

## AMIRA, DAUGHTER OF ROSA

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Communist icon Rosa Luxemburg was rifle-butted to death by German nationalists nearly a century ago. Nonetheless, though her legacy has been largely forgotten elsewhere, her spirit is alive and well in 21st century Israel. It thrives among her assorted homegrown doctrinal descendants. Ideologically, *Ha'aretz's* Amira Hass is Rosa's daughter and drinks from her wellspring.

In a recent op-ed, Hass justified – indeed glorified – the targeting of Jews by Arabs who hurl rocks at passing Israeli vehicles. There's no doubt where her loyalties and sympathies reside. “Throwing stones is the birthright and duty of anyone subject to foreign rule. Throwing stones is an action as well as a metaphor of resistance,” she wrote. Nowhere did Hass mention the historical progression and context that produced what she habitually disparages as Israeli “occupation.”

This is no surprise. Hass, reared in an orthodox communist home, had long ago crossed the lines not only in abstract terms. She resides in Ramallah, having previously made her home in Gaza (but that became uncomfortable and unsafe, given the illiberal nature of Gaza's Hamas warlords).

For the most part, the usual hodgepodge of Israel-bashers overseas avidly amplifies Hass's every word. Her diatribes, however, barely resonate inside Israel except among small cliques of local ultra-radicals. But her stirring defense of rock-hurlers did succeed in setting off an uncommon hullabaloo.

For one thing, her piece appeared the day after Waal al-Arjeh, the stone-thrower who hit Asher Palmer's car in 2011, was convicted of murdering the young father and his one-year-old son, Yonathan. The judges determined that, contrary to forgiving attitudes by predisposed news-slanters, rocks can be lethal weapons. Palmer lost control of his car and was killed in the resultant crash as was the baby – a mere 17 days past his first birthday.

Another toddler, Adelle Biton, is now comatose and in critical condition after a rock struck the car in which she, her two sisters and mother were riding last month. Adelle's mother, Adva, invited Hass to “come to the Intensive Care Unit, see my Adelle, a three-year-old child, connected to tubes. Come experience with me what I am dealing with. Amira, a rock does not distinguish between different people's blood, and not between an adult

and a three-year-old. A rock kills. A rock is a murder weapon for all intents and purposes.”

But Hass is a seasoned political warrior and in all likelihood impervious to any pain that doesn't serve the causes she propagandizes. In her universe, the fault for the tragedies of tiny Yonathan and Adelle – and too many others – rests with their parents and official Israel. The tots just shouldn't have been where they were, Hass would surely aver.

Nor is she likely to be swayed by the fact that the Yesha (Judea and Samaria) Council had demanded that Hass be indicted for incitement. Quite the contrary. She is likely to posture as the Jeanne d'Arc of free speech, despite the fact that Israel's Left clamors for the prosecution of any oddball who dares opine in the other extreme. Its persistent drive to try Rabbi Yitzhak Shapira for his obscure 2009 *Torat Hamelech*, a scholarly treatise on the religious rules of warfare, is a prime case in point.

Moreover, Hass didn't merely extol stone-throwing but took the Palestinian Authority to task for not making practical anti-Israel attrition tactics part of the formal school curriculum.

“It would make sense for Palestinian schools to introduce basic classes in resistance,” Hass advised the PA. In an accusative tone she argued that such instruction isn't offered “due to inertia, laziness, flawed reasoning, misunderstanding and the personal gains of some parts of society.”

She recommends that “various forms of steadfastness and resisting the foreign regime, as well as its rules and limitations, should be taught and developed.” Thereby, Hass figures, Palestinian youths could be discouraged from aiming at Jewish children – not that anyone has yet come up with a reliable method to rapidly ascertain the age groups among a given moving vehicle's passengers.

But no such fine points bother Hass or her backers in the increasingly anti-Zionist *Ha'aretz*. That's where Hass particularly resembles the Luxemburg prototype.

To inveterate ideologues like Rosa, Zionism was anathema. Although reviled by Germans as a contemptible generic Jew (with her revolutionary doctrines falsely ascribed to all Jews), Rosa's antipathy to Jewish causes was a near-boastful expression of alienation from her own Jewish roots.

In 1917 she wrote her friend Mathilde Wurm a harsh response to the latter's concern about pogroms. “I have no room in my heart for Jewish suffering,” Rosa declared outright. “Why do you pester me with Jewish troubles? I feel closer to the wretched victims of the rubber plantations of Putumayo or the Negroes in Africa... I have no separate corner in my heart for the ghetto.”

Rosa's indifference to her own people arose from the intuition that cutting the cords of disagreeable Jewish affiliations eases acceptance beyond the ghetto. This was Rosa's ticket to citizen-of-the-world credentials – even if only within the setting of her Marxist milieu, packed paradoxically with her own breed of estranged Jews.

No less paradoxically, her professed lack of solidarity with fellow Jews flourishes remarkably in the Jewish homeland – the creation of the very Zionist movement to which Rosa was the antithesis. Logically, this country ought to be the last place in which to expect Jewish self-loathing. After all, Zionism regarded itself as the remedy to Rosa-syndrome complexes.

But the Zionist cure is perhaps of limited effectiveness against the collective mental aberrations which 2000 years of exile, helplessness and dependence on the whims of diverse potentates and tyrants inculcated in downtrodden Jews. Rosa's keenness to bask in the warmth of socialist comradeship still abounds among all-too-many Israelis. For them too, distancing themselves from the inherent interests of the Jewish people purchases a voucher for universalist endorsement.

This mindset long predated actual Jewish self-determination. As in the Hass episode, in its more extreme manifestations this inclination didn't merely involve apathy toward the tribulations of fellow Jews but also meant active collaboration with the enemies of the Jews.

This was already so before the pretext of "resisting occupation" at all came to be. Even Jewish independence hadn't yet been declared, couldn't be seized upon as a *casus belli* and misrepresented as the Palestinian *nakba* (catastrophe – the loaded Arabic moniker for Israel's sovereignty).

Then as now, whenever the Left goes on the warpath it's ostensibly for peace, justice and virtue. Its self-acclaimed high-mindedness inevitably rationalizes any means, as it did immediately following the start in April 1936 of the blood-soaked three-year cycle of Arab-perpetrated pogroms. The more militant Marxists, under the aegis of the Communist *Peh-Kah-Peh* (PKP, the Yiddish acronym for the *Palestinisheh Kommunistisheh Partai*) plastered local streets with posters demanding "the repeal of the Balfour Declaration and an end to Jewish immigration."

The PKP opposed the construction of Tel Aviv Harbor (where immigrant boats docked) and repudiated each batch of new immigration certificates issued. These were entry visas allotted very tight-fistedly by the British mandatory authorities to Jews already then desperately escaping Europe. The PKP, purportedly anti-British and anti-fascist, opposed rescuing these Jews. In that it sided with the infamous Mufti Haj Amin al-Husseini who instigated the Nazi-financed carnage that was the 1936-39 "Great Arab Revolt."

Husseini subsequently, in the role of pan-Arab prime minister, spent the war years in Berlin, where he consorted with Hitler, Himmler, Eichmann, et al. He broadcast virulent Nazi propaganda, recruited Muslims to the SS and actively foiled the rescue of any Jews, even children, during the Holocaust.

Indeed as Arab terror escalated, proof mounted of active PKP collusion with it (in incidents such as the 1936 bombing of Haifa's Beit Hapoalim and Tel Aviv's Fair Grounds). When Arab leaders themselves announced a brief

truce in the autumn of 1936, the PKP rejected any ceasefire on the grounds that “Zionism drags Jews to hell... Zionists and imperialists alone are to blame for these days of atrocity” – much like settlers are nowadays held liable.

The anti-Zionism of the PKP evolved gradually. The party arose from the fringes of the broad-based Poalei Zion. In 1919 – coincidentally the year in which Rosa was fatally bludgeoned – the embryo faction banded as the Hebrew Socialist Workers Party. But by 1922 its rejection of Zionism became so all-encompassing that it ditched Hebrew – whose revival was core to the Zionist ethos – and reverted to Yiddish (the language which Moscow’s commissars preferred for Jews).

In 1923 the PKP castigated Zionism as “a bourgeois movement serving the interests of British imperialism” (just as the Zionist state today is castigated for purportedly serving the interests of alleged American imperialism). The party cheered the 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop pact that facilitated WWII. The PKP vehemently opposed fighting the Third Reich until Hitler betrayed Stalin and attacked the USSR in 1941.

History is an irreverent matchmaker with a quirky sense of irony.

Back in pre-state days, when the PKP assumed it was abetting Marxist goals, it also inter alia furthered the fascist game plan. It’s not much different today.

The anti-Israel and pro-Arab line that Hass promotes appeals equally to anti-Israel forces on the international arena’s left and to rightist neo-Nazi outfits abroad. The rhetoric to which both supposed opposites resort when demonizing Israel is eerily similar. Hass delights them both.

She may pose as the embodiment of humane admonition and hector as the self-appointed voice of Israeli conscience. She may adopt the affectation of doing the moral thing in our name but the end result is immoral and indisputably at our expense.

Hass and her like-minded cronies in our midst aren’t held accountable and most probably never will. They are sure to continue deriding the Israeli mainstream’s disapproval of them. They will keep on deriving clout and celebrity in distant salons, campuses and media.

They’ll keep on molding foreign opinion against their own people. Like Rosa, her heirs too have no room in their hearts for Jewish suffering. Rosa’s ghost walks among them and they bow to its diktats.