

Chapter Four: Peace

Tolerance

Since the new Palestinian textbooks began to be published (2000), political and religious tolerance has been an important theme in them. This is continued in this latest issue of school textbooks . Tolerance of various types, though not without limits, is also said to be one of Islam's distinguishing characteristics. The point that should be made in this respect is that, so far, not a single specific reference in this context to the Jews, unlike the Christians, has been ever made in the Palestinian textbooks.

Love is better than hatred... openness is better than being closed off...

Linguistic Sciences, Grade 9, Part 1 (2003) p. 62

Respecting human dignity, accepting the other and respecting diversity are [some] of the most important values of civil society.

Civic Education, Grade 9 (2003) p. 2

[Some] of the Palestinian society's values:

- Belief in God. The Palestinian human being holds on to his faith and respects other religions.

National Education, Grade 4, Part 2 (2004) p. 43

The heavenly [monotheistic] missions [religions] are all the same, because their origin is God's revelation.

[Qur'an] Recitation, Grade 9 (2003) p. 27

The history of the Muslims has not witnessed a struggle between science and religion like that witnessed by Europe at the beginning of its renaissance, when scientists were subjected to interference, oppression and torture by the religious establishment at that time, which made many European intellectuals hostile to religion [so much so that] they called for its separation from science...

Islamic Education, Grade 9, Part 2 (2004) p. 71

Activity: Human Rights in a State of War

1. I will speak on the school radio about Islam's safeguarding human rights even in a state of war and compare that to the wars [waged by] modern Imperialism.
2. I will write an essay comparing the rights of the prisoner-of-war in Islam and the reality [faced by] the prisoner-of-war today.

Islamic Education, Grade 9, Part 2 (2004) p. 87

Freedom does not mean anarchy and licentiousness. There must be limits and rules that will guarantee the interests of [both] the individual and society... The freedoms in Islam are therefore limited by the principles of [Islamic] law. For example, the freedom to profess a religion does not mean that a Muslim has the right of apostasy from his [Islamic] religion...

Islamic Education, Grade 9, Part 2 (2004) p. 87

Peace in General

Peace in principle, as a value, is advocated by the Palestinian school textbooks, though it is somewhat circumscribed, as an ultimate ideal, by Islamic legal considerations, which may not be identical with those of international law.

Peace is a trust that binds us all.

Reading and Texts, Grade 9, Part 1 (2003) p. 108

Peace is better than war... power is better than weakness.

Linguistic Sciences, Grade 9, Part 1 (2003) p. 62

The lessons to be learned from the Peace of Hudaibiyyah [between Muhammad and the pagan Quraysh tribe of Mecca]:

- It is permitted to have a truce between the Muslims and their enemy if it is in the Muslims' interests.
- It is obligatory to observe treaties and covenants concluded by Muslims with others [only] if they conform to the laws of Islam.

Islamic Education, Grade 9, Part 1 (2003) pp. 56-57

Islam commands [the Muslims] to abide by the treaties with non-Muslims and forbids their violation, unless they [the non-Muslims] start violating them [first].

Islamic Education, Grade 9, Part 1 (2003) p. 90

Peace with Israel

The issue of peace with Israel is discussed here for the first time since the publication of the new Palestinian textbooks began. The history of the Arab-Israeli peace process is told in brief and in a-matter-of-fact language. The gradual Arab shift, from opposition to peace with Israel to its conditional adoption, is described. The Palestinian move towards negotiations with Israel, and eventually to an agreement with it, is put within this general Arab context. The Palestinian textbooks do not openly advocate the ideal of peace with Israel.

It should be noted, however, that the Oslo Accord between the PLO and Israel is mentioned here for the first time in the context of peace between the two parties. Former mentions of the Accord did not refer to peace at all³⁹. An interesting part of this section is the assignment at the end in which the student is requested to write a report about the Oslo Accord, which means that the Palestinian educators wish the students not just read about it, but to think about it.

After the establishment of the Israeli entity, the Arab League managed to formulate a unified position regarding the efforts by some Arab states to [make] peace with it, the peace activities that were carried out, and the manner of settling the dispute. The [Arab] League Council, at its eighteenth session in 1950, refused any cooperation or [any] political, or economic, or military agreement, with it [i.e., the Israeli entity], and it emphasized this anew after the Tunisian president al-Habib Burqibah had, in 1965, presented his proposal for peace with Israel. The Arab Summit Conference in 1967 [following the Six-Day War] represented the Arab reality regarding Israel when it raised the slogan “No peace, no negotiations, no recognition”.

Modern and Contemporary Arab History, Grade 9, (2003) p. 81

In 1970 President Gamal Abd al-Nasser died and President Muhammad Anwar al-Sadat came to power [in Egypt]. During his time the October War of 1973 took place and the Egyptians recaptured the Suez Canal. Egypt signed the Camp David Treaty with Israel in 1978, according to which mutual recognition between Egypt and Israel, the end of the state of war between them and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Sinai were achieved.

Modern and Contemporary Arab History, Grade 9, (2003) p. 64

After the signing by Egypt of the Camp David Accord in 1978 the Arab League Council adopted a resolution expelling it from the League and moving the League's headquarters [from Cairo] to Tunis.

Modern and Contemporary Arab History, Grade 9, (2003) p. 81

Since the Arab Summit Conference in Fez [Morocco] in 1982 the Arab League has officially begun to discuss proposals for peace with Israel, on condition that they be based on international legitimacy and on resolutions 242 and 338 of the United Nations [Security Council], which call upon Israel to withdraw from the territories it occupied in 1967, establish a Palestinian state there, and return the Palestinian refugees to their land and property⁴⁰.

³⁹ See PA1 p. 64

⁴⁰ Resolutions 242 and 338 are not unequivocal regarding the exact area that should be evacuated by Israel. Neither do they call for the establishment of a Palestinian state there, nor for the return of the Palestinian refugees to their former land and property.

The realities [facing] the Arab states of Egypt, Jordan and Palestine have led them to support [the idea of] negotiations with Israel.

Modern and Contemporary Arab History, Grade 9, (2003) p. 81

The following two quotations contain the first mention of the Oslo Accord in the Palestinian textbooks in the context of peace with Israel. Until now it was mentioned briefly three times within other contexts, including a military one, stating that the Accord facilitated the entrance of the PLO armed forces into Palestine⁴¹.

The *Intifadah* lasted until 1993, when the Oslo peace agreement was signed between the PLO and Israel.

Modern and Contemporary Arab History, Grade 9, (2003) p. 75

The Oslo Peace Agreement, 1993

The PLO and Israel signed in Washington the Declaration of Principles (the Oslo Agreement) on September 13, 1993. On May 4, 1994 the agreement for the implementation of self-rule in the Gaza Strip and in the city of Jericho was signed in Cairo. Among the articles of this agreement were [the following]:

3. Mutual recognition by the Palestine Liberation Organization and Israel.
4. Establishment of self-rule in the Gaza Strip and Jericho first, to be later extended to the rest of the West Bank.

The leadership of the PLO returned to Palestine in May 1994.

Modern and Contemporary Arab History, Grade 9, (2003) pp. 75-76

I will write a report about the Oslo agreement between Palestine and Israel.
Assignment, **Modern and Contemporary Arab History, Grade 9, (2003)**
p. 76

⁴¹ See PA1 p. 64