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# The Treason Of The Intellectuals

Ruth King

I assiduously avoid Holocaust metaphors when discussing Israel's case for two reasons. First, Zionism is not a response to the genocide of World War II. In fact had Zionism been successful, millions of Europe's Jewry could have been saved. Second, the Arabs and their propaganda machines have, with considerable success, promoted the canard that they have been forced to pay for Hitler's crimes by Jewish usurpers of "their Palestine."

This column is an exception, prompted by the craven response of the academic elites to the tsunami of anti-Semitism that is engulfing Jews in every corner of the world.

When I was a young girl my parents entertained many colleagues and friends who had escaped from various corners of hell in Europe. In prewar Europe intellectuals and academic professionals were the elite--even their wives were called "Frau Professor" or Frau Doktor." One of my parent's friends was a physician who had been a medical school professor and pioneer radiologist in Germany. This particular gentleman was bald and had on his cheek the fencing scar "Renommierschmiss," a mark of honor sported by many German and Austrian doctors, lawyers and professors to signify an elite social rank.

On November 10<sup>th</sup> in 1938, the day after Kristallnacht, Herr Doktor reassured his Frau Doctor that this was a passing event. He told her that decent, cultured and educated German intellectuals would be appalled by the violence against Jews. After all, even as the Nazis were implementing their Nuremberg Laws in 1935 he and "Frau Doktor" were on the "A" list of soirees, salons, dances, dinners, musicales, in which the intellectuals expounded on the joys of reading Goethe or Schiller, avoided politics and listened to the music of Brahms, Schubert and Bach--great music, which, to paraphrase poet William Congreve, had "charms to soothe the savage beast."

But when he went to his medical school that morning, his formerly obsequious students who customarily leapt up to help him don his teaching robe, his colleagues and friends, all turned their backs on him. He was summarily fired. Other Jewish professors were similarly dismissed and professionals lost their licenses. And, with rare exceptions, their former friends and colleagues joined the savage beasts.

The story of my father's friend had a happy ending. Thousands of Jews managed to leave and he and his family were among them.

But back to the present--and future. Where are America's intellectuals, including above all the academics, today? In fact, where are those of the Western world? Ostensibly, they are in the vanguard of those promoting progressive thought and liberal values, staunch opponents of bigotry and racism, virtually quivering with multi-cultural sensitivity. Yet where are the most appalling examples of anti-Semitism to be found in the world today? Where is a democracy, a model democracy, routinely slandered with Holocaust and apartheid metaphors? Where are the jihad driven efforts to destroy her ignored? Where is the moral world turned upside down so that the real evil-doers, Israel's would-be destroyers, are painted as victims?

Why in the universities and colleges, of course, where boycott and divest and assorted hate fests may be manipulated or financed by Arab money, but flourish through the studied and outrageous indifference--and worse--of presidents and faculty.

Not all these professors are recycled radicals from the anti-war movement who approach their teaching mandate with an anti-Israel agenda and manufactured history (although many are). Some may actually see their task as teaching history fairly.

But even when it comes to these people, where is their outcry and protest? They fret about the earth's temperature; about endangered flora and fauna; they sing songs about "peace" and worry about abortion rights; they worry about every and all minority rights except for the right of Jews to live in safety in Israel--and for the right of Jews to live safely everywhere, including on their own campuses.

These cowards, particularly Jewish professors--including, alas, faculty in Israel who preen in narcissistic self-hatred--have turned their back on Jews and Israel. They will be the first to be shocked when the rising tide of international anti-Semitism comes lapping at their heels and their cronies and friends abandon them.

A pox on them!

*William Mehlman, who usually writes in this space, is on vacation in the United States this month.*

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## **From The Editor**

### **Name that Zionist**

Haifa University professor Steven Plaut offers a quiz: Can you name the Zionist who said the following?

"Those good Jews brought civilization and peace to the Arab Muslims, and they dispersed gold and prosperity over Palestine without damage to anyone or taking anything by force. Despite this, the Muslims declared holy war against them and did not hesitate to massacre their children and women...Thus a black fate awaits the Jews and other minorities in case the Mandates are cancelled and Muslim Syria is united with Muslim Palestine."

The answer is Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad's great grandfather Suleiman al-Assad, along with five other Syrian Alawi notables. The letter, addressed to the French Prime Minister, also denounced Arabs and Muslims as barbarians who would persecute and massacre all minorities (of course they had the Alawis especially in mind) if the French were to leave Syria. The letter held up the Jews, in contrast, as the model of civilized people bringing progress and tolerance when they migrate into an area.

### **Mosques Replace Churches**

Soeren Kern of the Strategic Studies Group in Madrid reports that as Islam replaces Christianity as the dominant religion in Europe, more and more churches are set to become mosques, which serve not only as religious institutions but as the building blocks for establishing parallel Muslim communities based on *sharia*.

In Germany, for example, Kern reports that more than 400 Roman Catholic churches and more than 100 Protestant churches have closed since 2000 with another 700 Catholic churches slated to be closed over the next several years. By contrast, there are over 200 mosques (including more than 40 mega-mosques), 2,600 Muslim prayer halls and countless unofficial mosques in Germany. Another 128 mosques are currently under construction.

In France the number of mosques has doubled to over 2,000 in the past ten years and the rector of the Grand Mosque of Paris has called for their number to be doubled again to meet growing demand. But there have only been 20 new Catholic churches built in France in the last decade while 60 have been closed. That's because while 64% of the French population identifies itself as Roman Catholic, only 4.5% of these people are practicing Catholics, according to the French Institute of Public Opinion. But in the

case of Muslims, 75% of the estimated six million in France, identify themselves as "believers" and 41% say they are "practicing Muslims."

In England the situation looks even worse. At least 10,000 churches have closed since 1960 with another 4,000 set to be closed by 2020. But there are now more than 1,700 official mosques in Britain, many converted from former churches. There are also thousands of Muslim prayer halls and unofficial mosques. According to one survey, 930,000 Muslims attend a place of worship at least once a week, whereas only 916,000 Anglicans do the same.

### **Only Good News from Israel**

We urge *Outpost* readers (whom we barrage with all too much bad news) to lift their mood by going regularly to an online site <http://Israel21c.org> that posts only good news from Israel. There is plenty of that, once you get away from politics into the realms of science and business.

An inspiring story that recently appeared there concerns the Haifa Technion's Professor Moussa Youdim, who grew up in the Shah's Iran, went off to study biochemistry at McGill University in Montreal and has lived and worked in Israel since 1977 despite offers from the U.S. and elsewhere. One idiosyncrasy: he never learned Hebrew, deciding he could excel at science or language, but not both. He has trained generations of Israeli researchers in English.

Youdim's specialty is neurodegenerative drugs including Parkinson's and Alzheimer's. Along with his Technion colleague Professor John Finberg, Youdim came up with Azilect, the first drug to slow the progression of Parkinson's, now used by patients in 56 countries. Youdim is now excited by the prospects of the newest drug he helped develop, Ladostigil, an anti-Alzheimer's and anti-Parkinson drug. Early clinical trial results are positive and will continue another six months. Now 72, Youdim holds 97 international patents in neuropsychiatric and cardiovascular drug development, has written nearly 800 articles and serves on the editorial board of 44 international scientific journals. He has won nearly 50 awards, most recently sharing a \$1 million Emet Prize for Art, Science and Culture for his work in neuroscience.

This writer encountered more good news when she noticed the name of the author of the article. It turned out to be her cousin Abigail Klein Leichman, who moved from Teaneck to Maalei Adumim four years ago and writes regularly for *Israel 21c*.

### **Crazy Journalists**

We are used to journalists in Arab countries spouting far-out conspiracy theories. Perhaps you shake your head in amazement and contempt at what passes for journalistic standards in these places. Not so fast. Some of the most acclaimed Western journalists are equally off the wall.

The best known is Seymour Hersh, who has amassed over a dozen major journalism awards, including the Pulitzer Prize, for spouting paranoid fantasies. Journalist Michael Rubin recently pointed to two other examples. Pulitzer prize winner Thomas Ricks, at the time a correspondent for the *Washington Post* (now a blogger for *ForeignPolicy.com*) suggested Israel purposely allowed Hezbollah to launch missiles into northern Israel. Wrote Ricks: "One of the things that is going on, according to some U.S. military analysts, is that Israel purposely has left pockets of Hezbollah rockets in Lebanon, because as long as they're being rocketed, they can continue to have a sort of moral equivalency in their operations in Lebanon." Notice the unidentified "some U.S. military analysts." That's a favorite trick of Hersh's as well, citing presumably well informed unidentified sources--which allows the journalist, if he so wishes, to make it up as he goes along.

Rubin's second example is a current one. Genevieve Abdo is a long time correspondent for London's *Guardian*, a frequent contributor to the *New York Times*, and now a fellow at a "progressive"

think tank, The Century Foundation. Abdo was asked by an interviewer for Australian public radio to comment about the terrorist attacks on Israeli diplomats in Georgia and India. Here's the exchange:

Interviewer: Iran's leadership says it's sheer lies that it's behind the attacks and that the Israelis have planted the bombs themselves to discredit Iran?

Abdo: Well I think that's entirely possible. I mean, if you consider what the Israelis did for many years in Lebanon and other parts of the Middle East, that theory is not so far-fetched.

### **A Profile in Courage**

Nowadays, on many campuses, it takes courage for a Jewish college student to defend Israel. Imagine the courage it takes for a young Pakistani Muslim in England to become a champion of Israel. A few years ago twenty nine year old Kasim Hafeez was prepared to go to Pakistan to train as a terrorist. His attitude began to change after reading Alan Dershowitz's *The Case for Israel*, which he first thought to refute as Zionist propaganda.

Now, having visited Israel, he says simply "I fell in love with the place."

To his audiences he says "Hold regular events that promote Israel in the best possible way. Show all the ways that Israel is helping humanity. Be proud of Israel, not apologetic."

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## **Why Myanmar...But Not Judea?**

Gerald Honigman

Why Myanmar...But Not Judea?

Why Sri Lanka, but not Samaria?

Why not Rhodesia, but the "West Bank?"

It's admirable (don't you think ?) when a people throws off the legacy of imperial oppression to embrace their new freedom. The very renaming of nations themselves has often been a reflection of this wonderful development.

Admirable, indeed--unless those people happen to be Jews.

Among the examples of this which have occurred over the last half century are people who lived in Great Britain's former imperial possessions of Ceylon, Rhodesia, and Burma. Those nations are now known as Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe, and Myanmar.

While I've thought about this for decades, what brought this issue onto my own front burner was an article I read recently about Myanmar's pro-democracy hero and Nobel Peace Prize laureate, Aung San Suu Kyi. Too often foreign imperialism gets supplanted by home-grown despotism, as the latter knows only too well.

Here's the problem, and admittedly, the Jews pose a unique case related to this discussion due to their forced exile in the wake of taking on the imperial conqueror of much of the known world not just once, but in two major (and other lesser) revolts recorded in depth by the Romans themselves.

Before we proceed, please contemplate this thought for a moment...Is a victim any less a victim because his victimization has been historically the longest enduring? While the so-called "Progressives" of the world are adamant that the previous imperialist names of conquered lands be dismissed, why is it that when it comes to dealing with the oft-conquered land of the Jews, the opposite is the case? Such sources of ethical enlightenment frequently insist instead that the millennia-old names of the land--Israel, Judea, and Samaria--be abandoned for the sake of the names Roman, British, and Arab imperialism and conquest gave to them instead..."Palestine" and the "West Bank." Everyone else is entitled to national liberation...but not Jews. The latter must agree to their scapegoat, victim, and preferred whipping post par excellence existence for eternity. Or just disappear.

With Christmas 2011 still very much of recent memory, a good portion of the world once again became familiar with the story of Jesus' birth. During this season, it has also become common for Arabs to declare the alleged "Palestinian"(non-Jewish) identity of Jesus. Since I've answered this with both barrels elsewhere, I won't bother with the deliberate Arab attempt to hijack another people's identity in this essay. But, since the subject is directly related to the overall issue of whose nation truly needs to be liberated in the land, please read whatever version you prefer on your favorite search engine of my earlier analysis, Arafat's Jesus.

Returning to the account of Jesus' birth, among other places, this appears briefly in Matthew 2:1 in which Bethlehem of Judea is declared his birth place. Bethlehem ("House of Bread" in Hebrew) was also the birth place of King David, over a thousand years earlier, the site of the beautiful story of Ruth and Naomi (even earlier), and so forth. And if the Arabs (whoops--excuse me, "Palestinians") can claim Jesus, then Ruth, Naomi, and David were theirs too... And I'm the Passover Bunny.

Note, please, that this is the same Judaea (Hebrew:Yehudah; Greek: Ioudaia; Latin: Iudaea...land of the Judeans--Jews) which the ancient Roman and Roman-sponsored historians--Pliny, Tacitus, Josephus, Dio Cassius, and others--wrote about themselves; the same Judaea which Rome placed on its Judaea Capta coins after defeating the first major revolt of the Jews for their freedom and independence after 70 C.E., constructed the towering, still standing Arch of Titus for in Rome, etc. and so forth.

And "Palestine"?



Shame on the "Progressives," for sure. While the geographical coastal region near Gaza and such had sometimes earlier been loosely designated as such by the Greeks, the name itself referred to no separate country nor nation. Indeed, there never, ever, ever was such a separate country, language, nation, or culture by that name. The cold, cruel fact--so willingly ignored by the "Progressive" Left--is that "Palestine" became associated with Israel/Judea by one of the most blatant acts of imperial cruelty ever to be recorded in history. After the Jews' costly second revolt for freedom in the second century C.E., the Emperor Hadrian decided to try to squash the Jews' hopes once and for all by renaming the land itself after their historic enemies, the Philistines--a non-Semitic (let alone non-Arab) invading "Sea People" from the islands near Crete.

Below are two of my oft-quoted favorite excerpts from contemporary Roman historians once again.

After the first revolt...

It inflamed Vespasian's (the Emperor) ire that the Jews were the only nation which had not yet submitted. Titus was appointed by his father to complete the subjugation of Judaea. he commanded three legions in Judaea itself. To these he added the twelfth from Syria and the third and twenty-second from Alexandria. Amongst his allies were a band of Arabs, formidable in themselves and harboring towards the Jews the bitter animosity usually subsisting between neighboring nations. Vol. II, Book V, *The Works of Tacitus*.

Please note: the Arabs mentioned in the above account were foreigners to the land, acting virtually as vultures, looking to grab a share of the main Roman kill. They were not "native Palestinians."

And, after the second revolt...

580,000 men were slain, nearly the whole of Judaea made desolate. Many Romans, moreover, perished in this war (the Bar Kochba Revolt). Therefore Hadrian in writing to the senate did not employ the opening phrase commonly affected by the emperors, 'I and the legions are in health'. Dio's *Roman History*.

The Emperor was so enraged at the Jews' struggle for liberation from their imperial oppressors that, in the words of the esteemed modern historian, Bernard Lewis.

"Hadrian made a determined attempt to stamp out the embers not only of the revolt but also of Jewish nationhood and statehood. obliterating its Jewish identity."

To reiterate this important point, wishing to end, once and for all, Judean/"Jewish" (as in Danish, Irish, Swedish, English, etc.) hopes for independence from their imperial conqueror, Hadrian renamed the land itself from Judaea to "Syria Palaestina"--Palestine--after the Jews' historic enemies, the Philistines, a non-Semitic "Sea People" from the Greek islands in the Aegean Sea.

Yet, one is hard pressed to learn any of the above these days. Again, no people--besides Jews--had ever established an enduring, separate identity in the land. After the fall of Judea, only one imperial conqueror after another (including that of the Arabs during the Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphates, ruled from Damascus and Baghdad respectively) grabbed hold of the land--ruling it from afar and colonizing it with their own invading armies. Before the modern era, the Ottoman Turks were the latest to do this, ruling the land for about four centuries until after World War I.

Arabs who both earlier and later came to settle on the land were part of a greater Arab--not "Palestinian"-- identity. They spoke Arabic, their culture was Arab, their loyalties were to family, clan, and tribe, and later--in the 20th century age of nationalism in the region (and largely to oppose the resurrection of Israel)--those who were politically active gave their loyalty primarily to a Greater Syria or Pan Arab identity--not to "Palestine." And that's what Republican presidential hopeful, Newt Gingrich, was also referring to in his recent comments on the subject

As with Palestine, the story evolved in a similar way regarding the imperial renaming of Judea and Samaria to the "West Bank." In one account after another about Bethlehem, Hebron, East Jerusalem, and other places in historical Judea and Samaria, those towns have been designated by statesmen, journalists, academics, and others the "West Bank"--or, "the occupied" West Bank, to add insult to injury. Judeans/Jews living in those areas are now the alleged "imperialist occupiers" of the land.

And those who beg to differ are more often than not simply dismissed as reactionary Zionist fanatics. With few exceptions, however, it's easy to discover that almost all the towns on the "West Bank" were re-named from their original Hebrew sites. Check out these excerpts from this source ("What's In A Town's name?") for starters. After the Arab imperial conquests of the 7th century C.E., the original name-changers in Palestine were the Arabs, who Arabized hundreds of Hebrew place names when they replaced the Jewish population of the country after the Muslim conquest. In the great majority of cases, Arabization took place by adjusting old Hebrew names to Arabic phonetic patterns. Sometimes these changes were minor, leaving the old names recognizable. Biblical Anatot near Jerusalem, the birthplace of the prophet Jeremiah, became the Muslim village of Anata; Modi'in, where the revolt of the Maccabees broke out, turned into Midia; Bet-She'an, in the Jordan Valley south of Tiberias, was called Beisan.

Often, however, the changes were great enough to obscure the original name. One might never guess from the sound of it that Jenin, the West Bank town that was so controversially in the news a while ago, was once the Hebrew Ein-Gannim; that the Palestinian village of Jib was the biblical Giv'on, where the sun stood still so that Joshua could finish routing the Amorite kings; or that Bet-El, "the House of God," the name given according to the Bible by Jacob to the site on which he dreamed of a ladder to heaven, is now the Palestinian Beitin.

Add to the above the Minutes of the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations and other solid documentation which show that the vast majority of Arabs were indeed newcomers into the land themselves (i.e., Arab settlers setting up Arab settlements), and the picture becomes even clearer. Judea and Samaria--the names the disputed territories now constantly making news were known as for thousands of years--became designated the "West Bank" in the wake of events following World War I and the official break-up of the Ottoman Turkish Empire.

After Great Britain's handing over some 78% of the original 1920 Mandate of Palestine's territory to Arab nationalism in 1922 with the creation of Transjordan, a quarter century later the latter's British-led army then grabbed the non-apportioned part of the Mandate of Palestine west of the

Jordan River upon its invasion of a minuscule, reborn Israel in 1948. Holding both banks of the river, it soon changed its name to Jordan. And to distinguish the east bank from the newly-conquered territory across the river acquired as a result of the newest imperial shenanigans in the land, the name "West Bank" was thus born.

Jews had owned land and lived in Judea and Samaria until they were massacred by Arabs in the 1920s and 1930s. Upon the establishment of the first Arab state in Palestine in 1922, its whole area was declared off limits to Jews. When it illegally seized Judea and Samaria in 1948, it did likewise there as well.

Keep in mind that when those Arabs then also bulldozed dozens of ancient synagogues, used ancient Jewish tombstones to pave roads and build latrines, and took other measures to erase the Jews' millennial connections to the land as well, barely a word was spoken in protest, besides those of the Jews themselves.

And today, the only thing that "Progressives" do about all of this is turn truth on its head. Jews and others who dare call the land by its historic names and insist that Jews should also have the right to once again live in their historic lands (displacing no one in the process on the still non-apportioned--not "purely Arab"--lands of the original 1920 Mandate) are branded the colonialists and imperialists instead.

Here's another thought, while we're at it.

If Judea must become, as many insist and, as the Nazis liked to say, Judenrein (free of Jews), then why should the one fifth of Israel who are Arabs (the freest Arabs living anywhere in the region) not also get the boot out of Israel? Many such folks indeed compose a very dangerous, treasonous fifth column.

Despite the tragedy of the Roman Wars and the expulsions and Great Diaspora which followed, Jews remained in the land, in varying numbers, clear up to the rebirth of Israel in 1948. While this does not give Jews exclusive rights to the land since others have conquered and come to settle it over the centuries, it does mean that Jews are anything but strangers there. Indeed, the historic names of the land itself are named for one of the Patriarchs of the Jewish people--Jacob, whose name was later changed to Israel, and Judah, one of Jacob's sons. On the other hand, Arabs claim exclusive rights to virtually the entire region, calling it "purely Arab patrimony" due to their own former imperial conquests and despite scores of millions of subjugated, non-Arab peoples still living there.

Regardless of the hypocrisy of the Progressive Left and others who should know better, in Judea and Samaria--as in Israel--the Jews are, at long last, home.

The Judean Hills and the Judean Wilderness will not be renamed the West Bank Hills nor the West Bank Wilderness for the sake of the Jimmy Carters, Michael Moores, Reverend Wrights, and the Noam Chomskys...nor for the Nicholas Sarkozys, Barack Hussein Obamas, or Hillary Rodham Clintons either (let alone the Arabs and their assorted other rah rah squads).

Furthermore, despite the hostility towards Israel practiced by many of the mainline Christian churches today, the birthplace of Jesus will remain in Bethlehem of Judea...not the West Bank.

Matthew 2:1 will not be edited.

Unless folks like black Africans in Zimbabwe and Asians in Myanmar (who, despite other problems, were not largely massacred and expelled by their own imperial conquerors who gave their lands other names--as were the Jews) are expected to call themselves Rhodesians and Burmese and not be allowed to live on their own historic lands, then the duplicity routinely practiced towards Jews in Israel, Judea, and Samaria on these same issues must come to an end as well. And, if not, then the Jews must do what they must do to thrive--not just survive--anyway.

*Gerald A. Honigman is a widely published Florida educator who has created and conducted counter-Arab propaganda programs for college youth. Visit his website at <http://www.geraldahonigman.com/>*

## The Romance Of Gush Etzion

Aryeh Tepper

The return of the Jewish people to their homeland succeeded thanks to the extraordinary tenacity of pioneering individuals who, in a dangerous environment, created new communities from scratch. One such community, or rather series of communities, is the Etzion district—in Hebrew, Gush Etzion—located along the ancient mountain route between Jerusalem and Hebron. The first three communities built by Jewish settlers were completely destroyed by Arabs. The fourth still stands today.

The initial effort took place in 1927, when a group of religious Ashkenazi and Yemenite Jews from Jerusalem purchased land from local Arabs approximately 15 miles south of Jerusalem and seven miles southwest of Bethlehem. The settlement lasted only three years before it was uprooted during the 1929 riots in which Arabs massacred the Jewish community of Hebron.

The next attempt was mounted in 1934 on the ruins of the first. The community, named Kfar Etzion, or Etzion Village, was wiped out during the Arab riots of 1936-39.

A third group tried again in April 1943, the same month in which the Jews of the Warsaw ghetto began their uprising. By 1947, four settlements numbering 400 souls had been established, including a religious kibbutz with the name Kfar Etzion. On November 29, 1947, the UN assembly voted to partition the land of Israel into two states, one Arab and one Jewish; the Jews accepted the plan, while the Arabs rejected it and went to war. In the ensuing months, Gush Etzion came under heavy fire from the Jordanian Legion and in March 1948 it fell. The Jewish settlements were completely destroyed.

More than 150 Jews died defending Gush Etzion, including 80 men from Kfar Etzion alone. Their wives and children, now widows and orphans, had been evacuated to Jerusalem in the days leading up to the hostilities. But many of the children grew up faithful to each other and to the memory of their fathers' sacrifice. After Israeli forces re-conquered the area in the June 1967 Six-Day War, these children, now young adults, went about rebuilding Kfar Etzion.



Today, the Etzion district numbers 19 different communities, including two urban centers. It has also become one of the most important centers in Israel, if not in the entire Jewish world, of modern Orthodoxy and religious Zionism. Adin Steinsaltz, a popular rabbinic figure and the author of a monumental translation of the Babylonian Talmud from Aramaic into Hebrew, has founded two

religious schools in the area. Aharon Lichtenstein, an internationally recognized expert in Jewish law and thought, heads a renowned yeshiva, Har Etzion. In Efrat, Shlomo Riskin, founding rabbi, has been a pioneer of women's education and of outreach to evangelical Christians. Also located in the area is the Siah yeshiva, a hothouse of post-modern and existentialist Jewish thought and scholarship.

Gush Etzion's intellectual vitality is expressed, among other ways, in a number of intriguing political positions. In the late 1980's, Yehuda Amital, who until his recent death served with Rabbi Lichtenstein as co-head of the Har Etzion yeshiva, was instrumental in founding a center-Left, religious-Zionist political movement aimed at countering religious extremism; in the mid-1990's, he also functioned as a kind of national unifier in the difficult days after Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated by a fanatic religious Jew.

To take a more radical example, Rabbi Menahem Fruman of Tekoa is a peace activist, albeit of an unusual kind—one who argues for religion as an integral element of any dialogue with the Arab-Muslim world; putting his money where his mouth is, he counted Yasir Arafat as a friend and has

established contacts with members of Hamas. It should also be noted that Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman lives in Nokdim, a settlement across the valley from Tekoa. While they are, in a sense, neighbors, it would be an understatement to say that Lieberman and Rabbi Fruman live in different worlds.

These days, the name Gush Etzion is liable to come up in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian peace talks. Even though the district as a whole lies on the "wrong" side of the Green Line, its west side is on the "right" side of the separation wall, and it is generally assumed—at least outside the Arab world—that the west-side communities will remain part of Israel in any agreement. If history is any guide, there is reason to believe that, for the foreseeable future, Gush Etzion will need to be defended by force of arms. And if one can imagine a scenario in which Gush Etzion Jews will once more be uprooted—both Tekoa and Nokdim, on the "wrong" east side, are rumored to be on the chopping block—one may also venture the prediction that, some day, their descendants will return yet again.

*This appeared in Jewish Ideas Daily of September 3, 2010.*

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## **Post-Mubarak Egypt: The Dark Side of Islamic Utopia**

Robert S. Wistrich

The Muslim Brotherhood [Ikhwan al-Muslimim], along with the more radical Salafi Islamists, has turned out to be the overwhelming victor in the first two rounds of the democratic elections currently taking place in post-Mubarak Egypt. In Egypt, the two largest Islamist parties won about 75 percent of the votes in the second round of legislative elections, held in mid-December 2011.

No one has benefitted more than the Muslim Brotherhood, the only well-organized and structured force in the country, from the political vacuum created by years of governmental repression. The success of Al-Nour, which had existed for barely nine months, was, however, the biggest surprise. Its call for the strict application of Sharia law in Egypt evidently did not deter voters.

These results, along with the clear victory of the Islamist Ennahda (al-Nahda) party in Tunisia's first free elections, seem to suggest that the main outcome thus far of the "Arab Spring" has been an accelerated Islamization of the Middle East.

The Brotherhood has always been radical, anti-Western, viscerally hostile to Israel, and openly anti-Semitic—points invariably downplayed in recent Western commentary on the "Arab Spring." Anti-Semitism and conspiracy-mongering have, of course, been part of Egypt's political discourse ever since the military coup that brought Nasser to power almost sixty years ago. Religious intolerance toward the 8 million Christian Copts in Egypt is also not new, though it has escalated in recent years and Copts remain a favorite target of the Islamists. But the anti-Jewish conspiracy theories of the Brotherhood and Egyptian preachers are in a class of their own. In an interview on *Al-Rahma TV* (October 26, 2011), the virulently anti-Semitic cleric Amin al-Ansari even claimed that Jews manipulate women in order to maintain their control of the world, citing *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and adding: "... when Zionism and Judaism benefit, it means the decline not only of Muslim women, but of humanity as a whole."

Such Muslim concern for women evidently did not extend to the chief correspondent for CBS News, the non-Jewish American reporter Lara Logan. In February 2011, she was beaten and raped in broad daylight by a frenzied throng of Egyptian men in Cairo's Tahrir Square, who were screaming "Jew! Jew!" even as they assaulted her. This shocking event (studiously ignored by *The New York Times* print edition) was virtually contemporaneous with the return of Yusuf al-

Qaradawi (the most celebrated Muslim Brotherhood cleric in the world) to Egypt after fifty years in exile.

The still vigorous 84-year-old, often misleadingly portrayed in the West as a “moderate,” came to Tahrir Square on February 18, 2011 to lead a huge crowd (some reports say more than a million-strong) in Friday prayers and to preach a rousing sermon. On the one hand, he called for pluralistic democracy in Egypt, while at the same time offering an impassioned “message to our brothers in Palestine,” in support of their approaching liberation. “I have hope,” he proclaimed, “that Almighty Allah, as I have been pleased with the victory in Egypt, that he will also please me with the conquest of the al-Aqsa Mosque [in Jerusalem].” Qaradawi, like most Muslim Brotherhood preachers, is not just an impassioned Israel-hater



but a fully-fledged anti-Semite. In a sermon during Israel’s Cast Lead Operation in Gaza (January 9, 2009), broadcast to millions on *Al-Jazeera TV*, he referred to the Jews as a “profligate, cunning, arrogant band of people.” Not a single Jew, he declared, should be spared by the Almighty. “O Allah, count their numbers, and kill them, down to the very last one.”

If this is not genocidal anti-Semitic incitement, then the term has little meaning.

Nor is it an accident that Qaradawi, like other Egyptian clerics, should quote an anti-Jewish saying attributed to the Prophet Muhammad in a notorious *hadith* on the preconditions for the Day of Judgment. In his commentary, Qaradawi emphasized that the coming apocalyptic battle “will occur between the collective body of Muslims and the collective body of Jews, that is all Muslims and all Jews.”



Sayyed Qutb

Such Muslim fundamentalist doctrines on Israel and the Jews are intimately connected to an obsession with purging Muslim countries of all and any Western influences—seen as part of a larger Jewish-Zionist conspiracy against Islam. Since 1928, when Sheikh Hasan al-Banna founded the Muslim Brothers in Ismailiyah, the notion that Jews are by nature evil and can never peacefully co-exist with others has been axiomatic for the fundamentalist organization. The establishment of Israel in 1948 further reinforced this Islamist doctrine of Zionism as a malevolent force and a permanent enemy. It was given a more systematic expression in the 1950s by Sayyed Qutb, the most important and influential of the Brotherhood’s thinkers. For Qutb, the term “Jews” became virtually interchangeable with “enemies of Islam.” Qutb was even convinced that Nasser himself was an “agent of Zionism” as were all the secular nationalist westernizing regimes in the Middle East.

Qutb’s heirs in the Brotherhood were especially outraged by President Sadat’s visit to Jerusalem in 1977 and his “fallacious peace” with the arch-enemy Israel. After 1979, their spiritual leader and the chief editor of *al-Dawah* [The Call to Islam], Umar al-Tilmisani, spared no effort in denouncing the diabolical nature of the Jews. For al-Tilmisani and his fellow Muslim brothers thirty years ago, normalization with Israel was the greatest “catastrophe” imaginable—nothing less than “the most dangerous cancer eating away at all the life cells in our bodies.”

Following Sadat’s assassination (a revolutionary fundamentalist act), the already cold peace with Israel became virtually frozen—not least because of the strength of the Muslim Brotherhood and its allies. During the next three decades of Hosni Mubarak’s repressive rule, demonization of the Jews continued unchecked in the Egyptian media, despite massive American economic aid to Egypt and a common strategic interest with Israel in containing Islamism. Mubarak and his government colleagues permitted it as a safety valve and an outlet for popular

rage that might otherwise have turned against the corruption of the regime. The fundamentalists, in turn, maintained their long-term goals of one day destroying the peace with Israel, thereby “saving Islam” and establishing an authentic Islamic state ruled by Sharia law.

As recently as January 1, 2012, the deputy leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, Dr. Rashad Bayoumi, told the Arabic daily *al-Hayat* that the Brotherhood regarded Israel as a “criminal enemy” and would initiate legal proceedings toward cancelling the 1979 peace treaty.

With regard to Israel and the Jews, the fundamentalist attitude has never deviated during the past few decades, closely linked as it is to a truly paranoid fear of “Judaization”—often a synonym for secularism, westernization, liberal modernity, or “globalization.” Paradoxically, Brotherhood ideologues, despite their rabid anti-Westernism, have no problem in drawing liberally on non-Muslim sources for their radical anti-Semitism—whether it be the Russian Tsarist *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* forgery, Henry Ford’s *The International Jew*, Hitler’s *Mein Kampf*, European anti-Semitic propaganda about Judeo-Masonic conspiracies, Christian anti-Talmudism, blood-libel slanders, or Western Holocaust denial. Egypt has long been saturated by this type of semi-pornographic stream of anti-Semitic vitriol directed at the “Satanic Jews,” publicly licensed and frequently legitimized by seemingly respectable journalists, academics, and Egyptian intellectuals. Though the question of Palestine is often present as the trigger for such deep antagonism, much of the hostility also relates to the presumed “cultural assault” on Egypt that derives not only from Israel’s physical existence but from the imagined “essence” of Judaism and Jewry.

The current unleashing of radical Islamist forces throughout Egypt has hardly improved matters. Thus, at a venomous Muslim Brotherhood rally in Cairo’s most prominent mosque on November 25, 2011, Islamic activists ominously chanted “Tel Aviv, judgment day has come,” vowing to “one day kill all Jews.” The rally had been called to promote the “battle against Jerusalem’s judaization” and was peppered with hate-filled speeches about the “treacherous Jews.” Hamas’s Islamic credo, its advocacy of jihad, its anti-Semitic world-view, and hatred of Israel are all inextricably linked to the ideology of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood—of which it proudly claims to be the Palestinian wing.

The mob assault in 2011 on the Israeli embassy in Cairo was not led by the Islamists but rather by a motley crew of anarchists, “democrats,” and apolitical hardcore soccer fans known as the Ultras, some of whom even waved Egyptian flags with swastikas and chanted slogans such as “We will export no gas, we shall burn you with gasoline.” Evidently, with or without the blessings of Allah, or citations from the Quran, the Egyptian masses required no special guidance in focusing on the traditional scapegoat of Israel in order to vent their mounting frustrations.

Admittedly, such pressure from the Egyptian street does not mean that the fragile peace treaty with Israel will be cancelled overnight. But the calls for such a step have been repeatedly heard in recent months from the “liberal” and more leftist sectors of the political spectrum as well as from the Islamist parties.

This trend reflects a broader, nationalist mood within the midst of the revolutionary chaos that co-exists alongside the anti-Semitic religious ideology of the Brotherhood. It is sobering to observe how few professors of Middle East studies at American or European universities seem able or willing to grasp the true nature of the Muslim Brotherhood, let alone display any interest in its visceral anti-Westernism or ferocious anti-Semitism. Today, very few academics seek to elucidate its core ideology or long-term goals, let alone acknowledge their incompatibility with liberal democracy, human rights, or a stable world order. Instead, the general consensus was that overthrowing Mubarak would lead to pluralistic democracy with the Muslim Brothers pursuing a benignly constructive role.

Typically, fundamentalist attitudes to Egypt’s Jews and Christians, or to the anti-Semitic legacy, were either whitewashed or simply ignored. At the same time, the implications of Egypt’s

revolution for American (and Israeli) strategic interests were generally viewed through rose-tinted glasses. Much the same can be said of British, French, and German academic responses to the recent upheavals in the Middle East, with a few honorable exceptions. Regarding anti-Semitism in particular, the prevailing trend in Germany (as elsewhere in Western Europe) has been to trivialize the genocidal expressions of anti-Semitism in the Muslim world, to misleadingly compare them to “Islamophobia” in the West, or to simply rationalize them out of existence.

A recent article by Middle East analyst Barry Rubin on the Muslim Brotherhood as a kind of functional equivalent to the long-since defunct Communist International can help us restore a broader perspective. The Brotherhood has been steadily expanding its influence in recent decades across the Middle East and even into Europe and North America. Moreover, it has now emerged as the strongest political force in Egypt, poised, for the first time, to achieve control of the state. His chilling scenario for the end of 2012 seems more than plausible:

... the overwhelming majority of Muslims in the Middle East—in Egypt, the Gaza Strip, Iran, Lebanon, Libya, Tunisia and Turkey, about a quarter billion people in all—will be governed by radical Islamist regimes that believe in waging jihad on Israel and America, wiping Israel off the map, suppressing Christians, reducing the status of women to even lower than it is now, and in their right as the true interpreters of God’s will to govern as dictators.”

The only addition that I would make to this all-too-sobering prospect is that Islamist regimes are also animated by an endemic, irrational, and religiously-oriented anti-Semitism that bodes ill for the comfortable liberal assumption that they can be easily bought off, contained, or relied upon to spontaneously embrace universal human rights. The ability of the Brotherhood and its Islamist offshoots to polish their “democratic” image for Western consumption should not be underestimated nor should it fool anyone. Not only Israel, but Europe, America, and the more liberal sectors of Arab public opinion in the Middle East should get ready for more stormy weather ahead.

*Robert S. Wistrich, author and editor of more than 25 books, is Professor of Modern History and Director of the Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Anti-Semitism at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. This is excerpted from the January 2012 Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs.*

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## **Adib Shishakli And Shukri Al Quwatli**

Sarah Honig

Forgotten is our peculiar urban folklore, yesteryear’s spontaneous fun of small Israeli kids rapidly rolling off their tongues the names of assorted Syrian tyrants. This singsong accompanied sidewalk games and was a staple of silly summertime tongue-twister contests.

Nobody then remotely believed that riots and havoc in neighboring autocracies could betoken the rise of democracy in the Arab-speaking sphere.

But for too long we’ve lost touch with our not-so-distant past, a time when recurrent “Arab Springs” were once announced with dizzying frequency. In Syria especially they followed in furious succession until, in 1970, one Hafez Assad proclaimed the longest-lasting self-styled spring and actually managed to pass on control of the abundant Damascene sunshine and blossoms to his son, Bashar.

Both Assads’ nastiness and penchant for massacres were hardly unique in their country. Syria spawned carnage and “popular uprisings” a dime a dozen. Only the durability of Assad-dynasty despotism was unusual.

Nonetheless, now – having learned to view the world through the tinted lenses of hypocrite Europe and bedazzled America – we, too, fall for the “budding democracy” babble.

But back in the less-blinkered day, our assessments were more clear-headed. Never would we ascribe high-mindedness to Syrian power-grabbers. Rather than be wowed, we laughed. Incomparable satirist Shai K.(Shaikah) Ophir popularized a sidesplitting routine consisting of a roll-call of Syrian tyrants going back to 1948. He recited them with what in hindsight appears like a forerunner of fast-paced rapper-style chants.



It was so all the rage that little pigtailed girls skipped rope and did hopscotch stunts while rhythmically intoning a sequence of rhyming names like Adib Shishakli and Shukri al-Quwatli. For a while, these were basic fare at Israeli playgrounds.

Ophir’s register of names began with Husni Za’im, who led the Syrian army’s attack on newborn Israel in 1948 and then overthrew president Shukri al-Quwatli and imprisoned him. Za’im’s reign, alas, lasted merely four-and-a-half months. He was summarily executed by his deposer Sami Hinnawi. But before Hinnawi could get comfortable in the boss’s seat, he was unseated by Adib Shishakli and assassinated in 1950. All three coups occurred during 1949.

Shishakli refused to allow the integration of Palestinian refugees into Syrian society, and he shelled Druse villages to quell their resistance (a common practice by Syrian conventions). He was toppled in 1954 and ultimately assassinated in his Brazilian supposed safe-haven.

Next came caretaker president Hashim al-Attassi, who already had behind him two stints in power as president and two as prime minister. In 1955 he was replaced by that old favorite, Shukri al-Quwatli.

Between 1946 and 1956, Syria had 20 governments and four florid constitutions.

In 1958 al-Quwatli amalgamated Syria with Egypt, forming the United Arab Republic. Formally Syria’s president was Egyptian Gamal Abdel-Nasser, whose 1956 defeat catapulted him to the status of a pan-Arab hero. Within a few weeks, al-Quwatli was betrayed, and his Damascus power base was usurped by Salah Bitar and Akram al-Hawrani. The latter was Nasser’s Syrian deputy, until they began to bicker. By 1959, al- Hawrani had to flee Syria.

In 1961 Abdel-Karim al-Nahlawi overthrew Nasser’s men in Damascus, and Syria became a separate entity once again, a fact that didn’t discourage Egypt from exploiting the UAR epithet till 1971.

Syria was now a Ba’ath stronghold, but different factions within that party battled each other with vengeance--literally. Nazim al-Qudsi was Syria’s first post-UAR president. Upon his removal, Luwai al-Attassi presided for four months till Amin al-Hafiz replaced him, ruling the roost from mid-1964 to early 1966, when Salah Jadid ousted Hafiz. It’s roughly here that Ophir’s long lampoon ends, replete with many more names than mentioned above. In time, Jadid was booted out by Hafez Assad, and the epilogue is now unfolding before our credulous eyes.

Suffice it to note that the miscellaneous short-lived dictatorships served the interests of incompatible components of what’s misguidedly known as the Syrian nation. They all waxed ecstatic about democratic and reformist virtues. Way back, though, no Israeli was naïve enough to take any of the ornate rhetoric seriously. Today, intellectually indolent molders of public opinion--smugly dismissive of the lessons of history--not only fall for the fallacy but excitedly hype it.

It’s little wonder that most of the international community has lost sight of what Syria was and still is. In the mix feature ignorance and fatigue, along with lots of economic and geopolitical interests. It was expedient for the world to turn a blind eye to truth. For us here, however, it was nothing but unimaginable folly. We should know better--if only because of proximity and because our self-preservation concerns behoove us not to disregard reality.

But Hafez Assad's Yom Kippur War record, sponsorship of terror and patronage of Hezbollah were obstinately overlooked. Israeli governments hankered after a deal with the same Assad who, when he served as defense minister in 1966, addressed Israelis and blustered belligerently: "We shall never call for nor accept peace. We shall only accept war. We have resolved to drench this land with your blood, to oust you aggressors, to throw you into the sea."

Assad never took back these words nor so much as pretended to have softened. Unsurprisingly, White House residents and perfidious Europeans pressured little unloved Israel to indulge the Damascus despot by inordinately imperiling the Jewish state's survival prospects. Predictably, Israel's own priests of pragmatism rushed with alacrity to ingratiate themselves and decree that by ceding the Golan to benign Syrian rule, we'd be blessed with blissful coexistence.

This encapsulated the homegrown omniscients' dalliance with Assad-the-father. Staggeringly, their enthusiasm for concessions soared after he went the way of all flesh and his son inherited the blood-stained Assad mantle. Our in-house experts uncannily perceived the agreeable aspect of Bashar, the lanky ophthalmologist with a supposed Western orientation. Bashar, we were tirelessly preached to by retreat-promoters, looks less totalitarian than his dad. He's just the gawky guy next door who might make a nifty neighbor if we only try hard enough to win him over. Yet, confoundingly, life refuses to mesh with established Israeli wishful thinking. Much to the embarrassment of our indefatigable deal-peddlers, Bashar's own citizenry is exceedingly less mesmerized by him than his Israeli boosters were until quite recently.

There's no getting away from the fact that paying off dictators to secure a semblance of accommodation is a losing proposition, because eventually dictators disappear. With them vanishes the peace we're required to fork out for. There's no Better Business Bureau or Customer Service to refund Israel's hefty, tangible and eminently risky investment in land-for-peace fantasies. Thank heaven the Golan is still ours – a buffer between our small sliver of a state and the Syrian mayhem. Imagine our misfortune if Assad's tanks were parked on the shores of Lake Kinneret.

Those who insistently brainwashed us that this is what's prescribed for our national well-being should atone for their sins by memorizing Ophir's skit and performing it daily in central city squares. Our street corners should again resonate with cadenced renditions of "Adib Shishakli and Shukri al-Quwatli..."

Hopscotch and jump-rope are optional.

*Sarah Honig is a senior editorial writer for The Jerusalem Post.*

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