

Chapter IV: Zionism

15. Overview

Zionism, the national movement of the Jewish people desiring to reestablish its national home in its ancestral homeland, is portrayed as a 'racist-imperialist-colonialist-aggressive political movement' that exploits the Jewish religion in order to control vast areas of the Arab homeland in partnership with imperialism.

The Syrian textbooks present Zionist ideology as a reactionary one, based on old religious notions that there is a connection between the Jews and Palestine and a false allegation that the Jews are one people.

To further blacken this image, the essence of Zionism is described in the Syrian textbooks as similar to that of Nazism, or worse.

Zionism is presented as the most hostile movement threatening Arab nationalism and the Arab homeland in its entirety.

16. Presenting Zionism to Syrian Students

Zionism is presented to the students in the lower grades accompanied by negative epithets, such as "the Zionist aggressors" (Reader, Grade 2, pt. 1, p. 107), "the Zionist enemy" (Conversation, Reader, Expression and Recital, Grade 2, pt. 2, p. 20), "the filth of Zionism" (Islamic Education, Grade 6, p. 109) "the Zionist cancer" ("Palestine is Arab", Selected Stories, Grade 6, p. 52). It is further portrayed as the main identity of the enemy. Zionist soldiers, or simply "the Zionists", are the ones who kill Bassem's father in the story "The Small Lemon Tree" (Short Stories, Grade 5, pp. 8, 12 respectively). Zionists, rather than Israelis, are mentioned as occupiers and oppressors in the West Bank city of Nablus in the story "Palestine Is Arab" (Selected Stories, Grade 6, pp. 47, 49, 50, 54, 57).

From the eighth grade on, the presentation of Zionism becomes more systematic, albeit distorted, and a great effort to refute Zionist ideology is made in the Syrian textbooks, especially those on National-Socialist Education.

17. A Racist Movement Based on Lies and False Allegations

"Zionism is a racist-imperialist-colonialist-aggressive-expansionist political movement connected with imperialism, which makes use of the Jewish religion in order to realize its own goals regarding the establishment of a national home for the Jews in Palestine and the neighboring lands." (National-Socialist Education, Grade 10, p. 89)

"Racism: Racism [probably a mistake and one should read: Zionism] regards the Zionist as superior to all humanity." (National-Socialist Education, Grade 8, p. 93)

"The gravity of the racist tendency [in Zionism] has become manifest in statements by leaders of the Zionist movement. Herzl called for the rounding up of the Arab Palestinian people and for their collective extermination." (National-Socialist Education, Grade 10, p. 95)

"Zionism is a racist political movement established by the Jews of Europe during the second half of the nineteenth century. It aimed for the creation of a national home for the Jews, but they differed regarding the definition of the area. They later agreed on Palestine." (Modern History of the Arabs, Grade 9, p. 97)

"Zionism is based on an old religious notion which claims that there is a connection between the Jews and Palestine... Zionism exploits this claim in order to exercise control over the Jews of the world. The Zionist notion was but a dream until the nineteenth century, the era of nationalism in Europe, when the Zionists transformed the religious notions into nationalistic ones." (National-Socialist Education, Grade 8, p. 92)

"Zionism considers itself a nationalist ideology based on the allegation that the Jews are one people... From the outset, Zionism presented itself as an alternative to the Jewish Question and called upon all the Jews of the world to emigrate to the "Promised Land"... This call has been accompanied by a chauvinistic attitude characterized by discrimination, haughtiness and denial of others' rights. Their view of the Palestinian Arabs in particular was more racist than the Americans' view of the Indians." (National-Socialist Education, Grade 10, p. 99)

"Zionist thought is based on many lies and allegations of which the most important ones [are the following]:

1. The Jews are one people of a common descent from which Jewish nationalism is formed and enjoys historical and cultural unity as well as unity of destiny.
2. Palestine and the adjacent Arab lands are the Jews' national home.
3. The Jews who live in various areas in the world should emigrate from their homelands and gather in Palestine." (National-Socialist Education, Grade 8, p. 93)

"Zionist ideology is based in its general outlines on reactionary-fanatic foundations, hostile to national liberation and to all the world's powers of peace and progress. It expresses the interests of the Israeli leadership and of the Jewish bourgeoisie that is connected with international monopolies. As it sprang from imperialism and because it is connected with the latter's most aggressive and reactionary forces, it contributes to international political tension and intoxication." (Reader, Grade 12, p. 126)

"[Zionism] conducts massive propaganda [efforts] in all countries where Jewish communities [exist] in order to prevent the Jews from assimilating in the countries they reside in, with a view of isolating them from their peoples and misleading them [to believe] that they belong to the so-called "world Jewish nation"... Therefore we see that this ideology pays special attention... to the revival of the Jewish religion and the resurrection of the so-called distinct Jewish culture through the call for learning the Hebrew language and [through] the establishment of theaters and scientific institutes which have an "independent Jewish" character." (Reader, Grade 12, p. 127)

18. A Partner of Imperialism

"[It is] the foster son of imperialism... It is called 'World Zionism'... It has been [imperialism's] partner in the game of robbing the peoples and it got a share of the profit... It desired to establish a basis in the Arab region that would protect the interests of both partners." (Reader and Literary Texts, Grade 7, pp. 205-206)

"Imperialism has found in Zionism an important means to realizing its ambitions in the Arab homeland... Zionism on its part has found in imperialism the best ally for the realization of its [own] projects." (National-Socialist Education, Grade 8, p. 98)

"Zionism is an integral part of the imperialist movement." (National-Socialist Education, Grade 8, p. 100)

19. Zionism Resembles and Even Surpasses Nazism

"What is the difference between the essence of Nazism and the essence of Zionism? The Nazis were claiming racial superiority, while the Zionists claim that they are God's chosen people to whom all peoples of the world should submit... The Nazis justified the occupation of the lands of other [people] and their enslavement by their need for living space, while the Zionists occupy the lands of others under the pretext of guaranteeing security space for the state that they established unjustly and aggressively on the lands of others. The Nazis oppressed and expelled other peoples and the Zionists are doing the same thing today with the Arabs and tomorrow with the other Muslim peoples and others." (President Hafez Assad, National-Socialist Education, Grade 10, p. 93)

"The vigorous and long struggle of our brethren [in the Palestinian Intifada] has exposed the racist nature of Zionism in front of world public opinion... It has exposed [this] new Nazism... which has brought to perfection Hitler's lessons, amassed malice and become superior in crime until it has become a model of racist evil." (Reader, Grade 11, p. 49)

"The chauvinistic trend and the aggressive-military trend do not separate and they were the kernel of the Nazi movement in the 1930's of this

century. People usually forget that precedence in this trend belongs to Zionist thought. It preceded Nazism in time and surpassed it in clarity." (A publication by the Ba'ath Party, National-Socialist Education, Grade 10, p. 99)

In addition, senior grade students are advised to read the notorious "Beware: Zionism!" by the Soviet propagandist Yuri Ivanov, translated into Arabic (History of Modern Times, Grade 11, pt. 2, p.182).

20. The Danger of Zionism

"Zionism is considered the most dangerous movement hostile to Arab nationalism, as it aims for the liquidation of the Arab presence and the settlement of the Jews of the world in Arab Palestine, with the help of imperialism." (National-Socialist Education, Grade 10, p. 45)

"Zionism is the form of Imperialism most dangerous to the Arab and Muslim nation. That is so because it is an expansionist and colonialist movement and aggressive in its means and goals. It aims at the expulsion of the peoples of the Arab nation, at their humiliation, at the occupation of their lands and at the realization of its stupid dream of building the State of Zion from the Euphrates to the Nile." (Islamic Education, Grade 8, p. 87)

"The colonialist-imperialist Zionist invasion of Palestine threatens the entire Arab homeland, because Zionism's desires do not stop at the borders of Palestine." (National-Socialist Education, Grade 9, p. 75)

"Zionism's ambitions in the sphere of land occupation are not restricted to what has been [already] occupied. Rather, it aims at expanding at the expense of the Arabs in other regions of Arab land." (Geography of the Arab Homeland, Grade 9, pp. 92-93)

21. The Arab Struggle against Zionism

"We are facing, in the [context of the] Arab-Israeli struggle, the world Zionist movement, that racist-expansionist-aggressive movement, which has generated a colonial invasion carried out by Israel, with unlimited support from the forces of... imperialism." (President Hafez Assad, National-Socialist Education, Grade 8, p. 48)

"The struggle between the Arab nation and the Zionist movement is a relentless, bitter and long one. It is so because this racist-Nazi movement intends to barbarically colonize an area in the Arab homeland stretching from the Euphrates to the Nile at the expense of the Arab nation and its national existence on its land and in its homeland..."

"The struggle between the Arab nation and Zionism had actually started when gangs of the strangers of the world began flocking to the territories of Palestine at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the

twentieth century. [But] it has taken shape in four wars that the Arab nation conducted against the racist Zionist enemy in the years 1948, 1956, 1967 and 1973...

"We say that this [1973] war is not the end of the Arab struggle with racist Zionism. Rather, it is but a link in a series of wars of liberation that may be the lot of more than one generation of the Arab nation, until the liberation of the entire occupied soil is realized and until the Zionist imperialist-colonialist presence on Arab land is liquidated." (A party document, National-Socialist Education, Grade 8, pp. 96-97)

"Resisting world Zionism, as a racist-aggressive-expansionist movement connected with imperialism." (Position of the Ba'ath Party, National-Socialist Education, Grade 9, p. 73)