

Abu Mazen's Zionist Nazis

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Book Review: Mahmoud Abbas, *The Other Face: The Secret Contacts Between Nazism and Zionism* (1984), Dar Ibn Rashid, Amman 1984

How often have you heard that Abu Mazen is a Holocaust denier? Ever since Mahmoud Abbas rose to top of the Palestinian leadership, the issue has come up again and again. But on the 27 April, 2014, in an unprecedented move, the Palestinian President publicly declared that the Holocaust was "the most horrible crime committed against humanity." Abbas argued that the Holocaust was the result of ethnic discrimination and racism, which the Palestinians reject.

Abbas' words, alongside his rejection of the idea that his book explicitly denies the Holocaust, strengthen the need to do an in-depth review of his controversial work. First, we need to point out that Holocaust Denial isn't just the denial that any murders happened, but also the minimizing of its true dimensions, the hiding of facts, as well as the blurring of the responsibility of the actual perpetrators. Abu Mazen may not do the former, but does the latter openly and explicitly.

We can already see this in the subtitle of the book itself "The Secret Contacts Between Nazism and Zionism." In addition, throughout the whole book, he weaves many anti-Semitic threads, describing Zionism as being ultimately responsible of the destruction of European Jewry, a statement that the Nazis themselves would no doubt have endorsed. Abbas also touches on Jews in Arab lands, ignoring their suffering and creating an ahistorical politically-motivated fantasy. Anyone with any knowledge of history would easily recognize this to be a tendentious, propagandistic work saturated with open and hidden anti-Semitic messages.

In spite of this, or perhaps because of this, the book continues to sell in Arab countries, is taught in the Palestinian Authority and can be fully read in an online version at Abbas' website. The text itself, and the fact that he still makes it available without reservation on his personal website, make clear that Abbas' statements to the media are nothing more than a smokescreen.

This is in keeping with the general Palestinian intolerance of anyone who identifies with the Holocaust and shows sympathy with the Jews for such. The Holocaust is not taught at all either in Arab countries or in areas under Palestinian civilian control, and the subject itself is generally taboo.

This was recently confirmed when a lecturer from al-Quds University in Palestinian territory, who escorted students on a trip to the death camps in Poland. After the trip, al-Dajani, who

supports teaching about the Holocaust, was forced to resign due to pressure from forces within the PA.

Six Million? A Zionist Lie

Abbas' book is based on his doctorate, submitted to the Oriental Studies Institute in Moscow in 1982. The first edition was published in Amman in 1984, and later came out in two new editions, in Cairo 1997, and in Ramallah in 2011. It runs to 252 pages divided in 16 chapters, without a bibliography.

Abbas addresses the issue of the number of Holocaust victims already in the introduction. He states that "there are rumors" that the numbers reached six million, but according to him no-one can confirm or deny this number: "the number of Jewish victims may be six million, and it may be far smaller, less than a million."

At this stage Abbas emphasizes that "the debate regarding the Jewish number, does not in any way detract from the ugliness of the act done against them. Because the principle of killing a man – only one man – is a crime that cannot be accepted in the civilized world, it's not humane."

But after paying homage to the need to denounce the crime, he goes on the offensive: "Many researchers have discussed the number of those who died – six million – and arrived at amazing results, according to which the number of Jewish victims numbers hundreds of thousands." On the same page, Abbas quotes the known Canadian Holocaust denier, Rojeh Dilorm:

There is no proof so far that the number of Jewish victims in the Nazi camps reached four million or six million; at first the Zionists spoke of 12 million who were wiped out in the camps, and afterwards the number was reduced and shrank significantly and became half that is only six million, and later the number it shrank further and became four million. After all, it cannot be that the Germans killed or exterminated more numbers than was actually in the world at the time. And the truth is that the number is far less than the millions that are argued.

Later Abbas ostensibly quotes the eminent Holocaust historian Raul Hilberg's classic *The Destruction of European Jewry* (1961), where he erroneously claims that Hilberg puts the number of Jewish victims at only 896,000 (p. 670). But Hilberg's estimate was nowhere near that low; he estimated the number of Holocaust victims at five million: "World Jewry lost a third of its number and slid from an all-time high of 16 million to about 11 million." An innocent mistake? Doubtful.

How does the eminent Dr. Abbas explain the alleged inflation of victims? According to him, the fault lies with the Zionist movement:

It seems that it was the interest of the Zionist movement to inflate the numbers of those who died in the war, so that the profits it desired would be as high as possible. This caused

it to establish this number [six million] for world opinion, so that the latter would feel more pangs of conscience and sympathy for Zionism.

Even when it comes to the gas chambers themselves, Abbas continues to rely on "facts" and "studies" of Holocaust deniers, quoting for instance Robert Faurisson: **"these chambers, [which have been said to] de designed to kill live Jews – in a scientific study published by French professor Robert Faurisson, he attacked the existence of such chambers for those alleged purposes, and stated with certainty that they were solely for cremating bodies, for fear of the spread of disease and bacteria in nearby areas."** (p. 3)

An Indictment of Zionism

Abbas asks in his book what is the "Other Face", that is who was the partner or agent beyond the Nazis, who is guilty for the crimes which took place during WWII. At first he blames the Western powers for having "outlined a plan for the final framing of the results of the war, and everything that derives from these." According to him, the Western powers sinned by themselves defining "the perpetrators and the victims, after they established themselves as judges and as having the last word regarding these crimes. They used the details, events and crimes as they liked, and ignored everything they wanted to ignore – names, people, institutions, organizations and states." Abbas goes on to say:

Eventually they accused the leaders of Nazism of all the crimes that occurred during that war, and persecuted those of them who were still alive, for an unlimited period, without any statute of limitations. The Nirenberg wagon continued to go on [...] and after a fundamental partner in a fundamental crime committed during the war, was left in the shadows [...] thus these countries only dealt with half of the truth, and neglected – deliberately – the second half.

The Rais is clear that the crime of the Holocaust had two partners. One was the Nazis – but who was the other one? Abbas goes on to explain that this is Zionism and its leaders. They are the "fundamental partner," who bear the blame for the Holocaust along with the Nazis.

Ostensibly, the book focuses on analyzing the relationship between the Zionist movement and Nazism since the signing of the so-called "Transfer Agreement" of August 1933, which allowed the transfer of the property of tens of thousands of German Jews to Mandatory Palestine as well as the Jews themselves. But all throughout the book Abbas continues to press his main thesis, which is an all-out indictment of the Zionist movement and its leaders such as David Ben-Gurion as "fundamental partners" in the destruction of European Jewry.

He makes this case by arguing that they ignored the Holocaust, cooperated with Hitler, and encouraged anti-Semitism and persecution of Jews in Europe – everything to increase immigration to the Land of Israel and speed up the growth of the Jewish National Home in Mandatory Palestine. Abbas also claims that the Zionists deliberately sabotaged the rescue of the Jewish communities of Romania, Hungary, Slovakia and the Baltic countries, including a shipment of 3,000 Jews from Hungary (p. 52).

"How can one believe that the Zionist movement, which set out to protect a nation, would later become the reason for its destruction?" Abbas wonders. The answer is just as outrageous as the question:

When one discusses declared Zionist thought, which acolytes of Zionism deeply believe in with great conviction, we find that the Zionists believe in the purity of the Jewish race, just as Hitler believed in the purity of the Aryan race. Zionism calls for a fundamental and final solution to the Jewish Question in Europe via their immigration to Palestine. Hitler also calls for this and implements this [...] David Ben Gurion defined the Zionist movement as solely a movement of immigration, and anyone who doesn't immigrate is a heretic and not considered a Jew (p. 4).

The Zionists and the Nazi are thus not just partners – they are almost one and the same.

A high-stakes plot

Thus, per Abbas, the Zionists thought anything that would cause Jews to immigrate was justified, including anti-Semitism and cooperation with Hitler:

It is well known that the motivation of anti-Semitism is persecution and repression, and this is definitely desirable for the Zionist movement. The conclusion from these ideas is that every racist in the world was given the green light, and first and foremost Hitler and the Nazis, to do with the Jews as they wish, as long as it ensures Jewish immigration to Palestine. The Zionist movement did not suffice with just giving a green light – but demanded even more victims, in order to be equal with the victims of other people in the war. This because it believes that raising the number of victims will increase its stock at the end of war, when the spoils are divided. (p. 5)

How did no-one ever hear of this heinous crime? How did Zionism conceal such malfeasance? Beyond the aforementioned backing from the Western powers, Abbas explained that anyone who tried to expose the plot was taken out by the Israeli establishment. According to him, the ruling MAPAI party refused to grant rights to the political opposition, and when the latter started to uncover the truth about the secret contacts with Hitler, anyone who brought up the subject, even if obliquely, paid for it with his life.

But eventually the conspiracy was "exposed". Abbas lets his imagination run wild, claiming that Adolph Eichmann was kidnapped by the Mossad because he exposed the conspiracy in Life magazine. He adds and "reveals" that Israel Kasztner was killed by Israeli security forces for daring to reveal the details of the conspiracy in court. He also point to an unknown third man he calls Dr. Kirin (not providing a first name or a date), who was, according to him, a German journalist who was about to publish documents related to the cooperation between the Zionist and Nazi movement, but was murdered in his hotel room in Berlin before he could do so.

Even when Dr. Abbas' arguments are not entirely baseless, they are still partial and severely distorted. Take the kidnapping of Eichmann, for instance: Abbas ignores the fact that Eichmann was one of the most senior Nazi fugitives and one of the architects of the Final Solution in Europe. He presents Eichmann as someone who was wronged, as according to him he was kidnapped for exposing the Zionist-Nazi conspiracy. The connection between Eichmann's kidnapping and his statements to Life magazine are very slim, as he was kidnapped on 11 May, 1960 while Life published the statements in November and December of that year. In other words, months after his capture. Like his unfounded or exaggerated attacks on the Zionist movement, we see here how Abbas can distort basic facts to suit his poisonous narrative.

Conspiracy, Lies and Propaganda

Reality is no bar to Abbas, and any and all facts or sources which contradict what he says are either denied or hidden. What is true of the Holocaust is also true of his treatment of Jews from Arab lands. According to him, Jews did not suffer from persecution, but on the contrary enjoyed privileges granted by colonialist British and French masters. Under the heading "Antisemitism in Semitic countries?" (p. 236) Abu Mazen goes on to slander Mizrahi Jews, deliberately ignoring the years of verbal and physical persecution they endured for years, and stating categorically that there is no anti-Semitism in Arab countries. While he states the number of Jews in these countries is shrinking, somehow the reasons for this slip his mind.

The mass expulsion of Jews from Arab countries simply didn't happen a la Abbas: the basic and well-established historical facts of expulsion of hundreds of thousands of Jews from Egypt, Iraq, Lybia, Yemen and Algeria, the murder of hundreds in pogroms and mass expropriation of their property are all inconvenient facts to be ignored.

Abbas sometimes openly contradicts himself. When he discusses the positions of the Zionist movement regarding the Holocaust (p. 47-8) he writes – without a shred of evidence – that the Zionist movement "did not send any assistance, financial or otherwise, for the victims of Nazism and it did not allow any other side to provide any kind of aid." But then he adds: "Zionism adopted the Nazi selection principle, when it went to save Jews from the slaughter. It made itself the ultimate arbiter regarding Jewish life, deciding who deserves to live and who deserves to die." So did it try to help or not? Only Abbas knows, apparently.

In general Abbas' book follows a conspiratorial line of thinking typical of the PLO and Arab conspiracy thinking in general, which "reads history backwards" from its conclusion. According to this logic, if the State of Israel was established in the wake of the Holocaust, it **must** derive from the fact that the Zionist movement encouraged the Holocaust and even increase its death toll. This is like the claim that the Jews must be behind 9-11, in order to advance their interests in starting a war in Iraq and continue their "oppression of the Palestinians." The same logic leads Abbas to state that the Zionist movement refused to cut deals to save thousands of Jews during the Holocaust, in order to "increase the amount of victims, and receive privileges at the end of the war."

Another example is when Abbas discusses the Damascus Blood Libel. On February 5, 1840, a Christian priest and his servant were kidnapped. A French investigation "discovered" that a number of Jews had kidnapped and murdered them, in order to use their blood for Passover matza. Dozens of Jews were imprisoned. But the Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid proved that Jews detest blood, and he therefore arrived at the conclusion that the Jews of Damascus are innocent, annulled the verdict and didn't harm the Jewish community, even giving them additional protection. Abbas somehow concludes from this that Jews benefit from false charges and enjoy the results of persecution and injustice, and their acquisition of Palestine (via the Holocaust) is an example of such underhanded methods.

Abbas in the Service of Eichmann's Propaganda

Although Abbas expresses regret over the victims of the Holocaust at the beginning of his book, it is nevertheless a tome filled with Nazi propaganda practically identical to that of Adolf Eichmann. After he fled to Argentina, the Nazi arch-murderer continued to disseminate poisonous propaganda together with his Dutch pro-Nazi friend, journalist Willem Sassen.

The pair, along with other Nazis, published a fascistic journal dripping with anti-Semitic poison named *Der Weg*. This journal was meant to "refute" what they called "the six million falsehood." The journal claimed that it was all a libel and that there were no gas chambers or crematoria in Hitler's Germany.

In 1957, Sassen interviewed Eichmann regarding "the Final Solution," and the extensive conversations between them were transcribed over 659 typewritten pages. Gideon Hausner, General Prosecutor in Eichmann's trial and a man who knew Eichmann very well for that purpose, summarized these talks in his book *Eichmann in Jerusalem*:

The Eichmann-Sassen conversations were conducted in an unrestrained and friendly manner. In the book the two intended to write, there were supposed to appear the facts about the "Final Solution" and the arguments to justify it. The assumption was that the Jewish Question in Germany reached a point of supreme importance, but it was the Jews themselves who escalated the conflict until they reached the choice: "either the German people will exist or the Jews, there is no room for them both." This was caused by "international Jewry", in a devilish plot to provoke the innocent German people, until it had no choice but to destroy the Jews of Europe.

And why did the Jews do so? So that those who are left alive would be able to demand a state for themselves. That was the "sophisticated Jewish death-plan", which was assisted by certain intelligence services, so that "the Jews will finally receive a territory for itself, after two thousand years without a home. They were willing to sacrifice themselves and relatives so they could earn a national existence." This is the conclusion Eichmann arrived at in a fourteen line summary of four thousand years of history [...] in other words: the Jews caused their own destruction. World Jewry, and first and foremost Zionism, chose

Europe as the "battleground" of national liberation. "The battlegrounds of that war were the death camps," Eichmann stated.

Sound familiar?

The Real Partner: Hajj Amin al-Husseini

It's worth dwelling a bit on the question of Abbas' motivation for creating the egregious equation between Zionism and the Nazis. In all probability, he does so to distract from the true partner to Nazism – especially the one who supported their goals in the Middle East, incited against Jews and prevented their transfer to Palestine. I'm talking, of course, about ex-Jerusalem Mufti Hajj Amin al-Husseini, the Palestinian national leader who lived and cooperated with the Nazi Regime in Europe from 1941-1945. Husseini was a wanted war criminal accused of signing a deal with the Devil. Thus Abbas, a Palestinian nationalist, has a clear interest to "blame the Jewish victim" for the crimes of the Nazis, rather than focus on the true partners in crime – the Nazis and their allies such as the Mufti.

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The author thanks Ami Dgani of "Palestinian Media Watch" for checking the Arabic translations and his helpful comments.