

Observations on IPCRI's Report on the New Palestinian Curriculum

PART 1: CMIP's View in Short (in lieu of an Executive Summary)

During the last three years CMIP has examined the new textbooks published by the Palestinian National Authority for use in its schools. Three reports have been issued so far, covering 107 textbooks, including two teachers guides for grades 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, as well as one book each for grades 5 and 11 and an atlas authorized for use in the PA schools. These reports are available on CMIP's website: <http://www.edume.org>. As an expert in this field CMIP has been asked by various factors (by private individuals and members of Congress) to comment on a report issued recently on the same subject by the Israel-Palestine Center for Research and Information (IPCRI) titled: "Analysis and Evaluation of the New Palestinian Curriculum: Reviewing Palestinian Textbooks and Tolerance Education Program".

Having studied this report, CMIP has come to the following summarized conclusions:

1. Unlike the CMIP reports, the IPCRI report **adopts an indirect approach, avoiding the use of quotations, maps and illustrations** that would strengthen the accuracy of its findings and enrich them with original source material, and thus help the reader to better understand the issues at stake.
2. **Not all the relevant material has been brought into the IPCRI report.** Some material has been left out, although it could have shed more light on sensitive issues. For example, there is one episode – that of Hassan Bin Thabet who was advised by the Prophet Muhammad to learn the Jews' language – told twice in different books. In one of them an anti-Jewish remark is inserted in the text (History of the Arabs and Muslims, Grade 6 (2000) p. 133). In the other book that remark is omitted (History, Grade 8 (2002) p. 92). The IPCRI report (p. 33) ignores the former and, thus, is unable to note a specific improvement in the Palestinian curriculum. Some of the other pieces of missing material are dealt with below.
3. **There are cases where the source material is misrepresented.** For example, the report states (p. 39) that the Palestinian Declaration of Independence, quoted in one of the books (Reading and Texts, Grade 8, Part 1 (2002) pp. 72-73), recognizes the State of Israel. No such recognition is to be found in it (and it could not have been found, since the said declaration dates back to 1988, before the Oslo Agreement of 1993). Some other cases of misrepresentation are referred to below.
4. **The report relies too much on external interpretation of the source material by officials at the PA Ministry of Education.** In one case the report quotes (p. 49) a PA Position Paper stating that a paragraph referring to "the good present relationship with Europe" has been inserted to end the section about the Crusaders in the history book for

grade 6. The book is listed among the report's sources, but no attempt is made to check the validity of such a claim. CMIP has two versions of this book. One was published in 2000 and the other – identical with the former – in 2001. Neither of them contains such a paragraph. Moreover, in neither of them is there any section about the Crusaders to be found. There might have been a mistake in identifying the book, but, in any case, it is reasonable to expect IPCRI to check such official statements when the source material is already available, and to state the result of their checking in their report. Some other cases of such reliance are referred to below.

5. The main fault of the IPCRI report, however, is not so much in its findings, which repeat to a great extent most of the issues earlier revealed by CMIP. It is rather the conclusions that raise questions. **There is a significant discrepancy between the findings and the conclusions, especially when the report's own criteria for analysis are taken into consideration.** Let us take, for example, the PA textbooks' attitude to Israel as a sovereign state:

Within the IPCRI report's "Specific Criteria" section several questions are asked as guidelines for the research, of which two are as follows (p. 22):

- "Is Israel, as a sovereign state, represented in the textbooks? How is it referred to?"
- "Are there attempts (overt or covert) to de-legitimize and/or reject the State of Israel as an internationally recognized political entity?"

The findings regarding this issue are in part as follows (not all of them are presented here, and those that are not presented do not by any means contradict those that are):

- "...In several instances, the State of Israel is presented as a usurper, an occupation force and a foreign occupier of Palestine... Timetables in the National Education and History of the Middle Ages, Grade 7 textbooks talk about the establishment of the State of Israel on Palestinian land..." (pp. 30, 31)
- "...In most presentations, Israel is implicitly referred to in different terms such as 'Land inside the Green Line', 'the Land of 1948', 'the interior'." (p. 31)
- "Israel, as a sovereign state, is not presented in the textbooks, except with reference to the Oslo Accords and the ensuing treaties and agreements." (p. 31)
- "Several books contain and make reference to maps of historical Palestine as a geographical and historical entity... [A description of various types of maps

follows]... The name “Israel” does not appear on any map.” (pp. 36-37)

As for the conclusion, in the section entitled “General Remarks”, it reads as follows (in full, on page 39 of the report):

- “The territory of the State of Israel is shown on the maps without any label. No reference is made to Palestine, either [CMIP: This is incorrect, as proven by the numerous maps showing the territory of the State of Israel under the title ‘Palestine’. See, for example, the whole country in one color and under the Palestinian flag in: Mathematics, Grade 3, Part 1 (2002) p. 86, in the context of the establishment of the independent Palestinian state]. The rationale for this approach, as explained by political officials and educators alike, is that Israel itself has not yet marked its borders and that no final agreement has been reached with the PLO and the PA as to the final status of the borders between the two political entities. This, however, does not mean that maps included in the textbooks should be left without labels that reflect the historical as well as the present-day political reality. Thus, until a solution is reached with regards to the disputed borders, maps should be described in more accurate terms (e.g., such as being typographical [sic], demographic or geological maps of Historical Palestine). In addition, maps should reflect the present-day political realities in terms of labeling the regions as they are described in internationally adopted documents, accords, resolutions, and treaties, etc. (e.g., Israel, the Palestinian Authority, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip)”.

Thus, instead of answering the questions above in accordance with the findings, the IPCRI report dwells on one of the findings only, trying to explain it away and suggesting a remedy. It completely ignores the other findings, which, put together, present a clear and decisive picture of a systematic effort done in the PA school textbooks not to recognize Israel as a legitimate sovereign state or even mention the phrase “the State of Israel” or “Israeli territory”.

This picture becomes bleaker if we add to it the references in the PA books to Palestine and Palestinian geographical sites. The IPCRI report notes in the findings:

- “...Generally speaking, ‘Palestine’ is mostly presented in its historical context. References to ‘Palestine’ are mostly made to reflect the Palestine of pre-1948 War, the pre-Partition plan.” (p. 25)
- “...In several instances, however, we notice a listing of some cities, holy sites, and geographical location that include ones in Israel proper.” (p. 25)
- “...The ‘Homeland’ is mostly used to refer to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip [examples mentioned]. There are, however, some instances in which the reference is made (within the framework of the homeland) to sites and cities in Israel proper.” (p. 26)

The authors of the IPCRI report, however, do not combine these latter pieces of evidence together with the preceding ones in order to draw a clear conclusion. In fact, they do not refer at all in their General Remarks section to this enormously important issue of the political definition of Palestine – with its immediate grave implications on the exact definition of the geographical extent of the Israeli occupation and, consequently, of the Palestinian territories that are to be liberated from Israeli occupation. Instead, the authors of the report insert among their findings two paragraphs that are intended to explain them away:

- “...According to a MOE [the PA Ministry of Education] Position Paper (2002), ‘the curriculum traces the development of the Palestinian people throughout its history; therefore, mentioning the names of certain cities that are related to particular historical events is natural and bears no political ramifications.’” (p. 26)
- “It is unclear whether some of these references were meant to serve a double purpose or were a function of the fact that a large number of curriculum designers, supervisors and reviewers, etc. was involved in the process. One has to note in this context that the working teams came to the task holding varied beliefs and attitudes and having different educational, political and ideological backgrounds. It is assumed that the final review will clarify the confusion and impose a measure of consistency in dealing with all knowledge-related (epistemological) and political issues.” (p. 26)

A clear conclusion that would fully present the current negative attitude of the PA school textbooks towards Israel as a legitimate sovereign state within its pre-1967 borders is thus avoided. What we have instead is a remark (p. 26) suggesting “a measure of consistency in dealing with all knowledge-related (epistemological) and political issues... so as not to create confusion with regard to Palestinian national aspirations and in order to avoid the possible understanding that the Palestinian educational system is preaching a political philosophy of a ‘greater Palestine’ including the territories of the State of Israel.” In other words, **the authors of the IPCRI report present the vivid reality portrayed by their own findings as a far-fetched interpretation.**

Another important conclusion, possibly the main one, is the following (p. 38):

“The overall orientation of the curriculum is peaceful despite the harsh and violent realities on the ground. It does not openly incite against Israel and the Jews. It does not incite hatred and violence. The curriculum promotes peace and tolerance within the Palestinian society but fails to extend these principles and concepts to include the Israelis.”

One needs to read this paragraph carefully more than once in order to realize that **the peaceful orientation of the PA curriculum is directed inwardly, not towards Israel.** The findings brought within the report substantiate that (p. 28), but the conclusion here has been phrased in a misleading way.

As for incitement, it is not done openly today, except in very few cases – see the poem in Reading and Texts, Grade 8, Part I (2002) p. 76, that calls for Jihad against the (Jewish) oppressors and slaughterers in Palestine. But **much indirect incitement could be found in images of the “other” as presented to Palestinian school children.** If Israel is presented as “a usurper”, “foreign occupier of Palestine” (p. 30) with a list of atrocities attached to it (pp. 30-31) and if such references comprise the bulk of the image of the “other” – as stated by the report itself: “Most references [to Israel in the PA books] reflect pain, suffering and bitterness experienced by the Palestinians as a result of the ongoing Israeli-Arab conflict.” (p. 30) – then, any reasonable person would agree that a fair degree of implicit incitement is found here. But the IPCRI report fails to note that.

The same method is employed in the case of the Jews. Here too the **IPCRI report fails to present several important references to the**

Jews as “Tartars” and “slaughterers” and an insinuation that the modern Jews are “human wild beasts” (These references are found in two different poems and a story in: Reading and Texts, Grade 8, Part 1 (2002) pp. 56, 77, 137, respectively). The report does bring other references, no less serious, in this respect, such as the following one:

“...The image of Jews who immigrated to Palestine is reflected in negative light (invaders, etc.). Their goal was to liquidate Palestinians and expel them from their land...” (p. 33)

But its conclusion (p. 40) reads:

“Educators, historians and politicians alike have long argued that in the context of a conflict, there is no escape from presenting the “other” in stereotypical references. This, however, should not be interpreted as a call to condone such practices. In the spirit of peace and tolerance, the “other” – in this case Israel – should be portrayed in proper terms (neutral and/or positive light). The authoring teams made every effort to avoid stereotyping and incitement. This is reflected in the practice of omitting explicitly defiant excerpts from poems and literary works included in the subject-matter content.”

They might have not done enough.

6. In a section titled “Some Thoughts on the Teaching History in the Palestinian Context”, other conclusions are given which are mostly not for CMIP to comment on. Nevertheless, some of them are misleading, not corresponding to the findings of the report and to other material not mentioned by IPCRI but covered by the CMIP reports. An example of such a misleading conclusion is the following (p. 48):

“No attempts are made [in the PA school textbooks] to falsify or create false evidence, to doctor statistics or to fake images.”

Not one of these three assertions is true. The PA school textbooks falsify the ethnic identity of the ancient Canaanites and turn them into Arabs, in order to create an ethnic continuity between them and the modern Palestinian Arabs, and in order to portray the Jews as an intruding element in between. The IPCRI report itself mentions one reference to that, out of several, saying (p. 27) that a certain book “describes Jerusalem as ‘a Palestinian city built by the Arab Canaanites’.” The report does not comment on that.

The PA textbooks do “doctor” statistics. In one case, the number of the inhabitants of Palestine in 1999 is given, including the Palestinians of the Diaspora, but not the number of more than five million Jews who

live in Israel. No one can claim that the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are meant by “Palestine” in this case, since the number of the Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel in its pre-1967 borders is also given there (See National Education, Grade 6 (2000) p. 11). The IPCRI report only says in this context (p. 33) that “the Jewish presence in the State of Israel is ignored...” with no further comment.

As for faking images, suffice it to quote here the IPCRI report itself (p. 33):

“Inscriptions in Hebrew are omitted, e.g., on a stamp of Palestine from the British Mandate period.”

Again, IPCRI does not comment. The stamp, originally with inscriptions in English, Arabic and Hebrew, is presented to the Palestinian children with the English and Arabic inscriptions only (National Education, Grade 2, Part 1 (2001) p. 7 and see a photocopy of the original stamp in CMIP report of November 2001, p. 21). The Hebrew inscription has been deleted, thus erasing any official evidence for the Jews’ legitimate presence in the country. That is why the number of the 5.4 million Jews in Israel is not given in the statistics.

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PART 2: Comments in Full

Introduction

The IPCRI report covers several issues, some of which are theoretical and thus do not fall within the scope of the following comments. CMIP will not deal with the IPCRI assessment of the PA education system or its assessment of how certain subjects are taught in PA schools in general. CMIP will restrict its discussion in this paper to how, in its report, IPCRI covers a limited number of issues referred to in the PA school textbooks and which are directly related to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Each issue will be discussed in a separate chapter on three levels: the criteria established by IPCRI for the research, the findings and the conclusions.

CMIP would not have questioned the methodology used by IPCRI in their report, had it not found some grave deficiencies in the way the work is presented.

- (1) A report claiming (p. 55) to have reviewed “all of the new PA-produced textbooks” (over one hundred, with at least fifty books containing relevant material), should have dedicated more than a mere thirteen pages to its findings, out of the total 56.
- (2) **The findings are clearly lacking.** There are only 85 references to material found in the PA books, compared to approximately 450 in CMIP's reports. Some of the references left out by IPCRI have significant bearing on the whole picture presented through the PA textbooks' attitude to certain issues – and they will be shown below, within the various chapters.
- (3) **A finding is never given as is.** No quoting mechanism is used. Rather, general statements and paraphrased findings are given by the authors of the report, sometimes accompanied by views and explanations of their own, or of officials at the PA Ministry of Education. No maps or illustrations are given in the report. Thus, the reader is dependent on these general statements with no access to any individual finding. The inconsistent reference system and, at times, lack of source references in the report further diminish its reliability.
- (4) There are **cases of misrepresentation of the source material**, to be dealt with within the chapters.

- (5) There is a tendency among the authors of the IPCRI report to create a wider context for the source material studied by them, which has blurred their conclusions. **Rather than judging the PA books for what they contain, the IPCRI report adds external elements to the research**, such as “the difficult situation on the ground and several unresolved major issues in the conflict” (p. 37), or various explanations by PA officials (pp. 26, 39, 49) and of their own (pp. 26, 34, 40). They cite a “professional” justification for such practice (p. 37): “Analysis and evaluation of any textbook, but especially history and national education textbooks, need to be situated in the proper historical and political contexts; otherwise, one risks making inaccurate and biased conclusions due to a dishonest or uninformed reading. In addition, such investigations should take into account the existing conditions in the political arena and on the ground.” Biased conclusions and dishonest reading are a result of mixing between pure source material and external, politically inspired views and explanations.
- (6) **The report has a serious deficiency characterized by a perplexing discrepancy between the findings and the conclusions.** It seems that the authors of the report are trying hard not to be led by their own findings into issuing too harsh a judgment on the PA curriculum. As a result, many findings are not commented upon, and many others are treated as sporadic episodes each with their own explanation, as if not to show evidence of a general trend on the part of the PA educators that would appear negative. It is the “trees” that are seen and discussed, rather than the “wood”. In addition, some findings are explained away, or their significance is minimized. These serious flaws in the IPCRI report will be discussed at length in the following chapters.
- (7) **There are several unsubstantiated assertions in the report** not related to any of the chapters. Two of these are dealt with in sections 4 and 6 of PART 1.

Chapter 1: The Concepts of “Palestine”, “Homeland” and “Jerusalem”

Criteria

There are two questions in this part (p. 21):

1. “How is the Palestinian national identity presented? In which context?”
2. “How are the concepts of ‘Palestine’, ‘Homeland’ and ‘Jerusalem’ are presented and portrayed?”

The second question is simple and natural in this context. The first, on the other hand, is much more interesting, even intriguing. Let us now review the findings which should answer these questions.

Findings

No findings are given in response to the first question. The entire section deals only with the three above-mentioned concepts:

- "Palestine
The concept of 'Palestine' seems to be used in both historical and modern contexts, the former being in a general geo-historic sense and the latter in reference [to] a political entity in the making. Generally speaking, 'Palestine' is mostly presented in its historical context. References to 'Palestine' are mostly made to reflect the Palestine of pre-1948 War, the pre-Partition Plan." (p. 25)

CMIP: Correct. "Palestine" in the PA school textbooks conforms to pre-1948 British Mandate territories. But IPCRI has left out important evidence that would emphasize this fact politically as well, not just in geographical and historical contexts and which refers to the present-day situation. For example, there is a statement in one of the books (Islamic Education, Grade 2, Part 1 (2001) p. 98) that says: "The countries of Geographic Syria ["Sham" in Arabic] are Palestine, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon." Israel is not mentioned there. That very Palestine, another statement says, "is Arab and Muslim" (National Education, Grade 2, Part 1 (2001) p. 16, and see the accompanying map showing Palestine in its Mandatory borders).

- "Geographical maps show all historical Palestine. Administrative maps show the West Bank and Gaza." (p. 27)

CMIP: Generally correct, but the administrative map of the PA territories shows them within the territory of "Historical Palestine" (see, for example, National Education, Grade 3, Part 1 (2002) p. 3).

- "The maps in the textbooks represent Mandate Palestine and when the reference is to the PA territories or the Palestinian homeland, the areas are contoured. No map, however, bears the name of the State of Palestine and none portrays the 'Land of Israel' or 'Israel' as part of the emerging Palestinian State. Israel, as a political entity, does not appear in any map." (p. 27)

CMIP: The contoured areas are the pre-1967 West Bank and the Gaza Strip, not the present PA territories, and they do not necessarily appear in reference to the PA. What is more important is the last sentence in this paragraph, and also the fact that, contrary to what is stated by IPCRI, there are maps that do include the pre-1967 Israeli territory in the context of the Palestinian state. See, for example, the map in Mathematics, Grade 3, Part 1 (2002) p. 86 where the whole country – Israel proper as well as the West Bank and the Gaza Strip – appear in one piece and in one color under the Palestinian flag, while the accompanying inscription reads: "The independence of the State of Palestine was declared in 1988 [by the PLO in Algiers]. How many years have passed since the declaration of independence?" (And see below Chapter 8: Maps).

- “The Homeland
The homeland, in present-day context, is presented as comprising the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In historical context, the homeland covers the whole of British Mandate Palestine.” (p. 26)
- “The ‘Homeland’ is mostly used to refer to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip [source references]. There are, however, some instances in which the reference is made (within the framework of the homeland) to sites and cities in Israel proper [examples given].” (p. 26)

And elsewhere (pp. 25-26):

- “Thus, in several instances, the reference is made to Palestine as the ‘Homeland’. In almost all such instances, the concept of the ‘homeland’ refers to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. As such city names, holy sites, illustrations, etc. are those that fall within this parameter [source references].
- “In several instances, however, we notice a listing of some cities, holy sites and geographical locations that include ones in Israel proper, such as Jaffa, Haifa, Acre, Nazareth, Caesarea, the Negev Desert, Erma [sic. Should be Jarmaq (Meiron)] Mountain/Safad [source references].”

CMIP: Correct.

- “Jerusalem
Jerusalem is portrayed (historically, religiously, culturally, socially, demographically) in relation to its Arab and Islamic nature. Several references are made of the Christian presence in Jerusalem. All illustrations and photos of Jerusalem reflect those [sic] found in the Eastern part of the city (mostly, the old city). It is almost always referred to as the ‘Capital of Palestine’. References reflect the national, political, cultural, economic, religious and historical importance of the city and its Arab and Islamic characteristics. However, there is no mention of its religious and historical significance to Judaism and to Jews, nor that the State of Israel considers Jerusalem its capital.
- “Several of the new textbooks contain a boxed section entitled ‘Did You Know?’ This section provides additional information not included in the text proper. One of these boxes appears in the [Christian] Religious Education textbook for Grade 2 and describes Jerusalem as ‘a Palestinian city built by the Arab Canaanites and named ‘Jebus’ or ‘Yabus’... after that it was called by many names... The prevalent name, however, is al-Quds.’” (p. 27)

Part of this information is further highlighted:

“In particular:

- Jerusalem is presented as the capital of the future state of Palestine.
- The photos and illustrations exclude any part of West Jerusalem. The claim is made only for East Jerusalem that was occupied in the 1967 War.
- There is a mention of Jerusalem’s importance to the three monotheistic religions.
- The Arab and Islamic character of East Jerusalem is emphasized. The locally, regionally and internationally accepted reference to Al-Quds is limited to East Jerusalem.” (p. 27)

CMIP: All the points made by IPCRI in this section are correct. However, IPCRI tends to overemphasize the exclusion of West Jerusalem from the PA textbooks. It should be remembered that it is historical Jerusalem, namely, the Old City first and foremost, that constitutes the focus of religious and nationalist emotions of all people concerned – Jews, Muslims, Christians, Israelis, Palestinians, Arabs and others – not the modern neighborhoods of West (or East) Jerusalem. As for the Jewish holy places in Jerusalem and elsewhere in the country, see below, in Chapter 3.

It should be noted that the Arabized Canaanites feature in the PA books more than just once. It does not only appear in the source given by IPCRI – Christian Education, Grade 2 (2001) p. 11), but is a recurring theme (Our Beautiful Language, Grade 7, Part 1 (2001) p. 32; National Education, Grade 2, Part 1 (2001) p. 4; Health and Environment, Grade 7 (2001) p.98; National Education, Grade 7 (2001) pp. 8, 71; Geography of Palestine, Grade 7 (2001) p.77). As a result of the Canaanites' posthumous Arabization, an ethnic continuity between the first known inhabitants of the land and the present Arab Palestinians is created, with a view of presenting the Jews in the history of Palestine as an intruding foreign ethnic element. IPCRI does not deal with this phenomenon beyond the mention of the above single example.

Conclusions

The findings in the IPCRI report can be summed up as follows:

- References to ‘Palestine’ are mostly made to reflect the Palestine of pre-1948 War, the pre-Partition Plan.
- The ‘Homeland’ is mostly used to refer to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. There are, however, some instances in which the reference is made (within the framework of the homeland) to sites and cities in Israel proper.
- The Canaanites are referred to as “Arabs”.
- Jerusalem is portrayed (historically, religiously, culturally, socially, demographically) in relation to its Arab and Islamic nature... It is almost always referred to as the ‘Capital of Palestine’. References reflect... its Arab and Islamic characteristics. However, there is no mention of its religious and historical significance to Judaism and to Jews, nor that the State of Israel considers Jerusalem its capital.

Added findings based on the CMIP reports:

- Reference to pre-1948 Palestine is made in the current political context as well, not only in geographical and historical ones, and is made at the expense of Israel's existence (and see also below, in Chapters 3 and 8).

The IPCRI report, rather than drawing the inevitable conclusion from the findings, namely, that there is a questionable perspective on the part of the PA textbooks regarding the geographical scope of Palestine, seeks to blur it. They quote, not a passage in a book, but rather a position paper by the PA Ministry of Education, which tries to explain why sites in Israel proper are treated as parts of the Palestinian homeland: “The curriculum traces the development of the Palestinian people throughout its history; therefore, mentioning the names of certain cities that are related to particular historical events is natural and bears no political ramifications.” (p. 26) This claim by the PA officials is clearly refuted by the added evidence that the IPCRI report fails to present.

The authors of the IPCRI report appear not to be at ease with what they have found, and they provide an explanation that would clear the PA Ministry of Education of dubious intentions: “It is unclear whether some of these references were meant to serve a double purpose or were a function of the fact that a large number of curriculum designers, materials writers, supervisors and reviewers, etc. was involved in the process. One has to note in this context that the working teams came to the task holding varied beliefs and attitudes and having different educational, political and ideological backgrounds.” They further add, assuming: “It is assumed that the final review [of textbooks, by the PA Ministry of Education, probably] will clarify the confusion and impose a measure of consistency in dealing with all knowledge-related (epistemological) and political issues. This is necessary so as not to create confusion with regard to Palestinian national aspiration and in order to avoid the possible understanding that the Palestinian educational system is preaching a political philosophy of a ‘greater Palestine’ including the territories of the State of Israel.” (p. 26)

Thus, the authors of the IPCRI report transform the evidence in their hands – which substantiates to a great extent the latter part of the last sentence of the above paragraph – into something unclear, confused and possibly misunderstood.

As regards Jerusalem, the only conclusion drawn by IPCRI is that “the focus on the Arab character of East Jerusalem... does not mean the denial of the Israeli and Jewish character of, for example, the Jewish holy places or Jewish history in the city.” (p. 40) This is a false conclusion that is clearly refuted by findings in the PA books ignored by IPCRI. They will be presented below, within the discussion on the holy places in Chapter 3.

Examples of manipulated conclusions that are supposedly based on the solid, though lacking, findings of the report, also reappear in the following chapters.

Chapter 2: Peace, Tolerance and Pluralism

These important issues will be dealt with here in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict only, rather than in other contexts, as IPCRI has done.

Criteria

Within the context of the said conflict, the following criteria are specified in the IPCRI report (p. 21):

- “Do the contents of the textbooks make any reference (discretely or collectively; overtly or covertly) to the principles of peaceful coexistence and tolerance between and among the adherents of the three monotheistic religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam)?”
- “Do textbooks use terminology that could be associated with the concepts of political tolerance, peace, coexistence, etc.? If so, in which context?”
- “Are there instances in which wording is likely to create prejudice, misapprehension and conflict?”
- “Are there stories and anecdotes that reflect non-violent conflict resolution, the love for peace...?”
- “Are there examples (linguistic or other) that lend support to, praise and encourage the use of violence against others?”

With the exception of the first one criterion, it is plain that all these questions are general in character. There is no specific question that would guide the researchers to look for texts in the PA schoolbooks referring to the possibility of peaceful coexistence between Israelis and Palestinians, or to the current (though lagging) peace process between Israel and the PA. The authors of the report, however, do treat these issues.

Findings

- “Peace, as a universal and religious value, is emphasized in the Palestinian textbooks. Political peace in modern terms, however, is not reflected in the new textbooks... Few references are made to the Oslo accords and to the Declaration of Principles (DOP) that ushered in the peace process between the Palestinians and Israelis (National Education, Grade 6, p. 23). The peace dimension of the Accords and the DOP is not mentioned. No material is included that explicitly talks about peace between the Palestinians and the Israelis.” (p. 28) (see CMIP’s remark—regarding the mention of this).

CMIP: Correct, but the passage that mentions the Oslo Accords in the National Education textbook, referred to by the IPCRI report, reads: “The [Palestinian] National Council decided [in 1964] to create armed Palestinian battalions which were named ‘the Palestinian Liberation Army’ for the liberation of Palestine and for the defense of the Palestinian revolution. The battalions of this army were stationed in Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Jordan. After the signing of the Oslo agreement between the PLO and Israel in September 1993, most forces of the Liberation Army entered Palestine.” (National

Education, Grade 6 (2000) p. 23) Thus, not only is the peace dimension of the Oslo Accords not mentioned, but the accords themselves are presented as having contributed to the PLO militarily. IPCRI does mention that later (p. 36), but it should have done so here, in order to make its own point clearer.

- “Inter-religious tolerance is emphasized in the framework of the teachings of the Koran and Hadith. It is based on Islam’s tolerance towards the followers of other monotheistic religions, traditionally referred to as “Ahl al-Kitab” (the People of the Book). Theoretically speaking, these calls apply to both Christians and Jews. However, the textbooks are almost devoid of any references to Jews, either in historical or in modern-day context.” (p. 28)
- “The general values of all three monotheistic religions that call for peace and tolerance are highlighted. No reference is made regarding tolerance towards Judaism in the present-day context.” (p. 28)
- “There is emphasis on the need for inter-religious tolerance, primarily as it relates to Christians and Muslims.” (p. 28)

CMIP: Correct.

- “Students are guided to visit holy places of the three traditions. No direct mention is made to the traditions although the reference is clear (National Education, Grade 6, p. 65).” (p. 34)

CMIP: The passage referred to here mentions “the various religions [mukhtalaf al-diyanat] and not “the three traditions”.

Conclusions

In light of the preceding findings, one is astounded to read the following conclusion (p. 38): “The overall orientation of the curriculum is peaceful despite the harsh and violent realities on the ground. It does not openly incite against Israel and the Jews. It does not incite hatred and violence. The curriculum promotes peace and tolerance...” Only at this point, in the last sentence of the conclusion, does one realize that its real meaning is somewhat different: “The curriculum promotes peace and tolerance within the Palestinian society but fails to extend these principles and concepts to include the Israelis.” CMIP is unable to explain this strange way of presentation which actually has a misleading character.

Another strange presentation by IPCRI is to be seen in the findings section, in an attempt to explain why “no material is included that explicitly talks about peace between the Palestinians and the Israelis”. It says: “According to a Position Paper issued by the MOE [PA Ministry of Education] (2000), ‘peace is a political issue not an historical one, and consequently, it is dealt with as such.’” In other words, IPCRI uses a PA Position Paper in order to explain away a deficiency in the PA textbooks.

The issue of incitement will be discussed in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3: The Image of the “Other”: Judaism, Jews, Zionism, Israel

Criteria

This section includes serious questions:

- “Is Israel, as a sovereign state, represented in the textbooks? How is it referred to?”
- “Are there attempts (overt or covert) to de-legitimize and/or reject the State of Israel as an internationally recognized political entity?”
- “How are Jews, Israelis, Zionism, Jewish religion, culture, holidays, etc. portrayed in the historical, political, social, cultural, and religious contexts?”
- Does the curriculum provide the opportunity for the students to recognize and respect beliefs and practices of others?”
- “Are the contributions of Jews and Christians recognized in the Palestinian, Arab and Islamic narratives?”

CMIP: There are at least five important questions that seem to be missing:

- How are Jews and Israelis portrayed in the context of the conflict in particular?
- How do the PA books describe the Jews’ connection to Palestine?
- Are the Jews and Israelis stereotyped, or presented as ordinary human beings?
- Do the PA books deal, for example, with Jewish or Israeli individuals, or just talk about them as one collective group?
- Do the PA books provide the student with adequate scholarly information about Jewish history?

Findings

Israel’s Image

- “Most references reflect pain, suffering and bitterness experienced by the Palestinians as a result of the ongoing Israeli-Arab conflict. In several instances, the State of Israel is presented as a usurper, an occupation force and a foreign occupier of Palestine. Israel is blamed for the Nakbah (catastrophe) of the Palestinian people [reference]. Timetables in the National Education and History of the Middle Ages, Grade 7 textbooks talk about the establishment of the State of Israel on Palestinian land [reference].” (pp. 30-31)
- “Some textbooks posit that Israel’s policies, since its establishment, have resulted in the misery of the Palestinian people, the expulsion of the Palestinian population during the 1947-48 War, the destruction of some border-line villages, the creation of the refugee problem, the exploitation of the region’s natural resources, the demolition of houses and uprooting trees, restriction of movement, discrimination against the Palestinian population, especially in East Jerusalem, undermining Palestinian national, political and cultural identity, restricting access of worshippers to holy sites, the negative impact of occupation and military measures and

- restrictions on the Palestinian economy, ecological and environmental problems and the dismemberment of the geographic and demographic unity of the Palestinian territories [references].” (p. 31)
- "Restrictions imposed by the Israeli government on Arab tourist agencies are highlighted [references].” (p. 31).
 - “Israel and the Israelis are accused of stealing the Palestinian national heritage and culture and of claiming some of its features (songs, food, etc.) as Jewish [reference].” (p. 33)

CMIP: IPCRI presents only a partial list of the accusations against Israel. Following are some other ones (certainly not all):

- Israel set fire to Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem (National Education, Grade 7, (2001) p. 55). [CMIP: The arson attempt was committed in 1969 by a mentally-ill Christian Australian tourist.]
- The Judaization of Jerusalem (National Education, Grade 6 (2000) p. 17).
- Due to Israeli occupation, Palestinian women are prevented from participating in the development activity of Palestine (The Palestinian Society – Demographic Education, Grade 11 (2000) p. 174).
- The Israeli occupation and the settlement [activity] have hindered the growth of educational activity in Palestine (The Palestinian Society – Demographic Education, Grade 11 (2000) p. 170).
- Israelis shoot at Palestinian children (Reading and Texts, Grade 8, Part 2 (2002) p. 70).
- “Some of the problems of [Palestinian] family violence emanate from the practice of the [Israeli] occupation and its destructive impact on our society” (Civic Education, Grade 8 (2002) p.55).
- Israelis torture Palestinian children under investigation (Our Beautiful Language, Grade 6, Part 1 (2000) pp. 124-125).
- Israel attempts to control and Judaize Muslim holy places, such as Al-Buraq [the Wailing Wall] in Jerusalem (National Education, Grade 7 (2001) p. 21), the Mosque of Abraham [the Machpelah – Cave of the Patriarchs] in Hebron and the Mosque of Bilal Bin Rabbah [Rachel’s Tomb] in Bethlehem (National Education, Grade 7 (2000) p. 55), and even tries to change the character of Christian holy places (National Education, Grade 7 (2000) p. 56).

In addition, some textbooks present, mostly in poetry, a demonizing picture of Israel and the Israelis. Examples:

- “The Intifadah Hymn [Excerpts]
We are burying the child in no hurry...
The mother and the small child may die...
And the middle-aged man suffers in the cell of the great prison...”
(Our Beautiful Language, Grade 6, Part 1 (2000) pp. 130-131)
- “Your enemies killed your children, split open your women’s bellies, held your revered elderly men by the beard and led them to the death pits.”
(Reading and Texts, Grade 8, Part 2 (2002) p.16)

[CMIP: This text was not originally written against Israel. But its inclusion in a PA textbook is undoubtedly purposeful, especially when no explanation is given to the student regarding the circumstances under which it was written.]

- “O my homeland,
You have accustomed me to see the enemy horses every day
Wading in blood, my blood
You have accustomed me to receive the arrows coming from all directions
And there is not a spot in my face that has not been hit”
(Linguistic Sciences, Grade 8, Part 1 (2002) p. 14)
- “O Lord, do not forget our pains and tears
And do not forget the prisons, the slaughter and the humiliation
And the demolition and terror...”
(Linguistic Sciences, Grade 8, Part 2 (2002) p. 88)

All these accusations – real and false – add up to a formidable list that may have a disastrous effect on the minds of young children. As we can now see, the PA school textbooks meticulously bring these “harsh and violent realities on the ground” – as defined by the IPCRI report (p. 38) – before the students. This point should be borne in mind whenever the issue of incitement is brought up.

Is Israel Recognized?

- “Israel, as a sovereign state, is not presented in the textbooks, except with reference to the Oslo Accords and the ensuing treaties and agreements.”
(p. 31)
- “Many cities and sites (inhabited by Arabs) in Israel proper are mentioned in reference to ‘Historical Palestine’. These references are made in the context of talking about the geography and topography of historical Palestine [references].” (p. 31)
- “In most presentations, Israel is implicitly referred to in different terms such as ‘Land inside the Green Line’, ‘the land of 1948’, ‘the interior’.”
(p. 31)

CMIP: As already seen in Chapter 1, there are more revealing examples – not given by IPCRI – of the PA books’ non recognition of Israel as a legitimate sovereign state, such as mentioning Palestine, not Israel, as one of the four countries that form Geographic Syria (the Levant, or Sham in Arabic, the other three countries mentioned in the text being Syria, Lebanon and Jordan), and showing Israel as part of the Palestinian state in one of the maps. The rationale for this non-recognition is given elsewhere in the IPCRI report: “The State of Israel is presented as a usurper, an occupation force and a foreign occupier of Palestine... Timetables in the National Education and History of the Middle Ages, Grade 7 textbooks talk about the establishment of the State of Israel on Palestinian land” (pp. 30-31). In another instance, the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 is described as occupation: “Palestine faced British occupation following the First World War in the year 1917 and Israeli occupation in the year 1948” (National Education, Grade 6 (2000) p. 16).

Judaism

CMIP has avoided IPCRI's practice of citing references in the PA books to Judaic patriarchs and prophets, who are revered by Islam, as an indication of positive reference to Judaism. What is left is the following:

- “Judaism is not mentioned as one of the religions of the past and present-day communities of the region. In the Christian religious education textbooks, the other monotheistic religions are referred to without identifying them.” (p. 32)

Thus, the PA books fail to fulfill the criterion set by IPCRI regarding the need to provide the student with an opportunity to become acquainted with the religious beliefs and practices of the other, and to respect them (see above, in the criteria section of this chapter). IPCRI prefers, however, not to state this specifically. It just reiterates the point in its recommendations: “Students should be provided with texts that contain scholarly information about the others (Jews and Christians), their heritage, history, culture, feasts and religious holidays, prophets and holy men and their contribution to humanity.” (p. 43).

The Jews in History

- “There is very little mention of the Jews, in general. However, when mentioned, references are usually positive.” (p. 31)

CMIP: This is a false statement. Except for one instance where Caliph Al-Ma'mun (9th century) is said to have respected Christian and Jewish scholars (History of the Arabs and Muslims, Grade 6 (2000) p. 134), all references to the Jews in history are either negative or neutral, or insinuate negative attitudes (see examples below).

- “There is clearly an avoidance of dealing with Jewish-Islamic relationship (especially in the Prophet Muhammad's relationship with the three Jewish tribes – Bani Nadir, Bani Qurayzah, Bani Qunuqa [Qaynuqa'] – in and around Medina) in negative contexts. Only tolerant and positive aspects of the historical relationship are presented. The textbooks highlight the peaceful agreement reached between the Muslims and the three Jewish tribes living in Medina/Yathreb and Khaibar [reference].” (pp. 31-32)

CMIP: It is true that the PA textbooks omit all references to the dispute between Muhammad and the Jews. They simply leave it for the teachers to do the job, as is clearly seen in the two following examples:

- “Activity
The teacher will discuss with the students the [Prophet's] raid against the [Jewish] tribe of the Qaynuqa'...”
(Islamic Education, Grade 8, Part 2 (2002) p. 46)
- “Activity

The teacher will discuss with the students the [Prophet's] raid against the [Jewish] tribe of Nadir..." (Islamic Education, Grade 8, Part 2 (2002) p. 55)

It should be also noted that the treaty between the Jews of Medina and the Prophet did not include the Jewish inhabitants of the oasis of Khaybar, and the source mentioned by IPCRI in this context (Islamic Education, Grade 7, p. 74) does not provide any reference to that.

- "There are no overt references to Jews as "the evil enemy" or as being "treacherous". These representations were previously made in the ancient historical context of the dispute between Muslims and Jews at the time of the Prophet Muhammad." (pp. 32-33)

CMIP: See our previous comment. As regards the PA general attitude towards the older textbooks, see below in this chapter.

- "There is also positive reference to Jews and Muslims as being members of "one Umma" (community)..." (p. 32)
- "Another positive reference that shows tolerance towards Jews and Judaism is reflected in an agreement they reached to the effect that any dispute between Muslims and Jews would be resolved by reference to the Torah and the Qur'an." (p. 32)

CMIP: These two "findings" do not actually exist. The text in the source mentioned by IPCRI (Islamic Education, Grade 7, pp. 75-77) says explicitly that "the believers are one nation (ummah) with the exclusion of other people" (p. 75). In the same text (i.e., the treaty), an article says that if the contracting parties have a dispute, Muhammad will judge the case (p. 75). However, on p. 77 of the same book there is an exercise in which the students are requested to put a V sign next to the following correct phrases and an X sign against the incorrect ones. Phrase No. 2 in that exercise reads: "Among other things that were mentioned in the document was [the following one]: 'The believers and the Jews are one nation to the exclusion of other people.'" Phrase No. 5 says: "If a dispute erupts between Muslims and Jews the judgment will be according to the Torah and the Qur'an." Clearly, the student should have put an X there in both cases.

- "Some of the religious texts cited carry indirect references to Jews, Christians and non-believers as hypocrites." (p. 32)

CMIP: No such case has been found by CMIP. The hypocrites were a special group among the Muslims, neither Jews nor Christians nor unbelievers. They were called by this name because of their outward conversion to Islam while remaining hostile to Muhammad.

- “There are several instances in which Jews are presented in religious contexts and in instances that relate to the agreements made between the Muslims of Medina and the Jewish community there.” (p. 32)

CMIP: One specific such case is the following:

“The Second Unit: The Emergence of Islam

The Unit’s Goals:

6. Comparing the position of Muslims and Jews in keeping agreements and treaties” (History of the Arabs and Muslims, Grade 6 (2000) p. 24).

CMIP views this phrase as an insinuation that the Jews do not keep agreements and treaties as Muslims do.

- “It is noted that the Prophet Muhammad urged his followers to learn foreign languages and asked one of them (Hassan Ibn Thabet) to learn the language of the Jews (History, Grade 8, pp. 92-3).” (p. 33)

CMIP: There are two references to this story in two different textbooks. In a former book not referred to by IPCRI the story goes as follows: “The Messenger [Muhammad] ordered Zayd Bin Thabet to learn the Jews’ language in order to be safe from their trickery” (History of the Arabs and Muslims, Grade 6 (2000) p. 133). Since the book referred to by IPCRI appeared two years later, it might have reflected a change in the attitude of the Palestinian educators in this specific subject. In any case, has IPCRI failed to note that.

- “There are several references to Jews relating to the life and death of Jesus Christ. Jews are also presented in reference to Jesus’ teachings on marriage and divorce in the Jewish and Christian traditions. These instances reflect that state of affairs that prevailed in the Holy Land at the time of Jesus Christ, especially as it related to religious and social sects such as the Saducees and the Pharisees.” (p. 32)

CMIP: The text in Christian Education, Grade 2 (2001) p. 43 talks about the controversy between Jesus Christ and the Pharisees over the issue of divorce, and Christ is quoted as having said to the Pharisees that Moses had permitted divorce because of their [the Pharisees] rough hearts. On page 45 of the same lesson, however, a question substitutes the Jews for the Pharisees:

“3. Why did Moses permit the Jews to divorce?”

Besides this episode, Christian education textbooks tend to present the Jews in a negative light. One example out of several ones not brought by IPCRI:

“The Jews were observing the holiness of the Sabbath. They made it a day of rest and prayer and prevented any work on it. They prevented even good works on it. By healing the sick man on the Sabbath, Jesus taught us that doing good works is an obligation upon us very day...” (Christian Education, Grade 3 (2002) p. 88)

Jews and Israelis in the Context of the Conflict

- “The Jews of modern times are mentioned in the narration of some historical incidents that transpired in the first half of the 20th century (e.g., the British Mandate, Jewish immigration to Palestine in the late 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, War of 1948, the massacre of Deir Yasin). The image of Jews who immigrated to Palestine is reflected in negative light (invaders, etc.). Their goal was to liquidate Palestinians and expel them from their land [reference]. References are also made to the “Zionist Terror Organization” in the context of reviewing the 1947-48 Arab-Israeli War [reference]” (p. 33).
- “Zionism (the Jewish national movement in modern times) is mentioned in several locations in the textbooks. In a few instances, the references are negative but there are some instances in which Zionism is mentioned without any comments or elaboration” (p. 33).
- “The Jewish presence in the State of Israel is ignored as it relates to the names of cities, towns and communal settlements” (p. 33).
- “Some of the cities, historical sites/archaeological sites, geographical features in Israel proper are mentioned, in the context of recent history, and are defined as Palestinian” (p. 33).
- “Inscriptions in Hebrew are omitted, e.g., on a stamp of Palestine from the British Mandate period [reference]” (p. 33).

CMIP: In this superficial description by IPCRI of the PA textbooks’ attitude towards the Jews in the context of the conflict two important elements are implied:

1. The image of the Jews as human beings.
2. The question of their rights in Palestine.

The image of the Jews as human beings in the context of the conflict is much worse than the one presented above by IPCRI. They are portrayed as having greedy ambitions regarding Palestine (National Education, Grade 7 (2001) p. 22), as infiltrators to the land (The Palestinian Society – Demographic Education, Grade 11 (2000) p. 21), as occupiers (Reading and Texts, Grade 8, Part 2 (2002) p. 59), as Tartars (Reading and Texts, Grade 8, Part 1 (2002) p. 56), oppressors and slaughterers (Reading and Texts, Grade 8, Part 1 (2002) p. 77), and are also insinuated as human wild beasts (Reading and Texts, Grade 8, Part 1 (2002) p. 137). All these references are not included in the IPCRI report, which thus conceals an important part of the real image of the Jews as presented to the young Palestinian students, with grave implications on the issue of incitement (to be dealt with below, in the conclusion section of this chapter).

As regards the Jews’ rights in Palestine, the IPCRI report implies two important elements within the PA textbooks, but fails to present them outright:

- (1) The attitude to Zionism, correctly defined by IPCRI as the Jewish national movement in modern times. It is insufficient to say, as has IPCRI, that Zionism is referred to at times negatively and at times

in a neutral manner. What is important here is how it is described. When one encounters phrases like “Zionist greedy ambitions [in Palestine]” (National Education, Grade 7 (2001) p. 21), “Zionist aggression” (National Education, Grade 7 (2001) p. 23) or “The fire of Zionist crime has mowed the Palestinian land” (Reading and Texts, Grade 8, Part 2 (2002) p. 27) – and all these expressions are not referred to in the IPCRI report, it becomes obvious that there is total rejection on the part of the PA textbooks of any Jewish national rights in the land. There is also one case where such rights are openly rejected, which the IPCRI report fails to mention: “The Balfour Declaration fits the saying: ‘The one who does not own gave to the one who does not deserve’” (National Education, Grade 7 (2001) p. 22). The attitude to any other rights the Jews may have in Palestine, especially religious ones, will be discussed below, in the section that deals with the holy places.

- (2) The attitude of the PA textbooks to the actual presence of the Jews in the country. Not only are cities established by Jews, including Tel Aviv, absent from all maps (except those of the atlas) while other cities are presented as Palestinian, but the 5.4 million Jews living in the land are not counted among its legitimate inhabitants. Examples:

- “The inhabitants of Palestine on 1.2.1999

1. The West Bank	1,973,000	}	
2. Gaza	1,113,000	}	36%
3. The Palestinians of the Interior*	1,094,000		13%
4. The Palestinians of the Diaspora	4,419,000		51%
Total:	8,598,000		100%”

(National Education, Grade 6 (2000) p. 11)

* “Interior” refers to Israel’s pre-1967 territory.

- “The World: Countries and Capitals

<u>Country</u>	<u>Population</u> (Thousands)	<u>Surface</u> (Thousand sq. meters)	<u>Capital</u>
Palestine	4,659*	21**	Jerusalem”

(Atlas of Palestine, the Arab Homeland and the World (2002) p. 128)

* This number appears to include the Palestinian Arab population of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and Israel proper. The 5.4 million Jews in the country are not counted.

** This number refers to the country in its entirety, well beyond the confines of the West Bank and Gaza.

The systematic effort of the PA textbooks to deny the legitimacy of the Jews’

presence in Palestine is reflected in the stamp episode that is mentioned above by IPCRI. One of the textbooks presents a photocopy of a stamp from the period of the British Mandate. But while the original stamp bears inscriptions in the three official languages in Mandatory times, namely, English, Arabic and Hebrew (and see the photocopy of the original stamp in CMIP's report of November 2001 p. 21), the photocopy in the textbook bears two inscriptions only – English and Arabic. The Hebrew inscription was deleted (National Education, Grade 2, Part 1 (2001) p. 7). IPCRI fails to understand the significance of this omission, namely, the desire to erase any official documentation that would prove the Jews' recognized status in Palestine.

Jewish Holy Places

- “Holy sites in Palestine do not include those of Jews except for ones that are holy to both Muslims and Jews (Al-Buraq Wall/the Wailing Wall, the Sanctuary of Abraham/Al-Haram al-Ibrahimi as-Shareef, Jacob's Well and Joseph's Tomb). When mentioned, no reference is made to their significance to the Jewish tradition [reference].” (pp. 33-34)

CMIP: In one clear sentence – Jewish holy sites are not mentioned in the PA books, period.

- “Jewish holy sites are presented and referred to in historical and religious contexts (as they relate to the life of Jesus Christ).” (p. 34)

CMIP: They are referred to in specific terms but their Jewish character is not mentioned. Example: “The Temple [al-Haykal in Arabic]: A word meaning ‘the Great House’ which was a place of worship of God, like the church today” (Christian Education, Grade 2 (2001) p.11).

In short, although several references are made to Palestine's being holy to the (three) monotheistic religions, no Jewish holy place is referred to as such by the PA school textbooks. Moreover, there are instances in which the Jews are accused of making attempts to control or Judaize Muslim holy places (which happen to be Jewish holy places as well, but the PA books do not mention that):

- “...the revolt of 1929 which is known as the Al-Buraq Revolt, in protest of the Jews' attempts at controlling the Al-Buraq Wall”* (National Education, Grade 7 (2001) p. 21)

* Al-Buraq Wall is also known as the Wailing Wall, one of the Jews' holiest places.

- “The attempt to Judaize some of the Muslim religious places like the Mosque of Abraham* and the Mosque of Bilal Bin Rabbah**” (National Education, Grade 7 (2001) p. 55)

* The Mosque of Abraham is also known as the Machpelah Sanctuary or the Cave of the Patriarchs and is holy to the Jews as well.

**The Mosque of Bilal Bin Rabbah (one of Prophet Muhammad’s companions) is better known as Rachel’s Tomb and is holy to the Jews. In fact, in a former PA book published in 1996 the place was still called: “The Tomb of Rachel, mother of our lord Joseph and wife of Jacob” (Palestinian National Education, Grade 6 (1996) p. 89). We thus have a rare opportunity here to witness a new myth in the making, or, rather, the development of an ongoing effort of challenging Jewish religious rights in the country.

The two above findings, as well as a few similar other ones, do not appear in IPCRI’s report which consequently fails to recognize the said effort as part of an overall denial of any Jewish legitimate rights or presence in the country.

Conclusions

Any impartial judgment of the preceding material would arrive at the following main conclusions, in response to the questions asked in the Criteria section:

- The Palestinian school students are kept in almost total ignorance of Jewish history, culture and religion.
- The Jews are deprived of any rights in Palestine, be they national or religious. Even their mere presence there is not recognized.
- Israel is not treated as a legitimate sovereign state (and see Chapter 8: Maps, for further evidence).
- The PA books present a stereotyped and negative image of the Jews, and demonize Israel.

IPCRI’s conclusions in this context are sporadically scattered over 6 pages and could be rearranged in clusters, in accordance with their points of argument, as follows:

Admission that some of the material included in the PA books is “inappropriate”:

- “One cannot fail to notice a number of cases in which Judaism and the Jews are inadequately and inappropriately represented in relation to their presence in the region.” (p. 49)

CMIP: This is a very mildly worded conclusion, if we take the preceding evidence into account. Other than this statement, there is no explicit criticism of the PA books in the IPCRI report in this context. Implicit criticism is sometimes found in other conclusions. For example, the two following items imply that the PA textbooks include stereotypical references to Israel and the Jews, but the report does not state that explicitly.

An attempt to explain the existence of stereotypical references in the PA books:

- “Educators, historians and politicians alike have long argued that in the context of a conflict, there is no escape from presenting the “other” in

stereotypical references. This, however, should not be interpreted as a call to condone such practices. In the spirit of peace and tolerance, the “other” – in this case Israel – should be portrayed in proper terms (neutral and/or positive light).” (p. 41)

The PA educators make positive efforts in this respect:

- “The MOE [PA Ministry of Education] is doing its best to do away with many stereotypical references to Jews and Israelis.” (p. 37)
- “The authoring teams made every effort to avoid stereotyping...” (p. 41)

CMIP: The PA’s new curriculum certainly avoids a number of the anti-Israeli and anti-Jewish references that appeared in the older textbooks. But many descriptions of the Jews and all those of Israel are still stereotypical, with grave implications on the issue of incitement (see below). The ambiguous role played by the PA regarding the older textbooks will be discussed below.

What is left does not pose a challenge to Israel according to IPCRI:

- “The historical timelines in several textbooks show a continuous Arab presence in the region. This does not necessarily mean a challenge to Israel’s biblical and modern claims of presence in the region. For an honest, complete and accurate representation of the multi-ethnic and multi-religious culture of the region, non-Arab and non-Muslim presence and history should be included.” (p. 38)
- “In the National Education and the Civic Education textbooks, one notices a focus on Arab and Palestinian ethnic, religious, geographic and religious [sic] identity. This does not mean the denial of the Jewish and Israeli narrative of the same ethnic and geographic dimension. However, the materials do not openly reflect readiness to consider the Jewish and Israeli narratives.” (p. 40)
- “The Palestinian narrative, one has to acknowledge, has short-term as well as long-term bearings on the political questions and the political agenda of the different parties of the region. These are legitimate aims and are not to be construed as denying others, particularly Israelis, the right to a secure and peaceful existence.” (p. 37)
- “One also notices an emphasis on the duty of students to love their land, family, towns, state, the Arab world and the Islamic world. These pronouncements, on the one hand, are not incompatible or in conflict with calls for recognizing, respecting and understanding others. On the other hand, they do not constitute a clear call for doing so.” (p. 40)

CMIP: No one argues with the fact that the Palestinians are fully entitled to asserting their national positions and aspirations in their school textbooks. This in itself does not constitute automatic denial of the “other”, even in times of conflict. What is disturbing in the PA textbooks is the mostly implicit, but very well traceable, denial of both the Jews’ rights and actual presence in Palestine, and of Israel’s status as a legitimate sovereign

state. The IPCRI conclusions do not tackle with this problem and, consequently, fail to present a faithful picture of the PA books' position in this issue.

Moreover, the IPCRI report claims, contrary to the evidence, that Israel is indeed recognized as a legitimate sovereign state within the PA textbooks, by quoting the Palestinian Declaration of Independence:

- “The Declaration of Independence [of the State of Palestine, issued by the PLO in Algiers in November 1988,] is used to reflect the policies of the future state. It reiterates some of the principles found in the draft Constitution. In addition, it highlights the recognition by the Palestinian people (represented by the PLO) of the State of Israel and all the UN resolutions that relate to the Arab-Israeli conflict.” (p. 39)

CMIP: No source is cited in this case, but the Declaration of Independence is quoted in Reading and Texts, Grade 8, Part 1 (2002) pp. 72-73. There is no trace there to any recognition of the State of Israel by the PLO. It should be remembered that the Declaration was issued in 1988, before the Oslo Accords between Israel and the PLO were signed (in 1993), which entailed mutual recognition. In other words, official Palestinian recognition of the State of Israel does exist in the Oslo Accords, but these are not quoted by the PA books.

There is no incitement against Israel according to IPCRI:

- “The authoring teams made every effort to avoid stereotyping and incitement. This is reflected in the practice of omitting explicitly defiant verses or excerpts from poems and literary works included in the subject-matter context.” (p. 41)

CMIP has found one instance in which one verse talking of the Palestinian refugees' return to their land with flags stained with blood fluttering over swords and bayonets has been omitted. But the poem still talks of coming back with resounding storms and a sacred lightening, with soaring vultures and eagles, which leaves the impression of war and conquest intact (Our Beautiful Language, Grade 7, Part 1 (2001) p. 40).

- “The overall orientation of the curriculum is peaceful despite the harsh and violent realities on the ground. It does not openly incite against Israel and the Jews.” (p. 38)

CMIP: Open incitement against the Jews exists in very few cases. One, for example, is the call for Jihad against the (Jewish) “oppressors” and “slaughterers” in a poem dating back to 1948 or 1947 (Reading and Texts, Grade 8, Part 1 (2002) p. 77). But if direct incitement is rare, indirect incitement is abundant. One has to just cast a glance at the long list of negative, and, at times, demonizing attributes attached to Israel and the Jews in order to understand the extent of the hostile attitude fostered in the minds of Palestinian school children by their curriculum against anything Israeli. If we combine this fact with what the PA books have to say on Jihad, martyrdom and the liberation of

Palestine (see below in Chapters 4 and 6), then a clear example of incitement appears before our eyes. IPCRI's ones, so it seems, remain closed.

The PA books, at any rate, have an "interim" character that would change, once full peace is concluded, according to IPCRI:

- "The textbooks undoubtedly bear the marks of unresolved controversies both among Palestinians and with the neighbors of the emerging Palestinian state. This observation was pointed out in other reviews and may reflect that fact that several major issues remain unresolved. The textbooks, moreover, and especially the history books, could be viewed as having an "interim" nature. As such, they reflect current political and social realities. Once the existing conditions are altered, or modified, the textbooks will certainly reflect the changes." (pp. 37-38)

It is CMIP's strong belief that, in order to reach a real and everlasting peace between Palestinians and Israelis, this "interim" character of the PA books should first change for the better, and not vice versa.

Finally, the following conclusion represents IPCRI's overall judgment regarding the PA textbooks in this particular respect:

- "The Palestinian MOE should be applauded for its willingness to embark on replacing the existing curriculum in spite of the difficult situation on the ground and several unresolved major issues in the conflict." (p. 37)

CMIP: Before anyone applauds the Palestinian Ministry of Education for replacing the older books with new ones less hateful, it should be known that it is the same Ministry which was responsible for the reintroduction of these older books to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in 1994, after a period of more than 25 years in which a milder version had been taught there. When Israeli administration took over in 1967, all school books were gathered and studied, and all the hateful material was taken out in a process of re-editing. Thus, phrases such as "the evil enemy" or "treacherous" in relation to the Jews (examples given in the IPCRI report p. 32) were not present in the books between the years 1967–1994. Only when the PA took over in 1994-95, did it gather all the re-edited books and replace them with the original ones.

Chapter 4: Jihad, Freedom and Martyrdom

Criteria

The only question in this section is as follows:

- "Are references to Jihad and shahadah or istishad [istish'had] (martyrdom) made? In what contexts are these two concepts used (e.g., militant, peaceful and constructive, etc.)?"

CMIP: This question is reasonable, though nothing is said there on "freedom", which appears in the title of the chapter. Also, one may wonder how IPCRI would define a

peaceful and constructive martyrdom. Another question that comes to mind in this context and should have been put here is the following one: To what extent do the PA books exalt Jihad and martyrdom? Can one find indications in the books that they urge the students to follow the historical examples of Jihad fighters and martyrs?

Findings

The relevant findings related to militant Jihad – as opposed to peaceful Jihad – are as follows:

- “Glorifying militant positions as in the case of Jihad against the Crusaders [source].” (p. 34)
- “War of Ramadan (October 1973).” (p. 34)

CMIP: These findings are very meager indeed, because militant Jihad is found in the PA books in abundance. Following are some prominent examples of the spirit of Jihad as taught in the PA books (though not in all of them the term itself appears):

- “Jihad comes first after worship.” (Our Beautiful Language, Grade 6, Part 1 (2000) p. 20)
- “God has ordered the believers to stand firm while meeting the enemies in the field of Jihad.” (Islamic Education, Grade 8, Part 2 (2002) p. 25)
- “You probably know what a great reward God has prepared for the Muslims who fight the infidels.” (Reading and Texts, Grade 8, Part 2 (2002) p. 15)
- “O brother, the oppressors have exceeded all bounds and Jihad and sacrifice are necessary.” (Reading and Texts, Grade 8, Part 1 (2002) p. 77)
- “Clarify the Muslims’ duty towards their brethren who are threatened by occupation and aggression on the part of the enemies.” (Islamic Education, Grade 7, Part 2 (2002) p. 37)

As for martyrdom, the IPCRI report presents this finding:

- “In some references, the concept of “martyrdom” is mentioned, primarily as it relates to historical events (pre- and during the 1947-48 War). The majority of references to martyrs relate to those who lost their lives in defense of historical Palestine (against the British Mandate and during the 1947-48 War) [examples]. Limited references are made to recent martyrs of the Palestinian Resistance/PLO (e.g., Abu Jihad [reference].” PP. 34-35)

CMIP: The concept of martyrdom is not mentioned in “some references”. It is instilled in the minds of Palestinian school children on many occasions. Examples:

- “Lord of the Martyrs”
The goals: Our dear students, may peace be upon you and God’s mercy and blessings. We expect you, after studying this unit, to realize the following goals:

...Glorification of the concept of martyrdom and martyrs.” (Our Beautiful Language, Grade 6, Part 1 (2000) p. 46)

* ”Lord of the Martyrs” is the title given to Hamzah Bin Abd al-Muttalib, Muhammad’s uncle, one of the first martyrs in Islam.

- “The Martyr

I shall carry my soul in my palm
 And toss it into the abyss of destruction
By your life! I see my death
 But I hasten my steps towards it
I see my death without my stolen right
 And without my country as a desired one
Hearing [weapons’] clash is pleasant to my ear
 And the flow of blood gladdens my soul
And a body thrown upon the ground
 Skirmished over by the desert predators
Whose blood covered the land with crimson
 And burdened the east wind with perfume
He fell asleep in order to dream the dream of eternity [i.e., Paradise]
 And enjoy in it the loveliest visions
By your life! This is the death of men
 And the one who asks for a noble death – here it is
I shall throw my heart at the enemy’s face
 My heart is iron and my fire is blaze”
(Our Beautiful Language, Grade 7, Part 1 (2001) p. 97)

- “Let us express [in writing]:

1. An event of martyrdom of a hero in the land of Palestine, using the following phrases: they have fulfilled what they had promised to God; they have stood the test; he is defending his religion and homeland; a bullet hit him in ...; he fell as a martyr; he watered the land with his pure blood.
2. The emotions of a mother whose son fell as a martyr on the soil of Palestine.”

(Our Beautiful Language, Grade 6, Part 1 (2000) p. 58)

- “Your enemies seek life and you seek death. They seek spoils to feed their empty stomachs and you seek a garden the width of which is both Heaven and earth [i.e., Paradise]. Do not be sad to encounter them, for [the taste of] death is not bitter in the believers’ mouth. ...These drops of blood that flow from your bodies will be transformed into red fiery shooting stars that will come down upon the heads of your enemies.”

(Reading and Texts, Grade 8, Part 2 (2002) p. 16)

The UN resolutions also stipulate that those refugees, who will prefer not to return, will be entitled to compensation. The PA textbooks do not accept that. All refugees must return. Examples:

“All the Palestinians wait for the return of every Palestinian to his city or village from which he was made to emigrate.”
(Islamic Education, Grade 6, Part 1(2000) p. 69)

“The right of return is a red line that cannot be crossed.”
(Linguistic Sciences, Grade 8, Part 2 (2002) p. 68)

As regards the national hymn (not anthem) that is mentioned within the said finding, it has no connection to the refugee problem. It will be discussed later on, in the framework of Chapter 6: Defending and Liberating Palestine as the “Homeland”.

- “Several references are made to the legitimate rights of the Palestinian refugees to return to their land. Some references are expressed in the form of poems or literary works (some implicit and some embedded in metaphorical terms). In one instance an ancient Canaanite myth about the phoenix is introduced and students are asked to relate it to the Palestinian refugees in the Diaspora [reference]; others are made directly in the context of talking about camps in which they live and about the Declaration of Independence and UN resolutions. It is worth noting in this context that some verses that are militant in nature were omitted from the selections used in the textbook.” (p. 35)

CMIP: The militant verse about blood, swords and bayonets omitted from the poem cited above, does not change the poem’s militant character, as is clearly seen. It just transforms the threat from an explicit to an implicit one. The Phoenix myth is Greek, not Canaanite, and it tells of a legendary bird that lives for a thousand years, burns at the end of this period, and then rises from the ashes. It has no connection to refugees. But the Palestinian educators are free, of course, to readapt ancient myths to current needs.

Beyond that, and not discussed by IPCRI, there is the issue of responsibility. The PA books blame Israel exclusively for the emergence of the refugee problem. See, for example, National Education, Grade 7 (2001) p. 21; National Education, Grade 6 (2000) p. 16; Reading and Texts, Grade 8, Part 1 (2002) p. 78.

Conclusions

The PA books, beyond making Israel exclusively responsible for the refugee problem, show a staunch devotion to the ultimate solution of total return, with an implied notion of violence. IPCRI fails to note that in its report, and the problem in its entirety is not referred to at all by IPCRI in the conclusion section.

Chapter 6: Defending and Liberating Palestine as the “Homeland”

Criteria

- “Are there any references in the textbooks to the concept of liberation, armed struggle, resistance, etc. In what context are these references made (historical, modern, nonviolent, militant, etc.)?” (p. 22)

CMIP: This is a very important question. The PA textbooks’ attitude to the issue of the armed struggle against Israeli occupation is a crucial matter. But more important is the (missing) question regarding the exact geographical scope of the occupation, or, in other words, what are the specific territories that are to be liberated.

Findings (Only those relevant to the present conflict)

- “Frequent references are found that relate to resisting the Israeli occupation and the national and religious duty to liberate the occupied territories [examples]. The liberation of the land occupied during the 1967 War figures prominently in some textbooks in symbolic forms (in poetry).” (p. 35)

CMIP: Correct.

- “There is, however, one instance in which we find a call for Arabs and Palestinians, in particular, to work for the goal of ‘rescuing’ Palestine. Since the excerpt is taken from the Encyclopedia of Palestine, first published in 1964 (Mustafa Al-Dabagh/ Our Country Palestine), the call is understood as that of liberating historical Palestine [reference].” (p. 35)

CMIP: This is not the only open call for the liberation of Palestine in its entirety. There is at least another instance in which a poem that dates back to 1947 or 1948 is included in one of the textbooks, and calls for Jihad against the (Jewish) oppressors and slaughterers in Palestine (Reading and Texts, Grade 8, Part 1 (2002) p. 77). Other examples are less explicit. They do not talk about destroying Israel or even fighting it for the liberation of the territory within its pre-1967 border. But they refer to that territory as one under occupation. See, for example, National Education, Grade 6 (2000) p. 16; Reading and Texts, Grade 8, Part 2 (2002) p. 118; Reading and Texts, Grade 8, Part 1 (2002) p. 57; a map titled “Palestine in the shadow of occupation in: Atlas of Palestine, the Arab Homeland and the World (2002) p. 6, and also Linguistic Sciences, Grade 8, Part 2 (2002) p. 82 (insinuated). The liberation in this case is thus implied, not stated.

- “Some texts note that it is incumbent on the occupied to resist the occupier. However, there are no open calls for the destruction of Israel similar to those that permeated the pre-1967 narratives.” (p. 36)

CMIP: See the previous comment, and also the following finding which talks about the Palestinian resistance before 1967.

- “The history textbooks talk about Palestinian struggle against occupation and highlight the revolts, general strikes and the uprising against the British. They also underscore the birth of the modern-day Palestinian resistance following the UN Partition resolution of November 29, 1947.” (p. 36)

CMIP: The link between modern-day Palestinian resistance, and that of earlier periods, which was directed against Britain and the Jews, and later against Israel, is made by the PA textbooks more than once. In one example, the text presents two Palestinian martyrs, one from the pre-1948 period (Sheikh Izz al-Din al-Qassam) and another from modern times (Khalil al-Wazir). It should be remembered that the PLO was officially committed to the destruction of Israel until the early 1990s, and all current references in the PA books to PLO activities and personalities of those periods actually condone that official policy (see, for example, a text looking favorably on the attacks by Palestinians against Israel from south Lebanon – Reading and Texts, Grade 8, Part 1 (2002) p. 45). The same applies to those members of the Palestinian armed organizations who were involved in terrorist actions against Israelis and later jailed:

- “Several references are also made to “prisoners of war” jailed by the Israelis (for political and/or military reasons) from the period extending from 1967-2001. These include those who are detained “administratively” without trials. Prison literature figures frequently in the textbooks [references]. The narratives talk about and glorify the sacrifices made by the prisoners in their struggle to liberate their land from Israeli occupation. Texts are also accompanied by visual art depicting the prisoners’ longing for freedom and their desire to be united with their families.” (p. 36)

The question, of course, is whether the PA textbooks favor such actions today. The poem that was mistakenly connected by IPCRI to the refugee problem actually belongs here. It reads:

“Fida’i, Fida’i, Fida’i,* O my land, the ancestors’ land
 Fida’i, Fida’i, Fida’i, O my people, the people of eternity
 I shall live as a Fida’i and continue as a Fida’i
 And shall die as a Fida’i until it [the land] returns
 Fida’i, Fida’i, Fida’i, O my land, the ancestors’ land
 Fida’i, Fida’i, Fida’i, O my people, the people of eternity
 To the teacher: The teacher will repeat with the pupils the national hymn
 several times.”

(National Education, Grade 1, Part 2 (2001) pp. 57-58)

* Fida’i – A warrior who is ready to sacrifice himself for a cause. In recent decades, this title has been reserved mainly for members of the Palestinian armed organizations.

There is a thin line separating this armed struggle from terrorism. The Palestinians are aware of this question and forcefully deny the accusation:

“The occupier [i.e., Israel] spreads everywhere the lie that the Palestinian struggle is terror. In the Declaration of the Establishment of the [Palestinian] State there is something that reveals the falseness of this allegation.”

(Reading and Texts, Grade 8, Part 1 (2002) p. 76)

IPCRI does not find this worthy of discussion.

Conclusions

The above presented evidence clearly shows that the PA books support the Palestinian armed struggle against Israeli occupation in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, with implied notions that the liberation of Palestine does not end there. Although open calls for the destruction of Israel are not included in the PA textbooks (with the exceptions mentioned above), acts by Palestinians with that aim in former periods are looked on favorably, while any accusation of terrorism is rejected outright.

The IPCRI report does not include any conclusions related to this chapter.

Chapter 7: The Oslo Accords and the Declaration of Principles

Criteria

- “Are the international and bilateral agreements signed between the Israeli government and the PLO mentioned? If so, how, and in what context?” (p. 22)

Findings

- “Several references are made to the Oslo Accords. Some are presented in relation to the establishment of the PA, e.g., the entry of the PLA [Palestine Liberation Army] into the PA territories after the signing of the Oslo Accords and the DOP in 1993 [reference]. Other references relate to the demographic and economic realities post-Oslo such as the decline in the population of Palestinians in the Diaspora and the patterns of social, educational and economic development in PA areas after the signing of the Accords.” (p. 36)
- “Few references are made to the Oslo Accords and to the Declaration of Principles (DOP) that ushered in the peace process between the Palestinians and the Israelis [reference]. The “peace” dimension of the Accords and the DOP is not mentioned.” (p. 28)

CMIP: IPCRI talks about this issue in a matter-of-fact manner. But it is significantly important to realize that the only reference to the Oslo Accords in the PA books so far (other than the DOP) does not mention the peace process, but refers to the military benefits the PLO has gained from those Accords.

Conclusions

No conclusions regarding this issue are included in the IPCRI report. What is left for CMIP to comment on in this context is that this phenomenon in which the PA textbooks refrain from presenting to the students the contents of the Oslo Accords, which constitute the basis for the current peace process, is one of the most revealing indications of the real attitude towards genuine peace with Israel on the part of the PA textbooks.

Chapter 8: Maps

Criteria

- “How are regional and historical maps drafted?” (p. 23)
- “How do visual texts portray the region’s political boundaries?” (p. 23)
- “Are illustrations, maps and graphs up-to-date and accurate?” (p. 23)

Findings

Since the original findings in the IPCRI report are intertwined with one another, CMIP has found it useful to separate and rearrange them in a logical order:

- “Several books contain and make reference to maps of historical Palestine as a geographical and historical entity. Some of the maps show Palestine as part of the Arab world (regional maps), whereas others show it in isolation.” (p. 36)
- “Maps are used for different purposes: to situate Palestine with reference to the Arab and Islamic worlds, in relation to the lines of latitude and longitude, for identifying the four directions, locating the different cities in historical Palestine (under Ottoman rule, British Mandate), Medieval history (during Islamic rule, the Crusades and Salah Iddin, etc.), Bilad As-Sham/Fertile Crescent as well as ancient history (the time of the Canaanites). Some maps highlight the location of the Israeli settlements in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.” (p. 36)

CMIP: All maps show the country as a whole, that is, Mandatory or “historical” Palestine, as named in the IPCRI report.

- “In all cases, the maps are not labeled in any way.” (p. 36)

CMIP: If IPCRI means by that, that maps of "historical" Palestine do not carry the phrase "the State of...", that is correct, and see the following findings. But in many cases the country as a whole is labeled “Palestine”. The question here, of course, is whether this should be regarded as a systematic effort on the part of the PA textbooks to avoid the

mentioning of Israel in maps. The impression that this is indeed the case becomes stronger when we realize that cities established by Jews in modern times, such as Tel Aviv, do not appear on any map either, except in an atlas that has been approved for use in the PA schools. But this atlas also systematically refrains from mentioning Israel's name on the map (except in one case in reference to the "Jewish State" in maps describing the events of 1947-48: Atlas of Palestine, the Arab Homeland and the World (2002) p. 5).

- "No map... bears the name of the State of Palestine." (p. 27)
- "The name of Israel does not appear on any map." (p. 37)
- "Israel, as a political entity, does not appear in any map." (p. 27)

CMIP: Correct.

- "The maps in the Textbooks represent Mandate Palestine and when the reference is to the PA territories or the Palestinian homeland, the areas are contoured." (p. 27)

CMIP: The areas contoured are not the PA territories, but the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and there is no connection between this phenomenon and the text. In any case, the contoured areas are always shown within "historical" Palestine and not as separate regions.

- "In some maps the boundaries of the West Bank and Gaza Strip are contoured. (This is the case when reference is made to the demographic distribution of Palestinians and to the administrative breakdown of the Palestinian State in terms of governorates.)" (p. 37)

CMIP: Yes, but not always. There are other cases in which the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are contoured.

- "Geographical maps show all historical Palestine. Administrative maps show the West Bank and Gaza." (p. 27)

CMIP: Not necessarily. There is one administrative map showing the districts of "historical" Palestine, and see also the following finding.

- "Some of the 'administrative maps' also show names of cities that were predominantly inhabited by Arabs prior to the establishment of the State of Israel. These cities include Acre/Akko, Nazareth/An-Nasirah, Safad/Safad, Haifa/Haifa, Jaffa/Jaffa, Lod/AL-Lud, and Ramle/Ar-Ramleh. The same was found for a lesson on 'tourism' in which the accompanying map includes the names of Haifa, Nazareth and Acre (along with photos showing the Church of the Annunciation and the Al-Jazzar Mosque, respectively)." (p. 37)

CMIP: Correct.

- “None [of the maps] portrays the ‘Land of Israel’ or ‘Israel’ as part of the emerging Palestinian State.” (p. 27)

CMIP: Incorrect. The “Land of Israel” is the Jewish traditional name of the whole country, including the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. As for the State of Israel, there is at least one map that shows its territory united with the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in one color, and under the Palestinian flag, in the context of the establishment of the State of Palestine. See: Mathematics, Grade 3, Part 1 (2002) p. 86. One can also find in the atlas political maps in which Palestine as a whole appears side by side with neighboring states. See, for example, the map titled “The Arab Gulf: Political” in Atlas of Palestine, the Arab Homeland and the World (2002) p. 48)

Conclusions

For the sake of convenience, we have divided IPCRI’s conclusion in this subject into three parts:

- “The territory of the State of Israel is shown on the maps without any label. No reference is made to Palestine, either.” (p. 39)

CMIP: Israel is never referred to on any map. That is correct. Palestine, on the other hand, is referred to many times, though not as a “state”, and its name encompasses the whole country, including Israel. IPCRI thus clings to technicalities in its interpretation of the evidence, forgetting that school children cannot grasp such delicate matters. All they see on the map is “Palestine” constantly covering the whole of Israel’s territory. This way, the contoured West Bank and the Gaza Strip within Palestine can be easily regarded as “liberated areas”, while the future of the other parts is, at best, in question.

IPCRI further explains this anomalous situation by repeating the PA’s justification:

- “The rationale for this approach, as explained by political officials and educators alike, is that Israel itself has not yet marked its borders and that no final agreement has been reached with the PLO and the PA as to the final status of the borders between the two political entities.” (p. 39)

This is, of course, an unacceptable explanation, unless in the eyes of the PA the border question covers the whole of Israel's territory. IPCRI itself notes:

- “This, however, does not mean that maps included in the textbooks should be left without labels that reflect the historical as well as the present-day political reality. Thus, until a solution is reached with regard to the disputed borders, maps should be described in more accurate terms (e.g., such as being typographical [sic], demographic or geological maps of Historical Palestine). In addition, maps should reflect the present-day political realities in terms of labeling the regions as they are described in internationally adopted documents, accords, resolutions, and treaties, etc.

(e.g., Israel, the Palestinian Authority, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip).” (p. 39)

It appears that IPCRI wishes to achieve three goals in its conclusion:

- To minimize the faults in the PA textbooks by concealing their real meaning behind technicalities.
- To clear the PA of responsibility by reiterating their justifications.
- To absolve IPCRI of condonation, by urging the PA to improve the books.

But the issue at stake is much more serious. The absence of Israel’s name from all maps and the appearance of Palestine’s on many of them instead, integrates, together with other phenomena in which Israel is not treated as a legitimate sovereign state (see Chapter 3 above), into one whole reality where Israel’s existence is denied. It is an implied message, that is true, but it is very live and real.

General Conclusions

CMIP has found the IPCRI report to be lacking on three specific levels:

Technical Treatment of the Findings

- IPCRI has not made a systematic effort to gather all the available material. Many findings, including decisively important ones, are left out.
- The researchers appear to have relied on second-hand information, including CMIP’s reports, with no real verification.
- External views and explanations were introduced by the researchers into the report, side by side with the source material.
- The source material is paraphrased or summarized, with no reliable system of reference.

Use of the Findings in the Report

- The IPCRI researchers do not combine pieces of evidence to form a whole picture. Each piece is treated separately.
- Important findings are sometimes presented with no comment.
- Some of the presented findings are false.
- Findings are sometimes presented in a misleading manner.
- There is a tendency on the part of the researchers to “explain” findings that seem unpleasant to them – either by themselves or by PA officials, to minimize the importance of such findings, or blur their meaning.
- On the other hand, they tend to highlight other findings.

Assessment

- The assessment tends to be more lenient than the evidence upon which it is supposed to be based. It often ignores important findings or distorts them.
- There are instances in which false conclusions are given, in complete contradiction to the findings.
- In some other cases, unsubstantiated statements and conclusions are made.
- Important issues are sometimes ignored and no conclusion is given in their case.
- At least in one case, a conclusion is phrased in a misleading way.
- There are cases in which the researchers do not ask all the right questions necessary for the research of a certain point.
- The IPCRI researchers tend to ignore implied messages in the findings.

In conclusion, as a research project on the textbooks produced by the Palestinian Authority, the IPCRI report is clearly lacking. It might have great value in other fields, such as in helping the PA Ministry of Education to readapt its school curricula so that it would become more compatible with the message of peace. CMIP will be glad to contribute to such a noble effort as much as it can.

In the meantime, the cumulative effect of the material in these textbooks continues to have a detrimental influence on the child with regard to his view of life, coexistence and peace.

Dr. Arnon Groiss
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