S Zizek : 30.10.23

*Wovon man nicht sprechen kann, darueber muss man schweigen*. (Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent.)[[1]](https://thephilosophicalsalon.com/saying-keeping-silent-and-showing-notes-on-a-scandal-in-frankfurt/?fbclid=IwAR0613bGJiUVLiv_PGsyPYVGboJsyoNIKuVgveVcbdM0eJi303J_-D0u4Nk_aem_AWQy9dw-ltBRVy_OSKoZV5nUTcybz895IuHiCwWthWQ1aLD-ghYC748sPEaTKbZbc2o" \l "_edn1" \t "_blank)

In this final proposition of his *Tractatus* Wittgenstein prohibits the impossible. Why should one prohibit something that is already in itself impossible? The answer is relatively easy: if we ignore this prohibition, we produce statements which are (for Wittgenstein) meaningless, like speculations about the noumenal domain in Kant’s philosophy. (Lacan qualified the prohibition of incest in a similar way, claiming that its function is to render the impossible possible: if incest has to be prohibited, it means that it is possible if we violate this prohibition.) There is, however, an ambiguity in Wittgenstein’s proposition which resides in the double meaning of “kann”: it can mean simple ontic impossibility, or a deontic prohibition (“you cannot talk/behave like that!”). Wittgenstein’s proposition can thus be read in a radical ontological sense intended by Wittgenstein himself – there are things impossible to talk about like metaphysical speculations –, or in a conformist-deontic sense – “Shut up about things you are not allowed to talk about!”

The opposite of this conformist wisdom is the ethical imperative:

*Wovon man nicht schweigen kann, darueber muss man sprechen*. (Whereof one cannot be silent, thereof one must speak.)

Horrors like the Holocaust or Communist purges or colonial disasters cannot be passed over in silence (as it happens in today’s China); we have to bring them out.

The opposite of this ethical injunction is a tautological cynical wisdom:

*Wovon man nicht schweigen kann, darueber muss man schweigen*. (Whereof one cannot be silent, thereof one must be silent.)

Which means: even if you know you cannot keep quiet about it, do not talk about it since talking about it would pose too much of a threat to you.

What, then, about the opposite tautology?

*Wovon man nicht sprechen kann, darueber muss man sprechen*. (Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one should speak.)

It defines poetry: poetry is an attempt to put in words what cannot be said, to evoke it, and this holds precisely for traumatic events like the Holocaust: any prosaic description of its horrors fails to render its trauma, and this is why Adorno was wrong with his famous claim that after Auschwitz poetry is no longer possible. It is prose that is no longer possible, since only poetry can do the job. Poetry is the inscription of impossibility into a language: when we cannot say something directly and we nonetheless insist on doing it, we unavoidably get caught in repetitions, postponements, indirectness, surprising cuts, etc. We should always bear in mind that the “beauty” of classic poetry (symmetric rhymes, etc.) comes second and that it is a way to compensate for the basic failure or impossibility.

But this is not Wittgenstein’s last word. Already in *Tractatus*, he introduces another term which works as the opposite of saying (*Sprechen*), namely showing/displaying (*Zeigen*). So, we can also say:

Wovon man nicht sprechen kann, dass zeigt sich. (Whereof one cannot speak, that shows itself.)

The inversion of this statement (*Was man nicht zeigen kann, darueber muss man sprechen* – What one cannot show, thereof one must speak) is a vulgar common-sense notion since it reduces “showing” to the obvious meaning of “what is evidently present in front of us,” which can be exemplified by seeing the exterior. The argument is then that focusing on how a person appears ignores the deeper spiritual truth of this person, the truth which can only be rendered in words describing this truth. Against this line of argumentation, one should focus on the elementary Hegelian question: not *what is the secret beneath appearance?* but *why does a thing need to appear in the first place?*

In short, Wittgenstein’s “showing” has nothing to do with “appearing” as opposed to what is beneath it. “Showing” is the form of appearance ignored when we focus on what appears. Here, Wittgenstein follows Marx and Freud who both claim that the true secret is not the Beyond of what appears but the form itself (the commodity form, the form of dreams). The difference between *zeigen*(showing) and *schweigen* (keeping silent) is that while *schweigen* is an act (I decide not to speak, which implies that I am already within the domain of speech – a stone does not “keep silent”), *zeigen* happens involuntarily, as a by-product of what I am doing when I speak: I don’t (and cannot) *decide* what to show.

This insight (formulated by Wittgenstein in many versions, like “what can be shown cannot be said”) should not be read as a hint to some ineffable deep Truth beyond words. What cannot be said is fully immanent to saying; it is the form displayed by saying; it is what we do by saying something. To Wittgenstein’s example of “honesty” we could add “dignity”: if you talk about it, you are NOT dignified or honest, since honesty and dignity can only be shown/displayed by doing it, by acting as an honest or dignified person.

Recall what I have often referred to as the “Hugh Grant paradox,” invoking the famous scene from *Four Weddings and a Funeral*. As the hero tries to articulate his love to the beloved, he gets caught in stumbling and confused repetitions, and it is this very failure to deliver his message of love in a perfect way that bears witness to its authenticity… In his very failure to speak about his love, he shows/displays it (although we can, of course, also intentionally fake such failures). We are dealing here with Wittgenstein’s version of “there is no meta-language”: a speech act cannot include in what it says its own form, its own act. Jon Elster articulated this feature in his notion of “states that are essentially by-products:

“Some psychological and social states have the property that they can only *come about* as the by-product of actions undertaken for other ends. They can never, that is, be *brought about* intelligently and intentionally, because they attempt to do so precludes the very state one is trying to bring about. I call these ‘states that are essentially by-products.’ There are many states that may arise as by-products of individual or aggregate action, but this is the subset of states than can *only* come about in this way. Some of these states are very useful or desirable, and so it is very tempting to try to bring them about. We may refer to such attempts as ‘excess of will,’ a form of *hubris* that pervades our lives, perhaps increasingly so.”[[2]](https://thephilosophicalsalon.com/saying-keeping-silent-and-showing-notes-on-a-scandal-in-frankfurt/?fbclid=IwAR0613bGJiUVLiv_PGsyPYVGboJsyoNIKuVgveVcbdM0eJi303J_-D0u4Nk_aem_AWQy9dw-ltBRVy_OSKoZV5nUTcybz895IuHiCwWthWQ1aLD-ghYC748sPEaTKbZbc2o" \l "_edn2" \t "_blank)

Among many examples offered by Elster (like “Good art is impressive; art designed to impress rarely is”[[3]](https://thephilosophicalsalon.com/saying-keeping-silent-and-showing-notes-on-a-scandal-in-frankfurt/?fbclid=IwAR0613bGJiUVLiv_PGsyPYVGboJsyoNIKuVgveVcbdM0eJi303J_-D0u4Nk_aem_AWQy9dw-ltBRVy_OSKoZV5nUTcybz895IuHiCwWthWQ1aLD-ghYC748sPEaTKbZbc2o" \l "_edn3" \t "_blank)), one should mention the topic of authenticity and sincerity: “The terms of sincerity and authenticity, like those of wisdom and dignity, always have a faintly ridiculous air about them when employed in the first person singular, reflecting the fact that the corresponding states are essentially by-products. /…/ Naming the unnamable by talking about something else is an ascetic practice and goes badly with self-congratulation.”[[4]](https://thephilosophicalsalon.com/saying-keeping-silent-and-showing-notes-on-a-scandal-in-frankfurt/?fbclid=IwAR0613bGJiUVLiv_PGsyPYVGboJsyoNIKuVgveVcbdM0eJi303J_-D0u4Nk_aem_AWQy9dw-ltBRVy_OSKoZV5nUTcybz895IuHiCwWthWQ1aLD-ghYC748sPEaTKbZbc2o" \l "_edn4" \t "_blank) Elster mentions the “unnamable,” which brings us back to Wittgenstein: sincerity and authenticity cannot be named; they can only be shown/displayed by way of practicing them—a lesson that deals a heavy blow to the cult of authenticity, which pervades our culture since the 1950s and which was given a new push by the trans-ideology (“be true to yourself; don’t be afraid to assume what you feel you are”).

Following Bertrand Russell’s famous quip against Wittgenstein (who, according to Russell, managed to say quite a lot about the unsayable[[5]](https://thephilosophicalsalon.com/saying-keeping-silent-and-showing-notes-on-a-scandal-in-frankfurt/?fbclid=IwAR0613bGJiUVLiv_PGsyPYVGboJsyoNIKuVgveVcbdM0eJi303J_-D0u4Nk_aem_AWQy9dw-ltBRVy_OSKoZV5nUTcybz895IuHiCwWthWQ1aLD-ghYC748sPEaTKbZbc2o" \l "_edn5" \t "_blank)), could we not say that Elster also manages to say quite a lot about the dimension that he proclaims “unnamable”? However, this reproach misses the point. Of course, we can talk about what a speech shows/displays, but *not in the first person*. I cannot designate myself as authentic, as having dignity, etc. – if I do this, I undermine my authenticity or dignity which can only show itself in how I act. The statement “there is no meta-language” should be understood in this precise sense: I cannot include my position of enunciation, which may display dignity, into my own enunciated content.

And does something similar not hold for both poles of today’s global political space, namely authoritarian nationalism and cancel culture? On September 29, 2023, [Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov](https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/world/lavrov-russia-open-to-talks-but-only-if-ukraine-meets-these-two-conditions/ar-AA1hqnWD?ocid=msedgntp&cvid=9e6e9484148f4da28fddae0bc4fbf83c&ei=23) “indicated that Moscow is prepared for discussions concerning Ukraine, provided they take into account the situation on the ground and Russia’s security interests.” Which means: we are prepared for peace negotiations, provided Ukraine accepts that territories occupied by Russia are part of Russia and provided it radically changes its politics (Russia demands a “de-nazification” of Ukraine)… in short, provided Ukraine capitulates. The Western liberal approach is often problematized along the same lines by anti-colonial critics. For the Western liberals, democratic exchange is formulated in terms that secretly impose the logic of Western democracy-and-freedom, so that joining liberal pluralism effectively amounts to a capitulation to Western values… Lavrov asserts the logic problematized by anti-colonial critics in its pure form. In Wittgensteinian terms, Lavrov speaks about negotiations, but what he shows/displays with his speech is the very opposite of negotiation, that is, a brutal exclusive enforcing of one’s own position.

Along the same lines, I can easily imagine Hegel having a repeated intellectual orgasm in bringing out the (for him) obvious necessity of the [reversal of inclusivity and diversity into a procedure of systematic exclusion](https://www.msn.com/en-gb/entertainment/tv/banning-free-speech-in-the-name-of-inclusivity-and-diversity-is-the-fringe-s-sickest-joke/ar-AA1fsL98?ocid=msedgntp&cvid=7a4dbfde0c6f4103812e09f2242d18b3&ei=17):  “How long can parts of the liberal Left keep maintaining that ‘cancel culture’ is but a phantom of the right, as they literally go round cancelling gigs, comedy shows, film showings, lectures and conversations?” What permeates “cancel culture” is a “no-debate-stance.” A person or a position is not only excluded; what is excluded is the very debate, a confrontation of arguments, for or against this exclusion. Hegel would have mobilized here what Lacan called the gap between enunciated content and the underlying stance of enunciation: you argue for diversity and inclusion, but you do it by excluding all those who do not fully subscribe to your own definition of diversity and inclusion, and so, all you do is permanently exclude people and stances. In this way the struggle for inclusion and diversity gives birth to an atmosphere of Stasi-like suspicion and denunciation where you never know when a private remark of yours will lead to your elimination from the public space…Don’t we get here an extreme version of the joke about eating the last cannibal? “There are no opponents of diversity and inclusion in our group – we’ve just excluded the last one…” So, again, in Wittgensteinian terms, while cancel culture speaks about diversity and inclusion, it shows/displays a stance of extreme exclusion.

Such inversion of inclusion into exclusion also obeys a deep Hegelian dialectical reversal, namely the transposition of an external threat into immanent antagonism, as it was perspicuously noted by Elster apropos the notion, fashionable today, of democracy under threat: “We can reverse the common dictum that democracy is under threat, and affirm that democracy *is* the threat, at least in its short-termist populist form.”[[6]](https://thephilosophicalsalon.com/saying-keeping-silent-and-showing-notes-on-a-scandal-in-frankfurt/?fbclid=IwAR0613bGJiUVLiv_PGsyPYVGboJsyoNIKuVgveVcbdM0eJi303J_-D0u4Nk_aem_AWQy9dw-ltBRVy_OSKoZV5nUTcybz895IuHiCwWthWQ1aLD-ghYC748sPEaTKbZbc2o" \l "_edn6" \t "_blank) Exactly as in the case of cancel culture, the threat to inclusion and diversity are inclusion and diversity themselves, when they are practiced in a way that shows/displays extreme exclusion.

But enough about cancel culture in the usual culture-critical sense. Much more interesting is the cancel culture that pervades our media in the weeks after the Hamas attack on Israel. [My speech at the opening ceremony of the Frankfurt book fair](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j8pwQ4uUxoQ) was twice interrupted by Uwe Becker, *Antisemitismusbeauftragter*in the state of Hessen, and then triggered an avalanche of attacks on me. Why? First, some facts about my speech. I first wrote a totally different one, but a day or two after the Hamas attack, I was contacted by Juergen Boos, the director of the Frankfurt book fair, who asked me to also mention the war in my talk. (I was probably expected to just join the chorus of all those uttering unconditional support for what the State of Israel is doing.) The new speech was sent in advance to Slovene organizers *and to Frankfurt* (Boos included), and it was suggested to me to change some formulations (which I did)… In short, there was no surprise in my speech: those concerned were acquainted with it.

So why the attacks on me? It took me some time to get it: not because I was too extreme but, precisely, because I was very balanced and moderate! The fear was that such an approach might seduce some who oscillate in their full support of Israel to see also Palestinian suffering. It is easy to condemn someone who chants “Death to Israel”—much easier than someone who unconditionally condemns the Hamas attack AND draws attention to its background. Plus, what annoyed my critics is that I quoted (positively) exclusively Jewish names (Moshe Dayan, Simon Wiesenthal, Marek Edelman…).

From the opposite side, I got many messages from West Bank Palestinians who are angry at me for not explicitly stating that, with regard to what is now happening to Palestinians, they should not just display their victimhood. Don’t those in the West Bank also have the right to rage? My rage is at this moment more directed at people like Uwe Becker who enact the most disgusting strategy on behalf of Germany: they who carried out the Holocaust now try to exculpate themselves by advocating Israeli injustice against another group! So, there definitely is a dark underside to the German obsession with standing on the right side now – but let’s go back to my speech. Here is a [typical media reaction to it](https://thegaze.media/news/the-75th-frankfurt-book-fair-comes-to-an-end-in-germany): “The popular Slovenian philosopher and cultural critic Slavoj Žižek caused a *scandal* during the opening ceremony. Žižek condemned the terrorist attack by the Palestinian Islamist movement HAMAS on Israel and emphasized the need to ‘listen to the Palestinians and consider their past.’”

First (as is often the case these days), the words between “and” are NOT a quote from my text, although they are presented as a quote. Second, yes, there was a scandal, but was it really me who caused it? Was the true scandal not the way my speech was brutally interrupted twice, the second time even by an intruder approaching me on stage? All this for doing what? For just stating the obvious, what we can read every day in our media: that there is no solution to the Middle East crisis without resolving the limbo status of the Palestinians. To get an idea of the despair of ordinary West Bank Palestinians, suffice it to remember the wave of suicidal individual attacks on the streets (mostly) of Jerusalem a decade or so ago: an ordinary Palestinian approached a Jew, pulled out a knife and stabbed (usually) him, knowing well that s/he will be instantly killed by other people around. While I condemn these acts, I have to note that there was no message in them, no shouting of “Free Palestine!”; there was no large organization behind them (even Israeli authorities didn’t claim this), no large political project, just pure despair. I was at that time in Jerusalem and my Jewish friends warned me about this danger, advising me that, if I see it coming, I should shout loudly “I am not a Jew!” And I remember clearly that I was deeply ashamed of having to behave like this, knowing well that I wasn’t sure what I would really do in such a situation…

The main candidate for the stupidity of the year is, in my view, [the title of a recent text in *Die Zeit* magazine](https://www.zeit.de/2023/45/hamas-terror-aktivisten-diskussion-mitgefuehl/seite-2): “The evil of Hamas has no context.” What this means became clear in a claim I heard all the time in Frankfurt: “There are no two sides here. There is only one side.” OK, but we can assert this only if we look at all the “buts” and see how the “one” side replies to them. One of the panelists in the opening ceremony even openly stated that she hates the word “aber” (“but”) – but is “but” not the polite way to disagree in a dialogue? “I see and respect your point, but…”

Analyzing the context does NOT imply excuse or justification. There are numerous analyses of how the Nazis took power, and they do not in any way justify Hitler; they just describe the confused situation exploited by Hitler to take power. Hitler didn’t emerge from a vacuum: back in 1920s and 30s, he offered anti-Semitism as a narrative explanation of the troubles experienced by ordinary Germans: unemployment, moral decay, social unrest… behind all this stands the Jew, i.e., evoking the “Jewish plot” made everything clear by way of providing a simple “cognitive mapping.” Does today’s hatred of multiculturalism and of the immigrant threat not function in a homologous way? Strange things are happening, financial meltdowns occur which affect our daily lives, but are experienced as totally opaque – and the rejection of multiculturalism introduces false clarity into the situation: it is the foreign intruders who are disturbing our way of life…

Back to my speech, the only comparison that I effectively evoke in it is the strange similarity between Hamas and the radical stance of the last Netanyahu government. Here is the quote:

“Ismail Haniyeh, the leader of Hamas who lives comfortably in Dubai, said on the day of attack: “We have only one thing to say to you: get out of our land. Get out of our sight … This land is ours, al-Quds [Jerusalem] is ours, everything [here] is ours … There is no place or safety for you.” Clear and disgusting – but did the Israeli government not say something similar, although not in such a brutal way? Here is the first of the official “basic principles” of Israel’s present government: “The Jewish people have an exclusive and inalienable right to all parts of the Land of Israel. The government will promote and develop the settlement of all parts of the Land of Israel — in the Galilee, the Negev, the Golan and Judea and Samaria.” Or, as Netanyahu stated, “Israel is not a state of all its citizens” but “of the Jewish people – and only it2. Does this “principle” not exclude any serious negotiations? Palestinians are strictly treated as a problem, the State of Israel never offered them any hope, positively outlining their role in the state they live in. Beneath all the polemics about “who is more of a terrorist” lies as a heavy dark cloud the mass of Palestinian Arabs who are for decades kept in a limbo, exposed to daily harassment by settlers and by the Israeli state. /…/ Perhaps, the first thing to do is to clearly recognize the massive despair and confusion that can give birth to acts of evil – in short, there will be no peace in the Middle East without resolving the Palestinian question.”

I was reproached here for ignoring a crucial fact: the Israeli government did not just say the same thing in a more civilized way; the difference is also in content – they do not demand an indistinct killing of the opponents. My reply: true, but while Hamas and its allies call for throwing the Jews out of the Israeli land, Israel is now *effectively doing this*, gradually but inexorably depriving West Bank Palestinians of their land. Even the US voiced concern over the West Bank settlers’ attacks on Palestinians: the [State Secretary Antony Blinken “conveyed concern”](https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/blinken-conveyed-concern-over-west-bank-violence-israeli-foreign-minister-2023-06-28/) about it, and, as expected, he got principled promises that Israel would look into it. How will this be done with Itamar Ben Gvir as the National Security Minister is not clear: [Ben Gvir announced on October 7, 2023](https://www.timesofisrael.com/ben-gvir-says-10000-assault-rifles-purchased-for-civilian-security-teams/) that his ministry was purchasing 10,000 rifles to arm civilian security teams, specifically those in towns close to Israel’s borders around the country, as well as in mixed Jewish-Arab cities and West Bank settlements.

While, as far as I know, nobody disputed any facts that I referred to in my speech, the main counter-argument was that this moment (when Jews are massively dying) is not the right one for a broader analysis. I couldn’t believe my ears when I heard this argument: at that moment (ten days after the Hamas attack) when many more Palestinians were dying than Jews. But why did I ignore the horrors taking place in Gaza? Recall the very last lines of [Brecht’s *Dreigroschenoper*](https://www.thoughtco.com/mack-the-knife-lyrics-in-german-4076149): “*Denn die einen sind im Dunkeln / Und die andern sind im Licht. / Und man sieht nur die im Lichte / Die im Dunkeln sieht man nicht*(“And some are in the darkness / And the others in the light / But you only see those in the light / Those in the darkness you don’t see.”) This is (more than ever, perhaps) our situation today, in the self-proclaimed age of modern media: while the big media were until recently full of news about Ukraine war, [the world’s deadliest wars went unreported](https://www.democracynow.org/2023/6/8/anjan_sundaram_conflict_reporting). Now that the spotlights are on the Middle East, one cannot but note that they are almost exclusively on Gaza and not on the West Bank where perhaps something much more crucial is going on. To avoid a misunderstanding here: I am of course appalled at how the IDF bombing of Gaza causes more “collateral damage” on civilians than on the Hamas forces, but I think Israel doesn’t want to re-occupy Gaza – the true event is going on in the West Bank: the gradual “ethnic cleansing” of the Palestinian population. So, I cannot but agree with [Judith Butler](https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v45/n20/judith-butler/the-compass-of-mourning): “From systematized land seizures to routine airstrikes, arbitrary detentions to military checkpoints, and enforced family separations to targeted killings, Palestinians have been forced to live in a state of death, both slow and sudden.”

After the new Netanyahu government, this multi-dimensional pressure grew almost exponentially, from direct killings by settlers to bureaucratic-administrative measures. Among dozens of video clips, let me mention just one, [by far not the most violent but, for me at least, the most depressing](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pfMc2Y43bdo). It depicts a settler harassing a group of Palestinian farmers working on their land, humiliating and abusing them, claiming this land is not theirs, scattering around their sacks with seed, plus provocatively standing breast to breast with some Palestinians and shouting at them things like “Why do you not hit me? Are you a man?” – all this with the silent presence of some Israeli soldiers in the background who do nothing… Can we imagine what would have happened if a Palestinian farmer were to do this to a group of settlers?

But this is a detail, and much worse things are happening, like groups of settlers sending messages to Palestinian homes that they better leave their dwelling in next 24 hours and that, if they don’t do this, they as a rule really come and beat, or even kill, the Palestinian family. [Here is one case](https://www.timesofisrael.com/2-palestinians-killed-after-settlers-said-to-ambush-funeral-in-west-bank/): two Palestinians were killed after Israeli settlers opened fire on a funeral procession near the West Bank town of Qusra, south of Nablus. “Ambulances were carrying the bodies of four Palestinians who were shot dead a day earlier, reportedly also by Israeli settlers, when settlers arrived at the scene and attempted to halt the funeral procession. One of the ambulance drivers was quoted by *Haaretz* as saying that ‘the settlers were waiting there. They blocked the gate, started firing on us and other people who had come for the funeral.’” The official reaction? “The IDF said that a number of Palestinian casualties were reported following clashes between settlers and Palestinians in the village where the funeral was about to take place, and that the incident is under investigation.” A lone incident? “There have been repeated incidents over the past year of young settlers violently raiding villages in rampages that have led to a handful of Palestinian deaths, scores injured and significant property damage. The assailants are rarely arrested, let alone prosecuted for their actions.” If this is not a form of terror, then this word has no meaning at all.

As long as the traditional secular Zionist settler-colonial ideology predominated, the state (not so) discreetly privileged its Jewish citizens over Palestinians; however, it put great efforts to sustain the appearance of a neutral rule of law. From time to time, it condemned Zionist extremists for their crimes against Palestinians; it limited the illegal new settlements in the West Bank, etc. The main agency playing this role was the Supreme Court – no wonder the Netanyahu government, which took over in 2022, pushed through a judicial reform depriving the Supreme Court of its autonomy. The large protests against judicial reform are the last cry of secular Zionism: with the new Netanyahu government, anti-Palestinian violence (the pogrom in Huwara, the attacks on the Stella Maris Monastery in Haifa, etc.) is no longer even formally condemned by the state.

The fate of Ben-Gvir is the clearest indicator of this shift. Before entering politics, he was known to have a portrait in his living room of Israeli-American terrorist Baruch Goldstein, who in 1994 massacred twenty-nine Palestinian Muslim worshipers and wounded 125 others in Hebron, in what became known as the Cave of the Patriarchs massacre – and this person condemned by Israel itself as a racist is now the Minister for National Security who should safeguard the rule of law… The State of Israel, which likes to present itself as the only democracy in the Middle East, [has now *de facto* morphed into a](https://www.palestinechronicle.com/huwwara-and-stella-maris-the-truth-about-judicial-overhaul-israeli-protests/)“halachic theocratic state (the equivalent to Shari’a law).”

In Lacanian terms, obscene violence is the surplus-enjoyment we gain as a reward for our subordination to an ideological edifice, for the sacrifices and renunciations this edifice demands from us. In today’s Israel this surplus-enjoyment no longer dwells in the obscene underground; [it is openly assumed](https://www.palestinechronicle.com/huwwara-and-stella-maris-the-truth-about-judicial-overhaul-israeli-protests/)“the surplus-enjoyment (as killing Palestinians, burning their homes, evicting them from their homes, confiscating their lands, building settlements, destroying their olive trees, Judaizing Al-Aqsa, etc.) becomes explicitly articulated. While these forms of surplus enjoyment were previously viewed as an exception in official Zionist discourse, they are now considered as the norm.”

A direct proof? [On a TV panel on August 25, 2023](https://www.972mag.com/ben-gvir-sorry-mohammad-apartheid/), Ben Gvir, the Minister for National Security, said: “My right, my wife’s right, my kids’ right to move around freely on the roads of Judea and Samaria [the West Bank] is more important than that of the Arabs.” Then, turning to panelist Mohammad Magadli, the only Arab on the panel, Ben Gvir said: “Sorry, Mohammad, but this is the reality.” And he was right: yes, this IS the reality in the West Bank. In short, anti-Palestinian violence is no longer even formally condemned by the state.

[The Secretary General of the UN Antonio Guterres said to the Security Council](https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/speeches/2023-10-24/secretary-generals-remarks-the-security-council-the-middle-east%C2%A0) on October 24, 2023:

“It is important to also recognize the attacks by Hamas did not happen in a vacuum. The Palestinian people have been subjected to 56 years of suffocating occupation. They have seen their land steadily devoured by settlements and plagued by violence; their economy stifled; their people displaced and their homes demolished. Their hopes for a political solution to their plight have been vanishing. But the grievances of the Palestinian people cannot justify the appalling attacks by Hamas.  And those appalling attacks cannot justify the collective punishment of the Palestinian people.”

The reaction was, as expected, not only furious critique and a threat to “teach the UN a lesson” but [a call for Guterres’ immediate resignation](https://www.change.org/p/call-for-un-secretary-general-antonio-guterres-to-resign-immediately?original_footer_petition_id=14819967&algorithm=promoted&source_location=petition_footer&grid_position=2&pt=AVBldGl0aW9uAHJlPwIAAAAAZTheUXaynGZkOWQ0YTJkMg%3D%3D): “The United Nations secretary general has now shown his true colors and has shown the world that he is biased and conflicted and not the correct person to lead the United Nations through this tense period in the history of our world.” The cynicism of this reaction is breath-taking: “The people of Israel (Jewish, Muslim, Christian, Druze and Bedouin) have suffered a major terror attack.” While the Israeli government explicitly treats non-Jews as second-class citizens, they are now all of a sudden addressed as victims of Hamas…

In order to find a way out, the first thing to do is to fully admit that we are dealing with a true tragedy: there is no clear simple solution, except those advocated by Ben Gvir and Hamas: the annihilation of the other side. My condemnation of the Hamas attack is clear and unequivocal. How can I be accused of supporting Hamas violence when the [title of my interview for *Die Zeit*](https://www.zeit.de/kultur/literatur/2023-10/slavoj-zizek-frankfurter-buchmesse-israel-palaestinenser-linke) is: “*Die Hamas muss vernichtet warden*” (“Hamas has to be annihilated”)? The truly horrible thing is that the area east of Gaza where Hamas went on a murderous spree was mostly populated by Jews who advocated peaceful coexistence with Palestinians, some of them even engaged in helping those who suffered in Gaza.

This is not the place to analyze the dark origins of Hamas which, according to many sources, was [first supported by Israel in order to split Palestinians between the more secular PLO and the Islamist Hamas](https://www.timesofisrael.com/for-years-netanyahu-propped-up-hamas-now-its-blown-up-in-our-faces/): “Most of the time, Israeli policy was to treat the Palestinian Authority as a burden and Hamas as an asset. Far-right MK Bezalel Smotrich, now the finance minister in the hardline government and leader of the Religious Zionism party, said so himself in 2015. According to various reports, Netanyahu made a similar point at a Likud faction meeting in early 2019, when he was quoted as saying that those who oppose a Palestinian state should support the transfer of funds to Gaza, because maintaining the separation between the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank and Hamas in Gaza would prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state.” In short, Israel made here the same mistake as the US in Afghanistan, supporting radical Islamists like Osama bin Laden to defeat the Soviet-backed regime.

Yuval Harari is right to emphasize that the principal goal of the Hamas attack was not just to kill Jews but to prevent any chances for peace in foreseeable future: it was a war started with the goal to eternalize war itself. And [Harari is also right to add that Israel should avoid this trap laid by Hamas](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=27yqmOGU4lo) since “down the road peace will only come if Palestinians can live dignified lives in their homeland.” It is important to emphasize the last words – “in their homeland” –, since Harari thereby accepts that the land occupied by Israel is also the Palestinian homeland. To put it in consciously naïve terms: Israel should treat its Palestinian citizens as its citizens. To the dismay of many of my “Leftist” critics, I agree with [the central claim of a letter co-signed by Harari with David Grosman and others](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/oct/24/yuval-noah-harari-backs-critique-of-leftist-indifference-to-hamas-atrocities): “there is no contradiction between staunchly opposing the Israeli subjugation and occupation of Palestinians and unequivocally condemning brutal acts of violence against innocent civilians. In fact, every consistent leftist must hold both positions simultaneously.” I made exactly the same claim in my speech: “one should go to the end in BOTH directions, in the defense of the Palestinian rights as well as in fighting anti-Semitism. The two fights are two moments of the same fight /…/ Those who think there is a ‘contradiction’ in this stance of mine suffer a total moral disorientation.” I found a graffiti on a wall in Ljubljana, my home city: “If I were a Palestinian from the West Bank, I would also be a Holocaust denier.” This, exactly, is the logic one should avoid at any cost, if for no other reason because it reproduces the Zionist argument: “a holocaust survivor has the right to ignore minor injustices the State of Israel is committing against Palestinians.”

One of the catastrophic effects of the ongoing war in the Middle East is also that some key distinctions are blurred: the pro-Israeli West (the US especially) now present the defense of Ukraine against Russian aggression and the defense of Israel against Hamas as moments of the same global war, as if Israel = Ukraine. On the opposite pseudo-Leftist side, there are already claims that the attacks (of Russia, of Hamas) are both justified defense measures which exploded against long histories of oppression: in short, Donetsk is the Russian West Bank… But why do I use the term “pseudo-Leftists”? Because, in the old Marxist tradition, I claim that the Left structurally CANNOT be anti-Semitic, since it knows that anti-Semitism relies on the basic ideological operation of transposing immanent social antagonisms onto an external agent to be liquidated. (Which is also why populism tends to be anti-Semitic: populism doesn’t question the antagonism inscribed into the basic social order but focuses on “corruption” and similar things.) I am well aware that there definitely ARE anti-Semitic tendencies in today’s Left, but as such they are reliable signals that there is something deeply wrong with this Left, and this holds from Stalin to Hugo Chavez, who was reminded by none other than Fidel Castro to avoid anti-Semitism. In the early years after the October Revolution, Jewish presence at the top of political power was very strong; things turned around with Stalin’s ascent to power. And the same holds for today’s Leftists who shout anti-Semitic slogans…

So, for the last time, back to my speech. Here is another [typical report](https://www.faz.net/aktuell/rhein-main/frankfurt/frankfurter-buchmesse-weiter-irritationen-um-rede-von-slavoj-zizek-19252639.html) on it:

“The Mayor of Frankfurt, Mike Josef**,** described Žižek’s speech as disturbing. *‘Freedom of expression and culture of debate are important. But when Žižek quoted the SS man, Reinhard Heydrich, he crossed a line that goes beyond provocation,’* he believes. Frankfurt’s Vice-Mayor Nargess Eskandari-Gruenberg was particularly bothered by the fact that Slavoj Žižek’s speech linked the current terror of Hamas to the unresolved conflict of the Palestinians, thereby relativizing it. ‘*I find this relativization intolerable and unpalatable.’* In her view, nothing can justify terror.”

The second reproach is obviously ridiculous: of course, there is a link between the Hamas attack and the unresolved status of the Palestinians in occupied territories. Hamas exploits the plight of the Palestinians in the same way Hitler exploited the discontent of ordinary Germans in the post-World-War-I crisis. As for the first reproach (quoting Heydrich crosses a line that goes beyond provocation): yes, my speech was again interrupted when I mentioned Reinhard Heydrich, but the insinuation that I am somehow putting Heydrich on the same line with Israel totally misses the point. Why did I mention Heydrich? I briefly evoked a line of thought which I developed in my books and talks (also in Tel Aviv, where it was accepted without problems). Something strange is re-emerging today. While Trump recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, some of his supporters (like the Proud Boys) are anti-Semitic, but is this really an inconsistent stance? When Trump signed the controversial executive order on anti-Semitism, John Hagee was there, the founder and National Chairman of the Christian-Zionist organization Christians United for Israel. At the top of the standard Christian-conservative agenda, Hagee has made statements that definitely sound anti-Semitic: he has blamed the Holocaust on Jews themselves; he has stated that Hitler’s persecution was a “divine plan” to lead Jews to form the modern state of Israel; he calls liberal Jews “poisoned” and “spiritually blind”; he admits that that the preemptive nuclear attack on Iran that he favors will lead to the deaths of most Jews in Israel… Israel should be very suspicious of such support, which has a long history.

Remember Anders Breivik, the Norwegian anti-immigrant mass murderer: he was anti-Semitic, but pro-Israel, since he saw in the State of Israel the first line of defense against the Muslim expansion; he even wants to see the Jerusalem Temple rebuilt, but he wrote in his “Manifesto”: “There is no Jewish problem in Western Europe (with the exception of the UK and France) as we only have 1 million in Western Europe, whereas 800,000 out of these 1 million live in France and the UK. The US on the other hand, with more than 6 million Jews (600% more than Europe) actually has a considerable Jewish problem.” His figure thus realizes the ultimate paradox of the Zionist anti-Semite, and we find the traces of this weird stance more often than one would expect.

Reinhardt Heydrich himself, the mastermind of the holocaust, wrote in 1935: “We must separate the Jews into two categories, the Zionists and the partisans of assimilation. The Zionists profess a strictly racial concept and, through emigration to Palestine, they help to build their own Jewish State. /…/ our good wishes and our official goodwill go with them.”[[7]](https://thephilosophicalsalon.com/saying-keeping-silent-and-showing-notes-on-a-scandal-in-frankfurt/?fbclid=IwAR0613bGJiUVLiv_PGsyPYVGboJsyoNIKuVgveVcbdM0eJi303J_-D0u4Nk_aem_AWQy9dw-ltBRVy_OSKoZV5nUTcybz895IuHiCwWthWQ1aLD-ghYC748sPEaTKbZbc2o" \l "_edn7" \t "_blank) Zionist anti-Semitism at its purest and clearest… Is this just a thing of the past? Here is [what some Rabbis teaching at the (state-financed) Eli Academy, an elite school where many army officers are educated, said](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3XB72y1Lm90):

“With the help of God, slavery will return. The non-Jews will want to be our slaves. Being the slave of a Jew is the best. They must be slaves. They want to be slaves. Instead of just wandering the streets foolish and violent, harming each other, now his life begins. This people around us have genetic problems. Ask an average Arab what he wants to be. He wants to be under occupation. /…/ They don’t know how to run a country or anything. /…/ Yes, we are racists. We believe in racism. Races have genetic characteristics. So we must consider how to help them. /…/ The Holocaust was not about killing the Jews. Nonsense. And that it was systematic and ideological makes it more moral than random murder. Humanism, secular culture – that is the Holocaust. The real Holocaust is pluralism. To believe in man – that is the holocaust. /…/ The Nazi logic was internally consistent. Hitler said that a certain group in society is the cause of all the evil in the world and therefore it must be exterminated.  /…/ For years, God has been screaming that the Diaspora is over but Jews aren’t obeying. That is their disease that the Holocaust must cure. /…/ Hitler was the most righteous, Of course, he was right in every word he said. His ideology was correct. /…/ Their (Nazi’s) only error was who was on which side.”[[8]](https://thephilosophicalsalon.com/saying-keeping-silent-and-showing-notes-on-a-scandal-in-frankfurt/?fbclid=IwAR0613bGJiUVLiv_PGsyPYVGboJsyoNIKuVgveVcbdM0eJi303J_-D0u4Nk_aem_AWQy9dw-ltBRVy_OSKoZV5nUTcybz895IuHiCwWthWQ1aLD-ghYC748sPEaTKbZbc2o" \l "_edn8" \t "_blank)

Although such an extreme stance is, of course, explicitly advocated only by a tiny minority (and still Netanyahu visited the Eli Academy, as can be seen in the video report!), it brings out the underlying premises that sustain what the State of Israel is now doing in the West Bank… However, is the comparison of what happens now in Israel with Nazism not a ridiculous exaggeration? Here, we encounter the true ethical greatness of Jews. If a non-Jew makes this comparison, he is instantly dismissed as anti-Semitic – and I share this dismissal; I think those of us who are non-Jews have no right to do it. But what if such an observation comes from important Jewish figures themselves? What if a top former IDF general says that the Israeli army is becoming a party to war crimes in the West Bank in processes that resemble Nazi Germany?

Speaking to Israel’s public broadcasting station Kan about the situation in the West Bank, [Amiram Levin, a retired general, the former head of the Israeli army’s Northern Command as well as deputy chief of the Mossad foreign intelligence agency](https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-08-13/ty-article/ex-israeli-general-says-army-partaking-in-west-bank-war-crimes-invokes-nazi-germany/00000189-ee00-d9cf-a7eb-ff2b12bf0000), said that “there hasn’t been a democracy there in 57 years, there is total apartheid”: “the IDF, which is forced to exert sovereignty there, is rotting from the inside. It’s standing by, looking at the settler rioters and is beginning to be a partner to war crimes.” When asked to elaborate on the specific “processes,” Levin invoked Nazi Germany. “It’s hard for us to say it, but it’s the truth. Walk around Hebron, look at the streets. Streets where Arabs are no longer allowed to go on, only Jews. That’s exactly what happened there, in that dark country.” Of course, there is a large gap that separates the situation of Palestinians in Hebron from the situation of Jews in the Nazi Germany; of course, Levin exaggerates, but precisely as a Jew who knows what Nazi anti-Semitism means, he has the right to detect an extremely dangerous tendency in what goes on in the West Bank.

As long as there are Israelis like Amiram Levin, there is hope. It is only with their solidarity and support that the West Bank Palestinians have a chance… However, the lesson of all this is a very sad one. In a memorable passage in *Still Alive: A Holocaust Girlhood Remembered*, Ruth Klüger describes a conversation with “some advanced PhD candidates” in Germany:

“One reports how in Jerusalem he made the acquaintance of an old Hungarian Jew who was a survivor of Auschwitz, and yet this man cursed the Arabs and held them all in contempt. How can someone who comes from Auschwitz talk like that? the German asks. I get into the act and argue, perhaps more hotly than need be. What did he expect? Auschwitz was no instructional institution…You learned nothing there, and least of all humanity and tolerance. Absolutely nothing good came out of the concentration camps, I hear myself saying, with my voice rising, and he expects catharsis, purgation, the sort of thing you go to the theatre for? They were the most useless, pointless establishments imaginable.”[[9]](https://thephilosophicalsalon.com/saying-keeping-silent-and-showing-notes-on-a-scandal-in-frankfurt/?fbclid=IwAR0613bGJiUVLiv_PGsyPYVGboJsyoNIKuVgveVcbdM0eJi303J_-D0u4Nk_aem_AWQy9dw-ltBRVy_OSKoZV5nUTcybz895IuHiCwWthWQ1aLD-ghYC748sPEaTKbZbc2o" \l "_edn9" \t "_blank)

The extreme horror of Auschwitz did not make it into a place that purified surviving victims into ethical non-egotistical subjects. So, again, the lesson to be drawn here is a very sad one: we have to abandon the idea that there is something emancipatory in extreme experiences, that they enable us to clear the mess and open our eyes to the ultimate truth of a situation. For the same reasons, I also think the entire debate about Holocaust versus colonialism that flourished a couple of years ago in Germany (which of the two was worse?) should be rejected as something profoundly obscene. Holocaust was a unique terrifying mega-crime; colonialism caused unimaginable amount of death and suffering. The only correct way to approach these two horrors is to see the fight against anti-Semitism and against colonialism as two aspects of one and the same struggle. Those who dismiss colonialism as a lesser evil are an insult to the victims of Holocaust themselves, reducing an unheard-of horror to a bargaining chip in geopolitical games. Those who relativize the uniqueness of the Holocaust are an insult to the victims of colonization themselves. The Holocaust is not one in a series of crimes; it was unique in its own way, in the same way that modern colonization was a unique breath-taking horror done on behalf of civilizing others. They are all incomparable monstrosities that cannot and shouldn’t be reduced to mere examples to be “compared” – each of them is in some sense “absolute” in its evil.

To conclude, let us return to the six versions of Wittgenstein’s proposition, as all six are relevant for our topic.

-“*Wovon man nicht sprechen kann, darueber muss man schweigen* (Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent)” enjoins us to respectfully pass over the (often manipulated or even falsified) sordid details of the horrors taking place instead of shamelessly using them to gain political profit. The information about Hamas beheading 40 Jewish babies (with Biden even claiming he has seen the photos) was withdrawn by the Israeli government itself as unverified); on the other side, I am inclined to doubt the Hamas claim that an Israeli rocket killed 500 in a Gaza hospital.

-“*Wovon man nicht schweigen kann, darueber muss man sprechen (*Whereof one cannot be silent, thereof one must speak)” correctly turns the initial proposition around. Information about criminal acts committed by our own side should be unconditionally rendered public and not ignored in order not to hurt our Cause.

-“*Wovon man nicht schweigen kann, darueber muss man schweigen* (Whereof one cannot be silent, thereof one must be silent)” describes precisely such an avoidance: we know we shouldn’t keep silent about a horror, but we do it out of fidelity to a false Cause.

-“*Wovon man nicht sprechen kann, darueber muss man* sprechen (Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one should speak)” enjoins us to tell the truth (about our crimes, as Amiram Levin did) even if it is difficult to sustain.

-“*Wovon man nicht sprechen kann, dass zeigt* sich (Whereof one cannot speak, that shows itself)” indicates how the way we are pursuing our goals often undermines these goals: not to mention Hamas, Israel pursues peace with *de facto* ethnic cleansing. (Incidentally, occupiers are as a rule always for peace: peace means that they can safely control the area they occupy.)

-And, finally, “*Was man nicht zeigen kann, darueber muss man sprechen*” (“What one cannot show, thereof one must speak)” outlines our duty to bring out also the hidden background of ongoing shocking events. Who and what strategies lie behind acts that appear suicidal?

**Notes:**

[[1]](https://thephilosophicalsalon.com/saying-keeping-silent-and-showing-notes-on-a-scandal-in-frankfurt/?fbclid=IwAR0613bGJiUVLiv_PGsyPYVGboJsyoNIKuVgveVcbdM0eJi303J_-D0u4Nk_aem_AWQy9dw-ltBRVy_OSKoZV5nUTcybz895IuHiCwWthWQ1aLD-ghYC748sPEaTKbZbc2o" \l "_ednref1" \t "_blank) Quoted from the bilingual edition *[Tractatus Logico](https://people.umass.edu/klement/tlp/tlp.pdf" \t "_blank)*[–](https://people.umass.edu/klement/tlp/tlp.pdf" \t "_blank)*[Philosophicus](https://people.umass.edu/klement/tlp/tlp.pdf" \t "_blank)*[(umass.edu)](https://people.umass.edu/klement/tlp/tlp.pdf" \t "_blank).

[[2]](https://thephilosophicalsalon.com/saying-keeping-silent-and-showing-notes-on-a-scandal-in-frankfurt/?fbclid=IwAR0613bGJiUVLiv_PGsyPYVGboJsyoNIKuVgveVcbdM0eJi303J_-D0u4Nk_aem_AWQy9dw-ltBRVy_OSKoZV5nUTcybz895IuHiCwWthWQ1aLD-ghYC748sPEaTKbZbc2o" \l "_ednref2" \t "_blank) Jon Elster, “States that are Essentially by-products,” in *Social Science Information*, vol. 20, no. 3 (1981).

[[3]](https://thephilosophicalsalon.com/saying-keeping-silent-and-showing-notes-on-a-scandal-in-frankfurt/?fbclid=IwAR0613bGJiUVLiv_PGsyPYVGboJsyoNIKuVgveVcbdM0eJi303J_-D0u4Nk_aem_AWQy9dw-ltBRVy_OSKoZV5nUTcybz895IuHiCwWthWQ1aLD-ghYC748sPEaTKbZbc2o" \l "_ednref3" \t "_blank) Op.cit.

[[4]](https://thephilosophicalsalon.com/saying-keeping-silent-and-showing-notes-on-a-scandal-in-frankfurt/?fbclid=IwAR0613bGJiUVLiv_PGsyPYVGboJsyoNIKuVgveVcbdM0eJi303J_-D0u4Nk_aem_AWQy9dw-ltBRVy_OSKoZV5nUTcybz895IuHiCwWthWQ1aLD-ghYC748sPEaTKbZbc2o" \l "_ednref4" \t "_blank) Op.cit.

[[5]](https://thephilosophicalsalon.com/saying-keeping-silent-and-showing-notes-on-a-scandal-in-frankfurt/?fbclid=IwAR0613bGJiUVLiv_PGsyPYVGboJsyoNIKuVgveVcbdM0eJi303J_-D0u4Nk_aem_AWQy9dw-ltBRVy_OSKoZV5nUTcybz895IuHiCwWthWQ1aLD-ghYC748sPEaTKbZbc2o" \l "_ednref5" \t "_blank) In Russell’s “Foreword” to the original English edition of *Tractatus*, available in *[Tractatus Logico](https://people.umass.edu/klement/tlp/tlp.pdf" \t "_blank)*[–](https://people.umass.edu/klement/tlp/tlp.pdf" \t "_blank)*[Philosophicus](https://people.umass.edu/klement/tlp/tlp.pdf" \t "_blank)*[(umass.edu)](https://people.umass.edu/klement/tlp/tlp.pdf" \t "_blank).

[[6]](https://thephilosophicalsalon.com/saying-keeping-silent-and-showing-notes-on-a-scandal-in-frankfurt/?fbclid=IwAR0613bGJiUVLiv_PGsyPYVGboJsyoNIKuVgveVcbdM0eJi303J_-D0u4Nk_aem_AWQy9dw-ltBRVy_OSKoZV5nUTcybz895IuHiCwWthWQ1aLD-ghYC748sPEaTKbZbc2o" \l "_ednref6" \t "_blank) Jon Elster, ‘Some Notes on “Populism”, *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, vol. 46, no. 4 (2020).

[[7]](https://thephilosophicalsalon.com/saying-keeping-silent-and-showing-notes-on-a-scandal-in-frankfurt/?fbclid=IwAR0613bGJiUVLiv_PGsyPYVGboJsyoNIKuVgveVcbdM0eJi303J_-D0u4Nk_aem_AWQy9dw-ltBRVy_OSKoZV5nUTcybz895IuHiCwWthWQ1aLD-ghYC748sPEaTKbZbc2o" \l "_ednref7" \t "_blank) Quoted from Heinz Hoehne, *The Order of the Death’s Head. The Story of Hitler’s SS*, Harmondsworth: Penguin 2000, p.333.

[[8]](https://thephilosophicalsalon.com/saying-keeping-silent-and-showing-notes-on-a-scandal-in-frankfurt/?fbclid=IwAR0613bGJiUVLiv_PGsyPYVGboJsyoNIKuVgveVcbdM0eJi303J_-D0u4Nk_aem_AWQy9dw-ltBRVy_OSKoZV5nUTcybz895IuHiCwWthWQ1aLD-ghYC748sPEaTKbZbc2o" \l "_ednref8" \t "_blank) See also a report in [Embracing racism, rabbis at pre-army yeshiva laud Hitler, urge enslaving Arabs | The Times of Israel](https://www.timesofisrael.com/embracing-racism-rabbis-at-pre-army-yeshiva-laud-hitler-urge-enslaving-arabs/). As expected, the defense of the Rabbis was that their statements were taken out of context: they wanted precisely to show how to help Arabs…

[[9]](https://thephilosophicalsalon.com/saying-keeping-silent-and-showing-notes-on-a-scandal-in-frankfurt/?fbclid=IwAR0613bGJiUVLiv_PGsyPYVGboJsyoNIKuVgveVcbdM0eJi303J_-D0u4Nk_aem_AWQy9dw-ltBRVy_OSKoZV5nUTcybz895IuHiCwWthWQ1aLD-ghYC748sPEaTKbZbc2o" \l "_ednref9" \t "_blank) Ruth Klüger, *Still Alive: A Holocaust Girlhood Remembered*, New York: The Feminist Press 2003, p. 189.