

Ilan Pappé

by Malcolm Levitt

On Friday 24th February the university hosted seminar by Ilan Pappé, the noted Israeli historian, academic and political activist. Dr. Pappé received prominence, some would say notoriety, in the UK by his championing of the boycott of Israeli goods and institutions, including academic institutions, on the grounds of its occupation of Palestinian lands and its internal policies towards non-Jewish inhabitants of Israel. The academic boycott was briefly adopted by the AUT (Association of University Teachers), a move which attracted widespread attention, until it was rescinded some months later.

The seminar by Dr. Pappé was well-attended, especially by members of the Islamic community. Ilan Pappé has a relaxed and non-confrontational style, and a cheeky sense of humor which glittered throughout his presentation, despite the gravity of the subject matter. The result was a wonderfully informative and inspiring couple of hours, which left many of those present with a remarkable sense of optimism about this most famously intractable of conflicts, despite all of the horrendous obstacles.

The report below is my own recollection of this event. Although I have tried for accuracy, this report may contain inadvertent misrepresentations, for which I take full responsibility.

Dr. Pappé used the stories of two different buildings to focus his presentation of the history of Israel. The first building, called the “white house”, is located in Tel Aviv. He described the attractive modernist architecture of this building, and then related what happened there shortly before Israel’s declaration of independence in 1948. A certain room in this building hosted a series of meetings, at which Israel’s future first president, David Ben-Gurion, as well as many other prominent Israeli politicians, such as Moshe Dayan, were present. It was at these meetings that the infamous “Plan Dalet” or “Plan D” was drawn up. This plan concerned the expulsion of the Arab population from the part of Palestine that was to become the Jewish state. In other words, Plan D described a strategy for the ethnic cleansing of Palestine.

Dr. Pappé proceeded to relate how this plan was implemented during and after Israel’s war of Independence in 1948. He brought home, with a few well-chosen words, what it means in practice



The War Against Napoleon:

Special Collections Gallery, Hartley Library

by Chris Woolgar

The conflicts that engulfed Europe between 1792 and 1815 need some explanation, for their course was far from inevitable and their consequences far-reaching. They brought war on a global scale, in a manner that was unprecedented; they played on traditional rivalries, such as that between England and other European powers, particularly France; in their initial stages, they were strongly inflected with an ideological component, a counter to revolution and the Terror; they focused on economic interests on a worldwide compass; and their pattern for nearly two decades was strongly influenced by the ambition of one man, Napoleon Bonaparte. These years brought pressing questions to governments across Europe. How might national interests be protected? How could war on this scale be conducted? How could it be won or brought to a close? And how could a new European order be fashioned at its end? The latest in the series of exhibitions in the Hartley Library’s Special Collections Gallery addresses these points through documents touching those aspects of the struggle in which Britain was involved.

Although it was prominent in British national consciousness, the impact of the war on Britain was rarely local. Involvement centred principally on a contest fought at sea; in Britain’s colonies and those of her European rivals; and, from 1808 onwards, in the experiences of her armed forces on the

to expel one half of the population of an entire country by force.

Dr. Pappé then told the story of another building, called the “green house”. This building is also in Tel Aviv, and is now on the campus of Tel Aviv university. This is a grand old house which was once the home of the sheik of a Palestinian village. It is now used as the restaurant of the university, and apparently has an excellent menu (here Dr. Pappé could not resist a jibe at the cuisine offered by comparable UK institutions). It is the only house from this village which was left standing by the new Jewish state. The name of this extinguished village lives on, in garbled form, in the name used on the menus of this restaurant. Few academics or students give a moment’s thought to the origins of this building, despite its obvious Arab architectural features.

Pappé used these houses and their history as metaphors for the crimes perpetrated by the Jewish state in its infancy and the wilful suppression of their memory.

Dr. Pappé is very unusual amongst commentators and historians of the Israel/Palestine conflict because he concentrates with great clarity and consistency on the root of the conflict — the ethnic cleansing of the Arab inhabitants by the nascent Jewish state in 1948 — and draws political conclusions accordingly.

His primary political conclusion is that no lasting progress towards peace is possible without seriously addressing the crimes perpetrated against Palestinians in 1948 and especially, without properly addressing the refugee problem. This is where Pappé parts company with most commentators on the Israeli/Palestine conflict, even those who are sharply critical of Israel’s current policies. Pappé does not accept the premise (implicit in the Oslo accords) that the refugees will somehow become irrelevant if Israel withdraws from the occupied territories and a Palestinian state comes into existence on a fraction of historic Palestine.

Personally, I think Pappé is absolutely right. The concept of a Jewish state is surely inextricable from ethnic cleansing. Even now, Israel is obsessed with the “demographic problem” — how to ensure a Jewish racial majority for the foreseeable future. Without the

racial priorities of Israel, it is not possible to understand the unilateral withdrawal from Gaza and the construction of a wall with fingers extending into the West Bank encompassing the major Jewish settlements. Pappé described the shame and outrage he felt when a law was passed in the Knesset (Israel’s parliament) which permits the forceful separation of families resident in Israel, if one of the marriage partners was born in the Occupied Territories, and the other is an Israeli citizen. This law is only applied to Arabs. Under it, men, women and children are torn away from their loved ones and expelled from the country. Bizarrely, such families are not even allowed to reunite in the Occupied Territories, since Israel does not permit Israeli citizens to reside in the Occupied Territories (unless they are Jews living in settlements).

Pappé argues with great consistency that critics of Israel who demand an end to the military occupation by Israel of neighbouring Arab lands are misguided. Even if Israel withdrew its military from every inch of territory conquered in 1967, the basic problem would remain — namely the ethnic cleansing of the Arab population in 1948, the creation thereby of millions of stateless refugees, and the status of Israel as an explicitly Jewish state, with its unavoidable racist consequences. A “two-state solution”, will only temporarily extend the existence of a Jewish state consisting of a self-imposed ghetto behind protective walls. This “ghetto state” will be permanently obsessed with its racial purity, and will be constitutionally unable to attain even an approximation of peace with its neighbours, the victims of ethnic cleansing, and their descendants. This is not a desirable future scenario, even for Jews.

Pappé proposes a single state for all the inhabitants of Palestine. He envisages a future in which all of the inhabitants of Palestine will enjoy equal rights, irrespective of their national or racial origin.

There was an extended question-and-answer session after Pappé’s presentation. This very interesting session threw up a few surprises.

One of the Palestinian Arabs who was present related his own pain and frustration of being denied

access to the lands and property for which his family still own the deeds. He and many other Palestinians in the audience applauded Pappé for his consistency, clarity and courage. They were surprised and encouraged to encounter a Jew and an Israeli who has the moral courage to identify the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians as the root of the conflict, and who is not making a false offer of peace based on an avoidance of the primary issue.

Pappé was asked to clarify his view of the holocaust. He replied that the holocaust was rather unusual in the sense that it was a massive atrocity which *has* generally been reported accurately by historians and politicians, unlike many comparable events. He went on to indicate that the effect of the holocaust on Jewish thinking has had two opposing influences: on the one hand, it has sharpened Jewish perceptions of injustice (he cited the strong participation of Jews in the American civil rights movement and the South African anti-apartheid struggle); on the other hand, it has strengthened a fearful and suspicious attitude to the non-Jewish world, and its memory is being used to justify atrocities committed by Jews. Unfortunately the second effect predominates at the current time.

Pappé was asked about his own experiences. He related briefly the attempts by the University of Haifa to expel him, which were (temporarily) foiled under the pressure of publicity. His position remains precarious and he is subject to some physical threats. Nevertheless he made very clear that any of his inconveniences and insecurities are trivial compared to those of his Palestinian colleagues. He made it clear that as a Jew and an Israeli he is able to adopt a public position which would mean an instant long-term prison sentence and probable torture for an Arab Israeli.

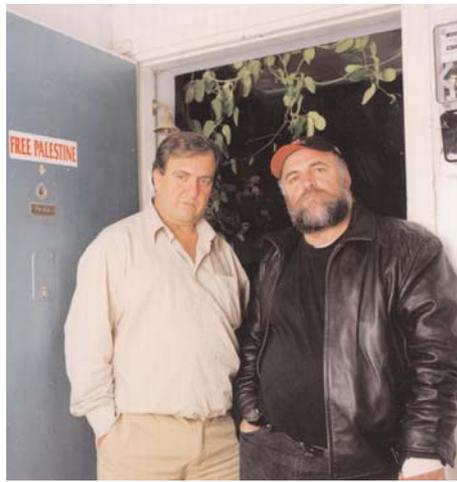
One of the most interesting exchanges, from my point of view, came when he was asked whether a one-state solution was not completely unrealistic. He replied by saying that in fact, the situation on the ground is already a one-state solution, in the sense that Israel controls militarily every square inch of the land of Palestine. He argued that the distance from the current situation to a single, secular, non-

racist, state is actually much less than to a “two-state solution” which would require much more radical changes on the military and political side. In his view, the two-state solution has always been unfeasible and remote, and has become even more so now, due to the massive Jewish settlement of the “occupied territories” and the hopeless fragmentation of the Palestinian areas by the “security wall”.

Pappe was asked to explain Zionism. He replied with a short history of Zionism stating that it initially had the characteristics of a national liberation struggle but soon became transformed into a colonialist and racist enterprise.

Pappe was asked why he lives in Israel and whether he could not achieve more from outside that country. He appeared to be quite astonished by this question. He replied that he loved the land and the people (of all races) even if he abhorred the state. He also made it clear that he feels he is achieving a lot within Israel. He mentioned the bilingual institutions, such as child-care centres and schools, that he has helped set up. None of this would have been possible from outside Israel.

For me, the most surprising (and wonderful) aspects of Pappe’s presentation was his cautious optimism. He stressed that he is by no means alone in his views within Israel, both on the Jewish and the non-Jewish side. He mentioned



Rami Elhanan, an Israeli living in Jerusalem, and Ghazi Briegeith, a Palestinian living in Hebron, met through the Parents’ Circle — a group of bereaved families supporting reconciliation and peace. Rami’s 14-year-old daughter was killed by a suicide bomber in 1997; Ghazi’s brother was killed at a checkpoint in 2000.

several times the “buds” of change appearing throughout civil society, even if they are still not manifest at the level of official or “reported” politics. These “buds” are growing everywhere, but they must be nurtured so that, when the right time comes, they will bloom. He feels passionately that these “buds” must receive international support in order to develop, and that the boycott of Israeli institutions (including academic institutions) by individuals is the proper means for other people

in the world to express that support since conventional political processes have stagnated and become utterly unrepresentative.

He made it very clear that the boycott is necessary, since nothing positive will happen if Israel is left to its own devices.

Ilan Pappe said many other things, but the aspects which stayed with me most were his optimism, his humour, his honesty, and his plain common sense.

Before this event, the organizers received an email from an honorary fellow of the Parkes Institute for Jewish/non-Jewish Relations, containing the following statement: “I must express my dismay that SOTON is prepared to give Ilan Pappe a public platform”. I do not know if the writer of this email attended Ilan Pappe’s talk. It would be interesting, in any case, if he/she, or anyone else, would reply to this article by explaining to the readers of Viewpoint precisely what it is they find so repellent in the views of this exemplary humanist.

Ilan Pappe has published the following books:

“The Modern Middle East”, Routledge, 2005.

“A History of Modern Palestine: One Land, Two Peoples”, Cambridge University Press, 2003.

“The Making of the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1947-1951”, Tauris, 1994.

◀ continued from page 1 :: *The War Against Napoleon*

Continent, notably in the Iberian Peninsula, but also in Germany, the Low Countries and in France itself. Featured in the exhibition are the six-year battle for control of Spain and Portugal, as well as aspects of the war worldwide, from Jena to Java, and Montevideo to Moscow, and its conclusion at Waterloo. If the denouement is well-known, the detail of its consequences is less appreciated — yet there are present-day resonances to many of the issues. How long should France be occupied? How many troops would be required? How might stability be brought again to both France and to Europe? And how should the defeated and the guilty be treated?

As the exhibition demonstrates, resolutions to all these questions taxed contemporaries.

The exhibition runs from 8 May 2006 to 23 June 2006, and from 10 July 2006 to 28 July 2006, Monday to Friday, 1000-1600 hours. The University’s Third Wellington Congress, 10-13 July, will include some forty papers, many focused on this conflict. The programme and further details are on the Congress website, at <http://www.archives.lib.soton.ac.uk/>

Engraving (page 1) is the abdication of Napoleon at Fontainebleau, April 1814, from J.G.Lockhart’s biography of the Emperor, published in 1829. ♦

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Do Men Fear the Urge for Women to Dominate the Engineering Industry?

by Josephine Ekman
[BSc Computer Science]

There are societies and programmes which exist specifically for women who are members of some of the most male-dominated industries including Engineering, Science and Mathematics. These groups aim to unite women who are a minority in these disciplines and network on an academic level, discuss current technological advancements and raise awareness of the ever so noticeable distinction between genders and their individual abilities to perform and succeed.



From a female perspective, women are not as highly looked upon in engineering as their male colleagues are. Despite the dramatic improvement in society's outlook towards women over the past decade, women are still discouraged from following engineering careers in many parts of the underdeveloped world. Furthermore, in the more developed world, those women who do decide to become engineers, scientists or mathematicians are only minute sector of the engineering society for both men and women combined. They are even more of a minority among their fellow women, who opt for more humanity based disciplines such as literature, art, languages, or history.

This poses many questions: first, are women predisposed to enjoy and succeed in fields that are non-technical, or second, does our society encourage a stereotype where women only belong in such fields deterring

women from choosing an engineering cohort to fit into this stereotype? It is quite possible that society has burdened women with a sense of "technophobia," believing that only men can comprehend or even succeed in this industry. These questions and many more have been the centre of discussions in groups throughout the country, and in particular with the ECSS Women, THEANO, and BCS Women groups at the University of Southampton.



Another interesting observation among women in engineering is that only a small percentage make themselves known and approach members of the women in engineering societies. Thus, we could categorize women in engineering into two categories: those who stand up for their gender and express themselves as women in a male dominated industry, and those who don't — those who possibly believe that women are inferior to men and choose not to challenge the "gender issue," or perhaps they are satisfied with the situation and do not see a problem as such.

Additionally, what do men think about this revolution of women trying to be heard? Each time we hold "women only" events or luncheons to discuss the female role in a male dominated discipline, our male colleagues question our intentions. They question why we have to hold "women only" events and why men are not invited, to the point where they threaten to hold "men only" events. Moreover, they tend to stand outside of the rooms, looking in to see what is going on, puzzled expressions on their faces, wondering why so many women are gathered together, and for what reason? Perhaps they have never seen so many women in the same room before or maybe they fear what women are capable of: anything from conspiring against our male counterparts to dominating an industry that men are so proud of. When in actual fact, women are merely meeting to network with other

women and improve education of the engineering industry to encourage more women to join, issues that are better discussed in isolation from men. Women want to be heard and to voice their opinions with the support of other women in similar situations. This need for seclusion is also a cultural necessity, for women who are afraid, nervous, shy, or against their culture to speak in public when men are present.

This article introduces many unanswered questions and opens doors to countless possibilities, but it is all a simple observation without factual evidence to prove anything. It does remain true, however, the distinction between genders in a world where technology is part of our everyday lives, yet is stereotypes to "men only." I invite you, the reader, to address these questions and even refute any of my comments. Email me with your responses at je203@ecs.soton.ac.uk, or write to *Viewpoint* at view@soton.ac.uk.

Letters

Modern Mercenaries

by Nick Misoulis:

Viewpoint 450, 20 March 2006

Dear Editor

The message in Nick Misoulis' article on *Modern Mercenaries* (*Viewpoint 450*) appears to be that:

A modern mercenary can be defined as any corporation that does shady deals to expand its corporate reach — for example, a corporate 'information provider' that specifically withholds information in order to enhance its transnational status.

He cites four US TNCs, that have been caught aiding and abetting the communist government of China to prevent access to information on the Internet, as a singularly heinous example. It may even, "cost them a lot in terms of lost business in the Western world, in years to come".

The fact that TNCs (and the US, UK and many other governments) routinely suppress embarrassing information, and frequently hire mercenaries for murderous activities, is apparently a secondary matter. Perhaps it is, to quote him out of context, all simply a "fundamental element of a market economy".

Roy Butterfield

Nick Misoulis replies

I'm not sure what Mr. Butterfield's unhappy with.

Surely we shouldn't tolerate something wrong just because we believe that something else is wrong too?

Mr. Butterfield had his opinion about his own perceived "wrong" published on the very same issue of the "Viewpoint", where my article was also published.

How would it feel if he wasn't free to?

Ignorance or Prejudice

Many of the Chinese students and scholars in Southampton University feel offended by Nick Misoulis' article "Modern Mercenaries" published in the last issue of *Viewpoint* (issue 450).

The article portrayed the Chinese government as a brutal tyranny and the Chinese people as living under cruel oppression. Anyone with sufficient knowledge about China and having an unbiased view will tell that many of the accusations are totally groundless. The accusations and language used by the author demonstrates how little he knows about China, Chinese culture, people, and government. Yet, he is so bold in criticising things he has so little knowledge of. We would like to suggest the author needs to learn to make judgements based on facets and to see with his own eyes what today's China is like before making bold allegations.

This country believes freedom of speech, so do we. But the freedom always comes with responsibility. Haven't we seen enough problems in this world caused by this kind of irresponsible and aggressive attitude as shown by the author? We feel that publishing this article is also irresponsible; it causes misunderstanding between peoples from different countries, and it brings disgrace to the name of freedom of speech.

Jun Yang

Nick Misoulis replies

Everyone who read my article would agree that I've got no problem with the Chinese people. Only with the unelected "government" that oppresses them and the corporations who assist this oppression. Therefore implications that I preach hate are ridiculous. (If I spoke about Mugabe's regime, would that imply hate for the people of Zimbabwe?) Nor do I see wrong in reporting on a case tried by the US Supreme Court. As for the regime of China, my information comes from reputable sources, such as BBC, Amnesty International, etc.

Here's an example:

<http://web.amnesty.org/pages/dp2005-china-eng>. Would Mr. Yang demand that they "shouldn't have been published", like he demanded for my article? That's indeed what Google contracted to do in China.

EEEk — Name that building!



Only months away from completion and it is still variously known as Estates, Education, ECS building Entrance, Education, ECS building Estates, Education, Engineering building EEE building Building 32 (remember that!)

Viewpoint readers can do better, we think. The Editor's prize awaits you. (Entries to view@soton.ac.uk, before 22 June)

Is anything happening?



On the day after the Mountbatten fire, 31 October 2005, the University announced that "we would come back bigger and better..."

As we go to press on 2 May 2006 we all enjoy this view:



Does anyone know what is or is not happening? Even our *Dolphin* is mute.

Sexy Quiz

by Renfield

What links:

1. The Little Shop of Horrors; Amélie; How to Steal a Million
2. length; morning; direct; injure; machine gun; optimum values
3. Рабоче-Крестьянская Красная Армия (Raboche-Krest'yanskaya Krasnaya Armiya); Anthony Burgess; Dieter Meyer; The Don't Make a Wave Committee; Muddy Waters; Woad; Charlie and the Chocolate Factory
4. whitest; nearly white; usual; folds; dinnerware
5. Andrew Eldritch; Not strained; Dire Straits
6. Spectroscopy; Scan; Requiem; Beer; Safety test; 4x4
7. She's the Man; Forbidden Planet; The Adventures of Bob & Doug McKenzie; Strange Brew
8. Peter Falk; Leo McKern

A bottle of wine is on offer for the most complete set of answers (including appropriate glosses) received by the time we go to press for the next issue. Answers to view@soton.ac.uk as usual.

Answers to Quiz Quinque

1. p; PT; pit; spit; spite; sprite; sprites; spritzes
2. RFID; raid; paid; pair; hair; haar; hear; heap; hemp; hump; sump; sumo
3. Dead heats (Oxford/Cambridge boat race; first of two tied Test matches; Olympic swimming; Horse racing)
4. Dates of Julian to Gregorian calendar adjustment
5. Fox: Firefox; Foxbat; Fox terrier; Flying fox
6. Footwear: Means "little boot"; Duke of Wellington; Sandalwood; Wellington & Boot (characters); Nike (Goddess of Victory); Adidas.
7. Floyd: Pink F., Heywood F., Keith F.; Charles "Pretty Boy" F.
8. First and last (feature) films of: John Wayne; Oliver Reed; Sid James; Grace Kelly

The prize for *Quiz Quinque* — a bottle of wine carefully (if unsteadily) selected from the recent tasting notes of the editorial board — goes to "the Microbes", ahead of some stiff competition by a nose. Please contact any member of the board to claim it.

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One of two new works on show is Point of Departure. This was filmed in both Stansted Airport and Trabzon Airport, Turkey, and contrasts the experience of transit and travel through the perspectives of two characters. The work focuses

on what Çavuşoğlu calls “the end points of the European idea” by contrasting two airports on the fringes of the Atlantic and the former Soviet bloc. Weaving together footage from both, he allows us to look again at the apparently ‘everyday’ act of crossing frontier points: these ‘non-places’ become strange, beautiful and unsettling.

Point of Departure is co-commissioned by Film and Video Umbrella and Northern Gallery for Contemporary Art. Supported by Arts Council England and The Henry Moore Foundation with additional thanks to Haunch of Venison.



*Image copyright the artist.
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