

## IMPACT-SE and Wasatia: Cooperation to Israelize the PA Curriculum

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Professor Mohammad Dajani Daoudi at Auschwitz

So suddenly, “Israel is a friendly country” in the Egyptian educational curriculum. And before we knew it, “one of them” [an Israeli] is against the educational curriculum in Syria, claiming it holds onto national principles. As if this wasn’t insolent enough, children in refugee camps are led to think that they have a land called “Laqatin” [a pumpkin] instead of Palestine, to fit with UNRWA’s “neutrality.”

All the above is being done by people with prestigious scientific careers, who work day and night in the heart of an institution called “IMPACT-se” in occupied Jerusalem. The new work of the institution aims this time to “correct” the educational curriculum in the West Bank, Gaza and Jerusalem according to Israeli standards. This is no surprise if you know the identity of the professor who leads this “mission.”

It is not new that Israel is tirelessly striving to bring up generations from the Arab region according to “peace,” “renunciation of violence and hatred,” “reducing incitement to terrorism” and more, or working to bring millions of people to believe in “the right of the Jewish people to live in peace on the land of Israel, like any other people.”

But how do they decide what students will study in Egypt, Palestine or Syria? This is not just a research institute that monitors “breaches of peace,” but offers proposals, alternatives and recommendations derived from resolutions of international organizations concerned with culture and education, particularly those that have the ability to threaten to cut funding here or withdraw a grant from there, as occurred more than once with the PA.

This institute is located in occupied Jerusalem, called the Institute for Monitoring Peace and Cultural Tolerance in School Education (IMPACT-SE), formerly known as the Center for Monitoring the Impact of Peace (CMIP). On its home page it says that “It is an Israeli [sic] nonprofit organization that monitors the content of school textbooks and examines curricula

around the world, especially in the Middle East, to determine whether the school material complies with international standards and whether teaching is based on recognition and acceptance of the Other.”

Counting the Intifada martyrs, Palestinian villages where weddings are held [p. 11 in the 2016–17 report], the racist separation wall, arrests, targeting medical teams [p. 31–32], the historical connection between the Palestinian people and the Arab nation, the current reality in refugee camps. ... All of the above and more are included in the list of “violations and contents that encourage terrorism”[this is clearly not the case] in a 57-page study published by the Israeli institute a year ago, in which it monitors what is considered by international and UN organizations to be “incitement to terrorism” in the Palestinian educational curriculum.

The study sheds light on examples of lessons that “glorify terrorists who shed the blood of Israeli children and other civilians, as well as lessons that promote the view that Israel is an exclusive Arab land, lessons that confuse Israelis and Jews, and encourage hostility within a radical Islamic worldview, and in some cases, Salafi.”

It’s true that this study is not new, but it has taken center stage with the declaration of the European Union two weeks ago that it “started an investigation of this curriculum” and later denied it, saying that it was “reviewing and examining claims from both sides” (Israeli and Palestinian). However, according to the newspaper *Israel Hayom*, who quoted the Union’s Foreign Minister Federica Mogherini, “the European Union will conduct a review of the new Palestinian textbooks, after allegations have been put forth by an NGO (meaning the Israeli IMPACT-SE), in a study which claims that the Palestinian books are more extreme than they were in the past.”

### **Normalization from Grandfather to Father**

All of the above may not seem surprising, unless those who are supposed to be from the “Palestinian family” have joined the mission of bringing up generations of Palestinians according to Israeli standards. IMPACT-se has announced “uniting of efforts with an institution called Wasatia, to encourage the PA to get rid of inciteful and violent notions in school curricula.” The institution clarified that it is cooperating with Professor Mohammad Dajani Daoudi from the Wasatia Academic Institute, with the aim of “promoting moderation in the Palestinian educational system.”

Dajani Daoudi is a Palestinian professor who worked as a lecturer at Al-Quds University in Abu Dis before he was dismissed by the university due to his normalization positions. He is also a “peace activist” and the founder of the “Wasatia” movement in January 2007. His institution, in his own words, aims to “promote religious and political moderation among Palestinians, encourage co-existence with Israelis, and teach the Jewish Holocaust.” The latter was the reason for his dismissal from the university. His car was burned by enraged Palestinian citizens in Jerusalem, after he led a group of students from Al-Quds University to visit the Auschwitz camp in Poland in 2014.



Discussion about Palestinian refugees is considered by the two institutions as incitement to violence and hatred [p. 35]

Dajani Daoudi does not recognize himself as a refugee, although he was born in Jerusalem and was forced to move between Lebanon, Syria, England, Michigan, South Carolina, Texas and Jordan. In an interview with *Haaretz* he said that his grandfather had to leave West Jerusalem to East Jerusalem (he did not explain the reason), and that “his grandmother heard from one of the neighbors at the time that UNRWA was distributing food and livelihood ... I immediately went to the agency representative, registered all members of the family and returned home carrying supplies. When my grandfather returned he was very angry, and he said that we have dignity. He tore our refugee cards and said we are not refugees.”

He added that when he returned from the United States in 1993, his father wanted to take him to the German Colony in Jerusalem where he was born, but he told his father, “I do not want to visit my house ... you have to walk into the future without looking back.” According to the professor, “in 1529 the Ottoman Sultan, Suleiman I, gave the keys of King David's tomb to the [great, great ...] grandfather Sheikh Ahmad Dajani and his heirs, and accordingly the word Daoudi was added to the family name. Mohammed Dajani's relative, Hassan, was killed by Palestinian rebels in 1936 because of his calls for "coexistence with the Jews.”

Going back to the joint project, the professor noted, in a recent pamphlet, five “problems” in Palestinian textbooks: “encouragement to violence; subliminal violent messaging; demonization of the Other; indoctrination to militancy; and degradation of women.” He concludes that “the Islamic faith should be taught as purely moderate, peaceful and tolerant. While some of the texts in the PA curriculum include anachronistic martial elements, such as militant jihadism against the infidels, these bear no relevance to today’s world.”

Although chapter 4 of Article 22 of the Oslo Accords (2) in 1995 committed the PA to an unreachable goal in the development of the educational curriculum, the Israeli occupation continues to claim that the Palestinian curriculum (which is considered below the required level in terms of consolidation of national principles), is the “fundamental cause of the resistance actions that haven’t stopped for 26 years.”