby Martin’s documentary film \textit{Gaza Fights For Freedom}, detailing the Great March of Return in 2018, an Israeli sniper joyously celebrates, shouting, “Wow, what a video! Yes! That son of a bitch, what a video! Of course I filmed it. Wow, hit him in the head…What a legendary video,” moments after shooting a Palestinian child behind a fence, it begs the question

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{150} Kathryn Shihadah, “Israeli prof: Israel tests weapons on Palestinian kids, tests drugs on prisoners,” imec.org, International Middle East Center, March 2, 2020, \url{https://imemc.org/article/israeli-prof-israel-tests-weapons-on-palestinian-kids-tests-drugs-on-prisoners/}.
\item \textsuperscript{151} Shihadah, “Israeli prof: Israel tests weapons on Palestinian kids.”
\item \textsuperscript{152} Shihadah, “Israeli prof: Israel tests weapons on Palestinian kids.”
\end{itemize}
what kind of remorse such an occupying force is capable of.\textsuperscript{153} As the documentary shows, the entire Great March of Return was typified by Israeli snipers firing nearly indiscriminately at Palestinians, often using illegal rounds referred to as expanding bullets—prohibited by the 1899 Hague Declaration because, as \textit{Vice} puts it:

They are fucking horrible: expanding on impact to increase the size of the wound, leaking those wounds of their blood more rapidly and devastating their internal organs. Use of them is listed as a war crime in the Statute of the International Criminal Court, but I suppose we should know by now that the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) are above little things like worrying about war crimes.\textsuperscript{154}

If a member of the occupation force that repeatedly refuses to take responsibility or investigate its actions will scream like an overjoyed child getting a puppy on Christmas after sniping a Palestinian child in the head, the half-hearted apologies and thoughts given like pulling fingernails over Shireen’s death do not seem genuine. Perhaps the crocodile tears would appear more genuine if the highly militarized Israeli police force did not assault Shireen Abu Akleh’s pallbearers and tear gas her mourners on their way to her resting place. If ranking members of the Israeli government did not lie in a coordinated fashion to blame Palestinians and leave the backdoor open for the potential for future histories to reference a dubious investigation conducted by the offending party that nearly every other investigation contradicted.

When asked what she hopes Shireen’s legacy will be, Lina

\textsuperscript{153} \textit{Gaza Fights For Freedom}, directed by Abby Martin (2019; United States: Empire Files, 2019), DVD.

\textsuperscript{154} Evans, “Israeli Soldiers Are Allegedly Killing Palestinians with Horrible Illegal Bullets.”
Abu Akleh responded:

She stood for truth, peace, and justice. Her voice will continue to resonate in Palestine, in the Arab world, and abroad. She was a human being before she was a journalist. She humanized the Palestinians; she took her time to understand and listen to them because she was also part of that struggle for freedom. She carried all their voices, she entered every single village, city, refugee camp.\textsuperscript{155}

\textsuperscript{155} Mansoor, “Niece of Slain Al Jazeera Journalist Shireen Abu Akleh.”
Bibliography


Bellingcat. “Unravelling the Killing of Shireen Abu Akleh.” 
Bellingcat, May 14, 2022. 
https://www.bellingcat.com/news/mena/2022/05/14/unraveling-the-killing-of-shireen-abu-akleh/


B’Tselem. “A Regime of Jewish Supremacy from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea: This is Apartheid.” B’Tselem 
The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, January 12, 2021. 
https://www.btselem.org/publications/fulltext/202101_this_is_apartheid.


In Memoriam


Jamjoom, Mohammad. “Who was Al Jazeera’s Slain Journalist Shireen Abu Akleh?.” Al Jazeera English. Video, 
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YQ2VDJ9W6qs&t=271s&ab_channel=AlJazeeraEnglish

Jpost.com Staff. “Israel Used Depleted Uranium Shells in Syria.” 
The Jerusalem Post, May 6, 2013. 


https://theintercept.com/2021/05/11/not-fine-video-ultranationalist-frenzy-jerusalem-unsettling/.


Saadi, Al Mujahid. “Shireen Abu Akleh Killing: Journalist Recounts Moment Al Jazeera Journalist was Shot Dead.” *Middle East Eye*. May 11, 2022. Video, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GP5K4DLtKk&ab_channel=MiddleEastEye](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GP5K4DLtKk&ab_channel=MiddleEastEye).


Author Bio

Devin Gillen is currently finishing his first year in California State University, San Bernardino’s history department Master of Arts program. He hopes to graduate by this time next year in 2024. After this Devin plans to make a living through some mixture of education at a community college level, substitute teaching, publishing as an editor and author or journalist, and artistic endeavors. He is primarily interested in United States foreign policy, particularly from the Cold War to the present with a focus on “Third World” nations. Through his writing and future education, he hopes to spread awareness to Americans of the extreme suffering their taxpayer dollars finance across the globe. Prior to COVID restrictions, Devin planned to create a zine of independent art and essays on United States-backed historical atrocities, and other geopolitical realities often ignored in history classes, to hand out at local DIY backyard shows. After graduating Devin hopes to pick this idea back up with dreams of turning it into a semi-official publication.