

Keeping One's Head

By Phyllis Chesler

So—what have you all been up to since last we spoke?

As for myself: I no longer know what to say about the anti-Israel and anti-Jewish propaganda that floods every corner of our waking lives. I hate to keep repeating myself. Look: I've been writing about this, predicting all that is now happening for at least twenty-five years—and I've been concerned and active on this very issue for more than 55 years.

I wrote two books on the subject. Back when I still could, I lectured. I did interviews. I wrote countless articles. I "took meetings." I kept reading and monitoring practically everything.

By 2005, I had taken the measure of the faux-feminists in the West, who thought that my studies on honor killing were "Islamophobic." And who deserted the cause of women living under Sharia Law in the name of "political correctness." I published a book titled *The Death of Feminism*. Alas, it is currently out of print.

I have since taken the measure of the faux-feminists, the brainless and heartless Hollywood celebrities, the anti-Zionist lesbians and "queers," and no longer appear in their pages or in their Memoirs. Communist leftists? So-called liberals? All, all have also deserted their own principles in droves to embrace gender over sex-based rights; glamorize trans athletes over biological female athletes; and who have taken up the cause of both face-veiling and "Palestine," a country that has never existed and whose very name is associated with genocide, most precisely, the intended genocide of the Jews and of the Jewish state—yet again.

Even Orwell would be astonished by the linguistic reversals of reality and by how Islamist Hamas accuses Israel of its own

crimes—but, above all, by how the world media still falls for it each and every time.

Thank God that others, younger, spunkier, newer to the battle, have emerged. At the moment, I am thinking of Eve Barlow and Benjamin Kerstein, as well as the long-timers (“oldies but goodies”), Canary Mission, Yigal Carmon, Alan Dershowitz, Elder of Zion, Steven Emerson, Caroline Glick, Daniel Greenfield, Richard Landes, Melanie Phillips, Daniel Pipes, John Podhoretz, Gerald Steinberg, Jonathan Tobin—and here I can go on, but I’ll stop for now.

At times such as these, one is consoled by Nature. Most glorious trees, bird songs, fiery sunsets. For some, family and friendship remain as constants in a world well on its way to World War Three or Four.

My major consolations consist of writing (of course!). I am preparing for two interviews next week and am therefore re-reading *Woman’s Inhumanity to Woman* and *Requiem for a Female Serial Killer*. What can the author say? I am very, very impressed by these two books and still cannot understand how I managed to pull together so much research for the first book and achieve such a gritty, true-crime dramatic narrative tone even as I incorporated all the feminist ideas that drove me to get involved in the case of the so-called “first” female serial killer.

Beyond that, my consolations consist of watching the best live streamed movies (the British version of *House of Cards*; *Adolescence*; *I, Jack Wright*—and all of Hilary Mantel’s Cromwells). I leave myself when I study a bit of Torah (what a treasure of a gift that is!) and when I occasionally attend the opera. I wrote a little something about Megillat Ruth and posted it here. Since then, it has appeared in *Israel National News* and in the *New English Review*.

I meant to write about Richard Strauss’s opera *Salome*, which I

at the Metropolitan Opera House. It was superb. Kudos to Elza van den Heever and Peter Mattei and to the entire cast, conductor (Derrick Inouye), and production team. Leaving aside the question of historical accuracy, the singing/acting was fierce, bright, devastating. The “politically correct” twist on Salome’s Dance of the Seven Veils, which was portrayed as Salome at six different ages—a



child taunting King Herod, who has sexually molested Salome all through her childhood—well, it was shocking, unbelievable, all too believable.

The portrayal of Salome as a lustful, maddened, essentially pagan creature demanding that John the Baptist, a holy man, have sex with her is also both powerful but unbelievable. But so is her desire for holiness, purity, to be near it, to have “of it,” and if not, to spoil it, punish it. When John, in rags, chained in a pit, refuses her offer of food and wine—and refuses the offer of Salome herself, she gets the King to deliver John’s head to her on a platter. She kisses his lips now that he is beheaded.

This last scene was not at all a diversion. Among some, beheading is still common. There is much to say about this but

not here, not now.

What diverts or even consoles you in these times?

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*Illustration ~ Salome with the Head of Saint John the Baptist
~ Andrea Solario ~ The Met Fifth Avenue*