

Conferência:

FUNDAMENTALISMO E POLÍTICA HOJE

Tariq Ali

DEBATE

Pergunta: Meu nome é Halyna Grinberg. Vou falar em português para que não seja necessária tradução. Para o senhor é necessário. Eu gostaria que o senhor me respondesse se ainda existem fundamentalistas árabes e qual é o papel dos fundamentalistas árabes na resistência do Iraque.

Tariq Ali: By Arab fundamentalists you mean Islamic ones? There are Arabs that are fighting, but the principal is that there are people who have come from Jordan and Syria to fight, obviously. When you have a situation in Iraq where you have the United States of America, Britain, Poland, Ukraine, Mongolia, a few token forces from Central America, fighting behind the United States and the Iraqis are not allowed to have any help at all, that is what the Americans think, in fact they have very little help, no Arab regime is backing them because they are scared. But the bulk of the resistance is in the native Iraqi resistance. Without this resistance, they couldn't be doing the things they are doing, because the classical first stage of a resistance is not just hitting the right targets and getting the right people, but having the support of sections of the people. If a resistance doesn't have the support of a sizeable majority of the people, it will be crushed very quickly, because people go and tell the occupying part "Oh, this is us doing it." And the fact that they haven't been able to find the people indicates, and you read now between the lines and sometimes openly in the American press, what American journalists are writing. We don't find anyone, they say, who supports the occupation in that town. No one. It's natural.

Pergunta: Eu sou Isabel [Maria de Carvalho Vieira], de Brasília. Queria, em primeiro lugar, parabenizar quem organizou o encontro, pela idéia de trazer o Tariq Ali e dizer da alegria que acho que todos nós tivemos de conhecê-lo pessoalmente e ouvi-lo pessoalmente. Foi uma das falas mais tocantes, mais emocionantes. Eu fiz algumas anotações e queria dizer da minha impressão de que ele é um exemplo de coragem, como foi a Nancy, um exemplo de coragem de como se pode resistir do ponto de vista da nossa posição como intelectuais, como psicanalistas, professores de universidade, a toda essa falta de lucidez e todo esse irracionalismo destrutivo da sociedade contemporânea com que nós estamos convivendo. Então, quando a gente propôs aquele manifesto, aquela declaração, o que a gente queria exatamente era tentar estabelecer linhas de nos alinhar às pessoas e aos movimentos que tendem a resistir e a denunciar a intencionalidade destrutiva explicitada nas ocorrências da guerra - tanto da

guerra explícita do Iraque quanto da guerra dos palestinos e dos israelitas, da guerra da Chechênia, da guerra dos sérvios, quer dizer, todo esse movimento destrutivo que para todos nós representa uma regressão brutal dentro do ponto de vista psicanalítico também. Quer dizer, nós estamos sendo dominados pela pulsão de morte. Estamos sendo dominados e a posição nossa seria a de aderir de alguma forma, individualmente, em nossos consultórios, em nossas aulas, mas também coletivamente, em manifestações coletivas de adesão a movimentos, como o Fórum Mundial e outros, como os movimentos que ocorrem dos jornalistas, por exemplo. Quer dizer, quando ele citou a coragem de homens como aqueles aviadores que se recusaram a levantar vôo e que foram presos, em Israel, aqueles israelitas que atravessaram o muro e ajudaram os palestinos a colher azeitonas e que foram presos, que a gente denuncie, explicita, divulgue isso. Essa é a nossa posição e agradeço muito a sua presença.

T.A.: Thank you, thank you. Next question.

Michel Plon: J'ai une question, s'il vous plaît, Monsieur Tariq Ali. D'abord, vous remercier pour cette très belle conférence. Et, ensuite, une question qui consisterait à demander votre aide pour avancer dans la réflexion à propos de ce phénomène qui consiste dans les kamikazes. Vous y avez fait allusion en disant que c'était horrible. Et je suis tout à fait d'accord avec vous. Seulement, je ne pense pas qu'on puisse se satisfaire de l'explication par l'occupation et par les conditions horribles de l'occupation qui est faite par les israéliens. Parce que, après tout, le phénomène de l'occupation d'un territoire et d'un peuple par d'autres armées est un phénomène récurrent dans l'histoire, depuis l'empire romain en Judée, les (?) en Italie pendant la Renaissance, etc., jusqu'aux troupes nazis en France et en Italie. Pourtant, il y a eu bien sûr des mouvements de résistance en tout temps, qui d'ailleurs ont été régulièrement qualifiés comme terroristes par les armées occupantes, ce qui est une sorte de loi recourante, mais il n'y a pas eu de kamikazes. Les seuls exemples de kamikazes qu'on ait ce sont les aviateurs japonais, mais ça n'était pas en territoire d'occupant, c'était une armée en quelque sorte qui se voulait victorieuse. Alors, c'est vrai que je trouve que c'est un phénomène sur lequel on reste un peu sans explication.

Nous autres, psychanalystes, nous sommes tentés de mettre en jeu pour éclairer la question, de mettre en jeu le concept freudien de pulsion de mort. Du moins, le versant de la pulsion de mort qui s'est retournée contre le sujet lui-même, qui devient, en quelque sorte, objet, en tant que tel, de l'agression, c'est à dire qu'il remplace une arme. Mais je ne crois pas que ça sera complètement satisfaisant. Il y a une autre dimension dans ce phénomène, qui est une sorte de retour massif d'une aliénation, d'un sentiment de religiosité extrême, d'adhésion à un dieu obscur et auquel cas, si cette explication était suffisante, est-ce qu'il n'y aurait pas alors à terme, à l'horizon derrière ces actions, quelque chose du spectre d'une théocratie, avec son martyrologue à la clé et la répression que s'en suivrait, comme dans tout état théocratique pour qui ne respecterait pas les martyrs. Alors, ce n'est pas vraiment une question, c'est presque une demande d'aide pour réfléchir à ces problèmes.

T.A.: Well, let me reply, I would like to comment on that, and let me reply in the following way. It's a very extreme form of action which people take; it's also very

courageous, because to decide to sacrifice your own life is quite an amazing thing to do. So what makes people do it, is what you asked. And I think there are two different aspects of it. One, undoubtedly, is religious beliefs, but there is a second sight to it, because some of these suicide bombers have not been from the most religious Palestinian organization, the Hamas. They have been from secular organizations as well. In other words, it has now become an accepted point of the struggle and this second point, which Avraham Burg talked about, is desperation. When it doesn't matter whether you live or die, because every day life is so awful for many people, then they say "what's the point of going on living, let's go and do something, maybe for the future". The girl bomber, who did the last suicide bombing, had lost her entire family in an Israeli raid. She was not an uneducated girl, not religious; she was a middle class professional. And she did it because she said "I don't want to live without the people who have been killed". So I don't think there is any one particular explanation for this, but you know, it has happened before, not in this way. This is very dramatic what we see with our eyes, in the television coverage. But the Buddhist monks did it as a protest against the Vietnam War; they would go outside the US Embassy in Saigon, pour kerosene on themselves and burn themselves. That was even more courageous, they didn't want to kill anyone, and they killed themselves to show "we don't want, we don't accept this war". But then you have a religious side, without any doubt, where people feel that a divine power is telling them to do. Look, I give you an example of an event which happened six or seven weeks ago, within weeks of each other. There was a trial in Indonesia, of the Bali bomber, who had blown up the discothèque, and he was tried in an Indonesian court, sentenced to death, and when death sentence was announced, he smiled, actually smiled, waved to his friends in court, looked up towards the heavens and it was a response which you could only get from someone who believed in something else, who believed this order has come from someone else. In that same fortnight you had a trial in the United States of America of a Born Again Christian Fundamentalist, who had killed a doctor who performed abortions in the name of his religious beliefs and blown up abortion clinics. And the behavior of this American in the court, which also sentenced him to death, was exactly the same. There was no difference at all between the Islamist in Indonesia and the Born Again Christian in the United States of America. When the death sentence was announced, the American, born again fundamentalist, waved to the crowd in the court, smiled at everyone, looked up and was happy to be killed for his cause. And for people to do that, they are mostly motivated by a religious belief. Though, you know, it is not just religious belief. You talked about the resistance in Europe, many who refused were killed by the Nazis. Some of them sacrificed their own lives to blow up railway lines, trains carrying armaments, they knew they would be killed, or they knew there was a big chance they would be killed, and they agreed to do it. And quite honestly, when sometimes I think back and read about what happened, in the Jewish side of the Second World War, you really wish that there had been a Jewish resistance, who would have done that. Because they were going to be killed anyway. They should have done that, they could have done that. It would have been a much much better way to go, than to be herded like sheep into these horrible chambers. So, we have to learn some things from History.

Alvaro Gabriel Vives (*Psicanalista, Argentina/Buenos Aires*): Você é um escritor e acho que todos que estão aqui reunidos são pessoas sensíveis às palavras. Eu concordo com grande parte das análises que você faz, discordo de algumas e entendo essa possibilidade de conversar com você não tanto como um encontro de propaganda, um encontro de estratégias políticas, mas um encontro para a gente poder encontrar uma conversa. E eu fiquei particularmente tocado que diante dessa sensibilidade comum que temos às palavras, mas em nenhum momento, até este instante, da sua parte ou mesmo da nossa, não tenha sido mencionada uma única palavra e que eu acho que ela poderia mudar todo o tom do que você disse até agora; e a palavra é paz. Até agora, eu posso ter escutado errado, não sei se foi um problema de tradução, essa palavra não foi mencionada aqui. Eu gostaria de saber, sinceramente, dentro de tudo que você colocou, se é possível fazer declarações menos generalizadas, inclusive discriminando um campo de outro, e estou falando mais especificamente do conflito do Oriente Médio, de que existem pessoas que realmente estão dispostas a se recusar, como você mencionou, a lutar além da linha verde, aviadores, como foi mencionado, que se recusam a levantar vôo para missões nos territórios, palestinos que se recusam a fazer alguns tipos de ações e, principalmente, que nas vésperas das eleições israelenses, quando praticamente 98% dos territórios ocupados em 67 havia uma disposição de se devolver, e isso poderia pesar justamente sobre a eleição do Sharon, que esse acordo não pôde ser aceito pelos palestinos. Justamente eu gostaria que isso fosse uma conversa, onde essa palavra paz pudesse ser incluída. Obrigado.

T.A.: Well, we are in a situation where there are two occupations, simultaneous occupations, in the Arab World. The occupation of the Palestine by the Israelis and the occupation of Iraq by the West. These are violent occupations, carried out by military force. That's why we have to stress what is happening in these countries today, and not be utopian. But there was a utopian moment, before the latest War, and we shouldn't forget it. On February 15, this year, 12 million people all over the world marched for peace. Most of you, I hope, certainly did. I spoke at the big demonstration in London of one and a half million people, the biggest demonstration in the History of Britain. One and a half million people and what did we ask? We asked for peace. We said "don't invade Iraq". Young children poured out of their schools, hundreds of thousands, all over Europe and North America, including the United States, and said "we want peace, don't invade." Who listened? And when you have the largest universal mobilization in World History for peace and the United States goes to make war, and then people feel nothing else can prevail, except resistance in the occupied lands with violence! The only message they understand, and it's proving to be true in Iraq. Because if there had been no resistance in Iraq, let me tell you that, it would have been greeted as a triumph for the United States in the whole world. Now Palestine is a different question. It's a different question for the following reason, that we have here two national movements, the Jewish national movement, the Zionist movement, which went and took someone else's land and settled there with the help of the British. That's what they did. But ok, they don't have a country to go back to, Israel is their country as they will live there. But how will they live? That's the question. Palestinians inside Israel are being treated like second class citizens. Palestinians outside have been made refugees. So the Palestinians

need their own state, and they need, I'll tell you why, this story that "we were prepared to get them this, but these Palestinians didn't accept" doesn't impress me because it's not true. All they were prepared to get, no continuous territory, shriveled little Bantustans divided from each other by roads on which only the Israelis could travel, overlooked by Israelis tanks, and infiltrated by Israelis settlers. Which self-respecting people would accept this as a way to create an independent Palestinian state? And they didn't. Of course the Palestinians leaders made hundreds of mistakes too, who denies that? But the option is on the Israelis, they are the strongest power in the Middle East, they have nuclear weapons, stocked, and piles chemical weapons, no one is going to threaten them. And you should read the letter Avraham Burg wrote from the heart of Israel to the Jewish Diaspora abroad, which is more reactionary than many Israelis inside Israel, because they live there and they can see what they are doing to the Palestinians. When living outside, people dream "oh, you know, this and that hope"; it's not, it's a complete mess. And so we are all in favor of peace, obviously, but what sort of peace? There is the peace of the graveyard and then there is another peace.

Alvaro Gabriel Vives (*Psicanalista, Argentina/Buenos Aires*): Boa tarde. Com a existência da ONU e a declaração dos direitos humanos, com a existência da Organização das Nações Unidas que presume um apoio entre os países, e ainda o apoio à humanidade com a declaração dos direitos humanos, de que teoricamente não existiria miséria, aí está a grande contradição. A existência da luta contra a fome e a opressão contra os países mais pobres que precisam de ajuda. E a ONU, podia ser muito mais efetiva na luta contra a guerra, porque é o mundo todo contra os Estados Unidos, e a gente não pode abaixar a cabeça. Eu queria perguntar se o senhor acredita numa ONU mais eficaz e mais unida.

T.A.: I do believe in a more effective UN, but it's a utopian belief. I'll tell you why. The structure of the UN, from its very birth, was deformed. You have the Security Council with vote powers on anything, and you have a General Assembly which has no power, except consultative powers, at all. So the Security Council from the beginning dominated the functioning of the UN. And what was the Security Council? We mustn't have too many illusions about it; it was what happened after the Second World War: it was the Council of Victors. Russia and America, the big two powers, China came slightly later, Britain and France, victorious powers, and that's all. Now the Security Council today reflects a world which doesn't exist. And throughout the Cold War period, the United Nations couldn't do anything. The Vietnam War, the Korean War, nothing. When the Russians invaded Hungary and Czechoslovakia, nothing. And it's the same today. It has no power to do anything when the United States decides to do something. And recently, what the Security Council has done is a disgrace! They have given retrospective sanction to the invasion of Iraq, by accepting the puppet regime the Americans have imposed as the official regime and saying that the Americans have to be supported. That's the resolution they passed unanimously. When Pol Pot was defeated in Cambodia by Vietnam he was allowed to occupy a seat in the UN for twelve years, because the Americans wanted to punish the Vietnamese. So what they say goes, and today it would be more honest if you had the Security Council just with one vote, the United States. Nothing else matters. That's the reality. The

only way you could change the structure is to give the General Assembly of the United Nations many, many more powers. But let's suppose the General Assembly of the United Nations, which's voted for thirty years, were to lift the sanctions on Cuba. What effect has it had? Unfortunately, brute force is the only representative principle recognized by the Security Council.

Corinne Daubigny: Je me sens un petit peu déchirée quand je vous entend, je suis aussi gênée par le fait qu'on applaudisse. Les sujets sont trop graves et il y a trop de vies humaines en jeu, pour que quelque part on applaudisse, qui que ce soit. Mais on continuera à applaudir, je dis simplement mes sentiments. Alors, déchirée parce que bien sûr je ressens quelque part la douleur qui peut être celle, qui est celle de l'occupation, et j'entend bien ce que vous dites sur la martyrologie et, en même temps, il y a des choses qui signent, de votre côté, par rapport au conflit du Moyen Orient, quelque chose qui est, excusez-moi de le dire, probablement une ignorance. Cela tient à la question du fondamentalisme. René Major, qui avait initié ces États Généraux, en février dernier a fait une conférence où il a parlé du fondamentalisme protestant des États Unis et du rôle de ce qu'il appelle le mythe de l'élection, depuis très longtemps, dans cette affaire. En disant que, à la suite de Freud, l'idée de l'élection du peuple juif a été reinterprétée de manière délirante par le fondamentalisme protestant, entre autres. C'est exact, c'est à dire que, excusez-moi, je suis obligée de dire des choses précises, c'est à dire que, par exemple, si vous lisez les oeuvres de Luther - Luther c'est le père d'une certaine forme du protestantisme - si vous lisez les oeuvres de Luther vous verrez effectivement une forme de remaniement de l'idée d'élection au profit de l'idée de la grâce d'un peuple, comme ça, par des chrétiens d'une manière générale, avec un antisémitisme absolument épouvantable. Quelque chose qui vraiment menace d'extermination. C'est facile de lire Luther actuellement car, malheureusement, il est diffusé sur les sites fondamentalistes islamistes. Que je regarde, car je regarde tout. Donc, c'est facile de se procurer les oeuvres de Luther. Par contre, vous avez invoqué les oeuvres de Herzl. Je les ai lues. Je vous demande de les lire. Vous ne trouverez pas l'idée de l'extermination ou de la soumission des arabes ou des palestiniens. Vous trouverez une idée de la colonisation avec achat de terres, vous y trouverez, la pire des choses qui est dans Herzl, l'idée de colonie, effectivement, au sens de petite colonie, de colonie par achat de terre et que peut-être ce n'est pas évident d'empêcher l'arrivée, sur ces terres, des arabes. C'est à dire, il y aurait un partage effectivement, un partage des terres. C'est la pire des choses que j'ai trouvé, moi, dans les oeuvres de Herzl. Mais certainement pas l'idée d'humilier parce qu'il y avait l'idée, au contraire, complètement illusoire, d'apporter des richesses sur ces terres, qui profiteraient au peuple présent. Ensuite, vous avez dit que, au moment que Hitler avait certainement trouvé – enfin, j'ai entendu que vous avez dit – que Hitler avait trouvé ses idées dans Herzl. Non, il ne les a pas trouvées dans Herzl, ça non ; par contre il les a trouvées aussi dans le génocide qui avait eu lieu aux États Unis, justement parce que les États Unis on fait un génocide, vous l'avez dit, d'ailleurs, contre les Indiens, et ont inventé l'idée du gazage ; donc, il a trouvé les idées ailleurs, mais c'est pas dans Herzl. Ensuite, vous avez dit que l'humiliation de porter l'étoile jaune était bien pire qu'aller en prison. Ça c'est vrai. Et vous avez dit qu'on ne peut pas imaginer pire que cette humiliation. Pourtant, en cinq

ans, six millions de juifs sont morts. C'était pire que l'humiliation même si l'humiliation était bien pire qu'aller en prison. Je crois que c'est important de ne pas attiser la haine, ni d'un côté ni de l'autre. Et quand on dit que se sont les juifs qui sont à l'origine de l'idée d'extermination, on attise une haine. Et je vais terminer. Les kamikazes palestiniens, ils sont effectivement dans une martyrologie qu'on trouve d'ailleurs dans la Bible aussi. Mais ils provoquent quelque chose qui n'est pas évidente, en sorte qu'ils n'ont pas fait exprès, bien entendu, qui est la terreur. La terreur des civiles, mais bien sûr, mais c'est une affaire de guerre, bien entendu ; la réaction des israéliens est une réaction en boucle qui est épouvantable, et qu'il faut arrêter effectivement, parce que les israéliens sont sensibles à la question de la persécution, à la question de la terreur, et ont très peur de l'extermination. Voilà. Donc, il est possible bien sûr de faire la paix mais en ayant des représentations de l'histoire qui, si vous voulez, soient dégagées de tous les fondamentalismes. Et c'est la différence entre la position de René Major et la vôtre ; celle de René Major est de dire : il faut séculariser les États, il faut séculariser aussi nos représentations ; il faut limiter la puissance des États. Vous dites la raison, ça nous fait aussi du mal. Bon, il faut peut être une raison tempérée, je dirais. Voilà, je termine là-dessus.

T.A.: This is a very serious question and you have made a few charges against me, which shows that you didn't understand what I said. I'll try to explain it to you. When I referred to Herzl and Hitler, I made a very specific point, quoting from Victor Klemperer's book, which I don't know if you read, but I'd recommend it to you. The German Jew who survived and wrote his diary. He was a philologist, a master of language, and looked at the language the Nazis used and found similarities in it, to what he had read in Herzl as a scholar; it's not me who is saying it. So don't accuse me of saying it. I did not say that Herzl suggested extermination, you imagined that. Or maybe you wanted to hear it, I didn't say it. That was the only point I made about Herzl, that some of the language he has used. When I talked about transference, I quoted Israeli officers who are forced to do these things. Of course it's not on the same scale as the Holocaust; we are not crazy people to say that. But to deny the daily repression of the Palestinians which takes place, which many Diaspora Jews deny, is unacceptable. Unacceptable! I debate with Israelis all the time, I'll tell you something: there was a debate in London for an audience as large as this, between me and a leader of the parliamentary Likud Party. On Israel and Palestine. And I told him, and it was a mixed audience, there were lots of supporters of Israel and lots of Palestinians, and I said to him all my active political life I have been in favor of a bi-national State of Israel and Palestine. That has been my position: a bi-national State, where Jews, Arabs, whoever else, Christians, Muslims, lived together in peace. That has been my dream. And he turned to me and said, in front of this big audience: "that can never happen, that can never happen because we will never allow the Jews in Israel to be a minority again. You can call us what you like, anti-democracy, apartheid; we will never allow the Jews in Israel to be a minority". I said okay, I understand that. In that case you should not stop the Palestinian from having a sovereign independent Palestinian State, without any interference from your side. You can't have it both ways. You won't accept a bi-national Israel and Palestine and you won't allow the Palestinians a State of their own, without interfering with it. And look, to discuss these things is extremely

important because people are being killed every single day. And I don't put an equal sign between people who are killed by the fourth largest army in the world, which is the Israeli army, which, as I said, many brave Israelis are resisting. So what should people outside, who are friends of Israel do? Who should they help? I think they should help the Israelis in Israel who are resisting. That's extremely important. As for what you said about Martin Luther, I agree with you. Of course there was a strong streak of German Fundamentalism and anti-Semitism in his work. However, if you look at the writings of protestant Fundamentalists in England, who made the English revolution of the seventeenth century, if you start reading the writings of John Milton, the great English poet of the revolution, totally pro-Israel. And because they were biblical, that's why, nothing to do with, you know, that was in the seventeenth century, for people who believed in the bible literally, like Milton and people did, for them the land of Israel belonged to the Israelis, to the Jews. Why do you think the Born Again Christian Fundamentalist groups in the United States today, at every big meeting they have, there is a member of the Israeli government present? Because that's what they believe as well, a literal belief in the Bible. So it's not the case that all protestant Fundamentalists are anti-Semites, far from it. They have an exaggerated respect, if you like, which many Israelis would laugh at even, for the land of Israel belonging to the Jews. And they actually say it, you can see it on their websites; if you go back home and type at Google.com, some of the Christian Fundamentalists' websites and you can read it up, and this is one of the problems of this particular Bush administration. It cannot act as a mediator anymore. It's so totally committed to one side, can't mediate. That's the situation we confront, there is not an easy solution. And there are not easy answers either. But you have to understand that one side is oppressed and the other side is the oppressor. That is the reality.