

Schoolbooks as a Factor in Peace Education: The Problematic Case of the Palestinian Authority¹

By

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Schoolbooks in general are the most reliable indicator of the ideals a society would wish to instill in the minds of the younger generation. In an ongoing conflict, schoolbooks form one of many factors² that shape the attitude of school children to the "other" and to peace and, as such, may serve as a powerful tool for nurturing or suppressing belligerent tendencies. The importance of schoolbooks is thus self-evident, and constitutes the rationale behind the research done at the Institute for Monitoring Peace and Cultural Tolerance in School Education (IMPACT-SE).

IMPACT-SE is a non-profit NGO dedicated to the ideal of education for peace, tolerance and acceptance of the "other." It was established under its former name, the Center for Monitoring the Impact of Peace (CMIP), in 1998 in order to check whether the Oslo Accords between Israel and the PLO had made their impact on the schoolbooks of both parties. It soon started looking into the curricula of other Middle Eastern nations. The Institute has been issuing over dozen reports examining the attitude to the "other" and to peace in close to 1,500 schoolbooks of Israel, the Palestinian Authority (PA), Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Iran and Tunisia. Most of these reports are available on the Institute's Web site: <http://www.impact-se.org>.

The Institute adopted a simple method of research: each book of a given curriculum (which may include over 100 books of subjects such as language, religion, civics, history, geography, etc.) was carefully scrutinized and any material therein dealing with the "other" – especially a rival one – or with issues of peace and war, be it in the form of text, photograph, illustration, map, chart or graph, was brought forth as is, with minimum analysis, so that the material would speak for itself. The various quotations from all the books were organized in chapters according to their specific themes, such as the attitude toward a specific other, the attitude to peace, the attitude toward the Arab-Israeli conflict, etc. This way all references were equally treated, as well as cases of non-reference which are no less important in schoolbook research. Overall analysis of the material was done in the conclusion section of each report. The page-by-page study of every book is time consuming, but the outcome is closest to perfect, as all relevant material gets due attention. So far, no serious attempt has been made to challenge this research method or refute the findings it has yielded.

¹ This paper concludes ten years of research conducted by Dr. Arnon Groiss at the Institute for Monitoring Peace and Cultural Tolerance in School Education (IMPACT-SE, formerly, the Center for Monitoring the Impact of Peace – CMIP) where he served as Director of Research until the end of 2010. During those years he authored over ten reports on schoolbooks of various Middle Eastern nations. Dr. Groiss is a graduate of the Hebrew University's Departments of Arabic Language and Literature and History of the Middle East (BA) – where he taught for several years in the 1990s and 2000s, of Princeton University's Department of Near Eastern Studies (MA & Ph.D.) and of Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government (MPA). He has been working as an Arabic-language journalist since 1973 at the Israel Broadcasting Authority's Arabic Radio. The author wishes to thank Mr. Ido Mizrahi, former researcher at IMPACT-SE, for his assistance in conducting this research.

² Other factors are the teachers in class, peers' influence, the atmosphere at home, on the street and in organizations of which the student is a member, the media, religious sermons in houses of prayer and elsewhere, etc.

The criteria for analysis were shaped in accordance with UNESCO's recommendations and principles.³ They were formulated in questions such as: Are other peoples, religions and communities recognized and accepted as equal, or stereotyped and prejudiced? Is wording likely to create prejudice, misapprehension and conflict avoided? Do the books promote peace and non-violent conflict resolution? And so on. These criteria are available to everyone for perusal in the introduction section of each report.

One point that should be stressed in this respect is the principle of universality adopted by IMPACT-SE: the criteria referred to above are used for the analysis of all curricula without distinction. In no case is a certain society "exempted" from meticulous scrutiny and serious evaluation of its schoolbooks under pretexts related to its specific circumstances. UNESCO's principles are universal and binding and there should be no exception of any kind. The often-encountered phenomenon of researchers applying different standards of analysis to Israeli and Palestinian schoolbooks is therefore totally rejected by this study.⁴

Over time, it became easier to discern minute nuances of change in attitude, and strict parameters for measuring types of attitude were developed. For example, the existence of a peaceful approach in a given curriculum cannot be determined solely on the basis of the appearance of general pro-peace expressions in the books, because peace is a universal ideal and only few countries would openly declare their non-adherence to it, even in the midst of a conflict. The valid indication of a true peaceful curriculum should therefore be those expressions that explicitly call for peace with the adversary.

Likewise, in times of conflict, and within the national narrative of each party, there is a strong tendency to present the adversary in unfavorable terms. That is understandable. The question in such cases is whether that negative description is the only information the student gets of the "other." If the answer is in the affirmative, we have here a case of demonized description of the adversary. But if other information is also given, in which an attempt is made to present the rival political entity or society more objectively and less stereotypically, the books then show a certain balanced approach.

³ For example, *UNESCO Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Cooperation and Peace, and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms*, adopted by the General Conference at its eighteenth session, Paris, November 19, 1974, Articles IV 7, V 14; *Declaration of Principles on Tolerance*, proclaimed and signed by Member States of UNESCO on November 16, 1995, Articles 4, 5; *Declaration of the Forty-Fourth Session of the International Conference on Education*, Geneva, October 1994, endorsed by the General Conference of UNESCO at its twenty-eighth session, Paris, November 1995; *Integrated Framework of Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy*, approved by the General Conference of UNESCO at its twenty-eighth session, Paris, November 1995, Articles 6, 9, 16, 17, 18 – all are available at UNESCO's official Web site.

⁴ Israeli researchers in particular tend to treat Israeli schoolbooks harshly, to the point of superfluous pedantry, with no parallel criticism on their part of Palestinian books. For example, the Israeli authors of a study issued by IPCRI criticize an Israeli Bible workbook for failing to present King David's conquests as expansionist wars – see Israel/ Palestine Center for Research and Information, "Examination of Israeli Textbooks in Elementary Schools of the State Educational System" (April 2004) p. 13 (www.ipcri.org/files/ibookseng.pdf). Conversely, no Israeli scholar has so far criticized Palestinian schoolbooks for their favorable attitude to the 7th-century Muslim conquests.

Another question is whether the "other" is mostly referred to in schoolbooks as a group only – which may carry hostile connotations if the "other" is a rival society – or whether there are references to the individual "others" as ordinary human beings. Also, in the case of what is perceived by textbook authors as a national struggle against foreign occupation – which might be considered legitimate according to international standards – one should look into the actual character of such a struggle, and to its geographic limits, as referred to in the schoolbooks, in order to make sure that the authors are not transmitting messages which justify or excuse terrorism against civilians and encroachment on the territory of the "other."

Recognition of the adversary's legitimate status within the conflict is an important principle that should be added to this list. That does not mean that one should accept the adversary's claims in whole or in part. But one surely has to recognize it as an equally legitimate actor on the scene with rights and interests of its own to be reckoned with. Failing to do so would mean total rejection and, consequently, an indication of a non-peaceful curriculum.

In other words, recognizing the adversary as a legitimate partner to the conflict, providing enough objective information about it that would counterbalance its (possible) demonizing description, treating its individual members as ordinary human beings, advocating peace with it and subordinating the struggle against it to international standards of human rights are all part and parcel of a genuine education for peace.

All these guidelines were followed within IMPACT-SE's research of the attitude to the "other" and to peace in the context of the Middle East conflict. The main question was whether the respective curricula advocated peace or, at least, refrained from using bellicose language.

Within the 465 Israeli schoolbooks examined in the 2000 and 2002 projects (plus a limited number of additional books studied later), no trace of any explicit or implicit call for violent struggle against Palestinians or other Arab/Muslim nations/groups was found, as well as anything else that could be interpreted as an expression contributing to the creation of a mental infrastructure necessary for the development of warlike inclinations.⁵ However, there were several cases of unfavorable description of Arabs/Muslims/Palestinians within the context of Jewish life in Muslim countries or in the context of the conflict (see below).

Arab and Iranian schoolbooks,⁶ on the other hand (with notable exception of the Tunisian books), did contain crude expressions against Jews and open incitement to fighting against them, and – in some cases – even annihilating them.

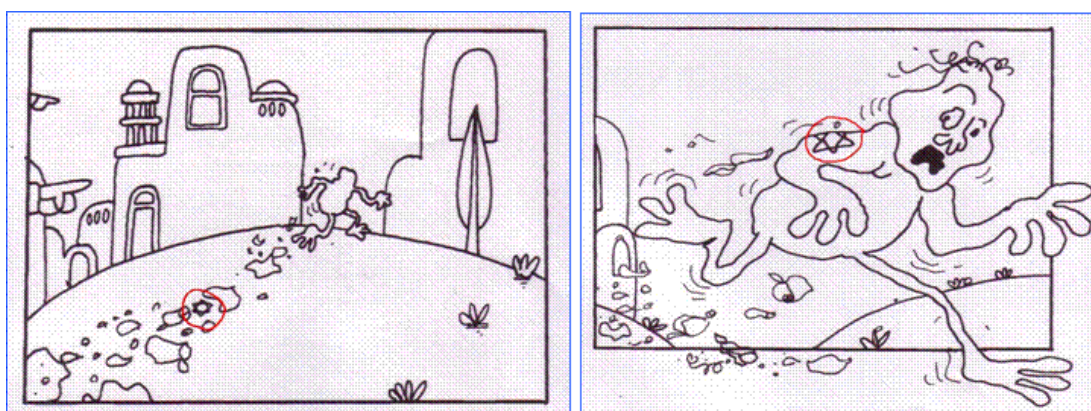
For example, Jews were presented in Egyptian schoolbooks as having abominable traits such as treachery, greed, racism, hypocrisy, trickiness, etc. These traits were

⁵ See the two reports on Israeli schoolbooks on IMPACT-SE's site. See also my article there (within a section titled "Reactions: Individuals") that refutes claims made by Dr. Nurit Peled-Elhanan that Israeli schoolbooks adopted a racist approach toward the Palestinians and legitimized their massacre.

⁶ Between the years 2000-2010 IMPACT-SE/CMIP studied 435 Palestinian (of various editions, including reprints), 119 Egyptian, 115 Iranian, 101 Saudi Arabian, 68 Syrian and 64 Tunisian schoolbooks.

described as eternally inherent in the Jewish soul and the students were requested to become acquainted with them and guard themselves against them.⁷ Jews were depicted in various Arab schoolbooks as enemies of Islam and the Muslims, of the entire human race and even of God Himself⁸ – the last accusation being actual call for murder among Middle Eastern religiously devoted societies. Jews were further demonized in Saudi Arabian schoolbooks by attributing to them various atrocities in the spirit of the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion," which were quoted in the books, including their alleged responsibility for the French and Bolshevik revolutions, the First World War, the abolition of the Islamic Caliphate by Kemal Atatürk, the spread of wantonness and crime all over the world and the destabilization of world order in general, as a first step on their way to taking over it.⁹

In light of all that, the persecution of Jews, including the Holocaust, is justified, as stated in Syrian schoolbooks¹⁰ that openly call for the Jews' elimination (*isti'sal* in Arabic).¹¹ A Saudi Arabian textbook expresses hope for the Jews' perdition and another one presents a Prophetic Saying [*Hadith*] about the killing of Jews by Muslims at the End of Days.¹² An Iranian third-grade workbook features a picture story in which the liquidation of Israel – or the Jews – is equated with the removal of garbage. The story tells of inhabitants of a small and tidy town who wake up one morning to discover a trail of garbage in their streets. They trace the contaminator which is found to be repugnant creature spreading garbage wherever it goes. They chase it away, clean up after it and everything returns to normal again. The Jewish Star of David is seen in one of the pictures as part of the garbage trail and the same symbol is drawn on the creature's right arm in two additional pictures.



(Iran, *Gifts of Heaven [religious studies] Workbook*, Grade 3 (2004) pp. 13-15 [marking circles added])

These clear-cut manifestations of Jew-hatred within Middle Eastern schoolbooks provided the basis for the following conclusion:

⁷ Egypt, *Islamic Education*, Grade 10 (2002) p. 39; *Islamic Education*, Grade 11 (2002) p. 77

⁸ Egypt, *ibid*; Saudi Arabia, *Hadith and Islamic Culture*, Grade 10 (2007) p. 102; Syria, *Islamic Education*, Grade 6 (1999) p. 57; the PA Ministry of the Endowments and Religious Affairs, *Koran and its Sciences*, Grade 11 (1996) p. 49

⁹ Saudi Arabia, *Hadith and Islamic Culture*, Grade 10 (2007) pp. 104-106

¹⁰ Syria, *National-Socialist Education*, Grade 10 (1999) p. 104

¹¹ Syria, *Islamic Education*, Grade 10 (1999) pp. 115-116

¹² Saudi Arabia, *Dictation*, Grade 8, Part 1 (2007) p. 24; *Hadith*, Grade 9 (2006) p. 148, respectively

From the material presented here it is clear beyond any doubt that a powerful anti-Jewish campaign, with racist and even murderous undertones is being conducted within Middle Eastern curricula. Traditional religious sentiments and the general atmosphere resulting from the Arab-Israeli conflict have joined together to create a solid ideological basis for the demonization of Jews as a nation and as individuals. To this end, even foreign cultural sources of Jew-hatred, namely, European anti-Semitic motifs have been recruited. A culture of hate is being created in schools all over the Middle East. One may even rephrase that in sharper words: **the minds of young Arabs and Iranians are being prepared for a new Holocaust against the Jewish people** [emphasis in the original].¹³

The level of hate education is not the same among the various nations whose schoolbooks were studied. Syrian books proved to be the most extremist ones, followed by those of Saudi Arabia and, to a far lesser extent, of Egypt. Iranian schoolbooks contain relatively few such expressions, including the said anti-Semitic picture story. By contrast, the Tunisian schoolbooks, while being explicitly anti-Israeli to the point of demonization, do not show any anti-Jewish attitude. Rather, the opposite is the case. For example, instead of the anti-Jewish *Hadith* mentioned above, we can find there one that is very different:

A funeral procession passed by [in Medina] and the Prophet stood up and so did we. We said: 'O God's Messenger, this is a Jew's funeral.' He said: 'Is it not a soul?! Whenever you see a funeral, stand up!' (Tunisia, *Islamic Education*, Grade 9 (2007) p. 32)¹⁴

Within the Palestinian schoolbooks the situation is rather ambiguous. On the one hand, there are some 25 books for grades 7-12, mostly dealing with religious subjects (Koran commentary, Prophetic Sayings [*Hadith*], Islamic jurisprudence [*fiqh*], Islamic history and the like). These books are Jordanian in origin and are still used in a dozen or so schools operated by the PA Ministry of the Endowments and Religious Affairs. They contain harsh expressions against Jews, including the said *Hadith* that urges Muslims to kill all Jews as a precondition for the advent of the End of Days.¹⁵

On the other hand, the bulk of Palestinian curriculum, which includes some 230 books issued by the PA Ministry of Education between the years 2000-2006, has been found to be devoid of open incitement against Jews. That does not mean that anti-Jewish expressions do not exist at all in these latter books (see below), but, on the whole, hostile references to Jews – not Israelis – are considerably few.

It is true that such a relatively mild attitude may have been partly dictated by the foreign donors to the PA schoolbook publishing project. Indeed, there was a case of a

¹³ Dr. Arnon Groiss, "The Image of Jews in Contemporary Schoolbooks in the Middle East" (PowerPoint presentation, 2009) [Hebrew]

¹⁴ This *Hadith* also appears in one of the PA Ministry of Education's textbooks – see below the discussion of grade 11 books.

¹⁵ The PA Ministry of the Endowments and Religious Affairs, *Hadith and its Sciences*, Grade 11 (1996) p. 200. Note: Since the bulk of this paper deals with schoolbooks published by the PA Ministry of Education, references to such books will not include this publishing body, for the sake of convenience. Most references were taken from the original editions of these books, with some updated ones, but all appeared in books that were being used during the school year of 2009/10.

history textbook for grade 10 where the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, a Czarist-Russian anti-Semitic fabrication of the early 20th century, were presented as the confidential resolutions of the first Zionist congress. Under pressure of one of the donors, that is, the Belgian government, the PA issued a newer edition without this statement.¹⁶ Having said that, the fact remains that, unlike the situation in other Arab nations, schoolbooks issued by the PA Ministry of Education do not promote a genocidal approach against Jews. That should always be born in mind.

Yet, the concluding analysis reveals that the PA Ministry of Education's schoolbooks still include certain basic elements that fall within the genocidal attitude found in the schoolbooks of other Middle Eastern nations. Such elements should be taken seriously, especially in view of the ongoing venomous anti-Jewish campaign in the Palestinian media – including some official ones, in mosques and in other forums, not to mention Hamas, whose Charter includes messages of Jew-hatred.¹⁷

It is possible to sort these alarming elements into three main categories:

1. Denial of legitimacy to the "other"
2. Demonizing description of the "other"
3. Advocacy of a violent struggle against the "other" rather than peace with it

Denial of legitimacy to the "other": To begin with, the Jews' perceivable rights in Palestine/Land of Israel are never recognized and sometimes even explicitly denied and dubbed "greedy ambitions [*atma*]." ¹⁸ That may seem comprehensible within the present conflict where deep emotions closely related to cardinal issues of self-existence and identity are involved (although on the Israeli side, schoolbooks do sometimes refer to the Palestinian national point of view using phrases such as "the Palestinians' national demands," "the Palestinians' national awakening," "the Arab-Palestinian nation," "Palestinian nationalism" and there is even an assignment in which the student is requested to "point to steps in the development of the Palestinian national movement in the years 1919-1939"¹⁹). Yet, the PA books go beyond that and the Jews' very presence in the country in the past and at present is mostly ignored, including their holy places.

¹⁶ Compare the first and second editions of *History of the Modern and Contemporary World*, Grade 10, p. 63 (both carry the date of 2004, but the second edition book also has the year 2005 written on the back cover). Following the issuance in 2005 of IMPACT-SE (CMIP)'s report on the PA books of that grade the Belgian embassy in Tel Aviv asked us to provide them with a copy of the page accompanied by English translation.

¹⁷ http://ar.wikisource.org/wiki/%D9%85%D9%8A%D6%AB%D8%A7%D9%82_%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B3

¹⁸ *National Education*, Grade 7 (2001) p. 22

¹⁹ See, for example, K. Avieli-Tabibian, *The Age of Horror and Hope: Chapters in History for Grades 10-12* (Tel Aviv, Center for Educational Technology, 2001) pp. 160, 166; E. Bar-Navie & E. Nave, *Modern Times Part 2: History of the People of Israel for Grades 10-12* (Sifrey Tel Aviv, 1999) p. 272; E. Bar-Navie, *The Twentieth Century: A History of the People of Israel in the Latest Generations for Grades 10-12* (Sifrey Tel Aviv, 1998) p. 93; Avieli-Tabibian, *ibid.* p. 185, question 6A, respectively, and there are many similar cases in these books and elsewhere. Note: Most references to Israeli material are taken from schoolbooks examined within IMPACT-SE's former reports of September 2000 and July 2002. Some of these books are no longer in use and the reminder have been since then revised. But IMPACT-SE's ongoing research has shown that no major changes have taken place in the Israeli schoolbooks as far as the attitude to the rival "other" and to peace is concerned.

Jewish historical presence in ancient Palestine is hardly mentioned. Even Christian Education textbooks designed for Christian students in the PA school system refrain from mentioning the term "Jews" while relating Old Testament events and use the words "people" or "inhabitants" instead: "Then came the king of Babylon, destroyed the temple and the inhabitants were exiled to Babylon. The people lived a long [time] in exile..."²⁰ Another text defines the Jewish temple by the following words: "The Temple [*al-Haykal* in Arabic]: A word meaning 'the Great House' which was a place of worship of God, like the church today,"²¹ with no mention of Jews in this context. On the other hand, Jews are regularly mentioned as such in PA Christian Education textbooks in cases where their rivalry with Jesus Christ and his disciples is described.²²

There is one prominent case of Palestinian acknowledgement of Jewish ancient history in Palestine. It is a chronological table appearing in two books and titled "Palestine throughout the Ages." One can see in this table the three following items: "The Jews – David's Kingdom 1000-923 BC; The Northern Kingdom of Israel 923-722 BC; The Kingdom of Judea 923-586 BC."²³ This is indeed a case of clear-cut recognition of the Jews' past history in the country that should be stressed, but it is an exception. In a later book a paragraph enumerating Palestine's historical periods moves directly from the Bronze Age (3200-1200 BC) to the Babylonian and Persian rule (586-332 BC), thus totally obliterating the Israelite-Jewish period in between.²⁴

Not only are the Jews excluded from the country's history, they are banished as well from the land, which seems like an even more acute problem. Charts showing the population of the country in its entirety do not include the 5.5 million Jewish citizens of Israel, while Israel's Arab citizens are included.²⁵ In addition, Jewish cities are not shown on the map (Tel Aviv is shown on one historical map, and see below the discussion of the grade 11 books).

Jewish holy places in the country are presented as Muslim ones usurped by Jews. This is the case of the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem, the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron and Rachel's Tomb in Bethlehem. The Wailing (or Western) Wall is holy to Jews as it is considered the only remnant of their Temple which was destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD. It is also holy to Muslims who call it "Al-Buraq" and believe that Prophet Muhammad tied there the divine beast by this name upon which he rode during his nocturnal journey from Mecca to Jerusalem whence he rose to heaven and returned. A text in one of the books says: "...the Jews' attempts to control Al-Buraq Wall."²⁶

The Cave of the Patriarchs is holy to Jews, Muslims and Christians due to its being the perceived burial place of the three Patriarchs – Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the Matriarchs Sarah, Rebecca and Leah. Another Matriarch – Rachel – is traditionally believed to be buried in Bethlehem. A text in one of the PA schoolbooks refers to "the

²⁰ *Christian Education*, Grade 7 (2001) p. 19

²¹ *Christian Education*, Grade 2 (2001) p. 11

²² See, for example, *Christian Education*, Grade 2 (2001) pp. 43 (and the question on p. 45), 59

²³ *History of the Middle Ages*, Grade 7 (2001) p. 105; *National Education*, Grade 7 (2001) p. 3

²⁴ *Reading and Texts*, Grade 9, Part 2 (2004) p. 36

²⁵ See the chart titled "Palestine's Inhabitants on 1.2.1999" in *National Education*, Grade 6 (2000) p.

11. See also the figures in another chart, and the footnote appearing there, in *Geography of the Arab Homeland*, Grade 9 (2003) p. 53

²⁶ *National Education*, Grade 7 (2001) p. 21

A text appearing in one of the PA schoolbooks says:

"The land of the Levant [*Al-Sham* in Arabic] presently comprises the following states:

1. Palestine
2. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
3. The Republic of Lebanon
4. The Syrian Arab Republic"³¹

Delegitimization is thus reinforced by disinformation.

Unlike their Palestinian counterparts, Israeli schoolbooks do tend to show the actual situation on the ground. Following the Oslo Accords and the division of control over the West Bank and the Gaza Strip between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, the map looked like this:



Borders of the State of Israel – 1999

[Purple:] Territory of the State of Israel

[Orange:] Areas A+B

[White:] Area C

--- Border

Area A: Full Palestinian control

Area B: Palestinian civil control

Area C: Full Israeli control

(Vardah Ashkenazi, Hannah Adan, Bilhah Alperson, *To Be Citizens in Israel – A Democratic Jewish State: Civics Textbook for Students of Upper Grades in General and Religious Schools*, (Center for Educational Technology, Revised Edition, 2001) p. 13)

In the wake of the Second *Intifadah*, however, and the ensuing Israeli re-occupation of Area B and parts of Area A in the early 2000s, maps appearing in current Israeli schoolbooks show the West Bank and Gaza either in different color than that of Israel proper³² – since they have not been officially annexed to it, or in the same color³³ –

³¹ *History of the Ancient Civilizations*, Grade 5 (2004) p. 30. A similar text appears in *Islamic Education*, Grade 2, Part 1 (2001) p. 98

³² Iris Greitzer, Tzviyah Fein, Meirah Segev, *Israel in the 21st Century: Selected Topics in Geography for Upper Grades* (Center for Educational Technology, 2009) pp. 70, 80; Tzviyah Fein, Meirah Segev, Raheli Lavie, *Israel – Man and Space: Selected Topics in Geography* (Center for Educational Technology, Revised Edition, 2007) pp. 11, 16, 33, 78

since they are actually under Israeli suzerainty, as the PA is considered legally an autonomous body. But in most cases within this latter option the PA's A Areas are contoured.³⁴

Unlike their Palestinian counterparts with regard to the Jewish population, Israeli schoolbooks do not ignore the Palestinian-Arab population in the country, before or after 1948, within or outside Israel's borders. One of them quotes a statement by Arthur Ruppin, a central Zionist leader in the country, made in the Zionist congress of 1913 saying: "At first, the Zionist movement believed that Eretz Yisrael [the traditional Hebrew name for Palestine] was empty of people... In the meantime, we have learned to see matters in a completely different way... As of now, there are six times as many Arabs in Eretz Yisrael as there are of us... It is a necessary task to make the lives of Jews and Arabs, side by side, as equal and friendly as possible..."³⁵

Additional examples of delegitimization of the Israeli adversary in PA schoolbooks are: the description of Israel's establishment in 1948 by virtue of the UN Partition Resolution of November 1947 as "occupation,"³⁶ avoidance of reference to Israeli pre-1967 territory as such by using circumlocutions like "the lands of 1948," "the Interior," etc.³⁷ and the treatment of regions, cities and sites within Israel's pre-1967 territory as exclusively Palestinian.³⁸ Even a Hebrew inscription has been erased from a British Mandate stamp reproduced in a PA textbook, thus erasing authentic historical information.



National Education, Grade 2, Part 1 (2001) p. 7



The original stamp

³³ Iris Greitzer, Tzviyah Fein, Meirah Segev, *Israel in the 21st Century: Selected Topics in Geography for Upper Grades* (Center for Educational Technology, 2009) p. 33; Tzviyah Fein, Meirah Segev, Raheli Lavie, *Israel – Man and Space: Selected Topics in Geography* (Center for Educational Technology, Revised Edition, 2007) p. 257

³⁴ Iris Greitzer, Tzviyah Fein, Meirah Segev, *Israel in the 21st Century: Selected Topics in Geography for Upper Grades* (Center for Educational Technology, 2009) pp. 6, 13, 120, 132, 136, 151, 179, 220; Tzviyah Fein, Meirah Segev, Raheli Lavie, *Israel – Man and Space: Selected Topics in Geography* (Center for Educational Technology, Revised Edition, 2007) pp. 7, 9, 23, 110, 122, 126 and more

³⁵ E. Domka, *The World and the Jews in Recent Generations* (Zalman Shazar Institute, 1998) pp. 231-232

³⁶ *Arabic Language – Reading, Literature, Critique*, Grade 12 (2006) p. 109

³⁷ *National Education*, Grade 4, Part 1 (2003) p. 43; *National Education*, Grade 6 (2000) p. 11

³⁸ See, for example, references to the Negev, and the cities of Haifa, Jaffa and Nazareth as Palestinian, without mentioning the fact that they all are located within Israel's pre-67 borders: *National Education*, Grade 2, Part 2 (2001) p. 25 (for the Negev); *Geography of Palestine*, Grade 7 (2007) pp. 76-77 (for Haifa and Jaffa); *General Sciences*, Grade 6, Part 1 (2000) p. 111 (for Nazareth).

The Jews' national movement in modern times – Zionism – is never recognized as such, but is rather described as a racist movement connected to Western Imperialism.³⁹

By presenting the Jewish-Israeli "other" as a foreign occupier who has no rights, no past, no holy places and no legitimate presence in the whole of Palestine, the PA schoolbooks no doubt contribute to the development of a mental environment conducive to the adversary's "disappearance" by whatever means.

Demonizing description of the "other": Although less openly hostile than in other Arab schoolbooks (except for the Tunisian ones), the general attitude towards Jews in the PA books is certainly not favorable, not even neutral. It is true that there is one reference presenting the Jews somewhat favorably by saying that Caliph Al-Ma'mun (9th century AD) used to respect Christian and Jewish scientists.⁴⁰ It is also true that derogatory terms like those appearing in other Arab schoolbooks, which talk of the Jews' being selfish and greedy, are extremely rare.⁴¹ But on the whole, the presentation of Jews in PA schoolbooks should raise concern. To begin with, they are mostly referred to historically in the context of their political rivalry with the Prophet of Islam in Arabia and such a context automatically puts the Jews in the villain's category in a society which is heavily traditional. Consequently, hate language and derogatory terms are sometimes used in reference to Jews in this case and they are described as people who use tricks and violate treaties.⁴²

In the context of the conflict there were several references to Jews as killers in early PA schoolbook editions.⁴³ Later editions omitted some of these references. But others have remained, including a poem portraying the Jews as slaughterers of personified Arab Jerusalem.⁴⁴ Another text attributes to the Jews genocidal intentions toward the Palestinians: "The coming of the Jewish throngs to Palestine continued until 1948 and their goal was taking over the Palestinian lands and then taking the original inhabitants' place after their expulsion or extermination."⁴⁵ In a grammar textbook for grade 12, a language exercise taken from a poem depicts Jews as invading snakes without specifically naming them: "By your life! How come that snakes invade us..."⁴⁶ An extremely demonizing description says: "Your enemies killed your children, split open your women's bellies, took your revered elderly people by the

³⁹ *History of the Modern and Contemporary World*, Grade 10 (2004) p. 60. Israeli schoolbooks, on the other hand, do sometimes refer to the "Palestinian national movement". See K. Avieli-Tabibian, *ibid.* p. 185.

⁴⁰ *History of the Arabs and Muslims*, Grade 6 (2000) p. 134

⁴¹ There is a story about a Jew who stole Caliph Ali's coat of mail. According to that story Ali lost his case in court as he did not bring acceptable witnesses. The Jew, having witnessed a fair Islamic trial, immediately confessed and embraced Islam and Ali left the coat of mail in his hands as a present – *Islamic Education*, Grade 9, Part 2 (2004) p. 85. Another case is a statement that presents Jews as seeking wealth in marital engagement – *Reading and Texts*, Grade 9, Part 2 (2004) p. 22

⁴² *Islamic Education*, Grade 12 (2006) p. 12; *Islamic Education*, Grade 9, Part 1 (2003) pp. 48-49

⁴³ *Our Beautiful Language*, Grade 7, Part 1 (2001) p. 95; *Reading and Texts*, Grade 8, Part 1 (2002) p. 134.

⁴⁴ *Reading and Texts*, Grade 8, Part 1 (2002) p. 77

⁴⁵ *National Education*, Grade 7 (2008) p. 20

⁴⁶ *Arabic Language – Linguistic Sciences*, Grade 12 [Sciences and Humanities] (2009) p. 61

beard and led them to the death pits."⁴⁷ In short, the overall image of both Jews and Israelis is totally evil.

Israel in particular is depicted as the source of all evil, with a long list of over 30 crimes:

1. Israel's "primary sin" is its very establishment: "The Zionist gangs usurped Palestine... and established the state of Israel."
(*Arabic Language – Reading, Literature and Critique*, Grade 12 (2006) p. 104)
2. Israel's occupation of Palestine in 1948: "Palestinian society fell under British occupation in 1917, which continued until the Israeli occupation in 1948."
(*National Education*, Grade 5 (2004) p. 30)
3. Israel's occupation of the rest of Palestine in 1967: "The Green Line: An imaginary line appearing in green on the maps... in order to separate the Palestinian lands occupied by Israel in 1948 from the lands occupied by it in 1967."
(*Modern and contemporary History of Palestine*, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) p. 57)
4. Israel's aggression against neighboring Arab states:
"Israel carried out an aggression against Egypt in 1956, with the participation of Britain and France."
(*Modern and Contemporary Arab History*, Grade 9 (2003) p. 75)
"Syria faced an Israeli aggression in 1967 which brought about the occupation by Israel of the Golan Heights."
(*History of the Arabs and the World in the Twentieth Century*, Grade 12 (2006) p. 81)
"Israel continued its aggression against Jordan in 1968."
(*History of the Arabs and the World in the Twentieth Century*, Grade 12 (2006) p. 84)
"Israel seized the opportunity of the Iraq-Iran War in order to strike the Iraqi nuclear reactor [in 1981]."
(*History of the Arabs and the World in the Twentieth Century*, Grade 12 (2006) p. 144)
"Lebanon faced repeated Israeli aggressions."
(*History of the Arabs and the World in the Twentieth Century*, Grade 12 (2006) p. 82)
5. Expulsion of Palestinians from their homeland: "The Zionist forces used various methods in order to empty the Palestinian lands of their original inhabitants. Among these methods was psychological warfare... in addition to killing operations perpetrated against the inhabitants of some cities and villages... which brought about the expulsion of about one million Palestinians."
(*Modern and Contemporary History of Palestine*, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) p. 38)
6. Massacre of Palestinians: "Israel employed the policy of violence in order to force the Palestinian inhabitants to leave their houses and lands. The best

⁴⁷ *Reading and Texts*, Grade 8, Part 2 (2008) p. 16. This piece, by an Egyptian writer who died in the 1920s, was not originally written against Jews. But its inclusion in a present-day Palestinian schoolbook may clearly have a negative impact.

example for that is the massacre it perpetrated against the Palestinian inhabitants in the village of Kafr Qassem on October 29, 1956... of which the number of victims reached 49."

(*Modern and Contemporary History of Palestine*, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) p. 41)

7. Assassination of Palestinian leaders: "Khalil Al-Wazir (Abu Jihad): A Palestinian leader... Israel succeeded in assassinating him on 16.4.1988 at his home in Tunis... Fat'hi Al-Shiqaqi: A Palestinian leader... Israel assassinated him in Malta on 26.10.1995."

(*Modern and Contemporary History of Palestine*, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) p. 82)

8. Killing of Palestinian children:

"The story 'An Evening Visitor' depicts the saga of the Palestinian struggle against the occupation through the figure of 'Abu Saleh' whose personal crisis began with the killing of his son Saleh in Jerusalem on the first day of the June War [1967] by the Israeli occupation army."

(*Reading and Texts*, Grade 8, Part 1 (2002) p. 45)

"The Palestinian child stood facing the enemy's bullets like a brave soldier."

(*Reading and Texts*, Grade 8, Part 2 (2002) p. 70)

9. Torture of Palestinian prisoners: "...People who suffer from total or partial disability in one of the senses or in physical or mental capabilities... The proportion of these [people] within the Palestinian nation exceeds that in other nations due to the occupation's crimes, which results from injury by various [kinds of] weapons used against the Palestinians and from acts of physical and psychological torture against them."

(*Islamic Education*, Grade 12 (2006) p. 152)

10. Destruction of Palestinian cities and villages: "Palestine faced... Israeli occupation in the year 1948 with the help of Britain. The Israeli occupation destroyed most of the Palestinian villages and cities."

(*National Education*, Grade 6 (2000) p. 16)

11. Usurpation and desecration of Muslim and Christian holy places:

"Mention the names of mosques and Muslim and Christian religious places the character of which the Israelis have tried to change."

(Assignment, *National Education*, Grade 7 (2001) p. 56)

"The Islamic Conference Organization... [was established] in 1969, following the crime of setting fire to the Al-Aqsa Mosque [in Jerusalem] by the Zionists."

(*Islamic Education*, Grade 11, Part 1 (2005) p. 113)

12. Demolition of Palestinian houses:



"What is the bulldozer doing?"

(*Our Beautiful Language*, Grade 2, Part 1 (2001) p. 88)

13. Uprooting of Palestinian trees:



"Let us express orally the following:"

(*Our Beautiful Language*, Grade 2, Part 1 (2001) p. 78)

14. Oppression of Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip: "The imperialistic policies imposed by Israel inside the occupied Palestinian territories have hindered human development through raising obstacles to education and pursuing repressive measures, which have led to the arrest of large numbers [of people] and to the injury of others, some of whom have become permanently disabled."
(*Contemporary Issues*, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) p. 19)
15. Dismemberment of Palestinian territories: "The [Jewish settlement] project aimed at dividing [the] Gaza [Strip] into three blocks separate from one another by Jewish settlements."
(*Modern and Contemporary History of Palestine*, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) p. 59)
16. Construction of the security fence/wall in parts of the West Bank: "Activity: Let us discuss the impact on the Palestinian people of the racist annexation and separation wall constructed by Israel on Palestinian lands."
(Assignment, *History of the Arabs and the World in the Twentieth Century*, Grade 12 (2006) p. 127)
17. Robbery of Palestinian land and water: "The Israeli imperialist authorities also seized the water resources and large portions of Palestinian lands and established on them a large number of [Israeli] settlements."
(*Contemporary Issues*, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) p. 19)
18. Israel's maltreatment of its own Palestinian citizens: "In some other Palestinian villages and cities restrictions have been imposed upon the inhabitants and they have been prevented from building [there] like Jaffa, Lydda, Ramleh, Acre and the villages of Galilee, the Triangle and the Negev."
(*National Education*, Grade 7 (2001) p. 55)
19. Racist discrimination against Palestinians: "Since its establishment in 1948 Israel has taken a series of racist measures aiming at stressing the Jewish character of its state."
(*History of the Arabs and the World in the Twentieth Century*, Grade 12 (2006) p. 127)
20. Violation of Human Rights: "Who violates human rights? ... The occupation."

- (*Civic Education*, Grade 9, Part 1 (2003) p. 28)
21. Attempts at the obliteration of Palestinian identity and heritage: "...the interest in Palestinian popular heritage has become a pressing necessity because of what this heritage has been facing during [Israeli] occupation, i.e., attempts at obliterating Palestinian identity and dissolving the components of Arab heritage and personality."
(*National Education*, Grade 7 (2001) p. 44)
 22. Pollution of Palestinian environment: "I will conduct a research [project] on the Jewish settlements' impact on Palestinian environment."
(Assignment, *Physical and Human Geography*, Grade 12 (2006) p. 95)
 23. Obstruction of Palestinian free movement: "The generation of [Palestinian] young men and women today lives in an economic, social and psychological crisis caused by the atmosphere of the stifling siege, which is a result of the closure, the check posts and the racist separation wall. These are practices imposed by the Israeli occupation authorities. These conditions lead to the restriction of freedom of movement of the young men and women generation."
(*Contemporary Issues*, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) p. 4)
 24. Crippling of Palestinian economy: "The Israeli authorities strove to make Palestinian economy subsidiary to their own economy through their control over the Palestinian economic and human resources such as land, capital, consumption market and labor."
(*Modern and Contemporary History of Palestine*, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) p. 59)
 25. Limitations on Palestinian agriculture: "This share [of the agricultural sector in Palestinian economy] diminished in the 1980s to about 22% as a result of the Israeli occupation's policies."
(*Arabic Language – Reading, Literature, Critique*, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) p. 12)
 26. Damaging Palestinian tourism industry: "The main problem facing the Palestinian tourism sector is the obstacles raised by the occupation authorities against Palestinian tourism."
(*National Education*, Grade 7 (2001) p. 78)
 27. Impoverishment of the Palestinian population: "The economic situation worsened because of the stifling Israeli blockade and many Palestinians were reduced to poverty."
(*Reading and Texts*, Grade 8, Part 1 (2002) p. 141)
 28. Israel's responsibility for Palestinian women's economic backwardness: "The Palestinian economy has been subjugated to the Israeli economy... This subordination brought forth several obstacles... as follows: ...Meager participation of women in the fields of economic activity."
(*Contemporary Issues*, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) p. 19)
 29. Israel's responsibility for internal violence in Palestinian society: "The political situation, such as the war situation and the [Israeli imposed] siege, is reflected in violence within the [Palestinian] family and its increased rate [of occurrence]."
(*Health and Environment Sciences*, Grade 10 (2004) p. 41)
 30. Israeli connection to drug abuse phenomena in Palestinian society: "The phenomenon of drug abuse appeared within Palestinian society during the era of Israeli occupation."
(*Contemporary Issues*, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) p. 6)

31. Israel causes anxiety and suffering to Palestinians: "Anxiety and suffering burden the Palestinians as a result of the Israeli occupation of Palestine." (*Reading and Texts*, Grade 8, Part 2 (2002) p. 28)
32. Israel falsely accuses Palestinians of terrorist activity: "The occupier spreads everywhere the lie that the Palestinian struggle is terror." (*Reading and Texts*, Grade 8, Part 1 (2002) p. 76)
33. Israel attempts at gaining control over water resources in neighboring Arab countries: "I will explain Israel's attempts at realizing its greedy ambitions regarding the Nile River." (Assignment, *History of the Arabs and the World in the Twentieth Century*, Grade 12 (2006) p. 155. On pp. 150-151 Israel is falsely accused of transferring huge quantities of water from the Litani River in south Lebanon into Israel's Sea of Galilee.)

The examples given above are not the only references found in the books in this respect and they reflect the general attitude to Israel. While most of these accusations are based on facts (though some are pure fabrications, as in the case of the "stolen" Lebanese water, for example, or the claim that "Zionists" set fire to the Al-Aqsa Mosque while the culprit was a Christian Australian tourist) – these facts are given from the Palestinian viewpoint of the conflict which ignores the Palestinian contribution to the situation. The books fail to note, for example, the deadly suicide bombing attacks by Palestinians in Israeli cities in 2002 which brought about the construction by Israel of the fence (concrete wall in urban areas) with a view to blocking free passage from Palestinian centers of population into Israeli ones.

The demonized image of Israel in PA schoolbooks is aggravated by the total absence of adequate objective information about Jews and Israel that would balance the strongly negative text and subtext. Palestinian students know virtually nothing about Jewish history, culture and religion or about Israeli society, economy, political structure, etc. In addition, there is no reference to Jews or Israelis as ordinary human beings. They are mostly presented as an alien and threatening group. In the few cases where the texts describe individuals, the latter are always stereotyped and shown as soldiers or settlers – both symbols apt to evoke hostility. See the following examples:

الدرس ٦ العنف



يعد العنف ظاهرة عالمية ومنتشرة، فهولا يقتصر على مجتمع دون آخر، أو على مجموعة لها خصائص اقتصادية أو اجتماعية أو ثقافية معينة، بل يحدث بين الطبقات الاجتماعية كافة، كما يحدث في الشارع والمنزل، وفي المؤسسات العامة أو الخاصة، ويأخذ أشكالاً مختلفة، وتترتب عليه نتائج جسيمة تؤثر في جوانب حياة الإنسان، النفسية منها أو الاجتماعية أو الصحية، وقد تصل إلى درجة فقدان الحياة.

"Lesson 6: Violence"

(*Health and Environment Sciences*, Grade 10 (2004) p. 40)



"5- Some of the students performed a beautiful play."
(Our Beautiful Language, Grade 1, Part 2 (2002) p. 131)

This heavily demonizing presentation of the Jewish-Israeli "other" in the PA schoolbooks is surely bound to have its impact on the student's mind. A systematically stereotyped description of the adversary as wholly evil may remove, over the long run, the barriers to legitimization of efforts to destroy it, in whole or in part.

In sharp contrast to the Palestinian educators, their Tunisian counterparts looked for and found in Palestinian literature pieces that portray a Jewish individual in positive light. A Tunisian literature textbook for grade 12 features two poems by the late Palestinian national poet Mahmud Darwish in which he expresses his love to his Israeli-Jewish girlfriend Rita. The Tunisian authors of the book also note the dilemma of having love relations with a member of the enemy people.⁴⁸ Thus, the Tunisian student gets the message that a Jewish/Israeli individual may be a lovable person. Such messages are not to be found in PA schoolbooks.

On the Israeli side as well one may find cases of unfavorable description of Arab individuals. For example, a story in a Medieval setting presents an "Ishmaelite" caravan leader as a greedy person who deceives a Jewish traveler.⁴⁹ Such material has been found in books used in schools of the independent Ultra-Orthodox stream which is not supervised by the Ministry of Education.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, it never reaches the scope and intensity of the anti-Jewish/Israeli demonizing expressions found in the PA books and presented above.

Other texts in Israeli schoolbooks sometimes portray Arabs/Muslims as oppressors of Jews in Muslim countries – by no means in all cases: one finds as well references to Muslim traditional tolerance towards Jews. Also, Arabs/Palestinians are sometimes depicted as aggressors in the context of the present conflict, albeit less intensively than what one finds in PA schoolbooks regarding Jews/Israelis. But, unlike the Palestinian student, the Israeli one is also given fairly objective information about the

⁴⁸ Tunisia, *[Literary] Texts, Grade 12 [Humanities]* (2006) pp. 93-94

⁴⁹ (n.a.), *On the Heels of the Flock D: Literature Reader and Exercises in Expression and Language* (Otzrot, n.d.) pp. 116-117

⁵⁰ The number of books used in Ultra-Orthodox Jewish schools and examined within the IMPACT-SE (CMIP) 2000 and 2002 research projects reaches 94.

Arab side historically.⁵¹ In addition, Israeli students are given a wider perspective of Arabic culture through Arabic literary pieces translated into Hebrew, with no parallel in the PA books regarding Israeli Hebrew literature.⁵²

Moreover, even within the present conflict, Israeli schoolbooks tend to treat the other party almost without prejudice. A history textbook explains: "Jews and Arabs were two national communities that struggled for the same piece of land... The 1930s are sometimes defined as the beginning of the conflict over the land between two national movements: the Jewish-Zionist movement and the Arab-Palestinian movement... Zionist settlement was perceived by many Arabs as undermining their very existence in the land..."⁵³

Continuing along this line, Israeli schoolbooks sometimes show empathy towards the Arab/Palestinian side due to its suffering during and after the 1948 war. One example is a piece that depicts the harsh living conditions of the Palestinian refugees. That is done from an Israeli viewpoint, namely, it is said that the refugee problem has been a result of a war initiated by the Arab side. Nevertheless, the text stresses the need for appropriate solution of that "complicated political... and... painful human" problem as a precondition to peaceful solution to the conflict.⁵⁴ Another example is a passage referring to the suffering of both sides, not only the Israeli one, as a result of the Palestinian struggle for independence: "The Palestinians' aspiration to national independence has given birth to a prolonged struggle which has found expression in the [first] *Intifadah*. This struggle is accompanied by terrorist activities, on the one hand, and by reactions of the State of Israel, on the other hand. The casualties on both sides are many."⁵⁵

Israeli schoolbooks even feature criticism of Israeli official policies regarding the Arab side, a phenomenon not to be encountered in PA schoolbooks. For example, there is a text criticizing Israel's rejection in 1971 of the Egyptian president Anwar Sadat's peace proposal "out of the feeling of power and superiority that had taken hold of Israeli society."⁵⁶ Another text cites an Israeli-Arab intellectual criticizing the Israeli government for its neglect of its Arab citizens.⁵⁷ Harsher criticism is directed at the Jewish organizations that perpetrated the infamous massacre in the Palestinian

⁵¹ See the piece about the Arabs' important contribution to world civilization: A. Doron, C. Frenkel et al, *From Generation to Generation: Lessons in History for State-Religious Schools*, Part 2 (Tel, 1994) p. 220; see also the detailed description of the emergence of Islam and other aspects of that religion, including Jerusalem's sanctity to Muslims *ibid.* pp. 198-211, and see below more references.

⁵² See, for example, a story by the Lebanese writer Tawfiq Yusuf Awwad in: A. Peres, *New Israeli Reader for Grade 6* (Ministry of Education, 1992) pp. 47-49, and a story by the Egyptian Nobel laureate Naguib Mahfuz in: R. Tzadka, *Reading Selection for Grade 8* (Horev, 1992) pp. 170-176

⁵³ E. Naveh, *The Twentieth Century: On the Threshold of Tomorrow, History for Grade 9* (Ministry of Education, 1999) pp. 44, 85

⁵⁴ E. Rapp and Tz. Fine, *People in [their] Space: A Geography Textbook for Grade 9* (Center for Educational Technology, 1998) p. 153

⁵⁵ H. Ne'eman, *The Central Mountain [Range] and Jerusalem*, Grades 7-9 (Educational TV, 1994)

⁵⁶ K. Tabibian, *Journey to the Past: The Twentieth Century – By Dint of Freedom*, (Center for Educational Technology, 1999) p. 313

⁵⁷ H. Adan, V. Ashkenazi, B. Alperson, *To Be Citizens in Israel – A Jewish and Democratic State: Civics Textbook for Students of the Upper Grades in State and State-Religious Schools* (Ministry of Education, 2000) p. 39

village of Deir Yassin in 1948: "The massacre of Deir Yassin has stained the Hebrew community's struggle for survival and independence."⁵⁸

Apart from the few Ultra-Orthodox texts mentioned above, Arab/Palestinian individuals fare in Israeli schoolbooks much better than their Jewish/Israeli counterparts in the PA ones and are presented in Israeli books as ordinary human beings. For instance, a story appearing in a lower grade textbook talks of a Jewish boy saved in a sea storm by an Arab fisherman.⁵⁹ Other stories present cases of friendship between Jewish and Arab individuals,⁶⁰ including children.⁶¹ Such stories are not to be found in PA schoolbooks.

Israeli schoolbooks even strive on certain occasions to suppress prejudice against Arabs explicitly:

The lady from the second floor opened her mouth and said that Arabs are exactly like Jews, that there are among them both nasty and decent people, and that they should not be labeled.

(R. Motzafi, M. Shachar, *What's the Connection? What's the Meaning?* Part 2 (Reches, n.d.) p. 184)

Advocacy of violent struggle against the "other," instead of peace: A delegitimized and demonized "other" is not a real partner for peace. One does not usually make peace with an "other" that is perceived to be threatening one's existence, unless there is extreme pressure, or the deal is expected to be limited in time and scope. Accordingly, there is total absence in all PA books of even one statement openly advocating peace with Israel that would echo the official commitment on the part of the PLO in the framework of the Oslo Accords to recognition of Israel and of its right to exist, renouncement of terror, peaceful solution to the conflict and to peaceful coexistence with Israel. That commitment, made by PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat in a letter he sent to Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, is found in one book as a document pertaining to the Oslo Process with no further elaboration.⁶² Expressions in favor of peace in general also exist in the books,⁶³ but the vital reference to Israel in this respect is missing. No reference is made either, contrary to what is sometimes done in Israeli schoolbooks, to concrete future possibilities of regional cooperation following the conclusion of peace. It is interesting to note that a Tunisian schoolbook brings a statement made by Yasser Arafat in a press conference on Dec. 4, 1988, following his address at the UN General Assembly, in which he mentioned the right of "all the parties to exist in peace, including the State of Palestine and the State of Israel and their neighbors."⁶⁴ Unfortunately, this statement is never brought by the PA schoolbooks to their young readers. It would have been helpful to the cause of peace had they so done.

⁵⁸ E. Bar Navie and E. Naveh, *Modern Times Part 2: History of the People of Israel for Grades 10-12* (Sifrey Tel Aviv, 1999) p. 228

⁵⁹ A. Cohen, *Did I Understand? – Reading Comprehension* (Reches, 1993) p. 222

⁶⁰ See the story in B. Talithman, *The Way of Words*, Book 5 (Tel, 1995) pp. 128-129 about friendship relations between a Jewish and an Arab family abruptly ended by the 1948 war

⁶¹ O. Ben Yosef, R. Gerber, A. Cohen, *Windows I: Reader for State Schools* (Tel, 1993) pp. 82-83

⁶² *Modern and Contemporary History of Palestine*, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) pp. 87-88

⁶³ See, for example, *Reading and Texts*, Grade 8, Part 1 (2002) p. 73

⁶⁴ Tunisia, "Document No. 20", *History*, Grade 12 [Sciences] (2007) p. 267

The discussion in the PA books of the alternative, that is, violent struggle for liberation, is much livelier. Examples:

Return, return, we shall return
Borders shall not exist, nor citadels and fortresses
Cry out, O those who have left:
We shall return!
[We] shall return to the homes, to the valleys, to the mountains
Under the flags of glory, Jihad and struggle
With blood, sacrifice [*fida'*], fraternity and loyalty...
(*Our Beautiful Language*, Grade 5, Part 1 (2004) p. 88)

Good morning, O my homeland...
The morning of your powerful fighters in fetters, in shackles...
The morning of glory and red liberty, watered by the martyrs' blood...

[Assignment]

I will connect the following poetical verses to the feelings they express:

...
"The morning of glory and red liberty, watered by the martyrs' blood..." – the hope for the liberation of Palestine.
(*Reading and Texts*, Grade 9, Part 1 (2003) pp. 20-21, 24)

O brother, the oppressors have exceeded all bounds and Jihad and sacrifice [*fida'*] are necessary
Shall we let them rob Arabdom of our forefathers' glory and dominion?

...
O brother, we have a sister in Jerusalem for whom the slaughterers have prepared the[ir] knives

...
O brother, get up to her; let us break through hazard in deep-red blood and a shaking blaze

...
O brother, if upon her soil my blood will flow and I will close my hand upon her pebbles

...
Kiss upon her ground a martyr who called to God in her name and fell as a martyr

(*Reading and Texts*, Grade 8, Part 2 (2002) p. 77)⁶⁵

Another text speaks of the violent struggle for Palestine's liberation that still continues: "Palestine is the blessed land... Its soil has been watered by the blood of the heroic martyrs who died in battles for its liberation and defense since the [days of the Prophet's] Companions to our own days."⁶⁶

⁶⁵ This poem was written in 1948 by an Egyptian poet but its inclusion in a PA schoolbook today carries a clear message of violent struggle for liberation.

⁶⁶ *Islamic Education*, Grade 12 (2006) p. 113

Israeli schoolbooks, by contrast, do stress the necessity of a peaceful solution to the conflict⁶⁷ and never advocate any violent alternative to it. Of particular interest is the following excerpt taken from the late Yitzhak Rabin's last speech before his assassination on November 4, 1995:

I was a soldier for twenty-seven years. I fought so long as there was no chance for peace. I believe that there is [now] a chance for peace. A great chance. The way of peace is preferable to the way of war. It is I, who was a soldier and Minister of Defense... that tells you this.

(R. Antman (ed.), *In the Language of Lines for Grade 4: Interdisciplinary Reader for State-Religious Schools* (Kinneret, 2000) p. 155)

The discussion of the violent struggle for liberation in the PA schoolbooks is bolstered by the use of the traditional Islamic ideals of Jihad and martyrdom, [*shahadah*] the mentioning of which by far exceeds that of the few references to the general ideal of peace (and the discussion here is restricted to Jihad in its military sense only, not in its other meanings such as one's inner struggle against one's own soul, sometimes called "the Greater Jihad"). These two ideals are greatly exalted. Jihad appears in a Prophetic Saying [*Hadith*] that puts it second only to belief in God and His Messenger.⁶⁸ As for martyrdom, there are poetical verses equating it with a wedding party: "O my homeland/ I shall not cry at this wedding/ For our Arabness forbids that we cry over the martyrs."⁶⁹ Another piece – a poem titled "the Martyr" – clearly encourages the student to be one, saying: "By your life! This is the death of men and whoever asks for a noble death – here it is!"⁷⁰

As regards concrete armed activity against Israelis, which Israelis and many others around the world would classify as terror while Palestinians and their supporters would consider it part of the Palestinians' struggle for liberation, the PA schoolbooks do not openly discuss such activity, save for one case where it is done favorably.⁷¹ But there are references in praise of the *Fidai*,⁷² that is, a member of the Palestinian armed organizations involved in such activity, while those *Fidais* who are killed in action or imprisoned are called "martyr [*shahid*]" and "prisoner-of-war [*asir*]," respectively.⁷³

An enormously important point that should be made in this context is the fact that the Palestinian violent struggle for liberation is never limited in the PA schoolbooks to the territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip occupied by Israel in 1967. In fact, the discussion of the violent return of the refugees clearly means Israel's pre-1967 territories because these are the places to which the refugees are intended to return. Add to that the massive campaign in the books to present Israel's pre-67 territories as

⁶⁷ See, for example, the following assignment: "Choose one of the following fields (or any other field in coordination with the teacher): agriculture, industry, transportation, tourism, education or culture; try to portray the [development] possibilities in this field under the circumstances of peace in our region." H. Ne'eman, *The Central Mountain [Range] and Jerusalem* (Educational TV, 1994) p. 37

⁶⁸ *Islamic Education*, Grade 9, Part 1 (2003) p. 62

⁶⁹ *Linguistic Sciences*, Grade 8, Part 2 (2002) p. 105

⁷⁰ *Our Beautiful Language*, Grade 7, Part 1 (2001) p. 97

⁷¹ *Reading and Texts*, Grade 8, Part 1 (2002) p. 45

⁷² See, for example, *Reading and Texts*, Grade 8, Part 2 (2002) p. 119

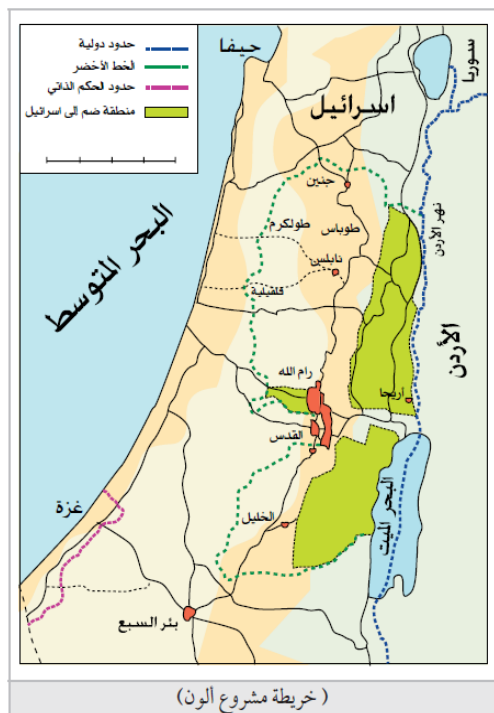
⁷³ *Civic Education*, Grade 3, Part 1 (2002) p. 7

purely Palestinian (see above) and you get a clear, albeit implicit, message of a delayed war for the liquidation of the State of Israel.

All these characteristics of Palestinian attitude to the Jewish-Israeli "other" and to peace were introduced during the early stages of the PA schoolbook publication operation which took place under the PA founder and first president, the late Yasser Arafat. But Arafat died in November 2004, before the completion of that project, which continued under his successor, Mahmud Abbas (grade 11, 2005/6) and the PA Hamas-led government (grade 12, 2006).

The books for grade 11 proved to be interesting and even surprising in some ways. Although the main fundamentals established under Arafat regarding the attitude to the Jewish-Israeli "other" and to peace were basically left intact, there were some signs of change.

For instance, the name "Israel" was found on two maps. It is true that those were originally two Israeli maps reproduced in a PA textbook. But it is also true that the Palestinian publishers could have erased the name "Israel" as they had done with the Hebrew inscription on the Mandate stamp (see above), and, yet, they did not.



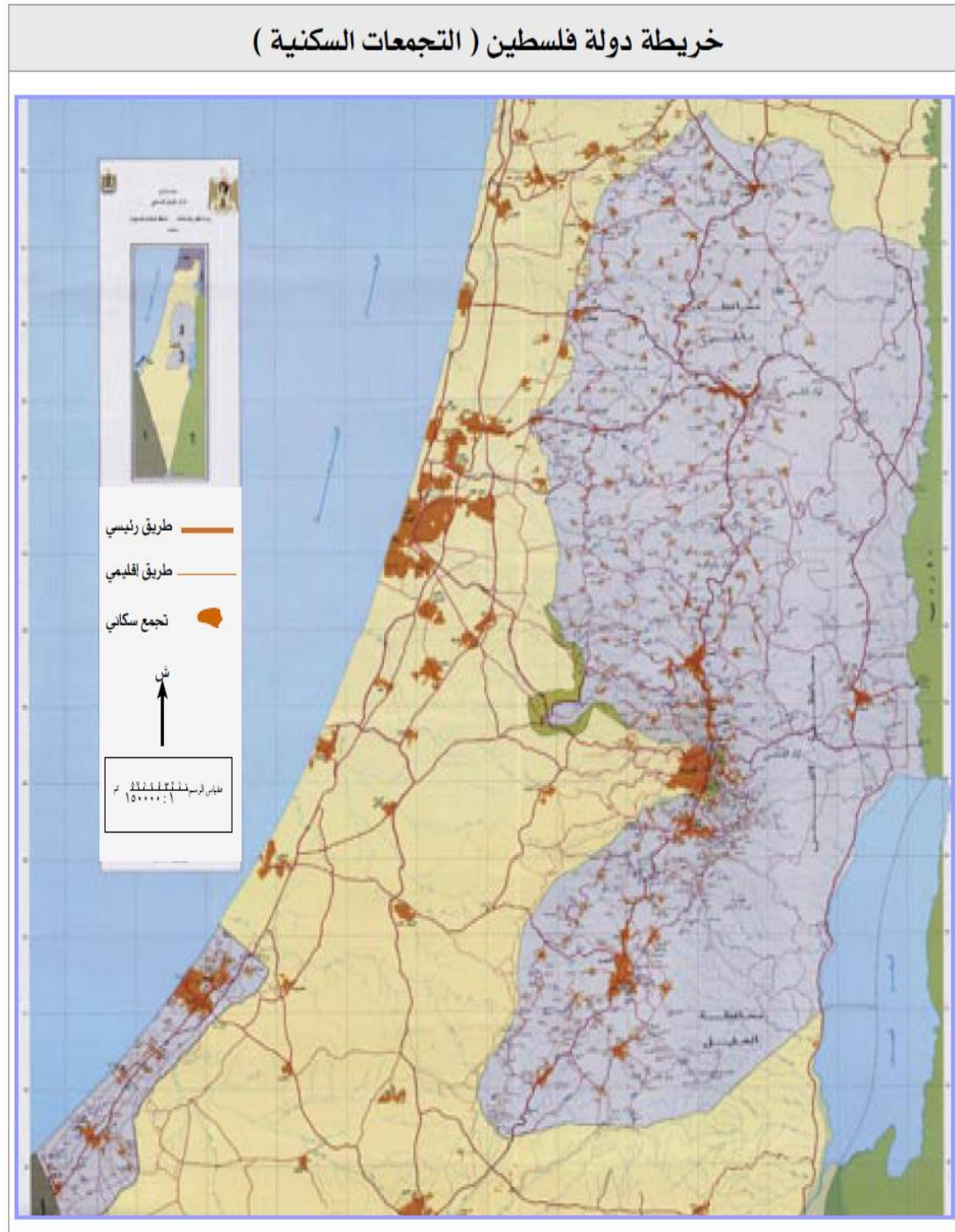
Map of Alon's Project
"Israel"



Map of Sharon's Project
"Israel"

(*Modern and Contemporary History of Palestine*, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) pp. 57, 58)

Jewish cities were shown on another map. Though one needed a magnifying glass in order to read their names, such a move was certainly an improvement comparing to past experience.



Map of the State of Palestine (Settlements)
(*Physical and Human Geography, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) p. 20*)

A whole page in a history textbook was dedicated to Jewish history in ancient Palestine, including a map and the phrase "the Jewish State" (omitted in subsequent reprints).



فلسطين في عهد النبي داود

فلسطين في عهد النبي داود

وشهد تاريخ فلسطين القديم دخول بني إسرائيل بقيادة يوشع بن نون في القرن الثاني عشر ق. م وحاربوا، الكنعانيين والفلسطينيين. وفي الثلث الأخير من القرن الحادي عشر قبل الميلاد تولى شاول بن قيس (طالوت) قيادة بني إسرائيل وحارب الفلسطينيين بقيادة (جالوت) الذين تمكنوا من قتله وأبانه في نهاية القرن الحادي عشر قبل الميلاد، وبعد وفاته تولى النبي داود بن يسي قيادة بني إسرائيل واستمر بمحاربة الفلسطينيين والكنعانيين، وأسس مملكة على قسم من الأراضي الفلسطينية تحت قيادته، ومن بعده جاء النبي سليمان الذي حكم منذ عام ٩٦٣ ق. م وحتى عام ٩٢٣ ق. م وقد وصلت الدولة اليهودية أقصى اتساع لها في عهده، وبعد وفاته انقسمت دولته إلى قسمين: مملكة إسرائيل في الشمال (السامرة)، ومملكة يهوذا في الجنوب (القدس).

"Palestine in the Reign of Prophet David"

(*Modern and Contemporary History of Palestine*, Grade 11, Part 1 (2005) p. 9)

In addition, Israeli pre-67 territory was being referred to as such alongside the continued use of circumlocutions,⁷⁴ the pro-Jewish *Hadith* mentioned above in the context of IMPACT-SE's Tunisian schoolbook report was encountered in a PA textbook,⁷⁵ a first clear-cut admission that it was the Arab side that opened hostilities in 1947-48 in defiance of the UN partition resolution appeared in one book,⁷⁶ and there were other, lesser, improvements.

All these changes could be rightly seen as harbingers of potential shift for the better in the PA attitude. However, that positive development was abruptly ended in the books

⁷⁴ See, for example, *Modern and Contemporary History of Palestine*, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) p. 86

⁷⁵ *Islamic Education*, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) p. 79

⁷⁶ *Modern and Contemporary History of Palestine*, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) pp. 30-31

for grade 12 issued a year later under the PA Hamas-led government of 2006-7, which returned to the former rigid line.⁷⁷

Since 2007 another process has taken place – the schoolbook reprinting operation. There were in the new reprints several changes in nuance that could be interpreted as movement in the direction of reconciliation. But changes in the opposite direction have been traced as well. For example, on the one hand, a text that urged the students to glorify "the concept of martyrdom and martyrs" was omitted.⁷⁸ On the other hand, a text, which mentioned in 2002 "the three monotheistic faiths" in relation to the land of Palestine and was followed by a question in which the student was requested to name them, omitted in 2009 both the word "three" and the question,⁷⁹ which might be interpreted as an attempt to play down the role of Judaism in the country's history.

The reprinting activity still goes on and it is hoped that through this mechanism the PA will be able to gradually change the existing attitude featured in the books into an active peace-oriented curriculum. No real peace will ever prevail without such changes. Hence, it is the future of the younger generations of both Palestinians and Israelis which is at stake. Recognition of the "other" as a legitimate party within the conflict, description of the "other" with no, or minimal, demonizing terms, side-by-side with provision of objective information about it, and, finally, open advocacy of a peaceful solution to the conflict with the "other" – are all a must in any peace-oriented curriculum. Israeli schoolbooks basically have that; the Palestinian ones still do not.

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⁷⁷ See the differences between the three phases of the PA schoolbook publishing operation in *Palestinian Textbooks: From Arafat to Abbas and Hamas* on IMPACT-SE's Web site www.impact-se.org/docs/reports/PA/PA2008.pdf . The only improvement left in grade-12 books is the continued use of "Israel" alongside the older circumlocutions to denote pre-67 Israeli territory.

⁷⁸ Compare *Our Beautiful Language*, Grade 6, Part 1 (2000) p. 46 to the 2007 reprint.

⁷⁹ *Our Beautiful Language*, Grade 3, Part 1 (2002) pp. 14-15; *ibid.* (2009) pp. 10-11

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