

Arabs and Palestinians in Israeli Textbooks, September 2000

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1. Executive Summary

CMIP has completed its research on the Israeli schoolbook's portrayal of Arabs, Islam and Palestinians. This report is part of CMIP's comprehensive examination of Middle Eastern school books to determine the extent education has been responsive to the ongoing peace processes between Israel and her Arab neighbors. This study reviewed 360 Israeli schoolbooks, from six disciplines, that were used in three different educational streams of the Israeli school system in the school year, 1999 - 2000.

The chapters of this report are divided into seven sections, or main topics:

1. Description of the school system in Israel.
2. Islam, Muhammad, the holy sites and the connection between Islam and Judaism.
3. Literature on Arabs, and on Arab-Jewish relations in Arab countries and in Israel during various periods of history, particularly during wars.
4. Political topics – the positions of the Arab countries, Israel and the Palestinians in the dispute – from the beginning of Jewish settlement in the Eretz Yisrael until the present.
5. Peace – attempts at dialogue since the beginning of Jewish settlement. Negotiations for peace following wars and the Oslo Peace Agreements; excerpts from literature on the subject of peace.
6. Information on the Palestinians in Israel in maps and statistical data.
7. Social development of the Arab sector in Israel.

Methodology

a) Purpose

In this report on Israeli schoolbooks CMIP's purpose is to determine how the facts and opinions are presented in the books. The positions adopted by the parties in conflict are not discussed, nor is the internal debate among Israeli historians. The quotations from the Israeli textbooks are representative of a larger body of material with similar messages. Each of these 360 textbooks was read in its entirety, and scrutinized thoroughly according to the following criteria:

- 1) Do stereotypes, prejudices, negative images and offensive terms with regard to Islam, Muslims, Arabs and Palestinians appear?
- 2) Are Islam, Islamic and Arab culture referred to and described with respect?
- 3) Are there displays of sympathy, empathy and sensitivity to the suffering and distress of Arabs, for example Palestinian refugees?
- 4) Is the position of the Arabs during the course of the conflict presented factually?
- 5) Is there any attempt to conceal data and information?

- 6) Are historical events - violent clashes, contacts, dialogue and attempts at rapprochement- presented partially and selectively for indoctrination, or presented in an objective manner, enabling the students to form a fair judgement of both sides of the conflict?
- 7) The presence of self-criticism over Israel's actions and positions.
- 8) Is an effort made to educate towards tolerance and to prevent prejudice?

b) The School Books Reviewed

The present study reviews the schoolbooks used in Israel during the school year 1999-2000, examining how Islam, the Arabs and the Palestinians are presented and portrayed to Israeli pupils. This examination of Israeli textbooks follows the CMIP studies of more than 140 Palestinian Authority textbooks and 28 teachers' guides, in September 1998 and March 2000.

The study of the Israeli textbooks was more complex, reviewing different educational networks with different schoolbooks. The PA has one set of books published by the PA Ministry of Education.

360 schoolbooks, including about twenty workbooks, were reviewed, from six disciplines: Hebrew Language, Literature, History, Geography, Education and Civics, Bible and Judaic Studies, for grades 1-12.

A number of textbooks on Civic studies are entirely devoted to the Israeli Arabs. The authors of these books state in their prefaces, that the books were written in the knowledge that encounters between Jews and Arabs living in Israel will contribute greatly to mutual understanding and respect. These textbooks were written jointly by Arab and Jewish teachers and inform the pupils objectively of the reality of life in the Arab sector. They do not conceal the economic hardships of the Israeli Arabs. Neither do they conceal their national difficulties - that is to say, the dilemma created by their being citizens of a state which defines itself as Jewish on the one hand, and their being part of the Arab world, with deep feelings towards the Palestinian people.

The books were selected from three sources:

- 1) The list of schoolbooks approved by the Ministry of Education for use in the state-run general network and the state-run religious network. Although the official list, it is not compulsory, but an indication of the Ministry of Education's recommendations. It was published in a memo signed by the Ministry's Director General, in March 1999.
- 2) Schoolbooks not included in the official approved list. These are popular among teachers and school's pedagogic committees who prefer to use them. We found these books on the lists forwarded by schools to the main bookshops specializing in schoolbooks in Jerusalem.
- 3) 45 textbooks used in the Ultra-Orthodox stream, which does not follow the policy of the Ministry of Education. These textbooks were acquired in Me'a She'arim, the Ultra Orthodox neighborhood of Jerusalem.

The decision not to limit this study to the official list approved by the Ministry of Education was motivated by CMIP's concern to reflect as much as possible the actual use of textbooks in Israeli schools.

c) What Was Not Reviewed

The study does not include the following:

- 1) Textbooks used in previous years. The study does not compare the schoolbooks reviewed with books no longer in use, and it does not address the changes that have been introduced since the 80's. It focuses exclusively on presenting the views, images and stereotypes used during the school year 1999-2000*.
- 2) Books used in schools of the Arab sector. These books will be examined in a separate study on the Arab sector in the State of Israel. The problems and the status of the Israeli Arabs as a minority within a Jewish State, and at the same time as part of the Palestinian people and the Arab world, form a unique situation which requires separate research.
- 3) Novels that are taught in literature classes and used in the matriculation exams, such as "*Hirbat Hiz'a*" by Israeli author Yizhar Smilansky, describing a group of Israeli soldiers who torture an Arab during the Independence War of 1948.

Main Findings

Three fundamental statements can be made about all the school books:

- a) The legitimacy of the State of Israel as independent Jewish state on the territory of the Land of Israel and the immigration of Jews to the country are never questioned.
- b) There is no indoctrination against the Arabs as a nation, nor a negative presentation of Islam. Rather, Islam, the Arab culture and the Arabs' contribution to human civilization are presented in a positive light.
- c) No book calls for violence or war. Many books express the yearning for peace between Israel and the Arab countries.

However, there is no unanimity between the authors with regard to the factors, motives of both sides and the development of events in the conflict, or regarding the ways for ending it and the price Israel and the Arabs should pay for peace. This reflects the fact that Israeli society comprises a broad spectrum of conceptions, views and lifestyles.

*Analysis of the previous textbooks can be found in the studies carried out by Dr. Eli Podeh, Prof. Dan Bartal and Dr. Ruth Firer. [see bibliography]

Islam

Islam is described with respect in both the general the religious state-run educational streams. Many books elaborate in detail how Muhammad established Islam and explain its basic fundamentals in a factual, objective manner. Many books highlight positive aspects in Islam. The language is factual and devoid of offensive terms and stereotypes. Sites holy to both Jews and Muslims are not presented as exclusively Jewish and the Arabs' attachment to these sites is taught. The students are even taught about the Muslims affinity to Jerusalem, although, the focus is on the religious, rather than the political dimension. In the ultra-orthodox stream examples of prejudice, patronizing expressions and disrespect to Arabs can be found.

Stereotypes

In textbooks of both the general state-run network and the religious state-run network, one senses a genuine effort to remove stereotypes and to build a foundation for coexistence and mutual respect between the two peoples. There are many stories that describe friendships between Jews and Arabs in Islamic countries and in Israel even in times of war. There are stories of Jews helping Arabs in daily life and in war as well as stories of Arabs rescuing Jews from physical harm and helping Jews to maintain their religion and identity. In many literary anthologies there are stories about the daily life of Arabs written by Arab authors. Some stories deal with the tensions created by the transition from a traditional society with its values and customs, to a modern western society. However, in some books in the ultra-orthodox network relations between Arabs and Jews are portrayed in negative terms.

History of the Arab Israeli Conflict

All the history books explain that the two main issues which prompted Arab rejection of Zionism were the purchase of land by Jews and the immigration (Aliyah) of Jews to Palestine, later the State of Israel, which was perceived by them as a threat to their position as the majority. This opposition started as local clashes, gradually becoming an organized struggle led by national leaders. In most of the books the conflict is described as a national one.

Many history textbooks describe contacts and meetings between Jewish and Arab leaders from the beginning of the conflict, breaking the stereotype of an Arab world united in their opposition to the Zionism. Failure of these contacts is attributed to the Arabs. Only a few books provide the student with data on the Arab population from the beginning of Jewish immigration to Palestine in the late nineteenth century, until the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. Complete statistics on the Arab population are provided partially and sporadically when clashes or disturbances are described, leaving the pupil with a distorted impression of the Jews having been the majority since the beginning of their settlement.

There is a large variety of maps. Some maps describe accurately the distribution of Arab population in Palestine in different periods. Other maps, mostly in the ultra-orthodox network, illustrate Israel without mentioning the existence of Arabs, country. Some books make a distinction between the State of Israel and the territories of Judea and Samaria because the final status of these territories is not yet decided. Other books ignore this distinction, and show only the border between Israel and

Jordan along the Jordan River. The most widely used atlas in the state run and religious state run schools features a map of the territories of the Palestinian Authority, specifying areas A and B according peace accords between Israel and the Palestinians.

All of the books present the Arabs as rejecting the United Nations Resolution of November 1947 partitioning the land between two states - Jewish and Arab. The Arab- Israeli wars appear in most of the books as justified wars of defense, from Israel's perspective. The Arabs are presented as responsible for the outbreak of all the wars.

In a few books, the hatred of the Arabs towards the Jews is presented as stemming from a fundamental difference, an inherent hatred that is independent of political, military or economic circumstance. However, most of the books explain the hostility of the Arabs as stemming from national and pragmatic reasons: their claim to having exclusive ownership of the whole territory and desire to remain a majority.

Some books in the general state and state religious systems quote speeches on peace by Arab and Israeli leaders at the signing of the peace agreements with Egypt and Jordan. Most of the literary anthologies present poems and stories that express a yearning for peace. However, it is a peace that is perceived as unattainable, a dream, and a utopia. The books express a wide range of opinions as to details of the history and motives of the sides in the conflict. A range of opinions is also presented for resolving the conflict and the compromises Israel and the Arabs should make for peace.

2. Israel's School System

Israel's school system provided education for more than 1,500,000 pupils in the year 2000.

The school system in Israel is structured into four main levels: *pre-primary* education (ages 2-5), *primary* education (grades 1-8), *lower secondary* or *intermediate* education (grades 7-9), *upper secondary* education (grades 9-12). (Table 1)

The lower secondary, or intermediate level provides general education, whereas the upper secondary level is divided into three main streams: academic, technical/vocational, and agricultural.

Israel's school system is based on two fundamental laws which determine the range of compulsory and free education as well as the status of public and private education.

Free, Compulsory, Unified State Controlled Education

The Compulsory Education Law adopted in 1949, which was extended in 1968, 1979 and 1999, to provides *free and compulsory education* for all children between the ages of 5 to 16, from the last year of kindergarten up to 10th grade. In addition, *free education* was introduced for pre-primary education and for 11th and 12th Grades.

The State Education Law (1953) replaced the previous tortuous education system, with a *unified state-controlled* school system. The law institutionalized two systems of education, namely the *state education sector* and the *recognized non-state education sector*, also referred to sometimes as the *independent education sector*

The State Education Sector

The State Education Sector covers around 90% of the whole education system. Its schools and kindergartens are owned *jointly by the state and the local authorities*, while their functioning is financed and supervised by the Ministry of Education, notably with regard to curriculum, textbooks and teacher recruitment.

The State Education Sector comprises three networks: the *general state run (or secular)* network, the *religious state run* network, *the (state) Arab* network. The state religious schools are established at the request of parents in any locality, provided that a minimum number of students are enrolled. The Arab schools are established in localities where the majority of the population speaks Arabic.

The State Education Sector is under the tight control of the Ministry of Education which defines the curriculum, is in charge of the recruitment and training of the teachers, and approves the textbooks to be used. The approved list of schoolbooks is very large since it contains several options for each of the subjects taught.

However it allows a substantial margin of autonomy. Parents, for example, can request the modification of up to 25 % of the existing curriculum, or to add to it, at the request of 75% of the parents of a class, although this option is rarely used.

This autonomy is more real with regard to schoolbooks. In theory, teachers are formally entitled to decide which textbooks will be used for their courses. Few teachers actually use this prerogative, which has been assumed by the pedagogic committees of the various schools and establishments.

Over the years, these pedagogic committees have had a tendency to choose popular and well considered schoolbooks although not included in the Ministry's approved list. Consequently, more than 20% of the schoolbooks actually used in primary classes and 50 % of those used in the upper secondary, do not appear on the Ministry's approved list. (1)

Recently, the Ministry of Education decided to stop the practice of issuing an approved list, since "in a modern country it is not proper to apply censorship" (2). This does not mean that the Ministry has given up its responsibility for disqualifying textbooks containing prejudices and stereotypes. But the disqualification of textbooks will now be triggered by complaints coming from the public, particularly parents, teachers and pupils. "This will be far more effective than censorship exerted by a civil servant". (3)

The Independent Education Sector

The recognized non-state education's institutions *are privately owned and mostly religious*.

They are subsidized by the state and supervised by the Ministry of Education, although they keep their independence with regard to curriculum and teacher recruitment.

The most important ones are those of *Agudat Israel* and *Shas* (El Hamaayan network), which we referred to in our research as "*Ultra-Orthodox*". The others are mainly of *Christian denomination*.

Table 2 gives an overview of the relative importance of the different state run and "Ultra Orthodox" networks..

Table 1
Structure of the Education System, 1997/8

Pre-Primary Education				Primary Education				Secondary Education							
Kindergartens (ages 2-5)				Primary school (Grades 1-8)				Lower secondary schools (Grades 7-9)				Upper secondary schools (Grades 9-12)			
334,000 (90%)				694,000 (95%)				220,000				294,000 (91%)			
Free Education				Free and compulsory education								Free education			
Age 2	Age 3	Age 4	Age 5	Age 6	Age 7	Age 8	Age 9	Age 10	Age 11	Age 12	Age 13	Age 14	Age 15	Age 16	Age 17

Source: Ministry of Education and Culture, Facts and figures about Education and Culture in Israel, Jerusalem 1998, p.45.

Table 2
Relative importance of the various state run and independent education networks for school year 1999

State Run Education (90%)			"Ultra Orthodox" (10%)	
Secular	Religious	Arab	Aguda	Shas
900,000 pupils	260,000 pupils	260,000 pupils	130,000	30,000
54%	18%	18%	8%	2%

Source: Compiled from the Israeli Press.

- (1) State Comptroller, Annual Report No 49, April 1999, pp 209-210.
- (2) Rali Saar, "Education / Next Year the Ministry of Education will stop supervising schoolbooks", Haaretz, May 12. 2000).
- (3) Ibidem

3. Portrayal of Arabs and Islam

In this table we present the terms currently used in Israeli textbooks with regard to Islam, Muslims, Arabs and Palestinians.

These terms were classified into two categories: positive, and offensive and patronizing.

Note: the first number in parentheses refers to the book's catalogue number, the following numbers preceding the semi-colon refer to the pages. There is no link between the various quotes on the same row in the different columns.

Positive terminology	Offensive and patronizing terminology
Large, important, great people [160, 373-4]	Enemy [364, 39; 313, 4; 21,249]
	"Halacha- it is known that Esau hates Jacob" [364, 39]
Righteous, most excellent [160, 374]	"In the State of Israel, the minorities for the first time in their history, came to know the taste of personal and economic equality ...and there was an increased recognition of the value of a person..." [220, 413].
Bravery & courage [299, 228-9]	Arab gangs [194, 75-77; 77, 72]
Justice & righteousness [299, 228-9]	Murder & robbery [77, 65]
"The Arabs are like the Jews. There are nasty people among them and there are decent people and they should not be labeled [17, 183]	"We [the Ishmaelites] cannot accept the Torah, it is difficult for us not to steal" [45, 233-4]
Loyal, dedicated, sensible, Noble & generous [16, 185; 17, 188]	"Incited Arabs" [20,139]
Justice & fairness [188, 66-8]	"Full of envy of the Jewish poet Ibn Gvirol who was an outstanding Arabic poet" [369, 62]
	Arab resentment for Jewish fervor for the Holy Land. Story of Rabbi Yehuda Halevy being run over [378,140; 317, 69; 369, 70; 165, 8; 322, 14-5; 21,249]
"It is a shame about the blood and the destruction" (King Abdallah) [20, 239] (about the 1947-8 War)	"Attacks by Palestinian terrorists have not yet stopped" [370, 63-4]
" [Feisal] readiness to accept an autonomous Jewish society in Palestine" [13, 204]	"Your ribs have been stabbed, Jerusalem by piercing arrow crosses and round crescents that insolently dot the horizon" [6, 277]
"Splendid figure" [29, 110-4]	"There is no logical explanation for the strange vision of the flight of the Arab fellaheen....It seems that they did not strike any roots in this land , did not connect to it in any way. They dwelled in it, for hundreds of years, but did not settle in it. They were like foreigners to it, like wayfarerswho rest along the way" [329, 350]
"Courage of moderate Arabs"[75, 133-4]	
"Sense of loss and dispossession" [298,302]	
"The fellahin felt dispossessed of their land" [160,369-70]	
Filial affection [26, 161-5]	
"Man and animals are not the same. The difference between them is between conscience and barbarism"[161,112-5]	
"Write a poem or composition, or make a drawing expressing the connection between water and peace in our region" [69, 107]	
Many textbooks contain long & detailed chapters on Islam, and on the depth of Muslims attachment to Jerusalem [299, 226; History Lessons, 188,190,196-9; 367, 67-8-9; 25, 74; 233,18-9; 34, 230-5; 322, 39; 224, 42; 34, 194-200-2; 14, 26;]	
Sultan Suleiman's role in removing the garbage from the Western wall and in revealing the site of the Temple [377, 190; 331, 225]	
"We must ... walk with him [Arabs] in love and respect, and it goes without saying in justice and righteousness" [299, 228-9; 160, 374]	

"We are mistaken in regard to a great people... This is the mightiest, most excellent people in physical attainments and in the skill of its understanding. We must not belittle its rights. The Hebrew people respects not only the personal rights of each person, but also the national rights of each nation and tribe' [160, 374]	
Respect for Arabs skills and knowledge [26, 107-8]	
Yearning for Peace [204,107; 216,134; 176, 182; 186,113; 186, 1993; 26,214-5, 141, 134; 194,162; 194, 75-7; 194, 146; 138,186] "Compose a prayer for peace. Prepare a folder of peace songs. Draw a picture of peace." [42, 9]	
Jerusalem 's names according to the three religions [23, 252]	
Story of a Jew who saved an Arab even though the latter was among rioters who attacked Jews" [27, 181-4]	
Suspicion and friendship between Jews and Arabs [1, 62-4; 47, 83; 194, 236-7; 218, 103-6; 146, 246-7; 158, 308-9; 5, 43; 280, 360-1; 49, 31; 146, 224-7; 27, 82-6]	
Arab expressions of respect and esteem with regard to Jews [194,180; 26, 222]	
Jerusalem, important and holy to Judaism, Christianity and Islam [302, 73; 42, 141; 194, 169; 187,185; 223, 253]	
"The tomb of the Patriarchs is sacred not only to Jews, but to Muslims and Christians as well" [125,72; 163, 26-7]	

4. Muhammad and Islam

In both the state-run and the religious state-run streams Islam is described with respect. All of the books elaborate in detail how Muhammad established Islam and explain the basic fundamentals of Islam in a factual, objective manner. Many books emphasize that Islam is closer to Judaism than to Christianity. It is frequently possible to discern a sympathetic tone and respect towards Islam. Such descriptions create openness among the student and provide him with an extremely good understanding of the Islamic religion and of the culture of the Arab peoples. Interestingly, it is the books used in the state religious stream that better highlight the positive aspects in Islam and the fact that jihad is not directed against Judaism and Christianity.

A second grade textbook used in the state-run schools explains to children, in a simple and substantive matter, what Islam is and who the Muslims are, under the heading, "Our Neighbors

"Israel is a Jewish state. Most of the country's citizens are Jews, but among its residents are also non-Jews. Most of the country's non-Jewish citizens are Arabs and Druze, who speak Arabic. The Arabs belong either to the Islamic religion or to the Christian religion. Most of the Arabs in the country are Muslims and a minority of them are Christians. The Muslims believe in the holiness of their prophet Muhammad – the founder of the Islamic religion. Their holiest book is the Koran, which contains the laws of their faith and the commandments of their religion. Their house of prayer is the mosque. Inside the mosque everything is very simple and there is no furniture. The worshippers in the mosque sit on the floor and pray facing Mecca – their holy city in Saudi Arabia, where their holiest temple is located. The mosques on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem are also holy to the Muslims."

(25, **The New Israel Reader** for second grade, 1987, p.74).

Muhammad and the Jews

All of the books, in all of the streams, emphasize that the Islamic religion is monotheistic and speak favorably of Muhammad's struggle against the idol worshippers. An ultra-orthodox book for children in the lower grades presents this, but also tells of Muhammad's negative regard for the Jews.

"The Founder of Islam

"The most respected family in Mecca was the Koreish family. Muhammad was a member of this family. He was born in approximately the year 570 CE. While still a small boy, he was orphaned and needed the benevolence of his uncle. He lived in poverty a long time until he married Hadidja, the widow of a wealthy merchant. To conduct his business, Muhammad traveled far and wide, and heard stories from Jews, Christians and Persians on matters of religion. Over time, he recognized that the legacy of his idol-worshipping forefathers was a lie, and that only the one God is the Creator and Master of the Universe. Along with this recognition, he began to believe more strongly that he was the messenger who would remove the belief in idolatry from his people and his country.

In the beginning, Muhammad hoped that the Jews too would believe in him. In order to win their hearts, he ordered that believers should pray in the direction of Jerusalem. But the Jews ridiculed Muhammad and called him a false prophet. From then on he hated them with a passion and changed the direction of prayer toward Mecca. And when he grew stronger he attacked them ... When he defeated the Jewish tribe of the children of Qureiga, he murdered all the men and made the women and children slaves.

Muhammad himself believed in his mission, even though as time went on he intentionally fabricated stories and imagined visions, in order to justify his actions or in order to attain some objective. His adages and the stories of his visions were recorded by his believers, some during his lifetime but most after his death. Slowly, they were collected into the book of the Koran, the Muslim book of faith". (367, **History of Israel**, 1993, pp.67, 68, 69).

As for Islam's regard for Judaism and the Jews, all of the books, in all of the networks, relate that Muhammad did not seek to convert the Jews:

“After all, Muhammad himself, already at the start of his wars, established the formula according to which the Jews were to be treated: whoever insists on retaining his Judaism ... should not be removed from his religion, and he must pay the poll tax ... and this will be given to God's Messenger (Muhammad)”.

“People of the Book’ – ‘Protected People’

“From what is written in the Koran, the believers of Islam learned that the law regarding the Jews is different from that of infidels who have no Torah from Heaven: infidels are to be converted to Islam or destroyed, while People of the Book (Ahal al-Kittab) are entitled to live in the shadow of Islam and to enjoy the protection of Allah and his Messenger, on the condition that they pay a special tax, the poll tax (Jeziya). As a result of paying the tax, the Jews became protected people (Ahal al-Dhimma), a status that was inferior to that of the Muslims, but the Muslims, the providers of protection, undertook to defend their lives, to guard their property and to enable them to practice their religion”.

(233, **Jews of the Islamic Countries During Ottoman Rule**, 1986, pp.18, 19).

A book used in the religious state-run network also contains a similar description:

"Muhammad determined that the Jews are not considered to be infidels, idol worshippers, since their faith is based on Torah from Heaven. In that, the Jews, the Christians and the Muslims are similar, and therefore they are called 'Peoples of the Book' (Ahal al-Kittab). Since the Jews were the first to receive Torah from Heaven, Muhammad praised them and said: We gave the Book to the Israelites and bestowed on them wisdom and prophethood. We provided them with good things and exalted them above the nations. ' (Koran 45:16). But the Jews rejected Muhammad's doctrine. They refused to believe that Muhammad was the 'seal of the prophets,' the last of the prophets, who was sent by God to enlighten people with God's will, and that his prophecy abolishes the Torah of Moses. When Muhammad saw that the Jews were mocking his message, he changed his attitude toward them. At Muhammad's order,

the believers drove out two Jewish tribes. They killed the members of the third tribe by the sword. Muhammad also accused the Jews of deviating from God's path. He claimed that the Jews included forgeries in the holy writings and used them to disrupt the writings. Muhammad distanced himself from the Jews and changed customs that mimicked the customs of the Jews: instead of facing in the direction of Jerusalem, from then on worshippers faced Mecca; and instead of fasting on Yom Kippur, from then on the Muslims fasted an entire month – the month of Ramadan. However, after Muhammad established himself in the country and succeeded in spreading his faith in the Arabian peninsula, he changed his attitude toward the Jews. Muhammad promised them that he would defend their lives and guard their property, on the condition that they recognize his rule and pay him a tax.

“In the Shadow of Islam

“... We can learn about the Muslims' attitude toward the Jews from the following sources: in the Koran it is written:

1. Fight against such of those to whom the Scriptures were given as believing neither in God nor the Last Day, who do not forbid what God and His messenger have forbidden, and do not embrace the true Faith, until they pay tribute out of hand and utterly subdued.' (Koran 9:29).

“And a letter that Muhammad sent to the Jews states:

2. 'And when this letter of mine reaches you and you dwell in safety, you will have Allah's protection and the protection of his Messenger (Muhammad) ... because Allah's Messenger will protect you .. and for this you must (give) the fourth part of the produce of your date palms, and a fourth of your fish and a fourth of your women's spun-goods ... and if you hear and obey, Allah's Messenger will be ready to respect the honorable among you .. and you will have no other ruler among you except me' ... "
- (34, **From Generation to Generation**, lessons in history for the state religious school, 1994, pp. 230, 335).

Islam, Christianity and Judaism

A book used in the religious state network about the teachings of Rabbi Yehudah Halevy presents students with a comparison between Islam and Christianity, in which Islam is portrayed in a more positive manner:

"In contrast to Christianity, in which divinity was embodied in human form, Islam is extremely meticulous in avoiding any personification of God. The Muslims argue that the Koran's pure Arabic foiled any human attempt to copy it. Therefore, the very language used indicates the Koran's divine source, and this book does not need any further miracle to confirm its divine origin. To the contrary: the very fact that in Judaism and Christianity there is a need for signs and miracles indicates the weakness of these religions, and not their power (see the Koran, 2:44)."

(322, **The Historical Teachings of Rabbi Yehudah Halevy** , 1987, p.39) .

A book in the religious state network about the responsa literature (“literature of questions and answers”), a book is quoted that compares Christianity and Islam in two ways: the holiness of the Torah and God's oneness.

“Needs Study

“From the book of Rabbi Yitzhak Shelat, Letters of Maimonides, Vol. A, pp. 215-216: Regarding the two main foundations of Jewish faith – the reality of God and the divine origin of the Torah – there are conflicting disagreements between Christianity and Islam: the Christians are preferable to the Muslims in their regard for the sacredness of the Written Law, since the Christians believe that the Five Books of Moses, the Prophets and the Writings as we have them are sacred writings that were given by God, and they even add them to their writings (see Shabbat, 116, B, in uncensored editions). The Muslims, however, while knowing about the Torah that was given to Moses by God, do not accept his Torah in its form, rather they draw story fragments from it in their writings ... In contrast, regarding the attitude toward the main belief in the oneness of God, the Muslims are preferable to the Christians, since the Muslims ascribe to God 'proper oneness, oneness that is unblemished' ... while the Christians do not properly ascribe such oneness.”
(224, **Responsa Literature**, 1992, p.42).

Maimonides' responsum on whether the Ishmaelites are idolaters and the attitude toward Hagar.

“Preface to the responsum

“The general content of Maimonides' responsum to Rabbi Ovadia regarding Hagar: The Ishmaelites and their religion: Maimonides determines that the Ishmaelites' religion (Islam) is not a religion of idolatry, and their ritual as well, the "Markolis – "throwing stones in their house of worship – is not an act of, nor an intention towards, idolatry.”
(224, **Responsa Literature**, 1992, p.42).

A history book in the state religious stream presents students with the "religion of the Arabs" before Muhammad and tells of the source of the Kaba:

“The Arabs' Religion

“The Arabian tribes actually believed in springs and rocks. Each tribe worshipped the god that it chose for itself, and it had its own laws and customs. But all of them also believed in the sanctity of the black rock, which was preserved in the Kaba building in Mecca. According to Arab tradition, the Kaba building was built by Abraham and his son Ishmael, and the black rock was God's gift that descended from heaven. When the rock came down from heaven it was white, but over the years it became black from the touch of the sinners (Kaba = Cube, since the structure in which the rock was placed was in the shape of a cube). The Kaba became the holiest site and drew pilgrims from across the peninsula. Each year, the tribes carried their gods and made the pilgrimage to Mecca.”
(34, **From Generation to Generation** – lessons in history for the state religious school, part b, 1994, p.194).

Further on, Muhammad's childhood is discussed in great detail and in very positive terms, and his struggle against idolatry is emphasized. The book tells of how the angel Gabriel was revealed to him and "ordered him to spread the belief in Allah – the one, true God." In the wake of this, "Muhammad demanded of the residents of Mecca that they abandon their pagan belief and atone for their sins by giving charity, prayer and good deeds." Since the residents of Mecca persecuted him, he fled. His flight is called the Hajira – and the year of the Hajira is the first year of the Muslim calendar. Alongside the text is a picture of the angel's revelation to Muhammad, and the text reads: "Notice that the Muslims do not draw the outlines of the faces of the holy figures. A Muslim holy figure always appears shrouded in flames)." (34, **op. cit.**, pp.198, 199).

The book also tells how Muhammad hoped that the Jews of the city of Yithrab (to which he emigrated from Mecca) "would help him spread the belief in one God, but they kept away from Muhammad and his messages, and therefore he persecuted them ... Muhammad's adherents killed all of the men of one of the Jewish tribes and sold the women and children into slavery" (*op. cit.*, p. 200). Further on, the "Pillars of Islam", the five commandments of Islam, are presented, The language which the book's author uses is free of pejorative terms and the description is substantive and objective, while pointing out positive customs in the Islamic religion, such as charity and atoning for sins.

“The Pillars of Islam”

“Muhammad ordered the Arabs to pray to Allah, the unseen, one and only God, and to perform his commandments. The new religion that he preached is called Islam, which means obeying God's will, and its adherents are called Muslims. The Islamic religion has five basic commandments that all believers, men and women, young and old, must perform:

1. Witness (Shahada) – the believer declares that 'there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of God.' Muslims recite this sentence during the call to prayer, during prayer and at various events.
2. Prayer (Tzal'at) – a Muslim must pray five times a day, facing the direction of Mecca.
3. Charity (Zaka'at) – every believer must give charity, in order to support needy Muslims (the charity is given to the poor, orphans and widows, but is also used to free Muslim prisoners and redeem Muslim captives).
4. Fasting (Tzom) – a Muslim must fast all the days of the month of Ramadan, from sunrise to sunset. According to Arab tradition, the Koran descended from heaven in this month, and therefore it is the appropriate month for atonement and forgiveness.
5. Pilgrimage (Haj) – Every believer must make the pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in his life. But instead of the pagan ceremonies that were held at the Kaba, Muhammad established a new religious ceremony according to the new belief. At the end of the ceremony Id al-Adha – the Festival of the Sacrifice – is celebrated,

including much prayer and the bringing of offerings, most of which are distributed to the poor.”

(34, **op.cit.**, pp.200-202).

The text contains a picture of the Koran. The explanation states: "The Koran is the Arabs' book of books, and includes all of Muhammad's prophecies." The use of the term "book of books," which denotes the Bible, indicates the author's sympathetic regard for the Koran. The student is asked to respond, among other things, to the following question: "The word Koran is reminiscent of the Hebrew words hakra'a [recitation] and mikra [Bible]. What can we learn from that?"

(34, **op.cit.**, p.201).

Afterwards, an explanation is given about the Muslims' holy cities – Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem – and the story is told about Muhammad's flight from Mecca to Jerusalem on the horse (see the chapter on Islamic holy sites in Jerusalem). Further on, details are given about the commandment of the Pilgrimage. Among other things, it is explained that the tiled area on which those who walk around the Kaba step, includes the grave of Hagar and Ishmael. "The path passes by a pavilion called 'Makam Ibrahim.' According to tradition, Abraham stood at this place when he built the Kaba. Muhammad praised Abraham, since he was the first believer in the one God and it was he who built the Kaba. Afterwards, the pilgrim runs between two hills. This run imitates the run of Hagar, Abraham's wife, when she was searching for water for her son Ishmael. Close by the Kaba is the murmuring spring, also called Ishmael's spring. According to tradition, it was from this spring that Hagar drew water for Ishmael. Later, descriptions of other ceremonies are given, including throwing stones into three piles. According to Islamic tradition, the piles mark the place where Satan stopped Abraham and tried to prevent him from carrying out the Akeda [sacrifice] of his son. The throwing of the stones imitates the action of Abraham, who supposedly cast stones at Satan in order to drive him away..

The Festival of the Sacrifice: the holiday ends with the slaughtering of the sacrifice, and the great holiday begins – Id al-Adha, which lasts four days (the sacrifice symbolizes the slaughtering of the ram at the end of the Akeda)."

At the end of the chapter, among other things the student is asked the following: "The Arabs claim that Ishmael the son of Hagar is the father of all the Arab tribes. Is there justification for this claim (see Genesis, 21:20)?"

(34, **op.cit.**, p.205).

At the end of the chapter, there are two pages of drawings from the life of Muhammad and a number of questions phrased in a sympathetic tone about Islam and Muhammad:

“Why did the Muslims sanctify Jerusalem?”

“An ancient proverb says that 'a man is not a prophet in his own city'. In what way does the story of Muhammad's life demonstrate the proverb?"

“Try to find a logical order for arranging the five Pillars of Islam.”

“The Jews call the last remnant of our Temple the Western Wall. The Christians call it the Wailing Wall, and the Muslims call it Al-Buraq. What is the reason for each of these names?”

“For study and discussion: the differences between the Pillars of Islam and their parallel commandments in Judaism; Jerusalem's holiness in Islam compared with its holiness in Judaism or in Christianity”.

(34, **op.cit.**, p.208, 209).

The same book also emphasizes Muhammad's good regard for the Jews and quotes a verse from the Koran that shows this: "Muhammad determined that the Jews are not considered to be infidels, idol worshippers, since their faith is based on Torah from Heaven. In that, the Jews, the Christians and the Muslims are similar, and therefore they are called 'Peoples of the Book' (Ahal al-Kittab). Since the Jews were the first to receive Torah from Heaven, Muhammad praised them and said: We gave the Book to the Israelites and bestowed on them wisdom and prophethood. We provided them with good things and exalted them above the nations." (Koran 45:16).

(34, **op.cit.**, p.230).

In the next chapter, jihad (holy war) is explained as a religious commandment:

"Muhammad encouraged the believers to spread the new faith and ordered them 'to fight against the infidels – the people who continue to worship idols and refuse to recognize Allah as the single God. '... Slay the idolaters wherever you find them, and take them captive and besiege them and lie in wait for them in every ambush ...'"

(Koran 9:5)."

Afterward, under the heading of "The Achievements of Muhammad and His Successors," the book states that "he succeeded in uprooting idolatry from the entire Arabian peninsula ... the caliphs, Muhammad's successors, directed the Arabs' impulses for war against infidels outside the Arabian peninsula. They led the Arabs on wars against residents of the Persian kingdom and against the Christians residing in the Byzantine Empire." The book goes on to describe the Arabs' conquests and the religious split among them between Sunnis and Shiites.

(34, **op. cit.**, pp.210, 211).

A book used in state religious schools emphasizes the fact that Islam is closer to Judaism than Christianity is. There is a common denominator between the two religions.

“Islam – Between Judaism and Christianity

“Islam was influenced by both Judaism and Christianity. The influence of which religion is felt more in Islam? Study the following three selections and answer the questions that follow them.

Judaism – 'Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One!' (Deuteronomy, 6)

Christianity – I believe in God the Almighty Father and in Jesus the Messiah His only Son and our Master, and in the Holy Spirit.' (from the Papal Bull; Second Century CE)

Islam – 'He, Allah, is One. He begets not, nor is He begotten. And none is like Him.'

(Koran, Sura, 112)

1. Two of these texts resemble each other. Which ones?

2. How is the two texts' similarity expressed?

In art as well, especially in religious art, there is a noticeable closeness between Judaism and Islam”.

(341, **Lessons in History**, vol.b, 1987, p.132)

Another book used in the state religious stream also discusses the connection between Judaism and Islam: "In contrast to Christianity, in which divinity was embodied in human form, Islam is extremely meticulous in avoiding any personification of God." (322, **The Historical Teachings of Rabbi Yehudah Halevy**, 1987, p.39).

Further on, the story is told of Muhammad's successors, the caliphs, who conquered many lands in the seventh and eighth centuries CE, and who were tolerant of the Jews.

The Caliphs and the Jews

“Difficulties in Governing

“When the empire was established, problems arose that demanded an immediate solution. The Arabs were used to life in a tribal framework and they lacked experience in running the country and controlling its residents. How, then, were they to enact laws that would be appropriate for those of different cultures, and how would they rule many peoples in many countries? True, the caliphs went to war in the name of religion; but would it be wise to impose their belief on peoples who believe in other religions?”

“The Arabs' Tolerance

“The caliphs decided to employ tolerance and not to impose the Islamic religion on the peoples under their rule. They did not consider the Persians, the Christians and the Jews to be infidels, and they permitted them to continue following the customs of their ancestors. In this way, they prevented ferment and unrest in the empire and received the cooperation of the vanquished”.

“Later, the various dynasties that ruled the Arab empire and their treatment of the ‘protected peoples’ – e.g. the non-Arab residents of the empire – are discussed: “In exchange for having their lives and property assured, they were required to pay taxes which the Arabs were exempt from paying – a poll tax and a property tax”.

(34, **From Generation to Generation**, op. cit., pp.212, 213).

All of the books, in all of the streams, mention the "Laws of Omar," (named after Caliph Omar II, who ruled from 717-720 CE. Some books present the full text of the laws (for example, 14, **From Exile to Independence**, Vol. 2, 1989, p.26), while others suffice with presenting a summary of them: the prohibition against the carrying of weapons by protected peoples; the prohibition against riding on horses; the obligation to wear special clothing in order to distinguish them from Muslims; the obligation to bow to Muslims; the prohibition against burying the dead in areas for Muslim burial; the prohibition against living in a house that is higher than that of a Muslim; etc.).

(34, **op.cit.**, p.232).

All of the books note that most of the rulers were not meticulous in implementing the severe restrictions that were imposed on the Jews. “They preferred to be assisted by the Jews and to exploit their talents for their benefit and for the good of their kingdom ... At first, the rulers had no experience in running a country ... and therefore they were forced to use the services of the protected peoples who were members of the 'Peoples of the Book.' They gave the Jews important positions in the caliph's court and in managing the state treasury. The rulers employed the Jews because they knew that the Jews would not threaten their rule”.

Further on, the Jews in Babylonia (Iraq) are discussed: “When the Arabs conquered Babylonia, they granted the Jews the status of a religious community permitted to manage its own affairs. The people continued to be led by the Exilarch, who was the representative to the authorities and who was accorded great respect in the Caliph's court. The Exilarch represented the Jewish people in the Caliph's court and was responsible for appointing religious court judges and for punishing offenders”.
(34, **op.cit.**, pp. 232, 243).

Up to this point, long selections from one book have been brought, precisely because it is taught in state religious schools. The book contains many drawings from Islamic history and of Islamic art, and it is written entirely in a way that is sympathetic to Islamic heritage.

A history book taught in the state-run stream also describes the rise of Muhammad in a substantive and factual manner. This book presents the full text of the Fatiha prayer, which opens the Koran and which a Muslim must recite five times a day. “The teacher will play the prayer for you on a tape recorder”. About the Islamic religion it states: “Muhammad founded a new religion, Islam. Muhammad emphasized three things in his many speeches: 1. Monotheism: the belief in one God, Allah; 2. Judgement Day: the day on which mankind will be judged for good or bad; 3. Charity: the obligation of all people to give charity to the poor and to better each other's lives”. Later, the book describes the internal structure of mosques and presents many illustrations of prayer customs, the external and internal look of mosques, and the custom of making the pilgrimage to Mecca.

The Meaning of Jihad

The book describes the commandment of jihad as follows:

“The Commandment of Jihad (a war that is commanded)”

“Muhammad called on his people to go to war against Arab tribes that did not want to accept his faith. After his death, his successors called for a war against other peoples that did not accept Islam. They viewed these wars as a commandment, and called them ‘jihad’.

“The Muslims divided the entire world into two regions: 'Dar al-Islam,' where the Muslims already rule, and 'Dar al-Harb,' which needs to be fought with the sword, until it too is ruled by Islam. The war against the people of 'Dar al-Harb' was considered to be a war that is commanded or jihad, since a Muslim had to participate in it. The leaders of Islam promised the fighters that anyone who fell in a war that is commanded or jihad is assured of going to Paradise. Thus, jihad became a

commandment in Islam, and some sects even viewed jihad as an additional, sixth Pillar of Islam." (348, **History of Israel and the Peoples**, vol. b, pp.183-196).

A geography book for state-run schools that deals with various cities around the world includes a chapter on Mecca and its holy sites. Alongside the description is a detailed diagram of the pilgrimage sites in Mecca and three pictures of the city. The description is written in a factual and substantive manner.

(72, **Communities in the Expanse – Chapters in the Geography of World Communities**, 1998, pp.180-181).

Another book, a history book used in the state run network, states that "the economic interests of the authorities occasionally required ignoring the discriminatory laws. Similarly, the Jews succeeded, through lobbying or by paying bribes, to circumvent these laws, mainly related to the building of new synagogues."

(14, **From Exile to Independence**, vol. b, p.27).

Another history book in the religious state network says that "in the period when Islam spread, Muhammad's successors, the caliphs, continued to show a sympathetic regard for the Jews ... This situation was not seen favorably by several caliphs, who were jealous of their religion . They sought to limit the freedom that was given to non-Muslims in their country. Their argument was that the wealth and success of the 'People of the Book' did not fit with the Koran's requirements that 'they be humiliated'."

(233, **Jews of the Islamic Countries During Ottoman Rule**, 1986, p.20).

And a history book for state-run schools writes about the caliphs' policy in the areas that they conquered:

"Usually, the Muslims behaved tolerantly toward the members of the monotheistic religions, even though they discriminated against them. In contrast, the Muslims used the sword to force idolaters to accept Islam."

(348, **History of Israel and the Peoples**, vol. b, p.200).

5. Jewish and Arab Holy Sites

The issue of Jewish and Islamic holy places is particularly sensitive since both sides periodically raise exclusive ownership claims to a particular holy site. Therefore, there is considerable significance to the way a holy place is presented to students – is it presented as exclusively Jewish or is information conveyed to students regarding the Arabs' attachment to that site?

The issue of Islamic holy places in Jerusalem is dealt with in Chapter 7 on Jerusalem. The attitudes toward the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron and Rachel's Tomb in Bethlehem will be examined below.

The Tomb of the Patriarchs

A second-grade reader for students at state schools states: “According to Jewish and Arab tradition, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, Jacob and Leah, and Adam and Eve are buried in the Tomb of the Patriarchs... Today, the Tomb of the Patriarchs is used as a place of prayer and pilgrimage to the tombs of the Jewish patriarchs, and the Muslim Arabs also come to pray there.”
(25, **New Israel Reader**, for second grade, 1987, pp.245, 253).

In contrast, a second-grade reader for the ultra-orthodox stream tells a completely different tale. There is no mention of the Muslim attachment to the Tomb of the Patriarchs and only Arab harassment is related: “‘Dear Yossi’, said father with tears in his eyes, ‘I always wanted to prostrate myself at the tombs of our saints. Not just I, but all our Jewish brethren wanted to come here, but they could not. The Arabs, who knew of our great love for this place, forbade us to enter it. Those who tried anyway to come here, risked their lives. Now, after we have won our war against our Arab enemies with the help of God, they cannot prevent us from coming and again we pray by the tombs of our patriarchs and matriarchs in Hebron’.”
(21, **Our Children**, second grade reader, 1996, p.249)

A textbook on the Book of Joshua has pictures of the Tomb of the Patriarchs and of the modern city of Hebron. The captions read: “It is interesting to note that the Tomb of the Patriarchs is sacred not only to Jews, but to Muslims and Christians as well. A mosque where Muslims pray has been built above the Tomb.”
(125, **With Joshua**, from the series “With the Bible,” 1992, p.72)



A geography textbook describes the Tomb of the Patriarchs' sanctity to Muslims. A photograph beneath the text includes the Tomb and the mosque above it. In bringing the photograph the book underscores to the student the Arabs' strong connection to the site.

“The **Tomb of the Patriarchs** lies opposite the hill north of Nahal Hebron. Because of its sanctity to Jews, the Maccabees built a splendid building over it, which was enlarged in the days of Herod. Following the Arab conquest, the Tomb also became a sacred site for Muslims, who built a mosque on the ruins of the earlier building. The Muslims saw themselves then as the guardians of the Tomb. They forbade non-Muslims from entering it, and during certain periods forbade Muslims from entering it as well. Since the Six Day War (1967), the Tomb of the Patriarchs has been opened to Jews, after centuries during which they were barred from entering.”
(163, **The Central Mountain and Jerusalem**, 1994, pp.26-27).

A geography textbook for the ultra-orthodox network also writes substantively:

“Because of the Tomb of Abraham, who is also the father of Ishmael, the site is also considered to be sacred by Muslims, who are considered to be the descendants of Ishmael. They built a mosque in the courtyard above the Tomb ... And because the Arabs have a mosque there above the Tomb, and to prevent conflicts, special times have been arranged for Jews and Muslims to pray there.”
(365, **The Good Country**, Land of Israel studies textbook for grades 4-5, 1991, p. 94)

King David

A textbook used for Bible study in state religious schools states that King David is also holy to Muslims:

“Interesting to Know

“David in other religions: David is holy to both Christians and Muslims. Jesus, the founder of Christianity, is believed by Christians to be the Messiah of the House of David. The Koran, the Muslims' holy book, also talks about David. David is believed by Muslims to be one of the prophets or emissaries who were honored by God to receive a Sacred Book. In the case of David, it is the Book of Psalms. The Koran tells of the fight between David and Goliath and does not tell of David's sin with Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite.”

(178, **With King David**, work book for the Book of II Samuel, 1993, p.146).

Bethlehem

A geography textbook presents Bethlehem as a city sacred to Christians:

“Between Hebron and Jerusalem, on the mountain ridge, lies the city of Bethlehem. According to Jewish tradition, Rachel’s Tomb is located at the northern entrance to the city. The Bible also states that King David was born in the city.

Over time, Bethlehem became a sacred city for Christians. According to their faith, Jesus was born there. The Church of the Nativity was therefore built as a focus of Christian pilgrimage, especially on Christmas.”

(163, **The Central Mountain and Jerusalem**, 1994, p. 27).

6. The Arabs' Attachment to Jerusalem

The controversy between the Palestinians and Israel about the future of Jerusalem is the most crucial issue in the negotiations toward peace. Their positions seem to be unbridgeable. The Israeli textbooks do not ignore the deep affinity of the Arabs to Jerusalem and convey this feeling to the students. By doing so the student is aware of the intensity of the conflict and of the difficulty to find a solution that will satisfy both sides.

The stories and poems in the literary anthologies do not refer to the political aspect but concentrate on the religious aspect.

A Holy City for Three Religions

A language textbook for the third and fourth grades states: "Yitzhak's grandmother lives in Jerusalem. Jerusalem is the capital of Israel. Jerusalem is a holy city for Jews, Christians and Muslims as well."
(42, **I Understand** – reading comprehension for grades 3-4, 1955, p.141).

An elementary school literature reader features a poem "This is Jerusalem," that says, among other things: "And the muezzin's voice/emerges from the turret/church bells chime in response/and a young boy with phylacteries/utters his prayers/and the melodies blend over the city."
(194, **The Way of Words**, Book 4, 1996, p.169).

Another reader contains two poems describing people from the three religions living side by side and expresses optimism about the coexistence of the two peoples.

Jerusalem /Rachel Farhi

A bell chimes the scent of frankincense, the muezzin calls from the top
of the mosque, and a small hyssop plant that grew on stone based on stone
Crowned and the voice of prayer a still small voice
Three prayers and a city so ancient.

The Chance / Aharon Bacher

A small alleyway in the market, on the way to the Wall.
A Muslim haj in a silken tarbush, in a long robe, strides,
slowly, leaning on a cane.
Two nuns deep in discussion.
Three yeshiva students, walking hurriedly.
Robe touching robe, murmuring touching murmuring.

The surrounding area looks at them with eyes of stone. It assesses
the size of the danger, so too the size of the chance that lies in
this sight, which contains all the unity that can be found

in contrasts. Each time they walk around here together, alongside each other, the chance exists. They are the chance. (187, **The Way of Words**, 5, 1992, p. 185).

A ninth grade reader features two poems by Yehuda Amichai, one of Israel's prominent modern poets, one of which mentions the names given to the city in the course of history by the members of the three religions.

Jerusalem 1967 / Yehuda Amichai

The city plays hide-and-seek among her names:
Yerushalayim, Al-Quds, Salem, Jeru, Yeru, all the while
whispering her first, Jebusite name: Y'vus,
Y'vus, Y'vus, in the dark. She weeps
with longing: Ilia Capitolina, Ilia, Ilia.
She comes to any man who calls her
at night, alone. But we know
who comes to whom.

(23, **Variations**, ninth grade reader, 1994, p. 252).

(translated by Stephen Mitchell, in *Poems of Jerusalem – a bilingual edition*, by Yehuda Amichai, Shocken Publishing House, Ltd., 1987).



A Hebrew-language study book for fifth grade in state-run schools contains a drawing with the symbols of the three religions that appeared in the “Children Draw Jerusalem” exhibition with the following caption underneath: “Jerusalem, the city that is sacred to the three monotheistic religions.”

(313, **That Is To Say – Language, Expression and Communication**, 1999, p.149).

Jerusalem – The Capital of Israel

In contrast to the above-mentioned books, there are some textbooks which totally ignore the other religions' attachment to Jerusalem and present students with a view of exclusiveness of Jewish ownership of the city. For example, a first-grade reader used in the state school stream says:

“Jerusalem the Capital

“There is one city in the world which all Jews love and it is called Jerusalem. Every day, in our prayers, we mention Jerusalem. David, King of Israel, built the city and lived there. The Temple stood in Jerusalem. Today the Temple no longer stands, but one section of the wall that surrounded the Temple Mount remains. That is the Western Wall. Jerusalem is beautiful. It is built on top of and is surrounded by mountains. It is where the President resides and it is the capital of the State of Israel.” (216, **Alfoni**, first grade reader, 1979, p.133).

A sixth-grade reader used in the ultra-Orthodox educational stream states: “We are all sons going to see their beloved mother who was held captive by foreigners for nineteen years.” (379, **Our Childhood 6**, sixth grade reader, p.274).

The same reader features a poem that requires no further explanation of the author's view of the Muslims' and Christians' attachment to Jerusalem:

"And Our Eyes Shall Behold
Your injured head still waits ...
Woe unto us – for gentiles have wounded you
Silver dust and gold dust
have covered the rounded bruises
on your radiant forehead.

Your ribs have been stabbed, Jerusalem
by piercing arrow crosses
and rounded crescents
that insolently dot the horizon.

Woe unto us, Jerusalem
for your ears are still ringing
from the mocking chiming of bells
and the alien metallic echo
spewing from the mosques' turrets.
(379, **Our Childhood 6**, sixth grade reader, p.277).

A book used in the ultra-orthodox sector refrains from using the word “holy” in reference to the other religions and suffices with saying “the city is also important to Muslims and Christians.” (365, **The Good Land**, grades 4-5 textbook for Land of Israel studies, 1991, p.27).

An eighth grade reader used in the ultra-orthodox network writes in a way that requires no additional explanation:

“Walk from place to place and you cannot help but see the glory and majesty in the city of your forefathers – even before its moment of redemption has come. And then you will come to the neighborhoods which the Greeks and Germans built for themselves and are named after them, such as the Greek Colony and the German Colony, etc. and which the wealthy Arabs built and called after themselves, such as Katamon, Baka, etc. and afterwards these were all given as an inheritance to the Children of Israel.”

(323, **Our Childhood 8**, eighth grade reader, 1989, p.271).

An elementary school history textbook writes that “Jerusalem has always been a holy city for the three religions.”

(223, **From Conservatism to Progress**, history for eighth grade, 1998, p.253).

A geography textbook features pictures of the Mosque of Omar and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, and makes a clear distinction between the Jews’ very special attachment to Jerusalem and the attachment of the Muslims and Christians to it, which according to the book is solely of a religious nature.

“Eretz Yisrael is the land of the Jews. During the many years the Jews were outside their land, they sought to return there and settle the land. A special place in their hearts was reserved for Jerusalem and therefore they repeated in their prayers: ‘If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand lose its cunning’.” (Psalm 137:5).

“When Israel returned to its land and the State of Israel was established, Jerusalem, our capital once again, became the most important Jewish center for the entire Jewish people. Jews from Israel and all over the world make pilgrimages to Jerusalem and visit the sites that are sacred to Jews, such as the Western Wall.

“Jerusalem is a unique city: located in the eastern Mediterranean, in Israel, it is the only city in the world that is sacred to the three great religions. In addition to Jews, Christians and Muslims from all over the world also come to Jerusalem to visit sites that are sacred to each of the religions: Christians come to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and Muslims come to the Mosque of Omar.”

(159, **Mediterranean Countries**, 1992, pp.54, 65).

The next paragraph, taken from a geography textbook used in state-run high schools, unequivocally describes the attachment of the Jews to Jerusalem as much deeper than that of the Muslims and Christians.

“A prominent feature of Jerusalem is its diverse population. Living side by side in the city are residents belonging to different religions, different streams and different nations. Jews and Arabs, secular and religious, Muslims and Christians and others... Jerusalem has been the religious, spiritual and national center of the Jewish people throughout the generations and through all of its dispersions and it is a holy city for Jews. It is also a holy city for Christians and one of the three holy Muslim cities. Consequently, Jerusalem acquired a unique status, both among Jews in Israel and around the world, and among adherents of other religions in Israel and abroad... and

Jerusalem also has places that are sacred to Christians and Muslims. For Muslims, Jerusalem is the place from where Muhammad, the founder of the Islamic religion, ascended to heaven and therefore many mosques have been built there. The fact that the city is sacred to three religions has, throughout history, brought tens of thousands of pilgrims to the city to visit its holy sites. Jerusalem's importance as a holy city and place of pilgrimage is also apparent in the perception that prevailed at various times whereby Jerusalem is situated at the center of the world."

(72, **Communities in the Expanse – Studies on the Geography of World Settlements**, 1998, pp.174, 175, 176).

7. Islamic Holy Sites in Jerusalem

The Dome of the Rock

A geography textbook states: “Jerusalem is important in Judaism, Christianity and Islam... with the start of Muslim-Arab rule in the country, Jerusalem became sacred in Islamic tradition as well. Two mosques were built on the Temple Mount, the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, in places that are linked in Islamic tradition to the journeys of Muhammad, the founder of the faith. Thus, Jerusalem became a city of religious significance all over the world.”

The text is accompanied by photos of the Western Wall, the Church of Mary Magdalene and the Dome of the Rock Mosque. The inclusion of the pictures reinforces in the student the idea that Jews do not have exclusive rights to Jerusalem and heightens awareness of the Muslims' connection to the city.

(302, **Man and Environment** – Studies in the History of Eretz Yisrael, 1999, pp.73, 162).

A geography textbook for the fifth and sixth grades used in the ultra-orthodox educational network indeed tells students about the connection between Muslims and Jerusalem, but does so without using the concept of holiness and highlights the fact that the Dome of the Rock Mosque was built on the site of the Temple. Below the text, there is a picture of the mosque.

“After the Arabs conquered Jerusalem, the sultan built a mosque known as the Dome of the Rock. The mosque was built on the site of the Temple and is called the Dome of the Rock because it is built above the Foundation Stone, upon which the Ark stood in the Temple. This mosque is also called the Mosque of Omar and it has a golden dome. On the southern side of the Temple Mount, there is a mosque known as the Al-Aqsa Mosque.”

(357, **Jerusalem the Holy City and the Temple**, 1991, p.36).

The book **With King David**, a student workbook for studying the Book of II Samuel, features a picture of the Dome of the Rock with the following caption: “The Dome of the Rock Mosque in Jerusalem. According to tradition, this is the site of Orna the Jebusite’s threshing floor.”

(178, **With King David**, 1993, p.129).

Jerusalem – A Holy City for the Muslims

Many history textbooks used in the state-run and state religious schools contain long and detailed chapters on the history of Islam (see the chapter on Islam in this report) and they contain explanations on how Jerusalem became a holy city for Muslims. The next quotation is an example of such an explanation which was written objectively and fairly. It illustrates for the student the depth of Muslims’ attachment to Jerusalem and leads the student to be sensitive to Muslims’ emotional attachment to this city.

“The first issue is religious – in the connection of Jews and Muslims to Jerusalem and to Eretz Yisrael. The connection between Jews and Eretz Yisrael, which is a basic principle of the Jewish faith, existed and was preserved throughout the generations. In contrast, the sanctity of Jerusalem and Eretz Yisrael for Islam underwent several changes. Muhammad designated Jerusalem as a holy city which Muslims should face toward when they pray. However, after realizing that the Jews of the Hejaz continued to adhere to their faith, he ended this practice and designated Mecca as a holy place. Nevertheless, Islam accepted the view that the Al-Aqsa Mosque, located on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, would be the valley of the vision of the resurrection of the dead in the end of days. Consequently, Muslim believers deemed the city a holy place, which alongside Mecca and Medina should be a place of pilgrimage. As early as the second century after the Hajira (Muhammad’s journey from Mecca to Medina), Jerusalem was already recognized as a holy site by most Muslims, and they directed the prayers and customs toward the city, which had originally been directed toward Mecca alone. Eretz Yisrael is mentioned in the Koran only once, and it is referred to as 'the Holy Land.' However, the reference as such reinforces Jerusalem’s sacred status and Islam gradually developed a view that saw the sanctity in all of Eretz Yisrael, while highlighting the fact that it was the land of the prophets and the place of Divine Revelation.” (299, **The World and the Jews in Recent Generations**, Part A: 1870-1920, 1998, p.226).

A geography textbook used in the ultra-orthodox educational stream emphasizes only the Jews’ connection to Jerusalem:

“Ever since King David purchased the threshing floor from the Jebusite and Solomon built the Temple, Jerusalem has been designated the capital of our country and from that time until today it has served as the capital and largest spiritual center in the world for the entire Jewish people. From Jerusalem, Torah went out to the Jewish people in all the lands of the Diaspora.” (365, **The Good Land**, Grades 4-5 textbook for Land of Israel studies, 1991, p. 47).

The Temple Mount

A junior high school history textbook states: “Muhammad declared that Jerusalem is a holy city and demanded that all his followers face toward it when praying. After clashing with the Jews of Medina, Muhammad ruled that worshippers must face toward Mecca and not toward Jerusalem. Nevertheless, Jerusalem was acknowledged as a holy city from that time on (to this day, Muslims refer to Jerusalem as 'Al-Quds,' i.e., the holy place), but not as holy as Mecca. From that point on, Muhammad began to claim that the Patriarch Abraham was the one who built the Kaba’a together with his first-born son, Ishmael.”

The same book cites a legend whereby Muhammad rode a winged horse from Mecca to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem and from there ascended to Heaven for a visit. The place where Muhammad tied up his horse was the Western Wall and is therefore referred to by Arabs as Al-Buraq, after Muhammad’s horse. “On the basis of this story, and following the Jewish tradition sanctifying the Temple Mount, the Muslims also sanctified the Temple Mount and built several important structures on it. The

most important among them are the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock.”

Alongside the text are two large photos of the mosques.

(341, **History Lessons** for state-run schools, vol.2, From the Rise of Rome to the Late Middle Ages, 5747, pp. 188, 190, 196-199); This story appears in greater detail in a history textbook. (348, **History of Israel and the Nations**, 1987, pp.202, 208-210).

Regarding the Western Wall, readers used in the ultra-orthodox network contain a story whereby the Arab sultan, Suleiman, uncovered it after the Christians sullied it. The story appears in two versions with certain modifications. It proves that the Arabs considered the site as a holy place.

A second-grade reader used in the ultra-orthodox network relates a story of a man appointed by Suleiman to look for the site of the Temple. One day, he met a woman with a basket of garbage on her head. She had come from Bethlehem especially to dump her garbage in a specific place in Jerusalem. The man was surprised and asked her, "Why did you come from Bethlehem to bring your garbage to this place?" – "This is what we were told to do, because whoever throws out his garbage here is, after all, doing a good deed." The man was curious and ordered that the garbage be removed and lo and behold before him was revealed the site of the Temple and the Western Wall.”

(377, **Our Childhood 2**, second grade reader, p.190).

A fifth-grade reader features the following description:

“Regarding the discovery of the location of the Western Wall and its uncovering, there is a tradition whereby the Sultan was once sitting by the window of his palace and looking over the Temple Mount area. Suddenly he saw a Christian woman holding a garbage basket and pouring it onto a pile of garbage that had accumulated over the years. The Sultan watched the woman repeat this action several times until he ordered that she be arrested. The Sultan inquired into the meaning of her actions and the woman answered him and said the following: ‘It is a tradition among us that it is an order to throw garbage in this place, because once the House of the God of Israel stood here.’ The Sultan immediately ordered that gold dinars be scattered around the pile and an announcement made to the poor of the city that whoever searched in the pile and found the coins would be able to keep them. Many of the city’s poor came there and after a short time, they uncovered the Western Wall.

“The Foundation Stone on Mount Moriah

“The foundations of the Temple were built on the foundation stone on Mount Moriah. Even in our time, when it is possible to visit the Old City and the Western Wall, a Jew does not have the opportunity to enter the Temple Mount, the place where the Temple once stood. Because of the sanctity of the place, it is customary not to tread there, lest one step on the actual spot where the Temple stood. The Arabs built a large mosque on the spot which is known as the Mosque of Omar, after the man who built it, and the Arabs prevented Jews from treading there. The Temple is within this compound and its foundations were built on top of one stone known as the foundation stone, i.e., the stone Jacob fixed as a monument as is stated in the Torah: ‘And Jacob took a stone and set a monument... and this stone which I have set as a monument shall be the house of God’.” (331, **Our Childhood 5**, fifth grade reader, 1997, p.226).

8. “To Know the Great Arab People”

History books in the general and religious state networks that deal with the history of Zionism and Jewish settlement in Eretz Yisrael, present students with the various approaches and attitudes that were prevalent in the Zionist movement with regard to the Arabs, and statements by prominent leaders on the Arab question. The student is presented with the various approaches, including internal criticism by prominent leaders over behavior by Jews in certain instances. The students are exposed to arguments raised by important Zionist leaders that the Arabs' fears of Jewish settlement in Eretz Yisrael should be understood, and ways should be explored for rapprochement and dialogue with them, in an effort to bring them to accept the Zionist enterprise, and at the least not to oppose it. Other books quote statements according to which Jews should learn the Arabic language and Arab culture, in order to get to know the Arabs in a direct way and create good relations between Jews and Arabs, as well as for practical reasons – to acquire knowledge from them in various spheres, such as agriculture.

Two books quote the words of Ahad Ha'am, (a prominent leader of the Zionist movement in its early stages), which also include self-criticism. Bringing a selection of this type elicits openness and sensitivity in the student to the feelings of the Arab side. Although written at the end of the nineteenth Century the message to the student is relevant to the present time:

"The first leader who made his opinion known over the existence of the problem and over the potential problem of a sharp conflict between Jews and Arabs was Ahad Ha'am. On his very first visit to Eretz Yisrael in 1891 he noted the following:

“... Not just this, but in general it is not our way to learn for the future. We most assuredly could have learned from the chronicles of our past and present just how cautious we must be lest the anger of the simple folk be aroused by despicable acts. We must therefore be extremely careful in our behavior with a non-Jew when we come to live among him once more, to walk with him in love and respect and, it goes without saying, in justice and in righteousness. And what do our brethren in Eretz Yisrael do? Precisely the opposite! ... They move about among the Arabs with hostility and cruelty, trespass unjustly, strike them shamefully without any sufficient cause, and even boast that they do so ... Our brothers are correct when they say that the Arab respects only those who show him bravery and courage. When he feels that justice is with his opponent; not so if he justifiably thinks his opponent's actions to be oppressive and stolen justice. Then, even if he also remains silent, he will restrain himself endlessly, but his anger persists in his heart and he plans revenge and bears a grudge’.”

(299, **The World and the Jews in Recent Generations**, 1998, pp.228-229).

(160, **From Conservatism to Progress**, History for eighth grade, 1998, p.374).

The teacher Yitzhak Epstein is quoted in praise of the Arab people:

"In general, we are mistaken in regards to a great people ... This is the mightiest, most excellent people in physical attainments and in the skill of its understanding. We

must not belittle its rights (those of the Arab people). The Hebrew people respects not only the personal rights of each person, but rather the national rights of each nation and tribe."

(160, **From Conservatism to Progress**, eighth-grade History, 1996, p.374)

In another book, Epstein is quoted in an article that he wrote in the newspaper *Hashiloah* in 1907, entitled "A Hidden Question":

"Among the difficult questions connected with the idea of resurrecting our people on its land is one question that stands clearly against them all: the question of our relations with the Arabs. This question, on whose correct resolution hangs the rebirth of our national hope, has not been forgotten, but rather has vanished entirely from among the Zionists and in its true form it is almost never mentioned in the literature of our movement. The loyal Zionists have so far not touched on the question of how we should act towards the Arabs when we come to buy land in Eretz Yisrael, to establish moshavot, and in general to settle the land.. Most of the land we buy from the large estate owners ... When we buy such land, we completely remove those who previously worked on it. True, we will not send them away empty-handed, we will pay them nicely for ruined houses and gardens, and in general we will not be stingy with gold coins during the time of the 'exemption.' From the standpoint of accepted justice and official honesty we are completely just, entering lawfully. However, if we do not knowingly want to deceive ourselves, let us admit that we dispossessed poor people from their meager property and broke the staff of their bread. Can we really persist on such a path of purchasing land? Is it successful, does it befit our objective? A hundred times no. Members of the people that was the first to say, 'And the land will not be sold in perpetuity,' and limited the rights of the buyer in favor of the worker, should not, cannot, expropriate their land from the hands of its workers, who settled on it in good conscience. But let us leave justice and sentimentality for a moment, and look at the question from the standpoint of ability alone. Will they be silent in the face of dispossessions, calmly accepting what we do to them? Will they not ultimately awaken to restore by force what was stripped from them by gold! ... And this people ... is only a small part of the larger nation, which holds everything surrounding our country: Syria, Aram Naharayim, Arabia and Egypt..."

The author of the book writes that "Herzl assessed the Arab problem as being a marginal matter, not requiring treatment, at least not in the first phase of acquiring legal title to the land". A letter he wrote in 1899 is quoted as follows: "You see another difficulty in the existence of the non-Jewish population in Eretz Yisrael, but who will say that they should be removed from there? Their private good and fortune will increase as a result of our bringing our assets. Do you believe that an Arab who has land or a house will be sorry when the price of his land increase five- and ten-fold? This is something that will necessarily happen with the coming of the Jews."

The same book quotes the words of Arthur Ruppin, one of the Zionist movement's central leaders, at the Zionist Congress in 1913:

"At first, the Zionist movement believed that Eretz Yisrael was empty of people ... In the meantime, we learned to see matters in a completely different way ... As of now, there are six times as many Arabs in Eretz Yisrael as there are of us ... It is a necessary task to make the lives of Jews and Arabs, side by side, as equal and friendly as

possible ...Clearly, Jewish settlement has thus far brought the Arabs great material benefits ... but along with this we must take the Arabs into consideration, be tactful in the matter of purchasing land, in order to prevent difficulties from them ... In any case, it is no wonder that relations between Arabs and Jews are not good. There is a wide gap between the new Jewish immigrants and the Arabs in custom and habit, and the two sides have not done enough to understand each other. Similarly, the attitude of the masses depends on the position of a thin layer of privileged families. The Arabic press is also controlled by this stratum, which mostly belongs to Christians and has absorbed certain anti-Jewish attitudes ... It would be useful if a generation grew up that would learn Arabic in our high schools and could speak with the Arabs in their language."

(299, **The World and the Jews in Recent Generations**, 1998, pp.230-232).

Knowing the Arabic Language and Culture

The need to know the Arabs' language and culture was raised by a number of leaders, led by Arthur Ruppin.

"The leaders of the Zionist movement were divided on the question of the Arabs. They hoped that the prosperity that would come in the wake of Jewish settlement would bring a great deal of progress to the Arabs of the country, which would lead the Arabs to accept Zionism, while others saw the conflict between Jews and Arabs as a natural clash between two peoples living in the same land. Arthur Ruppin believed that in order to contend with the Arab national movement, the Jewish Yishuv had to be strengthened, and that Arab culture and the Arabic language had to be known, in order to deepen the knowledge of the neighboring people. With the end of the First World War, it was already clear to the Zionist leaders that the Arab question would be the Zionist movement's most severe problem".

Author and researcher Yosef Meyuhas is also quoted: "The Jewish people will learn to know the large and important eastern people with whom we dwell, and in whose company we live and will continue to live for years and generations."

(160, **From Conservatism to Progress**, History for eighth grade, 1998, pp.368, 373).

There were those who sought to know the Arabs' life for practical purposes, including the members of Hashomer – the first self-defense organization established in Eretz Yisrael. "Yisrael Shohat wrote the following: Hashomer ascribed special attention to peaceful relations with the Arab environment. We knew that the Arabs would be our neighbors and that we would have to be with them, and to a certain extent adapt our lives to them. Hashomer members learned Arabic and wanted to learn whatever they could among the Arabs. The Shomrim tried not to make do only with visits to the effendis and sheikhs, but rather preferred the 'madafiya' (the village's hospitality room), in order to meet with the Arab peasant farmer, tenant or worker. The Shomrim learned the Arab way of life, and the life of the Arab village."

Hashomer members also dreamt of conquering the pasture: shepherds wander with their flocks to far-off regions and know the homeland well. Three members of Hashomer went out to live among Beduin tribes, in order to learn the profession. One

of them, Yosef Harit, related the following: "Three members undertook to acquire the doctrine of shepherding first hand – from the Beduin, and to that end Hashomer made contact with the Turkmen, a semi-wild tribe that lives in the mountains with their flocks. In the winter of 1913, three of our members dressed in Beduin clothes and went to be shepherds with the tribe's youth. The work was difficult, because the shepherd was both milker and guard, and would also sleep next to his flock. The shepherd's meal was meager – a bit of bread in the morning and a bit of bread in the evening, besides the milk that he was permitted to drink during the milking season. Despite all of these, and despite the illnesses they contracted, the members acquired the required experience and then we could think about getting a herd to shepherd on our own."

(76, **Homeland – Chapters in the History of the Jewish Yishuv**, pp.93, 95).

Concern arose among the Arabs over the successes of the Jews, concern that was mixed with admiration for their ability to overcome the difficulties that they encountered on their arrival to Eretz Yisrael. One book includes a quote from a newspaper that appeared in Damascus on 8 April 1913:

"Jaffa is the most important commercial city in Palestine. Most trade is controlled by the Jews, and anyone arriving in town would think that he had come to a Jewish city. Jaffa's earnings are from the golden apples. There are those who say that there is no reason to be concerned about the Jews conquering Palestine, since they are not in control of the government, but in truth the nation that controls commerce rules. The real rulers are the rich, who are also wise. The Zionists who own property (who have taken hold of the land and established many communities) are also diligent and learned, and since they dwell among a foolish people, ultimately they will take over all sources of livelihood and slowly expel all of the country's residents. Most of the hotels are owned by Jews. The Jews also have many schools, and the most important of them is the school in Tel Aviv (the Herzliya Gymnasium), the new neighborhood that dazzles all those who see it with the beauty of its buildings, its expansive streets, its landscaped parks, and which is nothing other than a slice of Europe."

(160, **From Conservatism to Progress**, history for eighth grade, 1998, p.376).

9. Stories Written by Arab Authors

In many literary anthologies there are stories about experiences and daily life of Arabs, which were written by Arab authors. These stories do not have any connection to relations with Jews. Usually, the author's country of origin is noted and occasionally other details about his life and ideologies are included. Most of the stories take place in a village and usually the people belong to the lower class. The stories portray the characters as good, friendly, familial. One story deals with the dilemma between following old custom or modern values. The student is exposed to seeing the Arabs as ordinary human beings, just like himself. Here are few examples of many stories that appear in the readers.

One reader features a story about children riding a donkey on the way to pick figs. They return on foot, walking after the donkey who has been packed with boxes full of figs.

(3, **Windows**, third-grade reader, 1994, p.53).

A reader features a story about the friendship between two boys who went to pick apples in an orchard. When one is caught by the watchman, he does not disclose the name of the friend who was with him in the orchard.

(29, **New Israel Readers**, fourth grade reader, 1986, p.61-64).

Another reader includes a story about a Beduin living in the Arabian peninsula who had a beautiful mare and colt. The tribe's sheikh coveted the mare and colt and took them for himself.

(44, **Literary Selections for Grade 8**, 1992, p.76-84).

Another reader features a story about the scars the author still has from a fall after stumbling over an obstacle. The obstacle was the "end of a looped metal stick, the kind the armies fighting in the First World War used as posts for erecting barbed wire fences.

(78, **I Understand**, Reading Comprehension, 1993, p.150).

One reader contains a story of a very poor peasant farmer who had 15 beautiful children. A wealthy and childless vizier (minister) convinced the mother to sell one of the sons to him. The mother agreed in order to get money with which she would buy food for her children. When the father heard this, he did not agree to the sale and begged the vizier to give him back his son. The vizier could not withstand the father's plea. He returned the boy and also let the father keep the money. Nine months later, the vizier's wife, who had been barren, gave birth to a boy, just as the blessing the poor farmer's wife had given her predicted.

(26, **New Israel Readers**, for third grade, 1986, pp.161-165).

Another reader features a story about a barber with a mentally ill brother.

The introduction states that the Egyptian writer, Tewfik al-Hakim, the author of the story, "advocated peace and understanding between peoples and sharply criticized the tyranny of the Egyptian leader, Nasser."

(165, **Literary Leaves**, 1987, p.169).

Another reader includes a story about an Arab porter who collected empty bottles and as he was about to bring them to the wealthy man who had asked him to collect them, the bottles fell and broke. The porter became very sad and was certain the rich man would not pay him his wages. But to his surprise, the wealthy man says he planned to break them in order to put the shards on top of the wall, as a charm against thieves, and he pays the porter for his work. The author of the story is Yatta Muhamad Ali. (169, **New Israel Readers**, for third grade, 1986, p.224).

The same story is repeated in a fourth grade reader (186, **Strings**, for fourth grade, 1993, pp.257-259).

Another reader features a story about a young porter who struggles under a heavy load and falls. The author, whose goods the porter was carrying from his store, realized how hard it was for the boy to carry such a heavy load. "My attitude toward him changed completely." He wiped the blood from the forehead of the boy who had been injured in the fall, and added to his wages. The author is the well-known Lebanese author, Tewfik Youssef Awad. (28, **New Israel Reader**, for sixth grade, 1992, pp.47-49).

One reader contains a story by Israeli Arab author Mahmud Abassi about two children who move from the city to a village in the Menashe mountains. The story deals with their absorption into the new society in the village and the differences between them and the village children. (309, **The Way of Words**, sixth grade reader, 1996, pp.14-17).

An eighth-grade reader includes a story by the well-known Egyptian writer, Naguib Mahfouz about two young people debating whether or not to get married. (244, **Reading Selections** for eighth grade, 1992, pp.170-176).

A ninth grade reader contains a story by the Egyptian writer Sophie Abdallah about the problems emerging from the transition from a traditional lifestyle to life in a modern city.

The hero of the story is Ismail, a young Egyptian Arab who left the village as a youngster and moved to the city with his mother after the murder of his father. Ismail does not know why his father was murdered, but this episode from his past continues to haunt him and presents him with a difficult dilemma: on the one hand, he is expected to avenge his father's death. This is the tradition in his village and he is expected to follow the tradition. On the other hand, revenge of this sort is contrary to the progressive education he received in the city. "He refuses to kill someone unconnected to the murder as some pressure him to do, and his mother supports his decision and says: 'Man and animals are not the same thing. The difference between them is the difference between conscience and barbarism. I brought you to the city so that you would turn your back on the law of the jungle.'" (161, **Literary Leaves**, ninth grade reader, 1998, pp.112-115).

A ninth-grade reader features a story by Naguib Mahfouz about a port worker who dreamt for 20 years of taking revenge against the man who took away his wife just hours after their wedding. He forced him to divorce her after beating him into unconsciousness.

Now the man wants to avenge himself and take back the woman who was his wife. He comes at the head of a large group. It turns out that the man who stole his wife died several years earlier and his wife sells eggs in the market. The man meets with her for a few minutes and then returns to his city.

(161, **Literary Leaves**, ninth grade reader, pp.117-121).

Two readers, for grades 4 and 6, include two stories about verdicts issued by a judge named Karkash who “was known in Arabic folklore as a stupid and evil judge. Instead of saying ‘stupidity’ they would say ‘Karkash trial’.”

The stories express social criticism of the legal system.

(28, **New Israel Reader**, for sixth grade, 1992, pp.156-157).

(29, **New Israel Reader**, for fourth grade, 1986, pp.155-157).

In contrast, a seventh-grade reader features a story about a wise sheikh who was known for his ability to arrange compromises between rivals and let justice and fairness prevail. The sheikh managed to apprehend a thief in a clever and amusing way.

(32, **Variations**, seventh grade general school reader, 1992, pp.150-151).

Another entertaining story tells of a man who sold his house, but made one condition: the nail stuck in the wall of the guest room would continue to be his property. The seller began coming every day to the buyer’s home to see his nail, hung things on it and then tied a wild dog to it. Eventually, the buyer got fed up and fled from the home he had bought.

(32, **Variations**, seventh grade general school reader, 1992, pp.168-171).

10. The Good Muslim Ruler

In some stories in ultra-orthodox school readers, a recurring motif is of the Muslim ruler who fosters the Jews and grants them rights out of confidence in their wisdom and loyalty, and stands against opposition from advisers and groups who seek to restrict the Jews.

In a sixth grade reader used in the ultra-orthodox network, a story is told about the Jews of Tiberias, which was subject to Muslim rule. The Muslim ruler invited the Jews to rebuild the destroyed Tiberias, but his close advisers did not view the rise of the Jews favorably and accused them of causing a drought. Rabbi Nahman prayed and rain began to fall. And the ruler said: "I now know that the Lord your God is the greatest God of all."

(379, **Our Childhood 6**, sixth grade reader, pp.52-54).

Another story, that takes place in Yemen, tells of an Arab woman who spread a rumor that the Jewish rabbi blew the shofar during the days when Selihot (atonement) prayers are said, in order to prevent rain from falling and to kill the Arabs by thirst. When rain fell, she claimed that they were plotting to drown the Arabs. The district governor determined that the Arab woman had defamed the rabbi and that he was a holy man.

(379, **Our Childhood 6**, sixth grade reader, p.102).

There is a story that occurs during the Golden Age in Spain about the Caliph Abdul Rahman, who dealt kindly with the Jews. An Arab tried falsely to accuse the son of the head of the Jewish community, who was very successful in his studies, saying that he had written a poem containing negative things about the Caliph. When the forgery of the poem was discovered, the Caliph tried to give the boy a great deal of money, but the latter refused. Later, he appointed him a minister.

(379, **Our Childhood 6**, sixth grade reader, p.372).

There is a story about a Jew who succeeded in capturing two lions who had broken out of their cage in Kushta and saved the city. The sultan praised his wisdom and gave him money for the poor of Jerusalem.

(43, **Everything in its Time**, third grade reader, p.87).

There is a story about the pasha, the governor of the sultan who ruled in Greece and who respected the Jews and their wise men. His advisers gnashed their teeth, because "they could not see the honor of Israel." In response, the pasha compares the Jews to the boilermen in the bottom of a ship, because of whom "the ships' passengers enjoy themselves and have a safe and pleasant sailing."

(379 **Our Childhood 6**, sixth grade reader, p.26).

"The legend tells of a certain Arab who was full of envy for the Jewish poet Ibn Gvirol, who was an outstanding Arabic poet, murdered him and buried him under a fig tree. Ever since, the fig tree has yielded the most incredibly sweet fruit. By

chance, the king ate some of those figs and inquired as to the reason for their sweetness. Ultimately, the murderer admitted his deed and was killed."
(369, **The History of Israel**, 1993, p.62).

A story about the death of Rabbi Yehudah Halevy is repeated in several readers for ultra-orthodox and state religious schools. A reader for fourth-graders in the ultra-orthodox network relates that when Rabbi Yehudah Halevy arrived in Eretz Yisrael, "an Arab horseman was passing by. When he saw Rabbi Halevy kissing the ground of the land of his forefathers, he trampled him wildly with his horse."
(378, **Our Childhood 4**, fourth grade reader, p.140).

The same story appears in book 317, **Lessons in the Bible** (the Book of Exodus) for state religious schools, 1979, p.69; in book 369, **The History of Israel**, 1993, p.70; and in literature reader 165, **Leaves of Literature**, 1987, p.8.

In contrast, in another book that deals with Rabbi Yehudah Halevy's teachings, a different version is given:
"Rabbi Yehudah Halevy was determined and boarded a ship to Eretz Yisrael, though he was forced to turn back due to stormy weather. In 1141, he died in Egypt and was buried there ... The legend says that Rabbi Yehudah Halevy arrived in Eretz Yisrael and set forth for Jerusalem. 'When he reached the gates of Jerusalem, he tore his clothes and walked barefoot on the ground, and would say the lament that he had written, Zion, Doest Thou Not Ask? A certain Ishamaelite was jealous of him because of his fervor and he ran over him with his horse, trampling him to death.' It is reasonable to assume that this story is not historically accurate, since at that time the Jews could not enter Jerusalem out of fear of the Crusaders, both because even Muslims were prohibited from entering Jerusalem and because it was not at all likely that a Muslim would kill a Jew, a fellow sufferer under Crusader rule."
(322, **The Historical Thought of Rabbi Yehudah Halevy**, 1987, pp.14-15).

11. The Contribution of the Arabs to Human Civilization

Some history books in the state-run networks include in the chapters of the history of the Arabs descriptions of the achievements by Arab scientists and thinkers. Here is one example:

“Despite the religious split which divided believers in the empire, a rich Arab culture developed in it. Since the empire encompassed many lands with different cultures and customs, the Arabs conveyed the cultural assets from people to people, and from country to country. From India to their country, and from their country to the countries of Europe, the Muslims transferred numbers, which replaced Roman numerals, which were not convenient for arithmetic functions. They also translated into Arabic the rich literature of the Greeks, which dealt with philosophy, science and medicine. Afterwards, the peoples of Europe translated these books from Arabic into Latin, and thus the Arabs contributed to restoring the cultural treasures of Greece to the European peoples.

“However, the Arabs were not simply **cultural middlemen**, they were also **creators of culture**. For example, they were the first to discover the existence of infectious diseases. They were also the first to build public hospitals. Because of their considerable contribution to various scientific fields, there are disciplines that to this day are called by their Arabic names, such as algebra. The Islamic religion also influenced the development of culture. The obligation to pray in the direction of Mecca led to the development of astronomy, which helped identify the direction according to the heavenly bodies. The duty to make a pilgrimage developed geography and gave a push to the writing of travel books. These books, and the Arabs' high capability in map drawing, helped develop trade. To this day, merchants use Arabic words, such as bazaar, check and tariff. Since the language of the Koran is Arabic, the Muslims spent much time researching the Arabic language and grammar.

“Islamic art was also influenced by religion. Across the empire, many mosques were built and they created a new architectural style. Because of the religious prohibition against drawing a person or animal, Muslim artists decorated their buildings with **arabesques** – engineering shapes or stylized forms of leaves and plants.

“Rulers also helped cultural growth in the empire. The leaders of the empire built palaces and the palace court was a place frequented by many intellectuals: scientists, poets and writers. With the money that flowed into the state treasury, the rulers bought valuable objects and art treasures.”

(34, **From Generation to Generation**, vol.b, 1994,p.220)

See also detailed chapters on this topic in books 341, **Lessons in History**, vol.b pp. 213-219; 369, **History of Israel**, 1993, p.53; and 348, **History of Israel and the Nations**, vol.b, 1987, pp 204-218.

12. Arab-Jewish Relations in Palestine in the Nineteenth Century

Books used in the ultra-orthodox stream contain descriptions of relations between Jews and Arabs. In these descriptions, Arabs are portrayed in negative terms. Thus, for example, a seventh grade reader tells of relations between Arabs and Jews in Safed in the following way:

Ishmaelites

"The Arab Ishmaelites, who hate the miserable Jews very much, will search for pretexts and carry out plots against them. In order to show you how strong their hatred for Jews is and how they persecute and attack them, I will relate several stories: in the city of Safed, the Ishmaelites were advised to throw a villainous man into the pit in the yard of a Jewish man and to testify that the Jew murdered that man. But before they could carry out their plot they were caught, their plan was discovered and they were brought to the court and punished for their wickedness."
(330, **Our Childhood 7**, seventh grade reader, p. 142)

A fourth grade reader used in ultra-orthodox schools relates that a year after an earthquake that destroyed many parts of Safed, an "evil man-made plague" befell them:

"The Arab villagers went up to Safed ... Ishmaelites breaking into homes, penetrating into every place, sparing no one, not even property. They hacked at houses with their axes, stabbed babies and infants with their swords. They left mourning and destruction in their wake. The Ishmaelites gathered together around the narrow alleyways and their hands dripped with blood ... Jewish blood."
(378, **Our Childhood 4**, fourth grade reader, p.145)

An eighth grade reader for the ultra-orthodox schools tells about the Jews in Jerusalem's Old City in the nineteenth Century:

"With this new settlement in Jerusalem, the housing shortage in the city grew far worse and there was incredible overcrowding. The Christians looked unfavorably on the increase in the Jewish population and placed many obstacles in its way. The Arabs, as a result of their great laziness and because they saw Jewish money and did not want to invest their own money in construction, did not bother to build new buildings as needed. They too became crowded, vacated their homes and attics for the Jewish residents and made a fortune renting out 'their apartments.' They sucked the Jewish residents drier and drier, because they raised the rent every year.

At that time, no one dared think such a bold thought as to leave the walled city to build a home and live in it!"
(329, **Our Childhood 8**, eighth grade reader, 1989, p.275)

Goyim

A first grade reader used in the ultra-orthodox stream calls the Arabs "goyim". This Hebrew term for gentiles has a negative connotation. It connects the Arabs to a long history of Jewish suffering in pogroms and attacks by Christians in many countries.

A story is told of two Jewish brothers who lived in Ashkelon and who had "bad and jealous neighbors who were goyim. Their goyish neighbors tried to do them harm and to steal their property, but they did not succeed."

(45, **Everything in its Time**, first grade reader, 1998, p. 213)

A third grade reader for ultra-orthodox schools tells about Grandmother Geula who lived in Jerusalem's Old City.

"The grandmother suffered a great deal in her life – suffering from poverty and deprivation, and most of all the difficulty of raising her children surrounded by bothersome Arab neighbors."

(43, **Everything in its Time**, third grade reader, 1999, p. 196)

Muhammad Ali – The good Ruler

A seventh grade reader in the ultra orthodox stream tells a story about Jerusalem in the days of Muhammad Ali emphasizes the Arabs' negative behavior and highlights the good treatment received from Muhammad Ali:

"The Sephardi community and the Ashkenazi community then bought from the Arabs, at a full and high price, a large and expansive courtyard in Jerusalem's Old City, and they built houses of prayer and study in it, as well as many regular houses to live in. When the communities' funds ran low and they could not afford to carry out their entire initiative, they were forced to borrow money from the Ishmaelites, and when the day came and they could not pay back the money they had borrowed, they gave that courtyard and all its buildings to their Ishmaelite creditors as a guarantee. And the Ishmaelites pressured them greatly to pay them the money in full, both the principal and the interest, and they harassed them with terrible cruelty, until recently, on the eighth day of the month of Heshvan 5581(1821) those savages burst into the houses of prayer and burned forty Torah scrolls and looted all of their sacred objects, and they imprisoned the leaders of the community. From that day on, the large courtyard lay silent, and all of its buildings, both holy and secular, were destroyed and covered with dust. And in the year 5596 (1836) in the month of Sivan (June), we residents of the holy city of Jerusalem sent emissaries to Muhammad Ali, the King of Egypt's deputy who is in Alexandria, to implore him to favor us with his kindness and order the Ishmaelites to return the large courtyard to the Ashkenazi Jews ... And when our emissaries came to see the great master and ruler Muhammad Ali, his face shone upon us and he spoke kindly with them and fulfilled the request which they made to him on behalf of all the Jews sheltered in his shadow ..."

(330, **Our Childhood 7**, seventh grade reader, p. 141)

The following is another story about good relations, this time among the simple folk:

A sixth grade reader used in the ultra-orthodox schools relates a tale of life in "Jerusalem of a century ago." It states that "all of Jerusalem's residents lived in friendship and brotherhood." Among other things, it told of an Arab who would bring sacks of coal to the Jews. "The coal man spoke fluent and colorful Yiddish like a Lithuanian Jew."

(373, **Our Childhood 6**, sixth grade reader, p. 255)

Arabs and Jews in the New Towns (Moshavot)

A story about Tel Aviv's Nordia neighborhood tells of how the Jews leased land from an Arab effendi, a Jaffa resident named Hinawi:

"In normal years, Arab passers-by and the Jews would establish bonds of friendship. But the pioneers were not always allowed to sit in their huts in peace. An ill wind would pass through the neighbors, inciters would gain the upper hand and the Arabs would try to attack the Jews and their property ... Hinawi the landowner also fell victim to incitement ... Members of Arab gangs, who did not like business being conducted with the Jews, pressured him to contribute his own money to their activities as 'ransom' for his ties with the Jews. Hinawi rejected their demand and two gang members murdered him."

(194, **The Way of Words 4**, 1996, pp.189-190)

The following is told of the behavior of the Arabs in the first moshavot (newly build small towns) that were established in the late nineteenth century:

"Blocking wells, uprooting saplings, stealing agricultural machinery and cattle, and flocks of Arab sheep invading the fields – all of these were recurring events."

(160, **From Conservatism to Progress**, history for eighth grade, 1998, p.279)

"The pioneers in the Jordan Valley came to work their land in peace, but their Arab neighbors did not like their coming and tried to drive them off their land. From time to time, they would set fire to the fields, steal fruit or sheep from the flock, and even try to harm members of the group. When the incidents of theft and burning increased, the pioneers decided to join the Haganah.

(194, **The Way of Words 4**, 1996, p.70)

A geography book used in the ultra-orthodox network describes the Arabs' actions vis-a-vis the moshavot (small towns):

"The residents of Rishon Le'Tzion suffered from attacks by their Arab neighbors, who had a hand in everything. Gangs of bandits sowed fear among the new settlement ...

"In Gedera, the Arabs would occasionally conduct raids of theft, robbery and murder ..

"Jaffa was an Arab city: its streets were actually narrow, old alleyways; the air was thick; loud calls and shouting at night were heard in its streets. It was difficult for the Jews in Jaffa to find decent apartments to live in, and when they did find them they were forced to pay a high rent for them ..."

(372, **Eretz Hemda (A Beautiful Land)** 1990, pp.135, 138, 144)

13. “The Hatred of the Adults Has not Affected Us”

The following three stories describe friendships that develop between Jewish children and Arab children. These stories start out with suspicion toward the Arab that stems from preconceived, negative notions that Jewish children have about the Arabs. During the course of the stories, the suspicion disappears and in its place a friendship develops. The message is that when it comes to personal relationships, it becomes clear that the Arab is a person like any other and stereotypes are proven wrong. Examples of this appear even in an ultra-orthodox textbook.

A Friendship Between Two Boys

A second grade reader tells of an Arab boy from the Arab village of Mizra'a who is accepted into the kindergarten of Kibbutz Evron. Prior to his arrival, there was some suspicion among the kibbutz children who asked, “Is he one of the good Arabs or one of the bad Arabs?” However, after he arrives, the barriers drop and he integrates into the kindergarten's routine. Later on it is related that the kibbutz children were invited to the village to celebrate Hamadi's birthday, enjoyed the candies his mother had prepared and “from that day on, the friendship deepened... Hamadi was invited to all of the kibbutz celebrations and he always came with some of the village children, he enjoyed it.” (1, **Strings** for second grade, 1996, pp.62-64).

One textbook has a poem about a boy playing ball beside the Sea of Galilee. He is joined by another boy who, it turns out, is called Bashir.

“I thought to myself: strange, I've never played with an Arab boy.

... Bashir and I ate together in the shade
on a rock shaped like a table.

Before we parted, we exchanged addresses
and promised to write each other.

I hope that we'll meet again.”

(47, **Windows**, 1993, p.83).

In another story, the Jewish narrator first attributes to the Arab he meets reservations about meeting a Jew. As time goes by, the Arab stops being suspicious and they become friends. The narrator sits on the shore of the Yarkon River, and senses someone standing beside him and sees an Arab boy playing the flute. “When he saw me, he wanted to run away. I called to him, ‘Come here, boy!’ I don't know if he understood everything I wanted to tell him ... apparently my facial expression soothed his fear. He started to approach me hesitatingly.” They introduce themselves. The boy plays the flute and the narrator invites him to join him for a meal. “It was a meal of affectionate feelings, friendly looks and confused talk, together with gestures and facial expressions that made us both laugh.” The Arab gives the Jew his flute as a gift and the Jew gives him a nice penknife. “His face glowed with happiness. ‘By Allah, you're very good!’ he said in a hushed voice that was all love and friendship. We parted amicably from the Yarkon. Many years have passed since then. The flute has remained with me as a souvenir... its sweet notes are still etched in my memory.” (194, **The Way of Words 4**, 1996, pp.236-237).

A Friendship Between Girls

A sixth and seventh-grade reader used in the state-run school system quotes a passage from the book, *Nadia*, by Galila Ron-Feder, about an Arab girl who comes to a Jewish boarding school. The passage describes the Arab girl's fear that the Jewish girls, one of whom lost a brother in a terrorist attack, won't want to share a room with her. Happily for her, she is warmly accepted and one of the girls asks her to share a room with her.

(218, **Literature 7**, pp.103-106).

(146, **Strings**, sixth grade reader, 1997, pp.264-267).

An eighth-grade reader describes the love between an 18-year-old boy from a Jewish settlement and a Bedouin girl. The story ends with their elopement.

(158, **Literature 8**, pp.308-309).

A Jewish boy describes his friendship with Abed, a Bedouin shepherd. "We didn't have a common language, but the hatred of the adults also hadn't attached itself to us yet. Children's games don't need words. After the war started, Abed disappeared for a long time. One day, the Jewish narrator saw him and followed him until the two met. "We stood facing each other – two quiet and sad children." Abed gave the Jewish boy the only gift he could give him – "a poor man's gift which he held in his hands: his weathered shepherd's staff."

(5, **Strings**, for fifth grade, 1994, p.43).

An Israeli Meets an Egyptian Boy

A sixth grade reader includes a story of the friendship that develops between an Israeli boy and an Egyptian boy who meet at an international youth conference in London. It all began when the Jewish boy was invited to play on an Egyptian boys' soccer team and scored a goal. Sa'id, the Egyptian boy, comes to the Israeli boy's room: " 'I realize you're surprised by a visit from a boy from an enemy country... I was looking for a chance to talk to you. My older brother fell in the Sinai during the last war between our countries,' Sa'id said, 'but it would be stupid for me to be angry at you for that.' 'If so, we're even,' Amir said with a sad smile on his face, 'because my father also died in that war. He was among those who crossed the canal.' For a moment, the room was filled with an oppressive silence and the two boys were steeped in confusion. Sa'id was the first to recover. 'Well,' he said, 'since that accursed war, I thought, that everything needs to be done to ensure that it will be the last war. It may sound strange because our radio, television and newspapers, and even our textbooks fill us up with stories about the evil Israelis, who stole the Arabs' homes. My teacher at school is a unique individual, who always cautioned us about blind hatred and in his history classes, told us about the sufferings of the Jews for 2,000 years, even though there is no mention of it in the textbooks. The teacher also told us what the Nazis did to the Jews during the Second World War. In general, he opened our eyes to many things, which we were used to accepting without thinking about them.' Amir listened carefully to Sa'id's words. For a brief moment, he thought he was dreaming. Could it be possible? Could an Israeli boy and an Egyptian boy sit

together and have a friendly conversation without a barrier of hate and without cursing each other? And then came questions and answers from both sides in an unending flow, with each one thirsting to know something about his friend, his hobby, his studies, where he lived and about his family. Sa'id flooded his friend mainly with questions about the kibbutz.

“The two boys did not notice the passage of time. They forgot where they were and forgot the conference, as if they were old friends. They forgot their parents' hostility, the unending war between their countries, the war that had continued for dozens of years and it seemed to them that they were speaking one language, even though they were speaking English, a language that was foreign to both.

“At midnight, Amir's roommate, Walter, came back to the room and to his surprise, found the unexpected guest there. Smiling broadly, he said: “The conference is starting to be effective, if a wolf and a lamb can live together – without my specifying which of you is the wolf and which is the lamb.”

(280, **Story and Song – Let's Get Acquainted**, 1985, pp.360, 361).

A Friendship in Baghdad

A fifth grade reader used in the state-run school system tells of a Jewish family from Baghdad that immigrates to Israel and parts from an Arab woman, the widow of a murdered Arab who was a friend of the family. “I will never forget your love for my husband, Kaid Al-Hashemi. Every day that you are without your children is a shame. If you sent them to Palestine – go to them.”

“And the Jewish woman answers: ‘We will pray for your well-being and the well-being of your children and, of course, for Kaid's soul.’ Mother parted from her with hugs and kisses.”

(49, **Windows**, reader for grades 5-6, 1997, p.31).

14. Stories of Arabs Rescued by Jews

These stories convey to the student a basic, universal, humanistic value: One must help another person – even an enemy – when he is in trouble and come to his rescue in times of danger, simply because he is a fellow human being. Four of the following stories take place during the war itself.

A fourth-grade reader for state religious schools tells of Israeli soldiers in Jerusalem during the Six Day War who, on entering one home, found a blood-soaked Arab girl. One of the soldiers “ran under heavy fire with her to an ambulance and thus saved her life. The girl has long since left the hospital and returned to her family and parents, but the friend who rescued her is still lying wounded. War is cruel, children, and let us hope that you will be soldiers in a time of peace. We wrote this word – peace – on the pieces of papers that we placed between the stones of the Western Wall when we reached it. That was our prayer: Peace.”

(138, **Open the Gate**, 1993, p.186).

A class reader for the ultra-orthodox network tells of the legend of Rabbi Pinchas BenYair. He saw a Jew carrying a load of wheat who wished to cross a river, but was afraid of drowning. Rabbi Pinchas Ben-Yair ordered the river to let the Jew pass. There was an Arab with the Jew, who was also carrying a load and who feared that his goods would be ruined by the water. “Rabbi Pinchas Ben-Yair saw him and told the river, ‘Let the Arab pass because he was an escort. So the Arab also crossed the river safely. With this deed, all saw the righteousness and greatness of Rabbi Pinchas Ben-Yair.’” (44, **Everything in its Time**, second grade reader, 2000, pp.160-164).

A fourth-grade reader for state religious schools tells the story of two childhood friends in Baghdad – a Jew and an Arab. Years passed and the Jew grew wealthy while the Arab became poorer. The Arab asked for help from the Jew but was rebuffed. The story says that the Jew sent his children in disguise to help his Arab friend, who indeed became wealthy without knowing that his Jewish friend had planned this without his knowledge. The Arab discovers this at the end of the story and regrets that he had doubted their friendship.”

(187, **The Way of the Words 5**, 1995, pp.85-87).

Another story also “balances” help for an Arab with help for a Jew. The third grade reader **Way of the Words** tells of Israeli soldiers who brought a wounded Egyptian soldier to a military hospital during the Six Day War, thus saving his life. Later, when the Israelis toured Egypt by bus, there was an attack in which several Israeli passengers were killed or wounded. A man stopped by the bus and took all the wounded passengers in his car, speeding to hospital. It was the same wounded Egyptian who had since become a well-known doctor in Egypt.

(309, **The Way of the Words**, 1996, pp.168-69).

There is a story of reservists in Gaza who found a girl who had been lost for two days from her family. The soldiers returned her to her family.

(283, **Interrelations**, 1993, pp.58-62).

A fifth grade reader for state religious schools tells of the 35 men who left to bring weapons to besieged Gush Etzion during the War of Independence. “En route, they encountered an old Arab man riding his donkey. An argument ensued. ‘Danny, he must be held here ... I think we should tie him up. He might tell about us.’ ‘Forget it, Yossi, what can this poor Arab do to you?’ replied Shaul. Yossi was not convinced but the majority agreed that the Arab should not be harmed and they continued on their way.” The story then tells how the Arabs opened fire on them in a wadi, killing them all.
(137, **Open the Gate**, fifth grade reader for state religious schools, pp.120-121).

A fifth-grade textbook for state schools tells the story of a Jew who saved an Arab even though that same Arab was among rioters who attacked Jews. The story takes place in Baghdad during the riots, looting and burning of Jewish property in the city and focuses on the Jews living in a side street. “The people living in the alley did not prepare themselves for a humiliating death or martyrdom. Their determined decision was to stand fast – come what may.

"Abu Efraim threw one of the rioters off his roof onto the heads of the other fleeing rioters. The man survived and Abu Efraim brought him water and saved his life.”
(27, **The New Israel Readers**, for fifth grade, 1987, pp.181-184).

15. “Arabs Are Just Like You and Me”

Stories of Jews Helped or Saved by Arabs

Many literary anthologies include stories describing Arabs in a positive manner that contrasts with the frequent or common image applied to the Arabs because of the protracted conflict and bloodshed. The authors deal with stories of Arabs saving Jews from physical harm and, no less important, helping Jews maintain their religion and identity. The message in these stories is a very important one: members of different religions must respect each other's religion and identity.

Stories of assistance are divided into the following types:

1. Helping Jews maintain their religion or fulfill their objective of immigrating to Eretz Yisrael; in other words, assistance related to Jewish identity. From this standpoint, these stories present noble behavior exhibited by Arabs;
2. Saving Jews from physical harm;
3. Saving Jews in time of war;
4. Assistance and advice in the field of agriculture from Arabs with know-how and experience.

Keeping Jewish Identity

There is a story about a Jewish widow and mother in Yemen who fell ill and, before she died, asked "her good Muslim neighbor", Fatima, to raise her son.

“ ‘Be his mother, he will play with your children and will forget his loneliness.’ She gave her a gold amulet in the shape of a Star of David and asked that when he reaches the age of 12 he be told that his parents were Jews and that he is a Jew and should immigrate to Eretz Yisrael.

“Fatima fulfilled her Jewish friend's wish and even put herself in danger, because the king of Yemen ordered that every Jewish orphan be converted to Islam. And when the boy reached the age of 12 she told him, in tears, his secret. 'I love you like my own son, but I swore to your mother' and she said to him: 'You must return to your country, your people and your homeland ... your name is Ovadia the Jew and the name of the holy city for the Jews is Jerusalem’.”

(194, **The Way of Words 4**, for fourth grade, 1996, p.180).

A story is told about an Arab who smuggled Jews across the Iraqi border.

"He did not understand what was wrong about poor Jews who love the land where their forefathers had lived in the past and who want to come to it out of this love; what bad could result from this for the world, why they are hated and why all the roads were closed to them."

(26 **New Israel Readers**, for third grade, 1986, p.222).

A story about a friendship that grew between an Arab boy and a Jewish girl located on opposite sides of the border in Jerusalem prior to the Six Day War.

"The courtyard of the girl's house is the border. The friendship is expressed in smiles and expressions, without words. The girl saves money, buys candies and throws them to the boy across the border. One day, the girl is shot and injured. The boy runs to her, takes off his only shirt, rips it and wraps it around the girl's leg. Later, he

disappears. Several days afterward, the Old City is captured. 'My first thought was that now I will be able to talk with the boy without fear.' When she returned home from the hospital there was no longer a border. She approached the boy's house. 'The door was off its hinges... empty, an overturned iron bed... no one was there. An Arab woman waved her arm and showed how they had fled to Amman. On a sign that said 'Caution – Frontier Ahead!' she scratched two words: on the eastern side – 'Sa'id,' and on the Israeli side – 'Edna.'" (The story appears in 194, **The Way of Words 4**, pp. 166- 167; and in 283, **Interrelations**, 1993 pp.52-53).

In a book on reading comprehension for elementary school students, a story is told about how a Jewish girl was saved by an Arab woman. The story underscores a message of equality.

"[The Arabs are like the Jews]... There are nasty people among them and there are decent people and [they shouldn't be labeled]...". To illustrate the point, a story is told about a four-year-old girl whose mother dies and whose father remarries. They lived in Akko. The father worked in Jerusalem and the stepmother raised the girl. "The girl wandered the streets dirty, barefoot, hungry. Only one family took her in, an Arab family that lived at the end of the street. To this day she remembers the heavy-set woman who hugged her, washed her, shampooed her hair, fed her, this woman who caressed her, perhaps the only caress she received as a child ... Once, the woman hid her for a week after her stepmother beat her cruelly. Her father had to return from Jerusalem in order to remove her from the neighbors' home. The girl shouted, cried, bit, clung fiercely to the large, heavy Arab woman, holding on to her like she was her last hope." For many years the woman was afraid of walking around Akko and when she was bold enough to do so she discovered that the Arab woman had died several months before, after lying in bed, and that no one had come to help her. "I myself abandoned that old woman."

(17, **What is the Interpretation? – Comprehension B** pp.184-188).

There is a story about a friendship between a Jewish boy and an Arab of Sudanese origin who sold peanuts near the Western Wall.

"The British forbade the Jews to blow shofars next to the Wall ... but the Jews did not give up the blowing and the British arrested those who blew shofars. When a British soldier came to arrest one of the blowers, the latter gave the shofar to the boy. The British soldier approached the boy, but before he could take the shofar away from him the Sudanese grabbed the shofar from his hand and hid it in the peanut roasting machine. When the British soldier reached the boy's hands, they were empty and the shofar was not confiscated."

(146, **Strings**, sixth grade reader, 1997, pp.21-24).

There is a story about a Bedouin who led two Jewish hikers who got caught in the desert and were searching for water. The Bedouin led them to a hidden spring, despite the fact that he was forbidden to reveal its location.

(29, **New Israel Reader**, for fourth grade, pp.88-90).

A Child Saved by God

"A three-year-old boy from B'nei Brak disappeared in the field. A rumor began circulating in the community that a wolf had killed him. At the same moment, his eye caught something white fluttering in the air from far away, walking and approaching the community. After several moments it was already in it and it was possible to see the figure of a man with a white turban wrapped around his head and riding on a horse. The father's heart began to pound strongly and a thousand thoughts passed through his head at the same time. All at once, his thoughts became frazzled and his mind was shaken. At the same moment, the voice of the Arab was heard who saw a Jew from the town. He addressed him: Hello, 'oh hawaja (Arabic word for sir). I found this Jewish boy (here he turned to Avreme'le who stood by his side) lying far from the community and I came here to return him; here, take him and return him.' And when Avreme'le's parents tried to thank the Arab and reward him, he did not want to tarry for even a moment. In the blink of an eye, he mounted his horse once more and galloped off to the dunes, until it was almost impossible to see him any more, and only a shining white dot could be seen for a long time in the dark of the night ... For many days, Avreme'le still felt the effects of that event. For a month, he lay sick in bed, and even after that he did not rush to leave home. Later, however, Avreme'le would tell the story of that event with special enthusiasm, feeling himself to be a hero and someone who had been miraculously saved by the grace of God." (331, **Our Childhood 5**, 1997, p.247).

A story about Abu Hamis, the "most famous seaman in Jaffa." The young Ben-Zion loved the sea and became caught in a storm with his boat. From afar, he sees Abu Hamis' boat. "He came to help us. I knew that he would not let us drown. The rope was thrown, brave arms clutched Ben-Zion and Abu Hamis mumbled: "My God, why have you made me crazy – am I not your beloved?"

The story is illustrated by the picture below:



(78, **I Understand**, Reading Comprehension, 1993, p.222).

A Wrong Suspicion

A boy walking in the field encounters an Arab. At first, he is afraid of him. "An Arab! Perhaps he is an infiltrator? Maybe a bandit? After all, he could murder him! He would certainly murder him here, in the field, when there is no other living person around. He must flee ... The Arab explains to him how to reach Hadera. He calms himself with the song, 'An Old Arab, Limping and Wretched.' On his way, he falls and twists his ankle. He could slaughter me like a 'lamb.' 'Why did you run in the field? I told you to walk to the corn. There is a path there.' Eran calmed down. Now it seemed to him that the danger was not as great as he had first thought. The old Arab sounded friendly. Now he was certain that the old man would not harm him, since if he had wanted to, he would not have volunteered to bring him help. The old man pops the bone back into place and feeds the boy. Eran was ashamed of his previous fear. How could I suspect this nice, old man? What an idiot I am! The boy who ran away from home offers to stay with the old man and help him guard the watermelon field."

(27, **New Israel Reader**, for fifth grade, pp 82-86).

"Kibbutz Abu Isa" is not marked on a map of the Hefer Valley, but it exists. It is sort of a tiny nature reserve in the Hefer Valley, which disappeared and no longer exists. On the eve of the establishment of the state, when all the Arabs in that valley one day uprooted themselves and moved eastward, toward Tulkarem, Abu Isa did not move. He remained. He is the last remnant of the Arabs of that entire area. Abu Isa works as a forest ranger for the Jewish National Fund. He is a good neighbor, a pursuer of peace. If someone from one of the nearby kibbutzim needs a loan – all roads lead to Abu Isa. It's the only kibbutz that gives a loan to anyone who asks, without interest or a note."

(26, **New Israel Reader**, for third grade, 1986, pp.92-93).

The Best Advice

There is a story about the members of a kibbutz who approach Abu Hassan, an Arab hunter, a "splendid figure," with a request that he give them advice on how to hunt the wolves who attacked the kibbutz' sheep and killed them cruelly. The story describes the joint hunt that took place out of cooperation between the kibbutz members and the Arab. (29, **New Israel Reader**, for fourth grade, 1986, pp.110-114).

A story is told about Abu Rafa, a villager from Beit Netufa, who, although he did not study in school and conducted no geological research, every year could still predict – without fail – whether rain would fall or whether there would be a drought. He was expert at knowing the different types of soil. "Abu Rafa's experience is equal to many years of study at an agricultural school." The narrator and his father consult with Abu Rafa every year about the coming planting season and the various types of soil, according to the estimated amount of water that will fall in those places.

(26, **New Israel Reader**, for third grade, 1986, pp.107-108).

There is a story about Jews who immigrated to Israel during the period when the Turks ruled the land. They arrived at the Jaffa coast in a ship. Arabs came up on deck to take the suitcases. "They were quite alarming... they acted extremely wild and I was sure that they were pirates." One Arab led the narrator to the pile of suitcases and told him to go down a rope ladder to the boat, where Arab seamen awaited him. "I calmed down. I understood that I was dealing with Arab seamen and not with pirates."

(170, **Journey to the Kibbutz**, 1991, pp.50-51).

In a history book about the first settlements, several stories are related about the displays of affection and help given by Arabs to Jews. One story about new immigrants tells of an Arab who sold a Jew "a brownish-black liquid. The man called to a girl: 'Come here, girl. You are surely thirsty. Have a little drink.' 'No thank you!, I said, and I didn't even touch the glass. I thought it was poison. The Jew apparently understood me. 'It's O.K. girl, don't be afraid. It's date juice. Good, sweet juice ... I drank some of the juice and I enjoyed it very much'."

(188, **Journey to the First Settlements**, 1992, p.18).

Saving Life

"Mira'le, what happened to you? What are you doing here?"

You won't believe it, but that was the Arab neighbor woman, the wife of the Arab peasant farmer who taught my father how to plow. She was standing in her yard next to the oven. When she saw me, she invited me in. I went inside. I found her baking pita bread in the oven. The thin dough became a thin, fragrant pita. It was the best smelling pita in the world. The pita smell was driving me crazy, to the point where I almost fainted from it, but I did not say anything, since I did not enter her home to beg for handouts. The neighbor was very nice to me; apparently she liked me and she gave me a pita. At that moment, it was difficult to resist. I forgot all of the manners I learned from my mother, grabbed the pita from her hand, stuffed it into my mouth and I ate and cried, cried and ate – because hunger is a terrible thing. The worst thing in the world. The neighbor understood that I was hungry. She offered me another pita and added a little onion, and that was the best thing that happened to me that day."

In the same story, the girl's father tells of how Arabs saved him from drowning: "I disappeared because of the flood. The rainwater filled the river bed and it was impossible to cross. Once, I did manage to cross the river, I even went into it. But the Arab passengers who sat on the side and waited for the flood to be over were afraid, from what they saw. They were certain that the flow of water would wash me away and that ultimately I would drown. Then they jumped into the river after me and pulled me out, and they made me wait. That's how I sat for three days and waited, until the flood had subsided."

(188, **Journey to the First Settlements**, 1992, pp.66-68).

There is a story about a friendship between a Jewish child and an Arab child in a mixed neighborhood in Baghdad, in which Christians, Muslims and Jews lived. Over time, the Christians and Muslims abandoned the neighborhood and only one Muslim family remain, that of Naif, whose father was a senior police officer.

Naif tells his Jewish friend, Nuri, that his family is about to leave the neighborhood and move to "a neighborhood where there are no Jews. 'Nuri, all of you are about to be slaughtered ... you have no chance ... you will all be slaughtered. They're going to kill all of you – that's what my father says.' 'So what do you want from me?', Nuri asked. Naif stood silently. Vaguely, he tried to say only one word, but it was precisely that word that was missing from his vocabulary. No one from his family, no one of his people, had taught it. His entire being tried, with complete honesty, to say 'I'm sorry,' but his people generally said that only when surrendering, when the sword was already poised over the neck, only to ask for mercy. At that time, Naif did not seek mercy, rather he wanted to express love for his friend. At the same time, the word was etched in burning letters on his honest face."

(27, **New Israel Reader**, for fifth grade, 1987, pp.176-180).

16. Defining the Arab-Jewish Conflict as a National One

Most history and geography textbooks used in the state-run religious and secular schools present the development of Arab opposition to Jewish settlement in Eretz Yisrael as a conflict that began as local, unorganized clashes that gradually took on the character of a national conflict. All the books explain that the two main issues that prompted Arab opposition were the purchase of land by Jews and the immigration of Jews, whose numbers increased steadily. Except for one book, all present the Arabs as the recalcitrant side, which prevented compromise and conciliation with the national movement of the Jews, e.g. Zionism. One book presents the various positions among the Jews, including an uncompromising position that sought to obtain control over the entire territory.

A history book used in the general stream presents students with two approaches to the question of when the conflict began to be a national conflict. However, in principle, the conflict is presented in this book as a conflict with a nationalist Arab movement.

“As to the nature of relations between Jews and Arabs during the First Aliyah, there are two main approaches: the first – because the Arab national movement was in its infancy (there is still no concept of national consciousness among the Arabs of Eretz Yisrael), the relations had hardly any nationalist slant. There were, however, more than a few clashes, which involved Arab attacks against the moshavot (the new small towns which were founded by the new immigrants) but these were motivated not by national causes, but broke out over blood feuds, guards, borders, flocks and an inability to understand the language and customs. The purchase of land by Jews distanced Arab fellahin (Arab farmers) from their land. There were also many cases in which fraternal relations prevailed between Jews and Arabs.

First Opposition in 1891

The second approach: it is possible to discern nationalist signs in the relationship between the Yishuv [The Jews in Palestine before the establishment of the state of Israel] and the Arabs. Already then, the Arabs began to fear the Jews would take over their lands. In 1891, a delegation of Arabs from Eretz Yisrael traveled to Constantinople to complain to the sultan that the Jews were “stealing” Arab lands. Many fellahin lacked a national consciousness, but there was a limited circle of urban intellectuals that carried within it the seeds of Arab nationalism”.

From that point on, this book uniformly adopts the term “the Palestinian National Movement.” The Second Aliyah, according to this same book, marked the beginning of the “crystallization of Palestinian ideology. This followed the publication of the works of Najib Azuri, one of the most important intellectuals who wrote about Arab national positions in the early twentieth century. His work combined anti-Semitism for its own sake with fears of a Jewish takeover of the entire world... The anti-Zionist Arab press advocated seeing Zionism as the main danger confronting the Arabs. In other words, the conflict now focused on the national level.

After the First World War, there were two prominent trends in the Palestinian national movement of Arabs of Eretz Yisrael (Palestine): the first – an attempt to establish a dialogue between the leaders of the Arab national movement and of the Zionist movement. The second – nurturing the dream of ‘Greater Syria’ under the leadership of an independent Arab king.

The first trend was evident in the meeting between Weizman and Feisal, except that the Arab movement was quick to distance itself from the agreement ... Between 1922-1928 the Palestinian national movement was to a large extent paralyzed for two reasons: ‘the tough rule of the British High Commissioner, Lord Fromer, and the internal competition between the Husseini and Nashashibi families... the 1929 riots created a broader and more populist base for the Palestinian national movement, as many Arabs joined then... they radicalized its position.’

(75, **Zionism, The Jewish People in Recent Generations**, Part A: 1882-1939, 1993, p.56, 92, 121, 122, 132 134).

Another textbook covering the history of the Middle East (and not the history of Zionism or of the conflict) reinforces the view that up until the First World War no separate nationalism developed in Eretz Yisrael: the Ottoman Empire was a Muslim empire and its ruler – the sultan – also served as the caliph (i.e. the head of Muslim believers). Therefore, the Ottoman Empire was for a long time considered the natural framework for the coexistence of Arab nations, whose connection to the Muslim religion was strong, whereas secular Arab nationalist consciousness had not yet stirred within them. Under the influence of European nationalist movements, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, in some Arab countries a kind of cultural-spiritual awakening was sensed that could serve as a focal point for the development of an Arab national consciousness. However until the First World War no notable Arab nationalist movement formed anywhere. The overwhelming majority of the Arab public remained loyal to the Ottoman Empire and to the idea of an Arab-Ottoman partnership which was based on foundations of Muslim solidarity’.

(314, **Basic Features in the History of the Middle East**, 1986, p.195).

Another book describes the Arabs’ attitude to Zionism as “political opposition” and it cites several examples of such opposition starting from 1891.

“Already at the outset of the Zionist enterprise, there arose political opposition to it on the part of Arab residents. It seems that the first public expression of it came in 1891. In the spring of that year, several Arab dignitaries from Jerusalem sent a petition to the central government in Constantinople demanding an end to the immigration of Jews to the land and to their land purchases ... In 1900, the Tiberias District Governor, Emir Amin Arslan, objected to the purchase of land in Lower Galilee by the Jewish Colonization Association because, in his opinion, they were likely in the future ‘to change the national character of the district.’

“Arab opposition to Zionists who settled in Israel began appearing more forcefully in 1905-1906. In 1905, Najib Azuri published his book, *The Awakening of the Arab Nation in Turkish Asia*, in Paris. This book is considered one of the harbingers of Arab nationalism. In the introduction to his book, Azuri predicted: ...two important phenomena, identical in nature, yet nevertheless contradictory, which until now have

not attracted much attention, are now being revealed in Turkish Asia: they are the revival of the Arab nation and the concealed effort of the Jews to reestablish the ancient kingdom of Israel. These two movements are destined to struggle in perpetuity until one of them overcomes the other...

“Genuine anti-Zionist public activity started with the Young Turks revolt. The leaders of this revolt, who declared an open regime and announced elections to the first Turkish parliament, allowed, among other things, freedom to associate and freedom of the press. This opened the era of the Arab press in Eretz Yisrael, and it moved to the forefront of the fight against Zionism. The papers most notable for their prominent anti-Zionist line were two Christian papers: the Haifa-based *Al-Carmel* and the Jaffa-based *Filastin*. *Filastin* (on 16.9.1911) called on the Ottoman authorities to ‘fulfill their obligation and not allow Jewish immigrants to remain in the country.’ Articles in *Al-Carmel* demanded an end to all Zionist activity. The anti-Zionist propaganda which increased following the Young Turks revolt, peaked between 1911-1913. Another source of anti-Zionist activity was the Arab nationalist organizations which were set up at that time and were aimed at preventing the fulfillment of Zionist aspirations. Nevertheless, these positions were accepted only by a small number of urban intellectuals and even in urban centers no consistent hostility toward Zionism had evolved. Occasionally, anti-Zionist papers such as *Filastin* printed appreciative comments about the accomplishments of the Zionist enterprise in Eretz Yisrael, but as a whole, during that period were planted the seeds of hostility which yielded their fruits in the coming years.”

(299, **The World and the Jews in Recent Generations**, Part a: 1870–1920, 1998 p.228).

From Local Clashes to a National Conflict

Many books stress that the background to the start of the Israeli-Arab conflict is land acquisitions. Some of the books describe the transition from a dispute over land to a dispute that took on a national character.

“Many problems emerged over the purchases of land by Jews. The Jews purchased the lands from the owners, the effendis, who lived in the large cities in Syria and Lebanon. But the ones who actually lived on the lands were the Arab fellahin. As a result of the Jews’ purchasing of the land, the tenants had to leave and this prompted clashes between Jews and Arabs. Over time, the Arabs’ fear of the Zionist movement increased and the expressions of opposition took on a nationalist character. At this time, two companies formed in the country, one belonging to Arabs, most of whom lived in villages in a tribal structure and the other belonging to Jews, who came from Europe and wanted to integrate into life in the land. The Arabs in Eretz Yisrael saw how the Jews were establishing for themselves an independent organization in the new settlements. They set up an independent life and looked after all their needs, with the help of Baron Rothschild, the Jewish Colonization Association and the Zionist Organization. They set up courts that discussed civil matters and did not need the Ottoman courts. They also set up their own bank – The Anglo-Palestine Bank – and developed an independent education network for their children. The Jewish Yishuv played a significant role in developing the economy of Eretz Yisrael. The new settlers used new agricultural methods and substantially increased the yields of the fields and

vineyards beyond what the Arabs obtained. The improved methods showed that the renewed Jewish Yishuv had economic and technological abilities. The Jews were seen by their Arab neighbors as having high economic and political status. They thought that the Jews could, with their wealth, buy up all of Eretz Yisrael and dispossess them of their land. In light of all this, the Arabs' fear of the Zionist movement increased. The more established the new Jewish Yishuv became, the more expressions of opposition there were, which had previously been only local in nature, i.e., the conflict with Jews over land acquired a nationalist character. The fight was not between an Arab village and a Jewish settlement, rather it was a comprehensive conflict between all Jews in Eretz Yisrael and all Arabs there."

(160, **From Conservatism to Progress**, history for eighth grade, 1998, pp.368, 370).

Most books stress the Arabs' vehement opposition to Zionism from its outset and cite various quotes. Najib Azuri's remarks are repeated in an eighth grade history textbook used in the state-run schools and it also contains other quotes from him:

"The expressions of Arab nationalism and along with that the opposition to the renewed Jewish settlement efforts intensified in 1908 after the Young Turks revolt in Turkey deposed Sultan Abd el-Hamid II. The first to express objections to Zionism and to Jewish immigration were the Arab papers *Al-Carmel*, which was printed in Haifa, and *Filastin*, which was printed in Jaffa. The following passage containing a call to the Ottoman authorities appeared in *Filastin* on September 16, 1911 to the Ottoman authorities:

'To fulfill their obligation and not allow Jewish immigrants to remain in the land.' In sharply worded articles, these papers attacked the Zionists infiltration into Eretz Yisrael. The candidate to the Ottoman parliament, Raam al-Nashashibi, said in his campaign propaganda: 'If I am elected as a delegate, I will devote all of my efforts, day and night, to eliminating the damage and danger facing us from the Zionists and Zionism.'

"In 1914, al-Nashashibi was elected to the parliament by the largest majority. In Haifa, an Arab nationalist organization was set up to organize an economic boycott of the Jews. In Jaffa, the Ottoman Patriotic Party called for an end to the Zionist movement. It should be noted that the opponents of Zionism were a small group of intellectuals. There were, however, other intellectuals who praised the achievements of the Zionist enterprise."

(160, **From Conservatism to Progress**, history for eighth grade, 1998, pp. 370, 372).

Nationalist Arabic Newspapers

Another book directly quotes Arab reactions from an Arabic newspaper. There is a clear indication of Arab recalcitrance toward the establishment of a Jewish political entity in Eretz Yisrael in this quote.

"Newspapers with a nationalist slant were established in Eretz Yisrael and they called for an end to Jewish immigration to it and a ban on the sale of land to Jews. It is easy to imagine the reaction of these circles to the idea of establishing a Jewish Home in Eretz Yisrael.

"An Arab paper wrote: 'Palestine is a pure Arab country... surrounded on all sides by pure Arab countries. The national yearnings started emerging and intensifying among

the Arab nation that resides contiguously in its territory. The only people in these Arab countries are Arabs... there is no possibility of another people, with an independent language, different customs and traditions and a contradictory political ambition living with them'.”

(227, **Zionism in Practice**, 1984, p.62).

Another history book used in the state-run schools states:

"The first clashes that erupted between the Arabs and the Jews resembled those that occurred among the villagers themselves: they were against a background of land purchases, grazing rights, water use and the like. At the same time, in several instances, there were good neighborly relations between residents of Arab villages and Jewish settlers: Arabs found work among the Jews and trade relations developed between the two groups.

“However, once the Jews starting purchasing land the situation changed: most of the land was acquired not from the fellahin who had worked them for generations, but from the owners registered in the Tabu land registry, traders and money lenders who charged interest, who usually lived in the big cities or even in other countries. The dispossessed fellahin blamed the Jews for their situation. In June 1891, Arab dignitaries from Jerusalem sent a telegram to the Grand Vazir (equal to Prime Minister) in Constantinople in which they demanded that the entry of Jews from Russia into Israel be blocked and that they be prohibited from buying land.

Over the years, the Arabs in the land started to understand that the national aspirations of the Zionist movement in Eretz Yisrael might clash with their own ambitions. The opposition then took on a political and ideological veneer”.

(7, **The Nineteenth Century**, history for eighth grade, 1998, p.144).

“During the years of the British Mandate, the Palestinian Arab community was an absolute majority in Eretz Yisrael. The Arabs of Eretz Yisrael, like the entire Arab world, were still a traditional society. The concept of nationalism did not usually reach them and therefore no leadership bodies, modern political infrastructure and education system which would have molded national consciousness developed among them. Most of the community was controlled by powerful, wealthy families, and the feeling of cooperation among them was religious (Muslim) and ethnic (Arab), without the modern nationalist component.”

(36, **The Twentieth Century – the Century that Overturned World Orders**, 1994, p.199).

A Struggle Over the Same Piece of Land

The same author writes as follows in a book published in 1999:

“The Jews and the Arabs were two national communities struggling over the same piece of land and the British could not establish peace between them. The Jews continued to work to increase Jewish immigration and settlement and the Arabs opposed that...”

During the 1930s, Arab nationalist movements evolved all over the Middle East. Many of the Arabs of Eretz Yisrael also began formulating a national consciousness – in other words, the perception that they are not just part of the larger Arab nation, but are also Palestinians, residents of Palestine. Therefore, there are some who believe

that the 1930s saw the start of the fight over the land between nationalist movements: the Jewish-Zionist movement and the Arab-Palestinian movement. The Palestinian Arabs were still not organized into political movements and institutions as the Zionist movement was. A majority of them, who were uneducated fellahin, were influenced by religious and traditional preachers, who saw the Zionist settlement in Eretz Yisrael as a desecration and defilement of Muslim holy sites and contradictory to Arab tradition. The Zionist settlement effort was perceived by many Arabs as undermining their very existence in the country. This view of Zionism prevented from the outset any chance of cooperation between Jews and Arabs – despite the efforts of the British to promote cooperation between the two communities. As the flow of Jewish immigrants increased in the 1920s and 1930s, so too did the hostility to Zionism and hostile acts perpetrated against Jews increase. Leaders of the Yishuv understood already then that they were not settling in an empty land, and that they must deal with the Arabs' opposition to the Zionist movement. Some considered establishing a bi-national state, others sought to reach a compromise and divide the land between the two peoples. And there were still others who clung to an unflinching battle for the entire land and the creation of a Jewish majority.”

(6, **The Twentieth Century – On the Threshold of Tomorrow**, history for ninth grade, 1999, pp. 44, 85).

17. Arab Positions on the Arab-Israeli Conflict

This chapter will examine how Arab motives over the course of the conflict, from its beginning until today, are presented to Israeli students, including the Arabs' objectives in each phase of their struggle against the Jews. In examining the textbooks, it is quite noticeable that there is a wide range of explanations and approaches in analyzing Arab strategy and the interests of the Arabs in Eretz Yisrael and the Arab countries. The conflict is explained in religious, national or cultural terms. Some of the explanations relate to the question of land ownership. There are also those which present the Arab leadership as being motivated by an eternal hatred which is independent of historical circumstances and cannot be altered.

It should be stressed that, without exception, all of the textbooks start with the fundamental assumption that the Jews have a right to settle in Eretz Yisrael and they examine the Arabs' behavior from a Zionist perspective. The differences between the various explanations do not stem from different fundamental assumptions. The various assumptions differ from each other in the extent of the detail, accuracy and readiness to present the Arab positions to the student as fairly as possible, even without identifying with them.

The following descriptions are given with a certain degree of detail, in order to show that Arab national desires are not ignored and that the development of Arab nationalism emerged not only in response to the development of the Jewish Yishuv but also against the backdrop of the growth of nationalist movements in the Arab countries and opposition to the British.

Some books present the verbatim text of decisions by Arab political institutions, such as the Arab Higher Committee, thereby giving the student the Arab position using primary sources. In contrast, other books simply write that the Arabs "opposed" a move or certain plan, "were angered," "became angry," etc.

The 1920-1921 Disturbances

The prevailing explanation in the books is that the disturbances were a reaction to the Balfour Declaration and an attempt to prevent their fulfillment. "The verbal violence on the part of the Arabs crossed over to other avenues as it became clear that the British and the Zionists indeed had serious intentions of fulfilling the Balfour Declaration. In early 1920, demonstrations of frenzied mobs took place in Jerusalem, Jaffa, Haifa and other cities. Within a short time, the countries of the Entente were about to convene to decide the fate of the Middle East areas. Arab pressure was meant to derail any Zionist attempt to win international approval for the Balfour Declaration."

(299, **The World and the Jews in Recent Generations**, part a: 1870-1920, p.285).

"During the four years following publication of the Balfour Declaration, the Arabs attacked the Jews and their settlements several times, and caused them great losses. It

became clear that the Arabs would not accept the establishment of a Jewish 'national home.' The Arabs even began to organize themselves and to establish institutions of their own that would lead the struggle against the Jews."

(77, **Homeland** – Chapters in the History of the Jewish Yishuv in the Eretz Yisrael in the New Era, part b, p.22).

Another explanation adds the struggle for control of Syria:

"On the eve of the decision over the fate of Eretz Yisrael at the San Remo Conference (1920), bloody riots organized by the Arabs broke out in the country. These riots were linked both to the Arab-French struggle for control of Syria and to the struggle against the Jewish Yishuv. In the context of the Arab-French struggle, attacks on Jews occurred in the month of Adar in the Upper Galilee, which was supposed to be within the sphere of the French Mandate. These attacks ended with the fall of Tel Hai. In the month of Nisan, various demonstrations took place in the country, in which the Arabs protested against the 'plan to turn Palestine into a Jewish National Home.' The demonstrations turned into bloody riots."

(227, **Zionism Tested in Action, 1914-1939**, 5744, 1984, pp.65-66).

The Arabs' demands are presented in a quote from the Arab Action Committee's decisions. The quote has great importance because it gives the student the Arab position as it was formulated by them, and not through interpretation by the book's author.

"Churchill refused to accede to the Arabs' demands and announced that the Balfour Declaration and Jewish immigration should be viewed as one of the facts established with the end of the war. The Arabs responded with anti-British demonstrations and bloody rioting against the Jews the Arabs said: We demand –

- a. The revocation of the Jewish National Home;
- b. The creation in Palestine of a national government responsible to a legislature that will be elected by the population of Palestine that resided in it before the war;
- c. A halt to Jewish immigration;
- d. That Palestine not be separated from other Arab lands;

(from the demands of the Arab Action Committee)

(227, **Zionism Tested in Action, 1914-1939**, 5744, 1984, p.72).

The 1929 Riots

Most of the books present the riots of 1929 as the beginning of the national conflict, despite the fact that it began in an incident related to a religious matter surrounding the Western Wall. The following explanation reflects the explanation presented in most of the history books:

"In the 1920s the national confrontation between the country's Jews and Arabs worsened. For the purpose of this confrontation, the Mufti, Haj Amin al-Husseini, exploited the issue of the Western Wall. The dispute over the rights of the Jews at the Wall was used in order to ignite the fire of political, chauvinistic nationalism... the Mufti's journal published the following: 'The Muslims of Palestine are determined to sacrifice everyone and everything in order to preserve their religious rights. It was enough for them that their national rights were stripped from them.' The Mufti exploited Jerusalem's holiness to mobilize the Muslim world in support of the national

struggle of the country's Arabs. He gave the struggle against Zionism an all-Muslim, religious hue."

(355, **This is Jerusalem, Part Two: From the Crusader Period to Our Time**, for high school students, 1993, pp.196-197).

Another explanation adds an additional element to this version: the Mufti's desire to bolster his standing vis-a-vis other forces in Arab society.

"The Mufti of Jerusalem was the living spirit of the Supreme Muslim Council. This body ... together with the other institution – the Arab Higher Committee, came out openly against Zionism in the context of religious preaching. Verses from the Koran accompanied the anti-Zionist explanations and warned of Zionism's danger to Islam. Thus, it was possible for the council, headed by the Mufti, to enflame the passions not only of the Arabs in Palestine but also the Muslim world, with the claim that Zionism threatened to take over Islam's holy places. Why was the Mufti so assiduous in spreading anti-Zionist vitriol? The Mufti's standing was in decline due to strong opposition from the Nashashibis, and he had to arouse the apathetic Arab nationalism and bolster his standing. Thus, he believed that the Palestinian national movement had to be extracted from the mud. By turning Islam's holy places and Jerusalem into the heart of the conflict, he succeeded in convincing the Arab world of the truth of his claims, thereby strengthening his standing."

(75, **Zionism, The Jewish People in Recent Generations, 1882-1939**, 1989, p.134).

A ninth grade history book states that the Mufti was "one of the leaders of the Arab opposition to the Zionist enterprise. This opposition was a combination of modern nationalism and religious and community arguments."

(6, **The Twentieth Century – On the Verge of Tomorrow**, history for ninth grade, 1999, p.85).

Another book describes the background to the 1929 riots in general terms:

"General Incitement and Murder

“At the end of the 1920s, the Arabs' opposition to the Jewish Yishuv and building of the country grew. Arab leaders, headed by the Mufti, Haj Amin al-Husseini, supported this opposition. They spread rumors to the effect that the Jews wanted to 'take over' the mosques on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, which are holy to Muslims around the world, and worked to undermine the Jews' generations-old rights to pray next to the Western Wall. British administration officials stood by”.

"On Tisha B'Av 5689 (August 1929), Jewish prayers were held, as usual, next to the Western Wall. At the same time, youths demonstrated near the Wall, in order to mark the Jews' right to the Wall. The next day, the Arabs set out on a violent demonstration. Tension mounted daily." (77, **Homeland – Chapters in the History of the Jewish Yishuv in Eretz Yisrael in the New Era**, part b, p.47).

A more simplistic explanation focuses only on the conflict over the Wall:

"In the summer of 1929, in the wake of a conflict over the Jews' rights next to the Western Wall, the Arabs began a series of attacks on the Jewish Yishuv."

(227, **Zionism Tested in Action, 1914-1939**, 5744, 1984, p.144).

According to another explanation, the reason for the disturbances was the Arab leadership's fear of losing its influence.

"The Arabs viewed the building up of the country and the expansion of the Yishuv as a thorn. True, the great majority of Arabs benefited from this development, and many of them came to Eretz Yisrael from neighboring countries because of the good economic conditions of the country. Only the Arab leaders, sheikhs and effendis, the landowners who became rich at the expense of the Arab peasant, who worked much and earned little, feared that their wealth and influence would be lost if the Yishuv continued to develop in this fashion.

"As a result, Arab leaders began to incite the masses against the Jews. They spread false accusations about the Jews' plan to take over the Mosque of Omar, on the site where the Holy of Holies once stood, about Jews who, supposedly, attack Arabs and kill them, etc. After they fanned hatred toward Jews in this manner, they waited for an opportunity to embark on a pogrom against them."

(20, **History of Recent Generations**, vol. b: From the First World War to the Six Day War, 1997, p.134).

Extremist and Moderate Arabs

One book makes a distinction between extremist Arabs and moderate Arabs who protected Jews in the Hebron Massacre. This explanation deviates from the accepted explanations in most of the books, in which Arabs are always referred to in inclusive language. In addition, the book highlights the behavior of the Jews' "nationalistic circles" (as it calls them) during the riots.

"The Muslims who feared Jewish 'ownership' of the Western Wall, had elicited an assurance from the Ottoman government that, although the Jews are indeed permitted to visit the Western Wall and pray to their heart's desire, they are prevented from bringing benches and dividers there, especially on Yom Kippur, when the Jews insisted on bringing benches and a divider (to separate men and women). Jewish nationalistic circles saw this ban as a national humiliation, while the Wall symbolized national rebirth for them. In practice, the status quo in the Western Wall plaza was maintained, Muslim homes came to within a few meters of the Western Wall, and occasionally the Jews would bring benches. The British did not care, the Arabs sufficed with protests and that was all.

"On the eve of Yom Kippur 1928 (5688), passions flared. The British removed the dividers that the Jews had brought, an action that greatly angered the Jews, primarily among the nationalistic (Revisionist) circles. While the Jewish public protested, the Arabs raised a loud cry that the Jews were about to take over the Haram al-Sherif and incited to a 'holy war' to save the Islamic holy places. The Muslims did not suffice with incitement, but rather even began taking provocative actions, such as constructing buildings next to the Wall, enabling animals to cross next to the Wall, as long as it disturbed the Jews' prayers.

"In the summer of 1929 Jewish nationalistic circles responded by establishing 'Committees for the Wall' in order to protest not only against the Muslims and the British, but also against the Yishuv's institutions, which took a moderate position.

"In August 1929 (the month of Av, 5689), the tension reached its climax, both by Muslim propaganda, which cried out to save Islamic holy places, and by members of Betar in Jerusalem, who waved a flag in the Western Wall plaza and opposite the Zionist Executive offices, and on their way back shouted nationalistic slogans and calls against the government.

"On Friday, 23 August, the riots broke out. A frenzied Arab mob, incited by sermons at the mosques, erupted from the Old City toward the Damascus Gate and the Jaffa Gate, looting everything that came to hand without hindrance from the British ... The British sent reinforcements only after three days and halted the rioting in Jerusalem, but riots had already spread to the entire country. First was Hebron. Six hundred Jews, mostly Sephardic, lived in Hebron, and they were proud of the good relations that prevailed between them and Hebron's extremist Arabs, and they did not heed the warning from the Haganah in Jerusalem that riots were liable to harm them. The Hebron Jews rejected any offer of help, claiming that this could anger Hebron's Arabs. Warnings from moderate Arabs also had no effect. On 24 August, the rioters from Jerusalem began to arrive. They were joined by many Hebron Arabs, who began going from house to house and killing Jews. Sixty Jews were murdered in Hebron, dozens of homes were burned and looted. Without the brave act of a British officer and the courage of moderate Arabs, who protected Jews in their homes, the number of those murdered would have been much higher. The Jewish community of Hebron ceased to exist." (75, **Zionism – The People of Israel in Recent Generations, 1882-1939**, 1989, pp.133-134).

The 1936-1939 Disturbances or: The Arab Revolt

In April 1936, rioting erupted in Jaffa that began a three-year period of violent clashes. The Jews call this period "disturbances," while the Arabs called it the "Arab Revolt." Most of the books note this period as being extremely important in the formation of the Palestinian national movement, and emphasize that "the disturbances deviated from the context of a spontaneous outbreak of incited Arabs and assumed the form of an organized war". (20, **The History of Recent Generations**, vol. b, 1997, p.139).

Another book adopts the terms "revolt" and "rebels" in describing the events. "The revolt began with a general strike, which was supposed to harm the entire economy and pressure the British to halt Jewish immigration, to prohibit the purchase of land and to establish a national representative government of Palestinian Arabs ... the Arab national struggle became an armed insurrection led by military men. The revolt reached its height in 1937. Military governors were murdered, Jewish settlements were attacked, roads turned into a battlefield and travel by road became dangerous. The entire country was paralyzed and many areas fell into rebel hands. Ultimately, the revolt was suppressed by joint forces of the British and the Jews. In early 1939, the country was quiet once more. However, the disturbances emphasized the depth of hatred and hostility between two movements that existed in the country, and showed that there was no easy and simple way to reconcile them – at least not in the short term." (6, **The Twentieth Century – On the Verge of Tomorrow**, history for ninth grade, 1999, p.86).

“The Arabs began to organize. The Arab parties, whose leaders quarreled frequently, reached reconciliation among themselves and a joint leadership was established – the Arab Higher Committee, headed by the Mufti, Haj Amin al-Husseini. The Arabs decided to begin a general strike – halting all economic activity, stopping transportation, closing businesses, offices and stores, until the British government accepted their demands: prohibiting Jewish immigration, prohibiting the sale of land to Jews and the establishment of Arab rule in the country. They announced that if their demands were not met, they would declare a civil revolt: they would stop paying taxes, stop working in the government and police, and would begin acts of terrorism against the British government and against the Jews. This time, unlike the previous disturbances, these were not outbreaks of murder and robbery that ceased after a few days. This time an Arab revolt was declared against the British, and action was planned for a long time. And indeed, the Arab community halted its economic activity.” (77, **Homeland**, b, 1998, p. 65).

One book presents the Arab Higher Committee's decisions verbatim. Quoting directly enables the student to place himself on the other side and allows him to judge its behavior for himself. This quote also strengthens the fact that, this time, what is being discussed is an organized revolt and not incited "gangs" acting in sporadic fashion.

"In April 1936, local national committees were organized in all the Arab cities around the Isthiklal (Independence) Party, and the Arab Higher Committee was established. The committee declared a general strike that would paralyze economic life in the country. Its purpose: to exert pressure on the British government to fulfill the committee's demands:

1. Prohibit Jewish immigration;
2. Prohibit the transfer of land to Jews;
3. Establish a national government that would be responsible to a representative council.

'If these demands are not met' – the Arab Higher Committee announced – 'the general strike will continue, until the British government fundamentally changes its current policy, the first step of this being the halting of Jewish immigration'." (227, **Zionism Tested in Action, 1914-1939**, 5744, 1984, pp.125-126).

The Assistance of Italy and Germany

Several history books add a new element in describing the disturbances: the assistance given to the Arab revolt by the fascist regimes in Italy and Germany.

The following explanation repeats the connection with the fascist regimes and adds the context of the development of the nationalist movements in the Arab countries: "The growth and increasing strength of the Jewish Yishuv in Eretz Yisrael created fear among the Arabs; they feared that if this process continued, it would not be long before the Jews were the majority in the country and, with the help of their economic cultural strength, take over all of Eretz Yisrael.

'Awaken and redeem yourselves' – called a Palestinian newspaper.
'The Egyptian leaders have awoken. Where are our leaders hiding?'

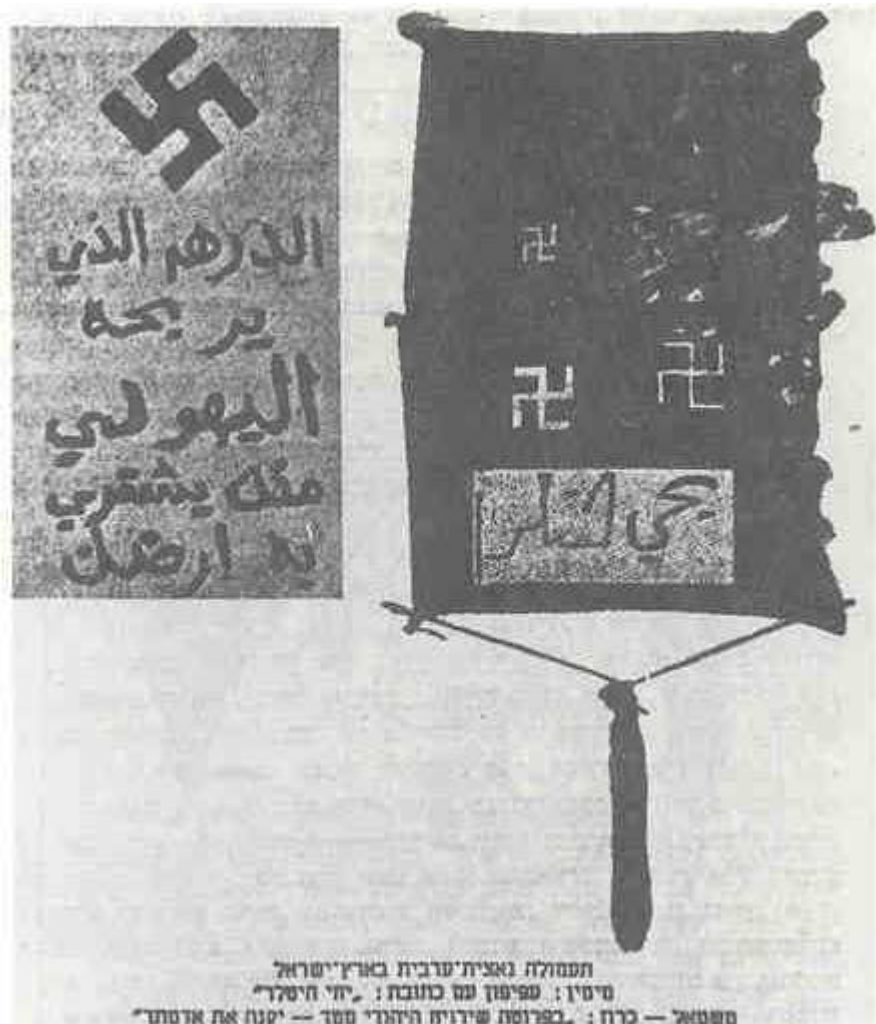
"In the neighboring countries – Egypt and Syria – the nationalist movement, helped by strikes and demonstrations, succeeded in forcing England and France to sign treaties that granted Egypt and Syria a considerable expansion of their independence. The Arab nationalist movement grew stronger and coalesced in every region of the eastern Mediterranean. This movement, which sought allies, was courted by Italy, which was interested in expanding its influence in the region after completing the conquest of Ethiopia in the autumn of 1935, and by Germany, which wanted a foothold in the region. The fear, the hopes and the chances for international support led to an expansion of the Arab nationalist movement and its taking root in the country, and the many members of the intelligentsia who joined it contributed to raising its level and prestige."

(227, **Zionism Tested in Action, 1914-1939**, 1984, pp.124, 125).

In this book one can find two examples of Nazi- Arabic propaganda in Palestine.

On right: "Long lives Hitler"

On Left: "The penny that the Jew earns, will buy with it your land"



(227, **Zionism Tested in Action, 1914 -1939**, 1984, p.171).

18. All or Nothing

The Arabs' Opposition to Partition of the Land of Israel to Two States

The Arabs' position regarding the partitioning of the country is presented in all of the books as a rejectionist position from the recommendations of the Peel Commission in 1937 to the UN resolution of November 1947. All of the historians and the authors of the textbooks are united in their opinion that the Arabs did not agree to having the country divided into an Arab state and a Jewish state, and they did not come to terms with the establishment of a Jewish state until the War of Independence. Since they demanded all of Eretz Yisrael for themselves and refused to give the Jews even part of it, they lost everything and did not even get the Arab state that was offered to them in the UN resolution.

One book also presents the various positions in the Jewish Yishuv (the Jewish population in Palestine before the establishment of the state) which was divided on the issue of consenting to partition. Following are a number of typical examples:

The Peel Commission, 1937

In the summer of 1937, the report of the Peel Commission, (the British commission established to investigate the situation in the country and named after its head, Lord William Peel), was published. The commission recommended that Eretz Yisrael be partitioned into two states, one Jewish the other Arab, and that a third section remain under British aegis. This was the first time that an official commission had proposed establishing, among other things, a Jewish state. Following is an examination of how the textbooks present the Arabs' position on this issue.

One explanation emphasizes the Arabs' opposition to the establishment of a Jewish state: "The Arabs expressed total opposition to the partition plan. Agreeing to a division of the country was, in their eyes, acceptance of the establishment of a Jewish state in Eretz Yisrael. In late September 1937, the Arab gangs resumed their activity. Their war lasted about two years". (77, **Homeland – History of the Jewish Yishuv in Eretz Yisrael in the New Era**, 1998, p.72).

Another explanation states, without going into any detail, that "the Arabs opposed this plan completely, and their war against the Jewish Yishuv and English rule was resumed". (20, **The History of Recent Generations**, vol.b, 1997, p.141).

Jews Against Partition of the Land of Israel

Alongside the Arabs' opposition, a ninth grade history book also presents the opposition of some Jews to the partition plan. Unlike other books, which place the blame for the rejection of the partition plan exclusively on the Arabs, this book presents a different version:

"The area of the Jewish state according to the report included about 20% of the area of Eretz Yisrael, since the number of Jews during that period was about a quarter of the

number of Arabs. The report also recommended limiting Jewish immigration to Eretz Yisrael ... the Arabs rejected the idea out of hand. From their standpoint, there was no room for recognizing the Jews' right to a part of the country.

The Jews were divided in their view of partition. The Right saw it as conceding Eretz Yisrael. Members of the Labor movement also rejected it, arguing that future borders should not be accepted before there is a Jewish majority in Eretz Yisrael. Others, who still believed in Arab-Jewish coexistence in the framework of a binational state, opposed a separation of the peoples. Many Zionists believed that the proposal should be rejected for practical reasons: the proposed Jewish state would not be able to absorb Jewish immigration and it would not be possible to defend its borders. The central personalities in the Zionist movement – Weizmann and Ben-Gurion – believed that the partition plan should in any case be accepted ... the Twentieth Zionist Congress accepted the principle of partition, but rejected the Peel Commission's partition proposal."

(6, **The Twentieth Century – On the Verge of Tomorrow**, history for ninth grade, 1999, pp.89-90).

The United Nations Resolution, 29 November 1947

All the books in all educational networks are unanimous in that the Arabs rejected the United Nations' decision of 29 November 1947 to partition Palestine, and that the Arabs prevented its implementation, while the Jews accepted it.

A book from the ultra-orthodox network for fourth and fifth grades states:

“When the United Nations declared the termination of the British Mandate and the independence of the inhabitants of the country [the Jews], the Arabs initiated murderous attacks on the Jewish Yishuv.”

(365. **The Good Land** – a textbook on the geography of Israel, for grades four-five, 1999, p.138)

A history book in the state-run network uses the term “a violent struggle” instead of “murderous attacks”:

“The Jewish Yishuv celebrated that night in the streets, but the Arabs saw the decision as a catastrophe and started a violent struggle for Eretz Yisrael.”

(6, **The Twentieth Century – on the verge of Tomorrow**, History for ninth grade, 1999, p.138)

The same author writes in another book:

“The Zionist movement and the Yishuv, with the exception of marginal groups accepted the partition plan gladly, but the Arab world and the leadership of the Arabs of Eretz Yisrael were against it. Immediately after the approval of the partition plan, the “State to be” was forced to struggle for its very existence. The British, who were still formally the rulers of Palestine could not (or did not want to) prevent attacks by the Arabs. The War of Independence of the Yishuv began before the official

Declaration of Independence as a bloody war between the Arabs of Eretz Yisrael and the Hebrew Yishuv”.

(36, **The Twentieth Century – The Century that Overturned World Order**, 1994, pp. 202-203)

Another history book in the state run network gives a similar explanation:

“The declared objective of the Arabs in the first period of the war [the War of Independence] was to sabotage the United Nations partition decision, and to prevent the establishment of a Jewish state in any part of the territory of Eretz Yisrael; and in the second period to bring about the collapse of the State which had already been established.”

(14, **From Exile to Independence**, the History of Israel in the Recent Generations, vol.b, 1990, p.252)

A language book in the state run network states:

“We were all happy about the U.N. Resolution that a Jewish State will be established after the Jews had not had a state of their own for almost two thousand years. After that it became clear to us that it is not so simple. The Arabs announced that they do not agree to this resolution and war broke out.

“The Arabs in Palestine, and with them the Arabs of the neighboring countries, declared that they will fight against us until the Resolution will be cancelled. At that time, there were few Jews in the country. The Arabs attacked us everywhere – in Jerusalem, in Tel-Aviv, in Haifa, in the kibbutzim, and mainly on the roads. Every day they shot at vehicles and killed people.”

(283, **Inter-relations – from Sentence to Conversation, from Word to Poem**, 1993, p 383)

19. Redemption vs. Dispossession

All the textbooks used in the state-run secular and religious education systems stress the issue of land purchases by Jews as the key issue in the Israeli-Arab conflict starting from the early days of Jewish settlement in Eretz Yisrael. The issue of immigration became a prominent one at a later stage, from the 1930s onward (on this subject, see the chapter on the conflict as a national conflict).

One of the books summarizes the subject of land by saying that what the Jews saw as "redeeming the land," the Arabs, from their point of view, saw as "land theft." The student is made conscious of the intensity of the problem and to its being one of the central roots of the conflict.

Landowners and Tenants

All of the books explain that the landowners were wealthy people who leased the land to tenants, who worked the land and paid the owners with a share of their crop yields.

A geography book that includes historical analysis explains that "the low level at which the land was tilled yielded small harvests and low incomes for the landowners, and they were inclined to sell the land to whoever made the highest offer... the sale of land to Jews created a class of peasant farmers who lost the right to work the lands on which they dwelt. In practice, it was the Ottoman land law of 1858 which led to the loss of their rights to the land, because as a result of that law, the wealthy people in the country became the landowners and this occurred well before the beginning of Jewish settlement efforts. Without any connection to the true size of this class, a consciousness of 'the dispossessed' emerged and concern arose that this fate awaited many... even efforts to compensate the tenants and resolve their problem did not prevent the sense of loss and dispossession."

Menachem Ussishkin, the chairman of the Jewish National Fund, is quoted as saying that "the Fund must ensure that these lands are not settled by more than a small number, so that their redemption from the Arabs who reside on them and their being dwelt on by Jews will not cause great difficulty and unnecessary conflicts." (298, **The Coastal Plain – Man and Environment Through the Generations**, 1997, p.302).

Fear Leads to Radicalism

In terms of economics, "the sale of land led the Arabs to search for an economic alternative to earn their livelihood. Many Arabs were integrated into the Jewish economy as agricultural laborers, but their status as hired hands imbued them with a feeling of impermanence and a lack of economic security." Later on, the same passage quotes from Yehoshua Porat's book, *The Growth of the Palestinian National Movement, 1918-1929*: "The mere purchase of land by Jews for settlement purposes and their ability to pay very high prices for it stirred fear of their supposedly unlimited

economic capabilities.... the Jewish buyers' willingness to use all kinds of means to bypass the obstacles that had been placed in their way reinforced this fear. This development nurtured itself and created a solid basis for a radical anti-Zionist position, the land disputes had anti-Zionist political echoes among the educated, urban elite... they began to organize the villagers to oppose and sabotage land purchases by Jews."

(298, **The Coastal Plain – Man and Environment Through the Generations**, 1997, p.303).

A similar analysis appears in a history book used in the general education stream:

"Earlier chapters have already noted that most of the lands that were purchased belonged to effendis – wealthy absentee landlords who lived luxuriously in Syria and Lebanon. They sold the lands to increase their wealth. The lands that were sold were inhabited by Arab fellahin, who were poor tenant farmers. They were forced to leave the lands after they were sold to Jews. Although the fellahin were monetarily compensated, they frequently refused to leave the land, and against this backdrop, the conflict between them and the Jews intensified. The fellahin felt dispossessed of their land, while the Jews, in order to exercise their right to the land and protect it from trespassing shepherds, were compelled to enlist the aid of the authorities or fight on their own to remove the fellahin. Such tension affected settlers in the early moshavot such as Petah Tikva, Zichron Yaakov, Gedera, Rehovot, Metula and others. Occasionally, there were even violent clashes between local villagers and residents of the moshavot."

(160, **From Conservatism to Progress**, 1998, pp.369-370).

20. Who is Responsible for Wars?

All the wars in which Israel was involved appear - in all the books, of all the school systems, for all ages - as justified wars of defense. The Arabs are responsible not only for the wars they started, but also for wars in which Israel was the first to shoot.

The Anger of the Arabs

A grammar book for lower grades in State-run elementary schools provides the pupil with sentences, and asks the pupil to identify the predicate and the subject. The following sentence appears, among others: “David Ben-Gurion, Head of the National Council, declared an independent state. The angered Arabs were enraged over the declaration of independence.”

(113, **Eshkolit – Collection VIII: Predicate and Subject**, p.31).

Another example for the simplistic explanation regarding “the Arab’s anger” appears in a fourth grade reader: “On the fifteenth day of the month of Iyar, 5708 (14.5.1948), we declared a Jewish State in the Land of Israel - the State of Israel. The Arabs were quite angered by this declaration.”

(196, **Reading, Understanding and Writing Well**, for fourth grade, 1993, p.22).

A fourth grade book for Ultra-Orthodox schools describes the wars as miraculous stories: “Wars in our Land: Our land has known many wars and hardships. Many tell of the miracles and wonders that have blessed our People in our land over all the generations, but in our generation, we stood against enemies. The Arab enemy rose up against us in the year 5708 (1948). The seven neighboring Arab countries wanted to destroy us and rose up to battle against us. They are many, very many, and we are few and weak, but trusting and believing in our great God. Indeed, we trusted and triumphed. Our triumph did not silence our enemy, the Arabs. They bullied us throughout the years and did not let the peaceful inhabitants of our land rest. Twenty years later, they again rose up against us in war in the year 5728 (1967), and this time, in an even larger number and well armed with the one proclaimed goal of destroying the inhabitants of our land. We stood before them as David stood before Goliath. We called upon God, armed forces in prayers and in pleas, he answered us with miracles and wonders, and again we arouse victorious. That war lasted six days. Indeed, it is called the Six-Day War.”

(377, **Our Childhood**, 2, second grade workbook and reader, 1996, p.245)

Israel and Egypt

A second and third grade language book for the state-run schools describes the wars between Israel and Egypt:

“In 1956, the Egyptians gathered an army in the Sinai Desert. A war broke out between them and us. The IDF (Israel Defense Forces), the army of the State of Israel, triumphed and conquered the Sinai Desert (they called this war the Kadesh Campaign, or the Sinai Campaign). Afterwards, Israel returned the Sinai to Egypt.”

“In 1967, in Egypt they gathered a strong army against Israel in the Sinai Desert. The Israel Defense Forces fought Egypt, captured the Sinai Desert, and triumphed over them (they called this war the Six-Day War). The Sinai Desert remained in our hands.”

“In 1973, The Egyptian army attacked our army. The Egyptians wanted to conquer the Sinai Desert from the hands of our soldiers. They did not succeed (they called that war the Yom Kippur War). The Sinai Desert remained in our hands.”

“In 1979, the President of Egypt, Anwar Sadat, and the Prime Minister of Israel, Menachem Begin, signed a peace treaty. Israel returned the Sinai Desert to Egypt. The Sinai Desert now belongs to Egypt, but there is no Egyptian army, nor Israeli army in the Sinai Desert. Since then, there has been peace between Israel and Egypt.
(42, **I Understand?! – Understanding Readings, Thinking, Expression and Communication**, Part 2, for 2-3 grades, 1995, p.183).

A third grade reader for the state-run religious schools states: “The War of Liberation [Independence]: The War of Liberation is called that because in that war we liberated part of the Land of Israel. The War of Liberation is also called the War of Independence. In the year 5708 (1948), we fought against our enemies, who wanted to take control of our land.”

(142, **Open the Gate**, A third grade reader, 1991, p.133).

“When the Arab League (the organization of the Arab countries) was established, the question of Palestine became a permanent subject. Palestine belongs to the Arab People, which will not agree to any political solution that will include the establishment of an Arab state in Palestine... The United Nations Resolution to establish a Jewish State in Palestine served as a signal for a great riot throughout the Arab bloc: A wave of strikes and demonstrations broke out in various places. In some Arab countries there were pogroms against Jews. In the city of Halab in Syria, about 70 people were murdered, and hundreds of houses were set afire in the Jewish Quarter. In Cairo, Egypt, the leaders of Arab countries gathered to discuss the new situation. The following resolutions were passed at the conference: Action should be taken to cause the partition plan to fail, to prevent the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, and to make sure that this country will be a united, independent, Arab state...”

(353, **Not on a Silver Platter - From a National Home to a Sovereign State: 1939 – 1949**, 1984, pp.103-105).

21. The Refugee Problem

The refugee problem is one of the most politically and emotionally charged issues in relations between the State of Israel and the Arab countries.

Most of the textbooks in all the educational streams state that the refugee problem was created in 1947-1948 by the Arabs because they fled from their homes. Only a few textbooks mention the claim that some refugees were expelled by Israel during battles. Some textbooks bypass the issue altogether by stating that demographic changes took place without elaborating on how they came about.

Another aspect reviewed is the extent to which textbooks touch on the suffering caused to the refugees. Indeed, several history books and stories relate to the suffering of the refugees.

Regarding the 1967 Six Day War, only a few textbooks note that Arabs were uprooted from their villages in the wake of the war and even they do not cite any numbers.

One book presents, alongside the problem of Arab refugees, the problem of Jewish refugees who were uprooted from Islamic countries.

“Only a few of the Arab, Muslim and Christian residents whose families lived in Jaffa in the past, currently live there. They number 9,000 people.”

(318, **Cities of Tel Aviv-Jaffa, Today, Yesterday, Tomorrow – Lessons and Activities for Fourth Grade**, 1985, p.109)

“During the War of Independence, most residents of Galilee towns and villages with minority populations remained where they were, as did minority residents of Jerusalem, Ramle, Lod, Jaffa, Haifa and Akko.”

(220, **Geography of Yisrael – Physical, Economic, Local, Regional**, 1996, p. 403).

“The Gaza Strip is populated mostly by refugees who arrived there from their homes, primarily near Jaffa and in the coastal plain, during the War of Independence in 1948.” The text is accompanied by a photo of a refugee camp.

(302, **Man and Environment – Studies in the Geography of Yisrael**, 1999, p.60).

“On the eve of the War of Independence the population of the Gaza Strip was approximately 70,000 residents. At the end of the War of Independence, the population expanded with the arrival of 164,000 – 190,000 refugees (according to the findings of two different committees) and another 11,000-22,000 Beduin.”

(220, **Geography of Yisrael – Physical, Economic, Local, Regional**, 1996, p.296).

“After Israel’s War of Independence, the Muslim population of Lebanon increased due to the arrival of thousands of Arabs from Eretz Yisrael (most of whom were Muslims). They not only altered Lebanon’s demographic map, but became an independent political force which eventually led to a civil war during the 1970s, the partial destruction of Lebanon and Israeli intervention in that country.”

(16, **Changes in the Geography of the Middle East**, 1992, p.267).

A high school geography textbook states:

“The first immigrants (olim) arriving in Israel from May 1948 to early 1949 moved into abandoned Arab towns and villages.” This sentence follows a brief, two-page description of the War of Independence which makes no mention at all of the refugee issue. At the end of the above-mentioned description the student is asked, among other things, to pick a front from the war and write about “the fate of the Arab communities and their residents.”

(298, **The Coastal Plain – Man and Environment Through the Generations**, for high school students, pp. 359-360, 363).

Flight

“With the departure of the British from the country in Spring 1948, a decision was made to undertake forceful action against the Arabs in Jaffa. Our forces encircled the city and began opening fire. Most of the Arab residents were stricken with panic and began fleeing the city en masse.”

(31, **Journey to Israeli Democracy**, 5754, 1994 p. 113)

“After the War of Independence the map of settlements in the northern part of the country changed dramatically. Of the 190 Arab villages there, only 66 remained, most of them in the center of the Upper and Lower Galilee. Approximately 120,000 Arab residents (mostly Muslims) fled to Syria and Lebanon.”

(352, p.38)

“... the British announced that they were departing from Haifa and that whoever is able to take the city – either the Jews or the Arabs – should do so. A brief battle ensued at the end of which the entire city of Haifa was in our hands. The Arabs lost and almost all of them fled from the city.”

(263, **Connections – From the Sentence to Dialogue**, 1993, p.387)

“When the course of events changed during the War of Independence and the Yishuv overcame the Arab armies and local Arab fighters, Arabs started fleeing from the mixed cities. Entire Arab neighborhoods were emptied of their residents. This happened in Haifa, Tiberias, Akko and Safed. The Arab cities of Ramle, Lod and Jaffa were abandoned. Arab villages were deserted.”

(77, **Homeland – Chapters in the History of the Jewish Yishuv in Eretz Yisrael in the New Era**, part 2, 1998, p.163)

Many books describe how the Arabs abandoned various towns and villages in Israel. For example, a high school textbook (298, **The Coastal Plain – Man and Environment Through the Generations**, pp.381, 382, 383) says:

“Of the 350,000 residents of the Gaza Strip, some 280,000 (80%) are Arab refugees who fled from their homes during the war that raged in our country in 5708. These refugees, who did not want to live under Jewish rule, settled in the Gaza Strip and were absorbed in refugee camps.”

(372, p. 103)

“When the War of Independence ended, the Gaza Strip remained under Egyptian control. The local population resided there and they were joined by Arab refugees who until the war had mainly been residents of towns and villages in the coastal plain. The UN built refugee camps for these refugees.”

(298, **The Coastal Plain – Man and Environment Through the Generations**, for junior high school, p.400)

“On the morning of the first day of the month of Iyar, the decisive assault began. The three key points in Safed were taken one after another and the following morning the flight of the city’s Arab residents began. As a result of the fall of Arab Safed, most Arabs residing in the Hula region fled.”

(20, **The History of Recent Generations**, vol. 2, 1997, p.234)

“On 19.4, Tiberias was in our hands. The Arabs there refused to accept the authority of Jewish rule and preferred to be evacuated with the help of the British army and leave the city.”

(353, **Not on a Silver Platter**, p.145)

“With the surrender of Jaffa, a mass flight of Arabs from the city began.”

(77, **Homeland**, part 2, 1998, p. 132)

“With the capture of the large Arab population centers in the Ramle-Lod area, the phenomenon of Arab residents fleeing recurred. The terrible stories about the ‘Zionist cruelty’ circulating among the Arab population and the anticipated liberation of the captured territories by the Arab armies prompted a mass flight of Arabs. Thus the cities of Ramle and Lod, among others, emptied out and the refugee problem was created.”

(353, **Not on a Silver Platter**, p. 176)

“Here solid stone houses are scattered on both sides of the road and each house is surrounded by a jagged green belt – a blooming array of olive, fig, almond and pomegranate groves. And beside such a walled house sits the pool itself, that is wells. All of this was left behind by the Arab residents who fled panic-stricken as the Children of Israel fought for the liberation of the besieged holy city of Jerusalem.”

(331, **Our Childhood** 5, p. 233)

A fifth grade reader features a story about a boy evacuated from a kibbutz being shelled and taken to Haifa: “They took us to an abandoned house in the heart of Haifa’s lower city. The Arab residents who had fled had left all their belongings there. In the home that became ours, we found elegant furniture the likes of which we’d never seen before.”

(24, **Selections** – A reader for fifth grade in the general school, 5752,1992, p.94)

“During the month of Adar, 25,000 of Haifa’s Arab residents left the city. After Kawkji’s failure, the Arabs started a rumor that they had to leave Haifa in order to allow for the bombing of the city. Then another 20,000 Arabs left. After the fighting, the Arabs refused to accept the Jews’ invitation to remain in the city and the remaining 20,000 Arabs left the city by land and by sea for Syria and Lebanon. Their leaders, who encouraged and even ordered them to leave the city in order not to be under

Jewish rule, promised them they would return to the city with the Arab armies that were preparing to invade Eretz Yisrael on May 15.

(20, **The History of Recent Generations**, vol.2, 1997, p.233)

(A similar version with minor variations also appears in the book, **Not on a Silver Platter**, p.146)

A geography text book used in the ultra-orthodox educational stream for the fourth and fifth grades, surveys all regions of the country. In many places it notes that a given Jewish city or town was built on the ruins of an Arab village “abandoned by its Arab residents.”

(365, **The Good Land**, pp.76, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 122, 126, 141, 185, 219, 220, 221)

History textbooks used by the state-run high schools also repeat the story of the flight from various towns and villages. (14, **From Exile to Independence – The History of the Jewish People in Recent Generations**, vol. 2, 1990, pp.267-270)

Flight and Expulsion

Two history textbooks and one geography textbook state that some of the refugees were expelled.

“During the fighting, many of the local Arabs were expelled. Some of them fled before the Jews reached a village or Arab neighborhood in a city, and others were expelled by the conquering force. Tens of thousands fled to neighboring countries – primarily to Jordan, Lebanon and Syria – in the hope that with the help of these countries, they would one day return to their previous places of residence. Many became refugees in camps set up in the Gaza Strip, West Bank and neighboring countries.”

(6, **The Twentieth Century – History for ninth grade**, 1999, p.138)

A history textbook used by state-run high schools devotes an entire chapter to a “summary of the flight of Arabs from Eretz Yisrael during the War of Independence.”

The author cites five reasons for the Arabs’ flight:

1. “The flight of the leadership and wealthy class already at the beginning of the war.”
2. “The deterioration of security and order in the Arab towns and villages.”
3. “In any civil war there are necessarily unplanned ‘population exchanges’ with no guiding force behind them. A civilian population concerned about its fate, justly or not, moves to areas where soldiers of their own people or religion are in control.”
4. “The organized appeal of the leaders of Arab countries to the Arabs in Eretz Israel.”
5. “The horror propaganda broadcast by the Arab media about incidents in which the Jewish forces compelled Arab residents to leave and harmed the civilian Arab population.”

Alongside these reasons, the author cites another position: “A new historical explanation has been offered by historian Benny Morris, who refers to the stages in

the Arabs' flight from the country and the reasons behind it. According to him, the main catalyst for the flight was the attacks by the Hagana, Etzel, Lehi and Israel Defense Forces and not the calls or instructions of the leaders of Arab countries or of the Supreme Arab Council and the Mufti." The author quotes at length from four pages of an article by Benny Morris.

(14, **From Exile to Independence – The History of the Jewish People in Recent Generations**, vol.2, 1990, pp.308-312)

In the same book, when the author analyses the results of the War of Independence, he writes: "Regarding the return of Arab residents who fled from Israel's territory, there was a consensus among the leadership that the Arabs' flight solves a serious problem that will arise in the future concerning the demographic composition of the State of Israel."

(14, **From Exile to Independence**, p.293)

Elsewhere in the same book, the following appears: "In essence, the primary problem of the emerging Jewish state was resolved – the existence of a large and threatening Arab minority in its midst."

(14, **From Exile to Independence**, p.313)

A geography textbook used in state-run high schools states: "Most Arab refugees fled Israel during the War of Independence (in the years 1947-1949) and during the Six Day War (1967) – two wars initiated by Arab countries. Following these two wars, hundreds of thousands of Arabs became refugees and scattered to various countries around the world, primarily in the Middle East. These refugees are known as "Palestinian refugees" and their exact number is in dispute. During the War of Independence, between 500,000 and 900,000 Arab refugees left their homes. They left behind their possessions and planned to return to their homes after the fighting ended. There were a variety of reasons for their departure: some sought to distance themselves from the dangers of the war, some listened to the directives of their leaders who called on them to leave their residences and thereby facilitate the Arab armies' conquest of Israel, and some were expelled during the fighting by various Israeli elements."

(8, **People in the Expanse – Studies in the Geography of the World's Population**, 1997, p.153)

Reference to the Refugees' Suffering

Few books covering the refugee problem mention the suffering of the refugees. A book of geography and demography states the following: "Below are some sections with information on the three largest groups of refugees. All three were created as a result of ongoing wars and political conflicts and, in each one, the great suffering caused to the refugees stands out:

- the Jewish refugees during World War II
- the Arab refugees and Jewish refugees resulting from the Arab-Israeli conflict
- the Rwandan refugees who emerged as a result of inter-tribal wars.

... the refugee problem is a complex political problem and a painful humanitarian problem, and it is one of the most difficult and complicated aspects of the long Arab-Israeli conflict.”

(8, **People in the Expanse – Studies in the Geography of the World's Population**, 1997, pp.151, 153)

The same text features a picture of the Jabalya refugee camp in the Gaza Strip, “where residents live in very crowded and distressed conditions.”



(8, **People in the Expanse – Studies in the Geography of the World's Population**, 1997, p.154)

Several state-run elementary school readers contain stories in which regret is expressed over the refugees' departure. Usually the narrator is a child or an adult recalling his childhood.

Thus, for example, a fifth-grade reader used in state-run elementary schools tells about a family that immigrated from Poland and lived in Jerusalem's Makor Baruch neighborhood. The family rented a home from Muhammad, who lived in Lifta. A friendship developed between the two families and each attended some of the other's family celebrations.

“When the War of Independence started, Muhammed stopped coming to our home. And we refrained from going to Lifta for fear of being attacked on the way there.” One day, the father of the family saw a convoy of wagons loaded with furniture. On one wagon sat Muhammad. “Where're you going to?”, I asked him. ‘To Jordan,’ he answered. ‘Why?’ – ‘We're afraid of what the Jews will do to us...’ ‘Go back home, Muhammad,’ I told him. ‘After all, you and your family won't harm the Jews and therefore ‘they won't harm you.’ ‘I'm afraid,’ Muhammad answered and spurred the horse to head out. We had a bad feeling. ‘I'll look after his apartment,’ father said. ‘The land will quiet down’... We never again saw Muhammad, our landlord, and his family.”

(187, **Through Words**, book 5, 1995, pp.128-129)

Refugees in the Six Day War

“During the Six Day War, Israel captured the areas of Judea, Samaria and Gaza and between 200,000-400,000 of their Arab residents left those places as refugees. Most moved to Jordan and a minority moved to other Arab countries. Most of the refugees from the Six Day War were those same refugees who had moved to Judea, Samaria and Gaza during the War of Independence.

Some of the Arab refugees settled and were integrated into the places they went to, some returned to their homes with the permission of the State of Israel, and many of them have lived since then in refugee camps and poor neighborhoods.”

(8, **People in the Expanse – Studies in the Geography of the World's Population**, 1997, p.153)

“During the Six Day War (1967) the Golan Heights were captured. In 1981, the State of Israel announced the application of Israeli law on the Golan Heights.

The Beduin and Circassians who lived on the Heights fled during the war and the Druze villages near the foot of Mount Hermon (Majdal Shams, Mas’ada and others) remained.”

(352, **The North of the Country – the Face of the Country**, p.43)

Elsewhere, things are stated indirectly:

“After the Six Day War the Golan and the Hermon were in Israeli hands and the border line moved eastward, far from the valleys of the north. Today most villages in the Golan Heights are Jewish communities and a minority are Druze.”

(164, **The Mediterranean and Southern Coastal Plain and Northern Israel**, 1992, p.50)

A seventh grade reader used in state-run schools features a story about soldiers in the Six Day War who distribute food to refugees fleeing Jenin and Nablus... “We let them cross the Jordan. We are thereby endangering our own soldiers... Who can guarantee that the voices we hear nearby indeed are the voices of refugees and not of commandos?... We didn’t start the war, we didn’t hate them, we didn’t expel them. We didn’t know why they were leaving and perhaps they didn’t know either... Woe unto the defeated, the Romans used to say. But believe me it’s also hard to be a ‘Jewish victor’.”

(218, **Literature Anthology – seventh grade reader**, pp.352-353)

Jewish Refugees from Arab Countries

One book portrays the refugee problem in symmetrical fashion. According to this version, the Arab-Israeli conflict prompted a flow of refugees in two directions and it notes that Israel made efforts to absorb Jewish refugees whereas the Arab refugee problem remained unsolved.

“The Arab-Israeli conflict and the wars between Israel and the Arabs caused the migration of large groups of refugees – both Arabs and Jews. The Arab refugees were

uprooted from their homes which were in the area of the fighting. The Jewish refugees were uprooted from their homes in Arab countries due to the hostility that emerged as a result of the establishment of the State of Israel and as a result of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

“The Jewish Refugees

“The establishment of the State of Israel, and the battles between it and the Arab countries, led to a worsening of the situation of Jews living in Muslim countries: those events sparked hostility and aggression against their Jewish citizens. And in some of them, including Iraq, Syria and Egypt, laws were even enacted to revoke their citizenship, leaving many of these Jews without a source of income. Tens of thousands of Jews left their homes and took nothing with them, most of them in the first years after the establishment of the State of Israel. Often they left via secret routes and risked their lives because some of the Arab countries forbade them to leave.

“In contrast to the Arab refugees, many of whom still live in refugee camps and whose problem remains unsolved – the problem of Jewish refugees from Arab countries was long ago solved. Some of the Jewish refugees from Muslim countries immigrated to Israel and some immigrated to other countries. Those who immigrated to Israel did so out of a sense that they were coming to their homeland, and the State of Israel, one of whose primary goals is to absorb immigration, invested great efforts in absorbing these immigrants. After a difficult adjustment period, they were absorbed in Israel and were integrated into the life of the country.”

In this text there are pictures of “Jewish Refugees on their way to Israel” and a picture of the refugee camp of Jabalya. (as shown on page 83).

Foreigners Without Roots

One textbook used in the ultra-orthodox sector presents the argument that the Arabs’ flight from Israel indicates that the Arabs did not strike roots in Eretz Yisrael and they are like “foreigners to it, wayfarers who rest along the way,” whereas the Jews made its deserts bloom.

“After all, despite the accepted explanations, there is no convincing logical explanation for the strange vision of the flight of the Arab fellaheen. Have you ever seen a dense forest with deep roots dating back hundreds of years, suddenly uproot itself from its land, and flee? And farmers are compared to a dense forest, with deep roots and a strong connection to Mother Earth. And there is no wind strong enough to completely uproot farmers from their land and carry them off as if they were the dust of the earth. On the contrary. Despite the horrors of modern wars and sudden invasions-conquests, the class of farmers in each and every country has proved their fearless determination. And here masses of fellaheen got up, abandoned all in a flash and fled in a panic, exactly like the ‘chaff which the wind drives away.’

“It seems that they did not strike any roots in this land, did not connect to it in any way. They dwelled in it, for hundreds of years, but did not settle in it. They were like foreigners to it, like wayfarers who rest along the way. The contact between them and this land was superficial, random and temporary. It was a sterile contact, the land was not fertilized by them and maintained its desolation and they did not strike roots in it.

And the proof is – that at the moment when the desolate land awakened to the voices heralding the rebuilding of the land and the return of its sons, it shook off its stagnation, threw off the veneer of destruction it had been covered in and emerged in all its charm and enchantment. Its streams flowed outward and it revealed the best of its treasures well-hidden in its depths. It, the desolate land, proved its loyalty to that ancient marriage contract that appears in the Torah received from Moses: ‘That the Lord your God is bringing you to a good land’.” (Deuteronomy 8:7-9) (329, **Our Childhood** 8, p. 350)

Stories About Arab Refugees Written by Israeli Authors

Several readers feature stories in which an Israeli narrator tells of an Arab friend of his who had to leave the country and became a refugee who fled to another country. These stories express much regret over the separation from the Arab friend and they awaken in the reader empathy for the Arab refugees. There are very few stories like this and they appear only in textbooks used in the state-run schools.

In the story, “Night of Separation,” which appears in a sixth-grade reader, the narrator is a Jewish man sitting in his room on the eve of Independence Day watching the fireworks and remembering the Arab village that used to be adjacent to his neighborhood and the good relations that prevailed between the village’s residents and the Jews. When the war broke out, the village residents stopped coming to the neighborhood. “Gloom settled over the neighborhood, and we, the children, were sad. We spent many hours standing at the edge of the neighborhood, looking at the village opposite in the hope of again seeing the village children, but they didn’t come.” One day, the children saw that the village residents were leaving with all their possessions. At night, the children went to the village and the narrator meets his friend, Hamid. ‘Hamid, why did you all leave the village?’ He stared with his shining black eyes and whispered: ‘We wanted to stay, all the villagers wanted to stay, but they were afraid. I’m also afraid... a few days ago, strangers came to our village. They told us that you, the Jews, want to kill all the villagers.’ ‘And you believed it?’ ‘I didn’t believe it, my father also didn’t believe it, but there were some who believed it’... ‘But why didn’t you come to ask us? After all, we were friends!’ ‘We were,’ Hamid whispered. ‘Those people scared us with their stories.’ ‘Hamid, stay with us,’ I told him. ‘I want to stay, but I can’t.’ ‘Are you afraid?’ ‘No, I’m not afraid anymore. I know that those people were lying, but I can’t. My whole family left and I too must go... I’ll never forget you, never.’ (146, **Strings**, sixth grade reader, 1997, pp.224-227).

In another story, the narrator is a member of a kibbutz near Beit She’an. After Beit She’an was captured by the Jews during the War of Independence, a convoy of refugees fleeing from Beit She’an to Jordan passed near the kibbutz.

“In this long convoy, I saw Abdallah as well. He was mounted on his noble horse. For a moment, I wanted to shout after him: ‘Abdallah, wait! Why are you running away? After all, we’re neighbors and really we could’ve been friends. Stay here! No one will do you any harm. Don’t run away, Abdallah! Don’t go away from this valley. It is the threshold of paradise!’ But I didn’t say a word. I was quiet as usual. I didn’t turn to

him. I saw him going down to the Jordan River. All the members of the tribe followed after him. 'We weren't the ones who wanted this war,' Gadi said. 'They started.' And I was silent and when the end of the war finally came, the war that seemed like it would never end, there was a strange sensation in the heart. The price of victory was very steep. Our kibbutz also paid its share. Beyond the flower-covered hill where Gadi and I would frequently walk, we saw Abdallah's tribe. They pitched their tents on the other side of the Jordan River. Plowing the earth and threshing their wheat, they continued living their lives as they had lived them here, when they lived on this bank of the Jordan, beside us. We were still neighbors now, but if before we were separated by our differences, now we were separated by a physical border, that of Jordan and the water. Essentially it was a quiet border. Now conflicts did not erupt between us, but no connections were formed either. Now, not only did differences separate between the two peoples, but an actual border separated them. We worked the land that was just a few meters away from theirs, but the distance remained: a distance consisting of years of hostility and alienation to which the insults of war were now added." (28, **New Israel Readers**, for sixth grade, pp.69-70).

22. Attempts at Dialogue

During the period of the British Mandate, there were attempts at establishing contacts and dialogues with the Arabs, with the goal of bringing them to accept the fact of Jewish settlement in Eretz Yisrael and to create an atmosphere of mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence.

Examining the way in which textbooks present these contacts is important for the following reasons: bringing them to the student's knowledge breaks down the stereotype according to which the Arabs are united in their total and sweeping opposition to the Zionist enterprise and to compromises with Israel under any condition; presenting the unfolding of the contacts brings the student to the conclusion that the Jewish side is not to blame for the failure to achieve compromises and the "blame" rests with the Arab side.

It is worth emphasizing that the Arabs' opposition to compromises is explained by rational motives – opposition to the purchase of land and to Jewish immigration out of concern over losing the Arab majority – and not for irrational reasons, such as blind hatred.

The Weizmann–Feisal Agreement

The first clear attempt at dialogue was in the meetings between Chaim Weizmann, as representative of the Zionist movement, and the Emir Feisal, the head of the Hashemite delegation as "the representative of the Hejaz kingdom and in its name," meetings that led to an agreement in January 1919. The agreement is discussed in varying degrees of detail, from presenting the complete text of the agreement to a few sentences that focus mainly on the foundations that contain recognition of the Jews' aspirations. In two history books used in the state-run school system, the entire agreement is presented in full (299, **The World and the Jews in Recent Generations**, Part A: 1870-1920, a high school textbook, p.282; 13, **From Exile to Independence – The History of the Jewish People in Recent Generations**, A, 1990, pp.205-207).

Another history book states the following: "Weizmann agreed to close cooperation in developing the Arab state and Eretz Yisrael. Feisal agreed to Jewish immigration to Eretz Yisrael." (217, **Imperialism and the First World War**, 5742, p.100)

A history book used in the ultra-orthodox network contains the following:

"Arab Regard for the National Home

"When the 'Delegates' Conference' arrived in Eretz Yisrael in 5678 (1918), Dr. Weizmann made a first attempt to obtain the Arabs' consent for the establishment of the National Home. He met with the Emir Feisal, and the two men signed an agreement in which Feisal promised to support the National Home, if the Western powers would also give the Arabs what they promised them." (20, **The History of Recent Generations**, vol. b, 1997, p.128)

Another history book used in the general educational stream points to the fact that the Palestinian national movement was not monolithic and united in its opposition to Zionism, but rather there were additional trends:

"After the First World War, two trends were clearly evident in the Palestinian national movement (of the Arabs in Eretz Yisrael):

The first trend – an attempt at dialogue between leaders of the Arab national movement and the Zionist movement.

The second trend – fostering the dream of "Greater Syria" headed by an independent Arab king (Syria was then under British occupation).

“The first trend was expressed in the famous meeting between Weizmann and Feisal at Akaba in 1918, and the signing of an agreement between them in January 1919. Feisal was interested in cooperation with Zionism, not because he was sympathetic to Zionism but rather because he believed that Zionism contained 'tremendous power' and influence which could serve the Arab interest. In other words, it could lead to the applying of international pressure for realizing the Arabs' independence in the Middle East, in exchange for Arab recognition of a Jewish state, immigration and settlement." (75, **Zionism – The Jewish People in Recent Generations**, A: 1882-1939, p.120)

The same book contains a letter by Feisal to U.S. Justice Felix Frankfurter, one of the leaders of American Jewry, in which sympathy for Zionism is clearly evident:

"We recognize that Arabs and Jews are cousins, and they have suffered persecutions on the part of the powers, who were stronger than they, and are capable, thanks to this happy historic meeting, to jointly take the first step for realizing their national ideals. We Arabs, especially the educated among us, look with deepest sympathy on the Zionist movement ... We will wish the Jews a most hearty welcome home ... We are working together for a reformed and revived Near East, and our two movements complete one another. The Jewish movement is national and not imperialist. Our movement is national and not imperialist, and there is room in Syria for us both. Indeed, I think that neither can be a real success without the other."

(75, **Zionism – The Jewish People in Recent Generations**, A: 1882-1939, p.129).

In most of the books, the fact that Feisal showed readiness to recognize the Jews' demands for a separate national existence is highlighted.

"In all its paragraphs, this agreement places the 'Arab state' and the 'Jewish state' opposite each other – in other words, it recognizes the fact that Eretz Yisrael is not a part of the 'Arab state' and is not itself an Arab state. That is to say, Feisal conceded Eretz Yisrael to the Jews ... From the standpoint of Zionism, this was recognition of Eretz Yisrael's autonomy and of the Balfour Declaration, and was an excellent basis for the gradual and peaceful development of an autonomous Jewish society in Eretz Yisrael." (13, **From Exile to Independence**, A, 1990, p.204).

Another explanation attributes the initiative for the meetings to the British: "Despite their reservations about the Balfour Declaration, British military government officials knew that their entrenchment in the Middle East did not depend only on Arab support, but rather on Zionist support as well, and they tried to create Zionist-Arab understanding even before the war ended. Their goal was to achieve joint Zionist-

Arab consent to accept British aegis, consent that was likely to help Britain in its struggle with France in dividing up areas of influence in the Middle East." (227, **Zionism Tested in Action, 1914-1939**, 5744 (1984), p.64).

A Role Playing Exercise

In a history book used in the general education stream that focuses on the subject of the "stockade and tower" settlements, and meant for elementary school students, the subject of the contacts between Jews and Arabs is presented in a general way, without referring to a specific event. This book differs from the rest by the fact that it presents both sides' positions in a fair and symmetrical fashion (though in very simplistic terms), and does not lay the blame for their failure only on the Arab side. This section is worth presenting in its entirety.

“Meetings With Arab Leaders

“In the period of the disturbances, several meetings were held between Jewish and Arab leaders. At these meetings, the Jews wanted to reach an understanding with the Arabs, so that both peoples living in Eretz Yisrael could live here together and in peace.

The Arab leaders argued that Eretz Yisrael is an Arab country and must remain such. They did not agree to having many Jews living in the country, since they were concerned that if there was a Jewish majority here, governance would pass to the Jews. Therefore, they demanded from the Jewish public that it cease buying land and halt Jewish immigration. Only under those terms would they be willing to accept us. The leaders of the Jewish Yishuv knew that if they accepted these conditions, the Jewish people would not be able to build itself a home in Eretz Yisrael. Therefore, they did not agree to halt Jewish immigration and the purchase of land. Our leaders believed that it was possible to find a way for both peoples to live in peace and cooperation with each other, without stopping the building of the Jewish National Home, and without harming the Arab community living here.

Neither the Jews nor the Arabs were willing to give up their desires and to accept the other's demands. However, at the end of each meeting it was agreed that there was room to hold additional meetings. These meetings were secret and only became known many years after they were held.”

Later, the students are asked to participate in a role-playing exercise in which they will represent the Arab side. This, of course, encourages them to relate to the Arab side with openness and understanding, though not to identify with it.

“17 Kislev 5698 (17.11.1937)

“To: Members of the Pioneering Youth Movements in Haifa
From: The Initiating Committee
Agenda: Role Playing

“There have recently been a great many rumors about secret meetings between Jewish leaders and Arab leaders. The matter is somewhat vague and unclear.

Whether or not the rumors are correct, it is important that you, too, devote some thought to the matter. Let's do so in the form of role-playing: several members will present the Jewish position and several will present the Arab position.

Each member is free to choose the position he wishes to represent.

We suggest focusing the role playing around these two points:

1. The meetings between the Jewish and Arab representatives – what are they likely to bring to each of the sides?
2. Each of the sides has matters that are important for discussion – what are they?

Sincerely

The Initiating Committee"

(342, **Stockade and Tower**, pp.118-119).

The Failure

All of the books in all of the educational streams place the blame for the failure of the contacts with Feisal on the Arab side. The following analysis reflects how the subject is presented in most of the books:

"At first, it seemed that the agreement that they had reached created an opening for a new path in Zionist-Arab relations, but in fact it contained nothing real. Feisal did not succeed in taking control of Syria, nor did he manage to dominate the Arab mood, which was directed against realization of the Balfour Declaration.

There were sharp opponents to Feisal's moderate policy from the outset. In February 1919, in other words about a month after the signing of the Feisal-Weizmann treaty, the first national meeting of representatives of Muslim-Christian associations convened in Jaffa, and they decided on total opposition to Zionism and to the Balfour Declaration. In June 1919, the Arab-Syrian conference met in Damascus, which was attended by Arab businessmen from Eretz Yisrael as well. This was considered to be the first of the gatherings of Eretz Yisrael Arabs. This conference, too, passed resolutions calling for the establishment of an independent Syrian state within 'the national borders of Syria' – Syria, Eretz Yisrael, Transjordan and Lebanon – and total opposition to Zionism. These resolutions served as the beginning of a long series of resolutions against the Jewish National Home and Jewish immigration, and for the establishment of an independent Palestinian-Arab state. Ultimately, the policy of moderate Arab statesmen in 1918-1919 was silenced and halted, and the radical line of Feisal's opponents, the line of non-readiness to any agreement and any compromise, gathered strength until it took over entirely."

(13, **From Exile to Independence**, part a, 1990, p.204).

Other books in the general stream present the text of resolutions by the General Syrian Congress, which convened in Damascus in February 1919 with the participation of representatives from Eretz Yisrael.

"We hereby reject the Zionists' demands for the establishment of a Jewish commonwealth in part of southern Syria known as Palestine, and we hereby oppose Jewish immigration to any part of the country. We do not admit that they have right of ownership and we hereby view their demands as a serious danger to our national, political and economic life.

We desire that there be no breakup of Syria and no separation of Palestine or of the coastal areas in western Lebanon in the homeland. We hereby demand that the unity of the country be maintained under any condition."

(227, **Zionism Tested in Action, 1914-1939**, 5744, 1984, p.65).

Another book, used in state-run and state religious schools, presents the text of another document in full:

"A Voice is Calling to the Arab People in Southern Syria (Palestine)

"The Jews are trying to separate Palestine from Syria and the rest of the Arab countries, in order to become the rulers of this country.

Palestine is a natural part of Syria, there is nothing separating them; the residents of Syria are Arabs like us, their leaders are like our leaders and their interests are connected with ours. Uniting Palestine with Syria and the rest of the Arab states is the only way to happiness for the Arab nation and the Arab countries...

"There are only 60,000 Jews in our country and they have not even the slightest right to our land and have no connection with it. We, the Arabs, number more than a million people here, and therefore the land belongs to us.

Therefore, protect your country, your honor, your spirit and your property. Demand that Palestine and Syria be one, free, Arab state; and that foreigners have no influence in this country.

The Callers for Justice!"

(299, **The Jewish World in Recent Generations**, part a: 1870-1920, textbook for high school students, 1998, p.283).

Only one book, a history book used in the general education stream, contains a version according to which the Zionist stance also contributed to there being no chance for the agreement to be fulfilled:

"Although Feisal and Weizmann did reach an agreement, from the early 1920s it already became clear that there was no way to bring about its implementation. True, the Zionists declared their desire for cooperation with the Arabs, but in practice they acted to increase immigration and settlement in order to create a Jewish majority in all parts of the country. Although Feisal aspired to establish the 'Kingdom of Greater Syria,' that would include Syria, Eretz Yisrael and Transjordan, and to be the leader of the entire Arab nation, in practice he did not rule in Palestine (Eretz Yisrael) and in Syria. Control over the Palestinian population was in the hands of local families who did not see themselves as being connected to Feisal and his aspirations. Moreover, the Arabs viewed the Zionists as a foreign entity in the region, among other things because of the way of life of traditional Arab society."

(6, **The Twentieth Century – On the Verge of Tomorrow**, History for ninth grade, 1999, p.46).

The King Abdullah-Golda Meir Meeting

Another attempt at dialogue occurred shortly before the establishment of the state, at a meeting between Golda Meir and King Abdullah. A history book used in the ultra-Orthodox stream describes the event in the following way:

"About a week before the establishment of the state, Golda Meir met with King Abdullah of Transjordan. A similar meeting had already occurred in November. Then, the king came to the electric power station at Aram Naharayim. This time, the king refused to come to Jewish territory and therefore Golda Meir made the journey ... to Amman disguised as an Arab woman. The king received them in friendship, but he was depressed, troubled and sad.

He suggested that Eretz Yisrael remain undivided and that it be annexed to Transjordan. In the new state, autonomy would be assured for Jews in the areas where they lived. In parliament, Jews would hold 50% of the seats and would perhaps be included in the new state's government as well. When they rejected his proposal, he said: 'If that is the case, then there is no avoiding war.' He added: 'I am very sorry, it's a shame about the blood and the destruction. If you feel a need to meet with me in the midst of the battles, do not hesitate to come see me. I will always be glad to have such a meeting.'"

Immediately after the description of this meeting, which contains a certain positive tone vis-a-vis the Arab side, by the nature of the story about its readiness to hold a dialogue with the Jews, in the sentence after the king's remarks, the author writes: "Transjordan was only one of the five states that decided to invade Eretz Yisrael by coordinating their actions, in order to throw the Jews into the sea." In other words, there is a repetition of the stereotype that all the Arabs are interested in throwing the Jews into the sea, despite the fact that previously it was related that at least Transjordan was willing to accept autonomy for the Jews. The author ascribes different positions to the same Transjordan in two sentences. (20, **The History of Recent Generations**, vol. b, 1997, p.239).

23. Peace is a Dream

Several literature readers present poems and stories that express a yearning for peace. However, it is a peace that is perceived to be a wishful thinking, a dream, utopia. In all of the poems and stories the aspiration for peace stems, among other things, from a desire not to experience war any more. Peace is also taught as one of the basic values of Judaism.

Not Battle, Not Fire

Peace / Tamar Adar

Peace – is a blessing,
Peace – is a prayer,
Peace – is a word that you will hear
all the time, every day – every hour.
Peace – is what is said when meeting
both children and adults:
Peace unto you and how are you,
we were so happy to see you!
Peace – is what is said when parting
from friends,
And if you want, you also add:
See you soon!
But peace, real peace
is a wish, a dream.
Peace is something we all seek
Always peace, not battle, not fire.
Therefore let us all wish:
May there be peace over Israel!
(204, **Way of Words**, B, 1993, p.107)

"In advance of Independence Day, the children warmly wished the country many blessings: May peace only come! May dad just return from army reserve duty! May our land be beautiful... Ruthie drew mountains, the mountains of the Heights, full of colorful flowers. 'When there is peace, they will not ride in the mountains in tanks and they will be full of flowers.' Yossi drew a long, winding road with a long convoy of cars traveling on it. 'When there is peace, the fathers will not go away to do reserve duty and they will be able to go on trips with their children every Saturday.'" (216, **Alfoni**, second grade reader, 1979, p.134)

A poem in a reader for second grade in the state religious stream:

Blue and white / Yisrael Rashel

like a song, like a dream.
Blue and white
A hope for peace."
(176, **Open the Gate**, 1990, p.182; 186, **Strings**, for fourth grade, 1993, p.113)

Box of Crayons / Tali Shorek

I had a box of crayons –
bright, pleasant and nice.
I had a box of crayons
both cold and hot.

I did not have the red of the wounded's blood.
I did not have the black of orphans' mourning.
I did not have the white of the dead's faces.
I did not have the yellow of burning sands.

I had the orange of the joy of life.
I had the green of blooming and blossoming.
I had the light blue of clear skies.
I had the pink of a dream and rest.
I sat and I drew Peace.
(186, **Strings**, 1993, p.107)

I Had a Dream of Peace / Eli Netzer

A green field, a wood and a house,
A white dove and an olive branch,
And the sun shining in the middle of the day –
I dreamt a dream of peace.

A young soldier and a shepherd with a flock,
And no enemy lying in wait for them,
And a bird singing on an oak tree –
I dreamt a dream of peace.

A fellah sowing seeds in a furrow,
A young woman and young man walking on a path,
Summer and a vine, a fig and a pomegranate –
I dreamt a dream of peace.

A beautiful melody playing in my ear,
I dreamt a dream and I am dreaming still.
Perhaps in another year, perhaps in another day,
The dream will come true?
(26, **New Israel Readers**, for third grade, 1986, pp. 214-215)

May There Be No More Wars / Liora Varon

At night, after Mother turned out the light,
I asked that be no more war.
That Father will not go to the army,
And Mother will not be sad.

At night, after Mother turned out the light,
I told God,
That Aisha and I are friends,
And I very much like the cakes,
That her mother bakes.
(141, **Way of Words**, Book A, 1992, p.134)

A poem / Dalia Weinstein

I would like, and only to you do I say this,
To be a girl in another land.
In a country where there is no news,
about people killed and about wars;
In a country which has no army and soldiers,
and where people are not afraid and don't worry;
In a land where peace is constant,
And you can go on a trip everywhere;
... And I am not conceding the state,
I just want this country to be another land.
(194, **Way of Words**, Book D, 1996, p.159)

Dove With An Olive Branch / Talma Eliagon-Rose

I have a picture at home
Of a dove with an olive branch.
Above it – the sun
At its feet – the ravages of war
The dove of peace
Drawn by an artist's hand
A perfect picture,
Dreams in a frame.

Dove with an olive branch –
Come out of the picture,
Restore the faith
That peace will follow in your wake.
(194, **Way of Words**, Book D, 1996, p.162)

A fourth grade reader for state-run schools tells of a friendship between the members of a kibbutz and an Arab from the village of Dar al-Kassem, Abu Salah. At each meeting between them, Abu Salah would say, "War is no good." When the United Nations passed the partition resolution, the kibbutz members were prohibited from visiting the village and Abu Salah also stopped visiting the kibbutz. They said that he was at a funeral of a kibbutz member who had been shot to death by Arabs. When the village was captured, they found it empty and an old woman told them that the "gangs" (the nickname for the Arab gangs) told the residents to leave the village, fearing revenge by the Jews. "Only the flowering almond trees waved their white

arms on both sides, like white flags of peace. And Abu Salah's words echoed in our ears: War is no good." (194, **Way of Words**, Book D, 1996, pp.75-77)

Fighting Without Hate

There is special meaning to the words of Raya Harnik, the mother of the Golani Reconnaissance Unit commander, Goni, who fell in the battle for Beaufort Castle in Lebanon in June 1982, which are presented in a reader for the state-run schools:

"Why was Goni killed, my beautiful boy?
Because he loved his country,
And he loved his friends,
And he thought that he was responsible for those under his command.

He was not killed because he hated Arabs,
And he was not killed because he wanted to be a hero.
He was killed because of the love for this beautiful country in which he hiked as a boy
and a young man,
And for the army, which he thought the best of all.
And for the reconnaissance unit and its soldiers, in whom he believed.

It is a sad ending to a true story.
It is a sad ending for Goni and for me,
But not for you, children.
Goni wanted you to live in peace and tranquillity,
That you should grow up in joy, just as he did,
That you should go to kindergarten and school
And hike in the country and love it.

And that there should be peace for you and for all Israel.

And if there is peace and there will be no more wars,
Then Goni's story will be like a legend.
Something people remember – like a dream, like a poem.
(194, **Way of Words**, book d, 1996, p.146)

A Prayer for Peace

A language book for 3-4 grades in the state-run stream includes the prayer for peace by Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav:

Prayer for Peace / Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav

"May it be Your will O Lord our God and God of our Fathers, to banish wars and bloodshed from the world, and to establish great and wonderful peace in the world
And nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.
All the inhabitants of the earth will know the real truth, that we did not come into this

world to argue and quarrel, Heaven forbid, and not for hatred and jealousy and taunting and bloodshed, Heaven forbid. We came into the world only to know You, Blessed One, forever."

the students are asked to perform one of the following three activities:
Tasks for selection (work in groups):

Compose a prayer for peace; Prepare a folder of peace songs;
Draw a picture of peace.
(42, **I Understand** – Reading Comprehension, 1995, p.9).

“This Picture Speaks”

The same book contains a picture of the late Yitzhak Rabin, the late King Hussein of Jordan and U.S President Clinton at the signing ceremony of the peace agreement with Jordan. "This picture 'speaks.' What is it saying? Write in your notebooks anything you want regarding this picture. Emphasize the words related to this picture: bloodshed, peace, help, war, cooperation, pleasantness, reconciliation, joy, conflict, anger, revenge, argument, love, admiration, hatred, disturbance, pain."
(42, **I Understand**, 1995, p.8).



A fourth grade reader used in the state-run schools emphasizes a selection from the Declaration of Independence in which the State of Israel calls for peace: "We extend our hand in peace and good neighborly relations to all the neighboring states and their peoples, and call on them to engage in cooperation and mutual assistance with the independent Hebrew people in its land." The same book also quotes the statements by Menachem Begin and Yitzhak Rabin when they received the Nobel Prize for Peace.
(48, **Windows**, fourth grade reader, 1996, pp.9, 12)

A reader used in the state religious stream tells about Yitzhak Rabin and his actions on the subject of peace with Jordan and with the Palestinians, and his murder because of his striving for peace.

"Yitzhak Rabin was twice elected Prime Minister of Israel. After experiencing six wars during his lifetime, he decided to lead the State of Israel toward peace with the Palestinians. Yitzhak Rabin signed an agreement with the Palestinians, the objective of which is to achieve peace between them and us. He shook hands with Yasser

Arafat in front of the entire world. A year later, he signed a peace agreement with the country of Jordan. Not everyone in Israel agreed with the path to peace chosen by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. On Saturday night, 12 Heshvan 5755 (5.11.1995), Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin participated in a peace rally in Tel Aviv and gave a speech from the stage. The atmosphere at the rally was festive, the crowd expressed its love for Yitzhak Rabin. The murderer, who opposed Rabin's political path, waited next to the Prime Minister's car. When Yitzhak Rabin parted from the crowd, the murderer shot and killed him.

After the selection, there is a picture with Rabin and King Hussein at the signing ceremony of the peace treaty between Israel and Jordan. (312, **The Language of Lines**, 1999, p.154)

A reader used in the state-run stream for sixth grade brings a selection from Yitzhak Rabin's speech at the Nobel Prize for Peace award ceremony. Next to his picture is written: "During his last term in office, he began the peace process with the Arab world. He signed the peace treaty with Jordan and the phases of reconciliation with the Palestinians. He was murdered in November 1995 by a Jewish assassin who wanted to prevent the continuation of the peace process. (309, **The Way of Words 4**, 1996, p.170).

24. The Peace Agreements and Israel's Borders

“The end of the Gulf War created good conditions for opening peace talks between Israel and its neighbors. The Syrians and the Palestinians, who abandoned hope of defeating Israel on the battlefield, turned to the negotiating table. The Palestinian intifada in the territories added to the pressure on Israel to consider the path of negotiation and peace. The process, which is still underway, was undoubtedly made possible as a result of the shifting of international relations and the collapse of the Soviet Union and the communist bloc. Under the Americans’ guidance and with the formal consent of the Russians, the Madrid Conference opened and after it, attempts to attain comprehensive peace in the Middle East continued. In 1993, Israel recognized the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as the representative of the Palestinian people.”

Next to this text is a photograph of Rabin, Clinton and Arafat.

(36, **The Twentieth Century – The Century that Overturned World Orders**, 1994, p.255)

A 1994 geography textbook for high schools in the state-run stream states:

“On September 13, 1993, an agreement was signed between the State of Israel and the PLO, the organization that represents Palestinians, and this agreement began a process in which autonomy would be given to Palestinian residents of Judea, Samaria and Gaza. It is a complex process, requiring a lot of patience on both sides, in an effort to achieve a future of peace.”

(163, **The Central Mountain and Jerusalem**, 1994, p. 12)

A reader used in religious schools cites the principles of the Oslo I and Oslo II agreements – an important step, given the fact that other readers overlook the agreements and do not provide the information on them – while expressing reservations about them and doubts as to whether they will be implemented.

“From the Press

“The incident burst forth suddenly and stunned Israel’s residents. It turned out that in Oslo, the chilly Norwegian capital, two teams, one headed by Abu Mazen, Arafat’s deputy, and another Israeli one, had been meeting. The teams signed an agreement of mutual recognition and a political agreement. The Oslo agreement did not determine any specific details. It was a general agreement that included only the principles of mutual recognition. The PLO was recognized as the legitimate leadership of the Palestinians. It was also determined that the PLO undertook to cancel the section of the Palestinian National Charter calling for the destruction of the State of Israel, something which in effect has still not been carried out to date (Kislev 5760, November 1999). The Oslo agreement was signed in 1993 and in it, Israel and the Palestinians recognized each other. Only in May 1994 was the Gaza-Jericho agreement signed. Under the terms of that agreement, the Palestinians were given complete autonomy in the Gaza Strip. In 1995, Israel and the Palestinian Authority began discussing the specific details, that were derived from the Oslo accords. The talks took place in Taba and were called the Oslo II agreements. To date (Kislev 5760, November 1999), Israel has handed over territories to the Palestinian Authority. There is still no discussion of a permanent status agreement. Prime Minister Barak of Israel

traveled to Oslo, but there is still a stalemate in the negotiations. Attacks by Palestinian terrorists have not yet stopped. At the end of the process, informed sources say, a Palestinian state will be established. To us it is clear that ‘the minds of ministers and advisers are in the hands of God.’ And we believe that ‘the Guardian of Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.’”

(370, **Europe Without Borders**, pp.63-64)

“A Very Cold Peace”

A textbook used in the ultra-orthodox education stream emphasizes negative actions by the Arabs, who are making the peace “a very cold peace.”

“After the 1973 Yom Kippur War, with the encouragement of the United States, peace talks began between Israel and Egypt. Egypt was the first country to sign a peace treaty with Israel. Following the signing of the peace treaty, Israel withdrew from the Sinai peninsula. The Jewish settlements there were forcibly evacuated. The peace with Egypt is a very cold peace! Thank God, there are no wars as there were in the past, there is no bloodshed, an Israeli embassy operates in Egypt and there is an Egyptian embassy in Tel Aviv, but occasionally there are killings perpetrated by lone soldiers. Israeli vacationers were murdered at Ras Burka, Israeli tourists were killed on a bus traveling to Cairo and Israeli ambassadors were assassinated. In reaction to the Lebanon war, the Egyptian ambassador to Israel left the country for four years. Egypt is also demanding that Israel give in to the Palestinians’ demands. In short, a very, very cold peace!”

(364, **The Middle East**, 1998, pp.50-51)

A third grade Hebrew textbook features a photograph of Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin, U.S. President, Jimmy Carter, and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat with a caption underneath listing their names and positions followed by “they signed a peace treaty between Israel and Egypt. It happened in 1979, that is _____ years ago.”

(42, **I Understand – Reading Comprehension**, 1995, p.184)

The Results of the Wars Regarding Borders

A geography textbook used in the state-run education stream factually describes the results of the Six Day War and the Yom Kippur War regarding borders:

“This war did not lead to a change in the southern border, but there were minor adjustments in the Golan Heights and the new border on the Golan was referred to as the 1994 Disengagement of Forces Line (the Purple Line).

Under the terms of the peace agreement with Egypt (March 1979), the State of Israel returned the Sinai peninsula to Egypt and the international border, running between the two countries from Rafiah in the north to Taba in the south (the Red Line) was approved.

In December 1981, the Golan Heights were annexed to the State of Israel. Israeli law applies to the annexed territories and their residents. The area of the State of Israel

within the borders described is 21,946 square kilometers. The areas of Judea, Samaria and Gaza have the status of held territories and they were not annexed to the State of Israel.

... 5. Explain the difference between the terms Eretz Yisrael and the State of Israel.

Of the areas that came under Israeli control during the Six Day War, the eastern part of Jerusalem was annexed to Israel in 1967 and the Golan Heights was annexed to Israel in 1981. Israeli law was applied to the annexed areas. These areas were annexed with their Arab residents and they were given the option of becoming Israeli citizens ... The term 'Judea and Samaria' was used to refer to a political-administrative area of the territories, captured by the State of Israel during the Six Day War. The Kingdom of Jordan defined these areas as the 'West Bank,' i.e., areas located on the west bank of the Jordan River that were under its control. These areas include the geographical units of the western half of the lower Jordan Valley. After the Six Day War, these territories were under Israeli military rule and today they are under Israeli civil administration. In 1990, there were 916,000 people living in Judea and Samaria." (71, **Man and Environment – Chapters in the History of Eretz Yisrael**, 1999, pp. 13, 14, 74)

The Green Line is not a Natural Line

A geography textbook for high schools and teachers' seminaries lists the area of countries adjacent to Israel, as well as the area of Israel and the territories it holds.

"Israel – 21,946 square kilometers; the Gaza Strip – 363 square kilometers; Judea and Samaria – 5,878 square kilometers."

The same book notes that "the Green Line is not a natural geographic line and there has never been an undefined border like it in Israel's history." (220, **Geography of Israel**, 1995, pp.24, 313)

"The border between Syria and us is disputed. From the establishment of the State of Israel until the Six Day War (1967), the Golan and the Hermon were part of Syria's territory. During those years, the quiet along the border was frequently violated – the many Israeli communities located in the low valleys to the west of the Golan suffered terribly from numerous shelling incidents and terrorists' attempts to infiltrate across the border. Following the Six Day War, the Golan and the Hermon moved to the control of the State of Israel and the border line moved eastward.

Some of Israel's borders with its neighbors are still disputed, and only the border between Israel and Egypt has been agreed on in an agreement that was signed in 1980. These facts affect day-to-day life along Israel's border." Further on two passages are presented – one describing the difficulty of life in communities along disputed borders (with Lebanon, Syria and Jordan) and the other describing life at the Taba border crossing – and the student is asked to note the differences in the atmosphere and in the feelings of the people living in those places.

(164, **The Southern and Northern Coastal Plain**, 1992, pp.50, 65)

25. The Negotiations Between Israel and the Palestinians

Various books present the Israeli and Palestinian positions in different ways. Some books differentiate between the range of opinions among the Palestinian public and some also criticize the official position of the Israeli government. This topic has special meaning, as the negotiations are currently taking place and the Israeli public is divided over the question whether Israel should give back territory in the West Bank.

A geography textbook used in the state-run schools describes the dispute over the border with Jordan. Israel's maximalist position, which seeks to annex all of the area of Judea and Samaria to Israel, is presented as the position of some Israelis. The Palestinian maximalist position, that demands all of the western part of Eretz Yisrael, is presented as the position "of the Palestinians who represent a majority of the population of Jordan."

"Jordan feels Israel's proximity, for better or for worse, more than any other country in the Middle East. The border between these two countries is very long and both have claims regarding the West Bank and Jerusalem. Among Israelis, there are some who believe in the Promised Land, in the Greater Land of Israel, the one where 'the Jordan River passes through its center,' and they consider Jordan to be part of Israel. In contrast to them, the Palestinians (who represent a majority of Jordan's population) see the western part of Eretz Yisrael as part of their homeland and strive to return to it." (16, **Changes in the Geography of the Middle East**, 1992, p.216).

In contrast to the above, a geography book that includes historical analysis presents the Palestinian position in a totally different way, i.e., as a position that is willing to compromise and reach agreement on dividing Eretz Yisrael between two states. "In recent years, discussions have been underway between Israel and Arab residents of Judea and Samaria, and agreement was even reached on administrative autonomy for the residents of these areas. They themselves are seeking to establish in these territories an Arab state **alongside** the State of Israel."

(71, **Man and Environment – Geography of Eretz Yisrael**, 1999, p.74)

A 1994 geography book depicts the *intifada* (the uprising of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza strip in the years 1988-1993) as an expression of the Palestinians' desire for national independence:

"The Palestinians' desire for national independence gave birth to a prolonged struggle that was expressed in the 'intifada'. This struggle entailed terrorist actions on the one hand and reactions by the State of Israel on the other; there were numerous casualties on both sides."

(163, **The Mediterranean Coastal Plain and Jerusalem**, 1994, p.37)

A geography book that contains economic and historical analyses differentiates between the varying positions within the Palestinian public – a compromise position and a maximalist position:

“Most of the Arab population of Judea and Samaria supports the PLO, whose goal is to establish a Palestinian state there. The rest support Hamas, a violent religious extremist organization that seeks to establish a Muslim state in the entire area of Eretz Yisrael.”

(220, **Geography of Eretz Yisrael – Physical, Economic, Communal, Regional**, 1996, p.318)

One book criticizes the Israeli position that did not recognize the Palestinians as a people. It is the only one that uses the phrase “rule of occupation” in reference to Israel’s control of the territories:

“The government viewed most of the territories as a bargaining chip for peace negotiations, but the Arabs refused to enter into such negotiations because of the bitter defeat they had experienced. The principle of ‘territories for peace’ would eventually serve as a basis for an arrangement between Israel and part of the Arab world only in the 1990s ... Along with territories that were captured, Israel received more than two million Arab residents from the west bank of the Jordan River and the Gaza Strip. They lived under the rule of occupation, and the State of Israel refused to view them as a national entity or a people. The Palestinian Arabs established political organizations such as the ‘Palestine Liberation Organization’ (PLO) and other organizations to fight and oppose the occupation and the State of Israel. These organizations carried out terrorist actions against Israel and against Israeli targets inside Israel and abroad.”

(6, **The Twentieth Century – On the Verge of Tomorrow**, 1999, p.162)

A geography book used in the ultra-orthodox stream considers the question of borders according to what is written in Jewish sources:

“Did you know that the Dead Sea is mentioned many times in the Torah as the eastern border of Eretz Yisrael, such as: ‘And the border shall go down to the Jordan and its limits shall be at the Dead Sea’? (Numbers, 34:12). Did you know that there is a debate whether Eilat is included in the borders of the land or is, from a halachic perspective, considered outside the land?”

(358, **The Negev – The High Ground**, 1997, pp.44, 45)

Another book used in the ultra-orthodox stream states:

“The Euphrates River was designated by the Creator as one of the borders of the country, in accordance with the promise in the Torah, the eastern border of Eretz Yisrael.”

(361, **Geography, 5**, 1989, p. 60)

26. The Peace Agreements and Water

Water, and the problems that have caused bitterness between Israel and its neighbors on this subject, is a central issue in the Arab-Israeli conflict. There is no intention here to enter into detail regarding the substance of the problems and the proposals for arrangements. Rather, this chapter seeks to examine to what extent the books' authors place the blame for non-resolution of the problems on the Arabs' rejection, or whether they present both sides' positions without determining which of them prevented arrangements from being achieved between Israel, Jordan and Syria. In most of the books, the dispute on this subject is presented in a factual way without blaming the Arabs for non-solution of the problem.

A Plan That Failed

A geography textbook that also includes historical analysis presents the positions of both sides in a substantive and objective manner:

"The difficulties are connected with the long-standing conflict between the State of Israel and its neighbors. Since the establishment of the State, there have been struggles between Israel and its neighbors over the question of water sources, as well as attempts to reach arrangements. One example of this is the Johnston Plan. In 1953, the president of the United States appointed Eric Johnston as Special Ambassador for Water Affairs in the Middle East. In 1955, after consulting with experts, he submitted a regional plan for resolving the problem of water between Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Israel. Most of his proposals were not implemented, because there was no agreement on them between the countries." (69, **The Southern and Northern Mediterranean Coastal Plain, and Northern Israel**, 1992, p.38).

A geography book used in the Ultra-Orthodox stream begins by first presenting the problem in a general manner:

"The problem of water is one that also faces Israel's neighbors, and without water the wilderness will not bloom, agriculture will not develop, life will not come forth. This explains the willingness of Israel and its neighbors to fight each other for water."

Further in the book, the author places the responsibility for the conflicts over the water issue on the Arabs:

"The act of drilling was accompanied by struggles between Israel and the Arab countries. The Arabs planned to divert the sources of the Jordan River, in order to paralyze the entire water system in Israel. In their plan, the Arabs sought to divert the upper portion of the Hasbani River, which emanates in Lebanon, to the Litani channel, through a tunnel and additional canal – in order to divert the Baniyas springs. The Arabs began their diversion plan, the Israelis began digging the outlines of the National Water Carrier, and the works were accompanied by many border incidents. The Six-Day War in 5727 (June 1967) and Israel's capture of the Golan Heights finally prevented the plan from being put into action." (363, **On the Platforms of the Country – Northern Israel**, 1995, pp.29, 33).

A Potential for Dialogue

A geography book used in the state-run and state religious streams points out the potential for dialogue between the countries of the region if there is cooperation between them on the water issue:

"This subject touches Israel both directly and indirectly. The deepening of the conflict over utilizing the waters of the Yarmuk River affects Israel directly. A conflict over the waters of the Nile or the Tigris also relates to Israel and its security, even if not directly. Along with the risks there is also a great deal of potential for regional cooperation and dialogue. If such a situation is created, Israel's experience in water use, irrigation and water recycling could help it forge a link with its neighbors." (16, **Changes in Middle East Geography**, 1992, p.314).

In a book used in the general stream, the potential for peace and cooperation between the peoples of the region is again emphasized:

"If There Were Peace

"A peace agreement between us and our neighbors would enable the countries of the region to reach broad cooperation in many spheres – and as a result we would be able to utilize the water sources and their landscapes efficiently.

Israel could, for example, implement a program in cooperation with Jordan for exploiting the winter flood waters of the Yarmuk: in winter, water from the Yarmuk would flow through a special canal to Lake Kinneret – and be stored in it, and in summer some of the water would flow back to Jordan. Such a plan would enable both countries to gain additional amounts of water.

- It would be possible to set up a power station for generating electricity on a tributary of one of the rivers that 'crosses borders'. Such a station could exploit the power contained in the flow of water in order to generate electricity and supply it to the countries located near it.
- And it would also be possible to build tourism and vacation sites near the water, where residents of the region's countries and tourists from distant lands could visit."

"Exercise 25 – Dream of Peace

"Write a poem or composition, or make a drawing, that expresses the connection between water and peace in our region."

(69, **The Southern and Northern Mediterranean Coastal Plain, and Northern Israel**, 1992, p.107).

27. Continued Hostility in the Era of Peace

Previous chapters discussed the Arabs' positions throughout the Arab-Israeli conflict from its inception, on the subject of lands, Jewish immigration to Israel, etc. The common thread in these chapters was that the reasons for the Arabs' opposition to Zionism stemmed from rational reasons – objection to losing the status of majority, loss of their claim to have exclusive ownership of the whole territory, etc. However, there are books that present the Arabs' hatred as stemming from the very difference between Jews and Arabs, an inherent hatred that is independent of political, military or economic circumstances.

The Citizens Are Hostile

There are those who present hatred for Israel as a given that cannot be changed, and without explaining the reasons behind it. According to this explanation, the hostility is popular. The following appears in a geography book in the Ultra-Orthodox stream: "Much to our regret, the Arab states are hostile to Israel, and they pressure friendly countries to act against Israel ... A peace treaty was signed with Egypt, and even with Jordan, but the citizens of those 'friendly' countries are hostile to Israel". (364, **The Near East**, pp.30, 39).

Another book in the Ultra-Orthodox stream includes a passage in the same vein: "Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt are Arab, Muslim states (Lebanon is partially Christian), and hostile relations exist between them and Israel. Although there has been a peace agreement between Israel and Egypt for more than 20 years, and though a peace treaty was also signed between Israel and Jordan, one can feel that these are countries in which enemies live". (313, **The High Ground – Northern Israel**, 1995, p.4).

A reader for Ultra-Orthodox schools contains the following:

There is a story about a father, an IDF (Israel Defense Forces) reservist, who goes to war. "'War?' I wondered, 'What happened?' 'The Arabs want to fight us and take over our country,' Yitzhak explained. Dad left to guard our state. The Arabs want to take our state away from us, but Dad and the soldiers will protect us and drive them away!"

(142, **Open the Gate**, third grade reader, 1991, p.136).

To Destroy the Jewish State

"After cease-fire agreements were signed with Arab countries, for a while the hope existed that these agreements, which by their nature were temporary, would be replaced by permanent peace accords and that good neighborly relations would develop between the countries of the region. However, it was the young state's lot to fight an ongoing struggle over its very existence, when around it were hostile states that constantly declared that their goal was to destroy the 'Jewish State.'"

Thus was shown God's personal supervision not only in war, but throughout all the years of the state's existence, which form a single, wonderful chain of an overt miracle ... During the 20 years of its existence, the State of Israel has gone through three large wars. The most difficult war was during the time of the founding of the State. It was a time of difficult, terrible birth pangs, and in the battles of the 1948 war 6,000 Jews fell: one of every 100 Jews who then lived in the country. At the end of the war, the Arab countries signed cease-fire agreements, but they were unwilling to enter into peace negotiations. They even refused to recognize the State of Israel's right to exist, and they constantly declared their desire to conquer the country and expel the Jews from it.

... In the month of Iyar 5727 (June 1967), the situation came to a head: the Egyptians, Jordanians, Iraqis and Syrians formed a military alliance and prepared for a war of destruction against Israel. In the three weeks that preceded the Six Day War, when all of our enemies rose up against us, and joined together around us to say: 'Let us go and wipe them out as a nation and the name of Israel will be remembered no more,' we cried out to the God of our fathers and asked He who saved us in every generation to save us. We cried out – and were answered”.

(20, **The History of Recent Generations**, Volume B: From the First World War to the Six Day War, 1997, pp.284, 303, 304).

Continuation of the Nazis

In the same book, Egypt is presented as a direct continuation of Nazi Germany:

"The Egyptian border was quiet during this period. However, during all the years between the Sinai Campaign (the war with Egypt in the Sinai Desert in 1956) and the Six-Day War (in 1967), the Egyptian dictator, Nasser, did not sit by idly. He worked hard to build a large army and equipped it with modern and sophisticated weapons – and waited for the right time to come. He was helped by Nazi scientists and technicians, who did not manage to get along in the new Germany and imagined in their accursed souls that here they could complete the work begun by the Nazi beast: to fight a war of destruction against the Jewish people! The Nazi remnants arrived in Egypt by the thousands, and worked mainly in the missile industry. At the time, it appeared that Israel's situation was like that of Czechoslovakia before the Second World War, except for the fact that the Nazis only wanted to conquer that piece of territory, while the Egyptians wanted to destroy all the Jewish residents of the country ... The power of hatred for Israel is great, it breaks down barriers and unites enemies. And the two rulers, Hussein and Nasser met ... and an agreement was signed between them ... a terrible Holocaust was expected for our people from Egypt. The Egyptian dictator, Nasser, constantly declared his desire to destroy the Jewish Yishuv in Israel, and fanned the flames of hatred among the residents of his country by speeches and publications that were reminiscent of the Nazis' incitement against the Jews before the Second World War. As was said, Nasser was aided by the Germans and the Russians. They supplied him with the most modern weaponry and in huge quantities."

(20, **The History of Recent Generations**, Volume B, 1997, pp.305, 307, 311).

This view regarding the Arab world's irrational hatred toward Israel is not limited only to books in the Ultra-Orthodox stream. After describing Israel-Egypt relations, the wars and peace, a geography book used in state-run schools states the following:

"At the same time, Egypt is part of the Arab and Muslim world, a world hostile to Israel, most of which refuses to accept it. Therefore, the concern exists among us that Egypt could perhaps suddenly turn its back on us and return to the era of confrontations and wars. In order to be prepared for any situation, we must know the geographic, economic and political processes taking place in Egypt, and clarify for ourselves what significance these changes hold for the future of relations between Israel and Egypt."

(16, **Changes in the Geography of the Middle East**, 1992, p.124).

A Foreign Implant

In the same book, the Arabs' hatred of Israel is explained by the fact that Israel is a "foreign implant," since there are national, cultural and religious differences between Jews and Arabs. "The Arab world constantly emphasizes that Israel is present in the Middle East as a foreign implant, from both a linguistic and cultural standpoint, and from a national standpoint. Their argument is that around the State of Israel resides the Arab people, whose language and culture is Arabic, while in Israel there is a Jewish nation whose language is Hebrew and whose culture is Western."

(16, **Changes in the Geography of the Middle East**, 1992, p.19).

A textbook used in the Ultra-Orthodox sector gives a religious reason for the Arabs' hatred:

"An Ongoing Conflict

"Halacha – it is known that Esau hates Jacob

"The Arab countries feast their eyes on Israel's territory, arguing that Jewish Israel is a foreign implant in the very heart of Arab states. The Palestinian Charter states that a holy war – a jihad – must be undertaken to liberate Israel-Palestine from the Jews. Not only the countries bordering on Israel act against it, but the rest of the Arab countries as well." (364, **The Near East**, p.39).

"Hatred as a Tool

"A history book used in the state-run stream gives a functional explanation for the hatred: "The rulers of Arab countries used hatred of Israel as a way to bring their people together and unite them against a common enemy."

(6, **The Twentieth Century - On the Verge of Tomorrow**, history for ninth grade, 1999, p.158).

28. Statistical Data

Data on the size of the population and the dispersal of settlements clearly indicate to the student the situation that those on both sides of the conflict were subjected to. A book that describes the history of Jewish settlement and omits data on how many Arabs there were, or that does not present a map noting Arab settlements, gives the student, for the period under discussion, a distorted picture of reality.

The subject of maps will be reviewed in the next chapter. Here, we will examine what data are presented in books about the Arabic population from the beginning of the Aliya (Jewish immigration to Israel) in the late nineteenth Century, until the establishment of the State in 1948. In general, it can be said that only a very few books provide the student with data about the Arab population in this period. True, friction and clashes with Arabs are related, but the non-presentation of statistical data is liable to leave the student with an incorrect picture, as if the Jews were the majority.

As for data on the number of those killed and injured in the disturbances of 1921, 1929, 1936, 1939, in the War of Independence and in the rest of the wars, only a very few books present the numbers of those killed and wounded among the Arabs.

The Population in the Nineteenth Century

A textbook on Zionism, that is used in the state-run and state religious streams, reviews the geographical changes in the Jewish population in the nineteenth century. It also gives the numbers of Jews in the "four holy cities" – Jerusalem, Tiberias, Hebron and Safed - (while distinguishing between Ashkenazim and Sephardim) - without mentioning the Arab population in Eretz Yisrael.

(75, **Zionism – The Jewish People in Recent Generations**, Part A: 1882-1939, 1993, pp.43, 56).

The same book presents data on Jews in the twentieth Century in percentage form for the years 1919, 1922, 1927, 1935. The student can calculate the percentage of Arabs according to the diagram. (75, *ibid*, p.193).

A book published by Israel Educational Television states briefly: "The population of the country on both sides of the Jordan River at the end of the eighteenth century was about a quarter of a million, only about 8,000 of whom were Jews."

(76, **Homeland – History of the Yishuv in Eretz Yisrael in the New Era**, p.5).

A geography book used in the state-run stream contains data on the Jews in the second half of the nineteenth Century. The number of Arabs can be learned indirectly, without details on the internal breakdown between Muslims and Christians:

"The Jewish Settlement Disposition at the End of the Ottoman Period

"The Ottoman Turkish Empire ruled Eretz Yisrael for 400 years (1517-1917). A survey of Eretz Yisrael, conducted by the Foundation for the Study of Eretz Yisrael in

London in the second half of the nineteenth century, shows that the population of Eretz Yisrael (within the area that, in time, was determined as the borders of the British Mandate) around 1880, numbered approximately 450,000, of whom 24,000 were Jews."

(302, **Man and Places – Chapters in the Geography of Eretz Yisrael**, 1999, p.127).

Only a few history books used in the state-run stream provide data on the Arabs in the nineteenth century.

"At the beginning of the nineteenth Century, between 250-350,000 Arabs lived in the country. About 50,000 of them lived in cities, about 50,000 were nomadic Bedouin and the rest lived in villages."

(7, **The Nineteenth Century** – History for eighth grade, 1998, p.143).

"Eretz Yisrael in the nineteenth Century was under Ottoman rule. Living in Eretz Yisrael during this period were Arabs, most Muslim with a minority of Christians, and Jews who lived in the four holy cities. During the Nineteenth Century, the population of Eretz Yisrael doubled, from 246,000 at the turn of the century to 500,000 residents in 1915. The number of Jews grew from 4,900 in 1800 to 90,000 in 1915. Living conditions and personal security both saw great improvement."

(160, **From Conservatism to Progress**, history for eighth grade, 1998, p.248).

"At the end of the nineteenth Century the ratio was 10:1 in the Arabs' favor (about 400-500,000 Arabs compared to about 50,000 Jews. Some estimates even put the number of Arabs in Eretz Yisrael during the same period at about 700-800,000). By the end of the period (1914), the ratio had fallen to 7:1 in favor of the Arabs (600,000 Arabs compared to 85,000 Jews). The reason for the change in the ratio stemmed from the immigration of Jews to Eretz Yisrael and from the natural increase of the Jewish population, in contrast to the stability in the natural increase of the Arab population."

(299, **The World and the Jews in Recent Generations**, 1998, p.225).

The Population in the Twentieth Century

Another book contains the following: "In November 1948 a census was conducted, according to which 712,000 Jews and 69,000 Arabs lived in the country."

(7, **Homeland**, part b, 1998, p.146).

"In Eretz Yisrael during the nineteenth Century, Arabs (Muslims and Christians), Jews and Druze lived side by side. The number of residents in Eretz Yisrael at the beginning of the twentieth century was about 600,000 Arabs and 85,000 Jews. A census conducted by the British in 1922 counted 757,182 residents, including: 590,890 Muslims, 84,794 Jews, 73,240 Christians and 7,280 Druze.

(160, **From Conservatism to Progress**, History for eighth grade, 1998, p.369).

A history book used in the state-run education system only provides numbers of Jews: "In the middle of the nineteenth century the Yishuv numbered about 10,000 people and 25 years later numbered about 25,000-15,000 of whom lived in Jerusalem."

(13, **From Exile to Independence**, vol.a, 1988, p. 21).

Regarding the situation in 1948, various data are presented in two books. Most books contain no data at all on the Arab population.

"With the establishment of the state, the minority population numbered 160,000 (after the rest of the Arab residents left the territory of the state)."
(220, **Geography of Israel**, 1996, p. 180).

Results of Clashes and Wars

"The total number of people killed in the week of disturbances in 1936-1939 was 133 Jews, with 230 Jews injured. 116 Arabs were killed. About 1,600 Arabs were tried. Only three of them were hanged. The rest were released."
(75, **Zionism – The Jewish People in Recent Generations**, Part A: 1882-1939, p.134).

"In the disturbances of 1936-1939 more than 400 Jews and 1,000 Arabs were killed."
(6, **The Twentieth Century**, History for ninth grade, 1999, p.86).

As for the War of Independence, only one book provides data regarding the Arabs:
"Israel lost about 6,000 soldiers and civilians in the War of Independence. The Arab armies suffered about 2,000 killed and the number of those killed among the Arabs of the country and the irregular forces is not precisely known. More than 600,000 Arab residents were uprooted from their homes and communities and fled."
(36, **The Twentieth Century – The Century That Overturned World Orders**, 1994, p.204).

29. Maps

Geographical maps provide tangible visual expression of the recognition or refusal to recognize the Arab side of the conflict. Maps that ignore Arab settlements produce a distorted and one-sided slant among pupils regarding the state of affairs in the field at any point in time during the Arab-Israeli conflict. Maps providing an accurate picture of settlements and population enable the pupil to judge the distribution of power for himself and to understand the factors that shaped the positions of the two sides of the conflict.

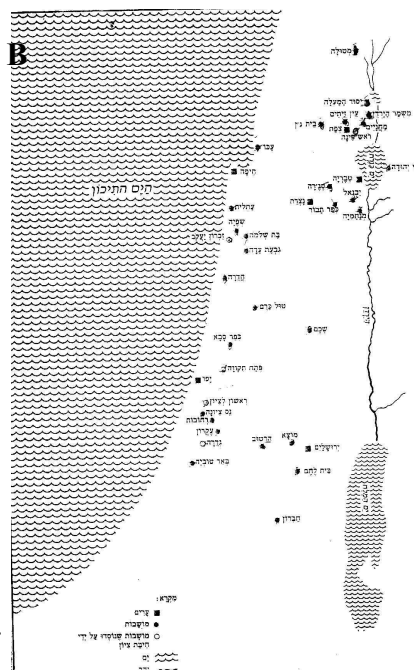
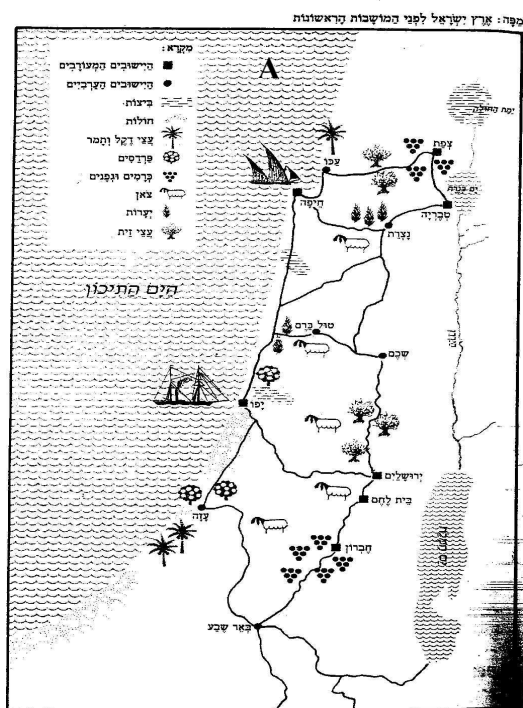
One can differentiate among several kinds of maps found in history and geography books:

- Maps illustrating the settlements and population of Palestine at various points in time, such as: the end of the nineteenth century, the First Aliya, the Second Aliya, etc.
- Maps illustrating events and wars, such as: the events of 1929, 1936-1939, the War of Independence, the six day war, etc.
- Maps illustrating the cease fire lines and state borders following wars
- Maps devised by international commissions or institutions such as: the Peel Commission, the United States Resolution of November 1947, etc.
- The maps of the Palestinian Authority following the Oslo Accords.

It should be noted that we are not speaking of maps that concern themselves with topographical or climactic data, or the like.

Maps of Palestine in the Nineteenth Century, Prior to the First Aliya

A history book about the first settlements in Palestine includes a map with drawings under the title “Eretz Yisrael before the First Moshavot” (map A.) (New small towns established by the first immigrants) illustrating the 13 main cities in the country. It differentiates between Arab settlements and mixed settlements that include Arabs and Jews. The same book includes a map of “Eretz Yisrael during the Period of the First Moshavot”, indicating only 15 cities and settlements, without characterization of the resident population. Among the 15, Jaffa and Nablus are Arab cities.



A book intended for State-run high schools shows maps of the settlements and lands in Palestine at the end of 1937. It indicates Jewish and Arab settlements and mixed settlements, and one of the maps indicates lands owned by Jews.

(342, **Stockade and Tower**, pp.35, 336).

A book published by Educational Television shows maps of the events of 1920, 1921, 1929, and 1936-1939, indicating a few Arab settlements and Jewish settlements that were attacked.

(75, **Zionism: The Jewish People in Recent Decades**, part 1: 1882-1939, pp.121, 124, 134, 200).

Maps of the battles of the War of Independence appear in many books, most indicating Jewish, Arab and mixed settlements. A map in a book published by Educational Television indicates Jewish settlements and features arrows indicating the invasion of Arab countries. Arab settlements do not appear in the book.

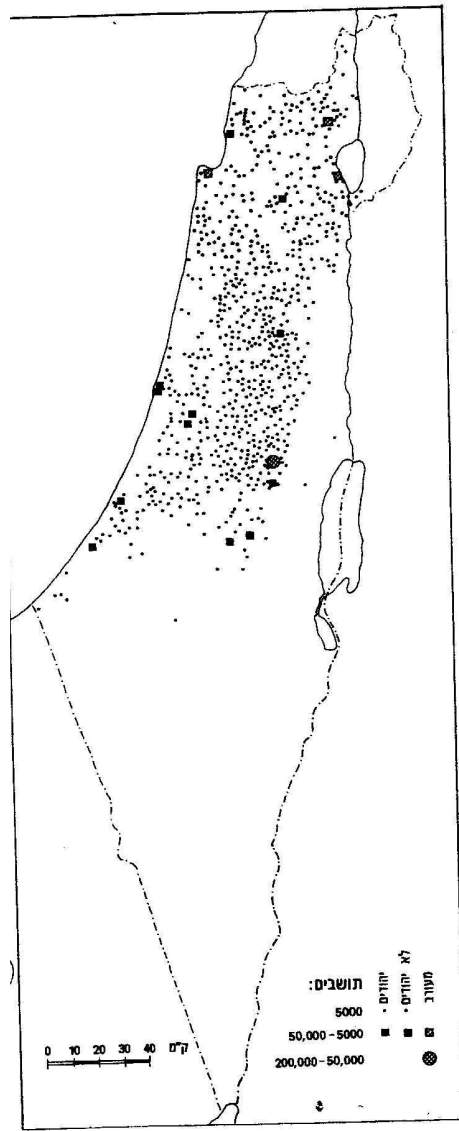
(77, **Homeland**, part 2, 1998, p.140).

A book on the history of the Yishuv for the state-run schools features a map of “The settlement struggle”, indicating Jewish settlements established between 1944 and 1947. Beside each settlement is the date of its establishment. There is no mention of Arab settlements.

(353, **Not on a Silver Platter – From A National Home to a Sovereign State: 1939-1949**, 1984, p.89).

A geography book for high schools run by the “Ort” school network features 4 maps of “Jewish settlements according to the periods of their establishment”. The 4 maps indicate Jewish settlements only, depicting the following periods: “Jewish settlements at the end of World War I”; “Settlements established with the establishment of the state of Israel (1918-1948)”; “Settlements established up to the end of the six day war (1948-1967)”; and “Settlements established by the end of 1998”.

(302, People and Scenery – Geography of the Land of Israel, 1999, pp.124, 125).



Maps Devised by International Commissions or Institutions

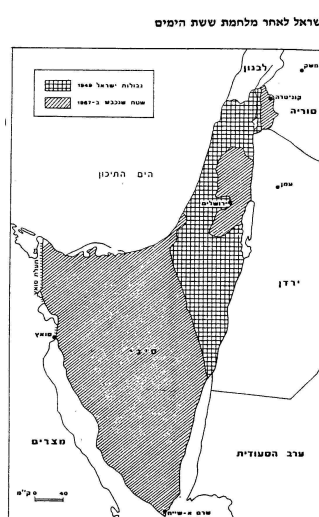
Many books feature the Peel Commission proposal for the partition of Palestine into an Arab state and a Jewish state. For example, book 353, **Not on a Silver Platter – From A National Home to a Sovereign State: 1939-1949**, 1984, p.98, and book 342 **Stockade and Tower**, p.78, and many other books.

The United Nations Resolution of November 1947, calling for the partition of Palestine into Jewish and Arab states and the internationalization of Jerusalem, is also featured in many books. A book published by Educational Television features such a map, beside a map of Israel's borders from the end of the War of Independence. The pupil is asked to check whether his current place of residence is situated within the borders of the Jewish State according to the UN Resolution. (77, **Homeland**, part 2, 1998, p.150).

One history book of the state-run schools features a map of “the separation of the eastern Trans-Jordan from Mandate Palestine, and establishment of the Hashemite Emirates: 1923” (75, **Zionism: The Jewish People in Recent Decades**, part1: 1882-1939, p.126).

Maps of Israel after the Six Day War

A history book for the State-run schools features a map of “Israel after the six day war”, clearly indicating “Israel's borders in 1949” and “territory conquered in 1967” (in the book's words). The same book features another map of “Israel within the borders of the green line”. (245, **The First Twenty Years of the State of Israel**, 1989, pp.78, 62).



A geography book for state-run high schools and for teachers' seminaries features a map of “The administrative division of the occupied territories (Judea and Samaria)”, indicating the green line borders and district borders. (220, **Geography of Israel**, 1996, p.314).

Another geography book features a map of “Changes to borders of Jordan”, indicating “The Jordan-Israel border until 1967” and “Jordan border 1980”, stretching along the Jordan river.

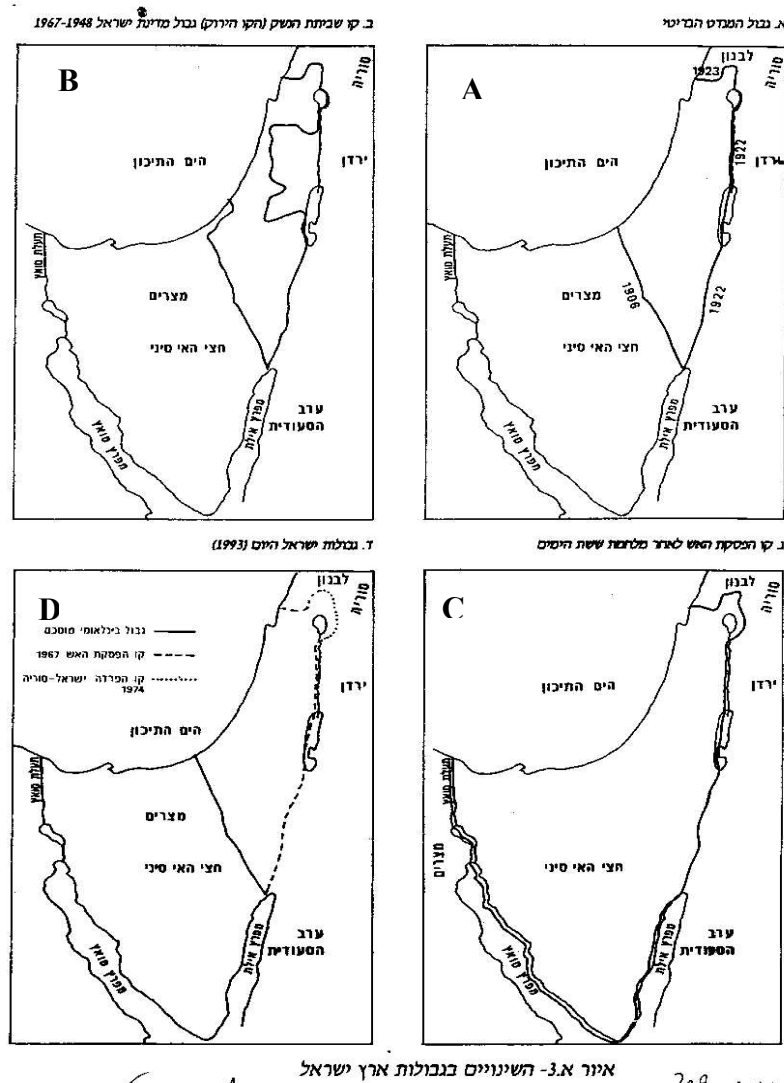
(16, **Changes in the Geography of the Middle East**, 1992, p.190).

A history book for the state-run schools features a map of “Regimes in the middle east in the 1960s”, indicating Israel in the green line borders. The territories of Judea and Samaria are included in the area marked as Jordan.

(36, **The Twentieth Century: The Century that Overturned World Orders**, 1994, p.190).

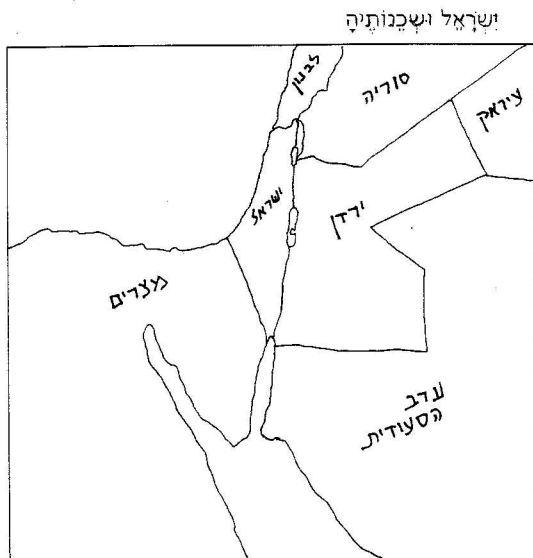
A book for the state-run schools features 4 maps on one page: “A. Borders of the British Mandate”; “B. The armistice line (the green line), the Borders of the state of israel 1948-1967”; “C. The cease fire line after the six day war”; and “D. The borders of Israel today (1993)”. Map D indicates “The internationally accepted border”, “The 1987 cease fire line”, and “The 1974 Israel-Syria separation line”.

(302, **People and Scenery – Geography of the Land of Israel**, 1995, p.12).



A grammar book features a map of “Israel and its neighbors”, indicating Israel’s borders including Judea, Samaria and the Golan Heights, without any reference to there being lines after the six day war. The map is offered to pupils as final. The pupil is asked to answer various questions regarding the countries neighboring Israel that appear below the map.

(96, **Eshkolit** – Collection 4: Whole or Part? 1990, p.32).

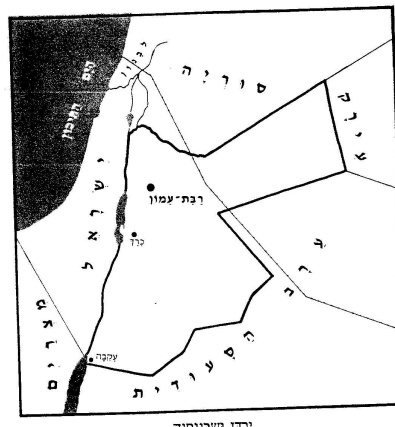


התבונן במפה וסמן ✓ ליד כל משפט נכון:

- לכל המדינות שמצוינות במפה זו יש גבול משותף עם ישראל.
- רק לסוריה, ללבנון, לירדן ולמצרים יש גבול משותף עם ישראל.
- כל המדינות המצוינות במפה זו שוכנות על שפת הים התיכון.
- רק ישראל נמצאת על שפת הים התיכון.
- חוץ מישראל אף לא מדינה אחת גובלת בים סוף.
- רק מדינת ישראל גובלת בשני ימים: הים התיכון וים סוף.

A geography book for the lower grades of the ultra-orthodox schools features a map of Jordan and its neighbors. The map features Israel including Judea, Samaria and the Golan Heights, without any indication of international, separation or cease fire lines.

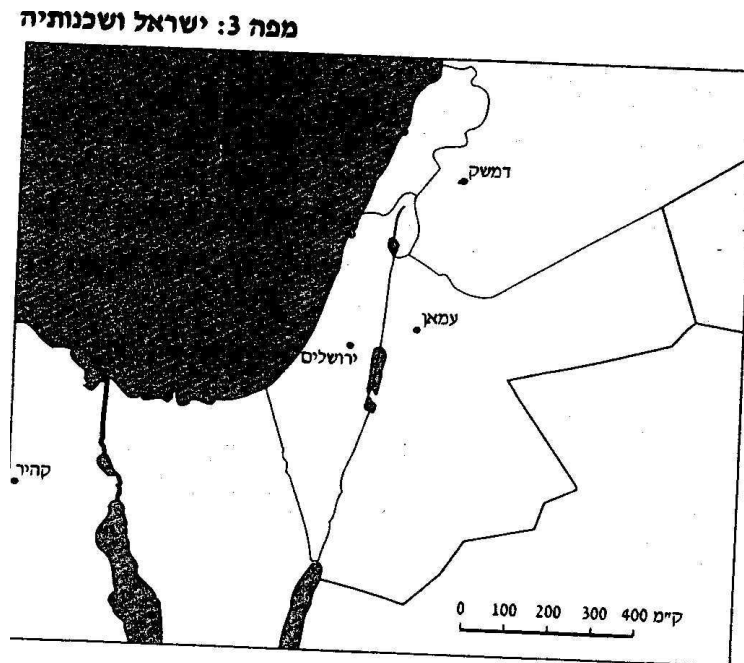
(361, **Geography 5**, 1989, p.8).



Many books of the ultra-orthodox schools feature a map of Israel with border including Judea, Samaria and the Golan Heights, without any mention of the fact that these are territories that came into Israeli possession after the six day war that are still subject to negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians or between Israel and Syria.

This is the case in the following books:

- (377, **Our Childhood 2**, a second grade reader, p.186).
- (44, **Everything in its Time**, a second grade reader, 2000, p.114).
- (43, **Everything in its Time**, a third grade reader, 1995, p.156).
- (351, **Paths on the Map**, part 2, the book cover and p.47).
- (361, **Geography 5**, part 2, 1989, p.57).



There are also similar maps used by the state-run schools, illustrating Israel's borders including Judea, Samaria and the Golan Heights, without any indication that these are disputable:

- (159, **Lands of the Mediterranean**, 1992, p.13).
- (69, **Central and Southern Coastal Plain and Northern Israel**, 1992, p.186).
- (16, **Changes in the Geography of the Middle East**, 1992, p.315).

Maps of the Territories of the Palestinian Authority

The atlas for elementary and middle schools by Prof. Moshe Braver (1999), the most widespread atlas and the one used for many years in most schools in Israel, features a map of "the territories of the Palestinian Authority". The atlas is updated every year according to developments in negotiations. This edition of the atlas gives the situations for 2000: "Area A: Given to the Palestinian Authority with civilian and security powers in 1995 (orange). Extensions of Area A which were implemented in accordance with the Wye Accords, 1997 (yellow). Extensions of Area A which were implemented in 1998-2000 (light yellow). Area B: Rural areas in which responsibility

for public order is in the hands of the Palestinian Authority. Israel is responsible for the war against terror and for defence of Israelis (pink).

The same atlas features a map of Israel and Jordan, including the border between Israel and Syria on the Golan Heights in red, marked “Interim border”. According to the legend beside the map, the borders between Israel and Jordan, and Israel and Egypt, are marked +++, referring to “state boundaries”.

Nevertheless, the information on the size of the territories includes a clear differentiation between the State of Israel and the territories of Judea and Samaria. Data on the territories appear beneath the map: “Israel (including the Golan Heights) 21,942 square kilometers... Judea and Samaria 5,523 square kilometers; the Gaza Strip 352 square kilometers; Israel in the 1967 borders 20,700 square kilometers (1949 armistice agreements); territories added since 1967: Golan Heights 1,176 square kilometers; Eastern Jerusalem 64 square kilometers; The Land of Israel in the borders of the British Mandate 27,027 square kilometers”.

The next page features a map of the Galilee and Golan Heights, marked “1967 cease-fire line between Israel and Syria” in red, and “1974 separation of forces line” in blue. (289, **Atlas for Elementary and Middle Schools**, 11th Edition, 1999, pp.25, 9, 10).

A much bigger and more comprehensive edition of the same atlas, used by high schools, features geographical data on countries all over the world at the beginning of the atlas, including data on Israel, Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip:

“Israel 21,942 square kilometers (including the Golan Heights). Residents: 6.1 million. Reproduction: 1.5%. GNP: \$14,410. Languages: Hebrew, Arabic. Population: 81% Jews, 17% Arabs, 1.8% Druze. Religions: 81% Jewish, 14% Sunni Moslem, 2.5% Christian, 1.8% Druze. Capital: Jerusalem, 630,000 Residents”.

“Judea and Samaria 5,523 square kilometers. Residents: 1.2 million. Reproduction: 2.8%, GNP: \$1,100. Languages: Arabic, Hebrew. Population: 90% Arabs, 9% Jews. Religions: 82% Sunni Moslem, 7% Christian, 9% Jewish.”

“Gaza Strip 352 square kilometers. Residents: 780,000. Reproduction: 3.2%. GNP: \$700. Languages: Arabic, Hebrew. Population: 99.6% Arabs, 0.4% Jews. Religions: 98.9% Sunni Moslem, 0.7% Christian, 0.4% Jewish”.

In the last edition of the Atlas printed in September 2000, there is an updated map describing the deployment of forces as determined in the Wye Agreement. Map No. 1 p. 122. The maps are marked as follows: Area A – orange “given to the Palestinian Authority with security and civilian authority in 1995”; in yellow – extensions of Area A, implemented according to Wye Agreement 1997”; in light yellow - “extensions of Area A implemented in 1998–2000; Area B – pink: “rural areas in which civilian authority and public order of the Palestinians in the hands of the Pal. Authority. Israel is responsible for the war against terror and defence of Israelis”.

In the same atlas there are three maps showing the Jewish and non-Jewish population of Israel in the years 1931-1947 and 1996 (Map No 2, p. 124).

The maps give the student precise information on the changes in population from Arab majority to Jewish Majority.

(**Physical, Political and Economic Atlas**, eleventh edition, Yavne, 2000, pp.IX, 17, 4,5,8,9,27).

30. Social Development of the Arab Sector

Some of the descriptions of the changes in Arab villages are written in condescending and patronizing language. In contrast, there are books – primarily geography books or books that combine geography and history – that describe the processes occurring in Arab settlements in language that is substantive and factual, pointing out achievements and development along with problems and distress. At the same time, even the descriptions that highlight the problems focus on problems of lifestyle, employment, welfare and economics, and do not address national and political issues or the standing of Israeli Arabs. These issues are discussed in Civic Studies books. Here we will examine the language and the adjectives that are used in the description and analysis of social development in the Arab sector.

For the First Time

An example of condescending language:

"In the State of Israel, the minorities, for the first time in their history, came to know the taste of personal and economic equality between men and women, and among villagers themselves, and there was increased recognition of the value of an individual, of his rights and duties vis-a-vis society and the state. Relations between families and communities improved, acts of revenge and hostility in villages disappeared almost completely, and there was a growing trend towards education and learning a trade. Democracy is increasingly taking root in their midst, and its value is growing among them." (220, **The Geography of Israel**, 1995, p.413).

The history and geography textbooks used in the religious schools and in state-run secular schools clearly differ in their presentation of Arab agriculture and the Arab fellah (a word in Arabic for peasant farmer) from that of the textbooks in the ultra-orthodox stream, which present Arab agriculture in the most negative way.

Arab Agriculture

"The residents of Peki'in [a village which Jews never left through all the course of history] were noted for the diligence and did not leave an inch of land on the slopes of the mountain untilled. Although the work was primitive, as is customary among the fellahin [the Arab farmers], thanks to the abundance of water and the natural wealth, the Peki'in residents were able to support themselves from this work... They are different from Arabs in their strict observance of religious matters".

(329, **Our Childhood 8**, 1989, p.265).

"The land in the mountain region is covered with rocks. Further inland, the region was covered with forests, but the Arabs from the villages had their sheep graze in the forests and chopped trees for firewood until the place became desolate. After the Arabs left their villages, trees started growing there again."

(365, **The Good Land** – Land of Israel studies textbook for fourth and fifth grades, 1991, pp. 69)

Another geography book contains a similar passage:

“For hundreds of years, the red sandy earth was not considered fertile. The Arabs, residents of the land in the past, did not know how to improve the soil: they did not use compost to fertilize the soil and had trouble irrigating it. When the Jewish settlers wanted to buy the land from the Arabs, the latter were glad to get rid of it (especially since large portions of it were covered with swamps, as mentioned) and sold it to the Jews.

“The Arabs thought the Jews were foolish and ‘throwing their money down the drain’: for such terrible land, they were paying huge sums. However, the Holy One Blessed Be He, blessed the Jewish settlers with wisdom: they learned to fertilize and irrigate the land and they turned the previously ‘unsuccessful’ red earth into some of the best plots in the country, especially for growing citrus fruits.

In the summer, the fields must be irrigated. The Arab residents of the Sharon region in the past did not know how to draw the water from the few wells they managed to dig up to the hilltops. They even had trouble finding a layer of ground water from which they could draw water through additional wells.

“The Jewish settlers were able to find the ground water layer at a depth of 100-600 meters and they pumped water from there to the hilltops with a mechanical pump they had developed (instead of with the manual pump that had been used until then).” (372, **Eretz Hemda [A Beautiful Country]- the Central and Southern Coastal Plain**, 1990, pp.52, 167).

“When the land of the Sharon region was Arab-owned, they were unable to grow much in the tough, dry land. Therefore, the Arabs agreed to sell the land for next to nothing to Jews who came to buy the lands. The Jews, who also benefited from God’s help, fertilized the land, improved the soil, learned effective irrigation methods for this land and managed to transform this land into fertile land.”

(359, **On the High Places of the Land – the Coastal Plain**, p.22).

Geography books used in ultra-orthodox schools similarly describe life in Egypt in the Nile region near the Aswan Dam, but after the derogatory description the author admits that efforts have been made by the Egyptian governments to improve the situation:

“With the construction of the dam... the water stagnating in the irrigation channels caused the bilharzia worms to grow in the water. Any kind of contact with the water from the reservoir [beside the dam] that has not been purified causes disease. The farmer touches the water. His children play in the water in the channels and the women wash clothing with contaminated water. That is how they contract the disease...

“The villages in Egypt are very miserable. The houses, which are no more than huts, are built very densely. There are no grassy areas and no trees providing shade to be found in the Egyptian villages. The roads are unpaved. And in the filthy alleyways, neglected children flit about. The village is a source of disease.

“Successive Egyptian governments tried to improve the farmer’s lifestyle by handing over additional land to them. The Egyptian government invested large sums in improving conditions in the village by providing clean water piped into the houses and linking up the villages to the electricity grid. Schools, hospitals and stores were built.

Nevertheless progress is very slow. Egyptian governments do not have enough money to develop all of the villages in Egypt.”
(364, **The Middle East**, 1998, pp.70, 71, 364).

Traditional vs. Modern Farming

In most textbooks used in the state-run secular school system, Arab agriculture is depicted in positive terms. The common term used to describe Arab agriculture is “traditional farming,” a term that is not by definition negative. The Arabs are associated with traditional farming directly or by the inclusion of a photograph of an Arab with an explanation of what traditional farming is beside it. For example, in order to illustrate the method of threshing wheat with a stick, that was common in the Biblical period, a 1995 workbook for the Book of Judges and the Book of Ruth (there is no mention of which grade the book is meant for) features a photo of an Arab, and the caption under it states:

“A contemporary man threshing wheat with a stick. Photo from an Arab village in Samaria. This method is gradually disappearing from our region.”
(10, **With the Judges**, 1995, p.38).

“In the past, most non-Jewish settlements were rural communities, and their residents engaged primarily in traditional farming. They raised crops that were suited to the mountain, such as olives and tobacco. They worked their small plots manually or with the help of work animals such as horses and donkeys. To overcome the problem of the steep slope of the mountains, the residents built agricultural terraces. The villages were built very densely: the houses abutted one another and the streets were winding and narrow.

Since the establishment of the State, the number of non-Jewish settlements has hardly changed, but great changes are underway in those settlements. One of the most prominent changes is that most of these places grew and developed and today they are urban communities and some of them have even received the status of a city (for example: Um al-Fahm, Shfaram, etc.).”

(69, **The Middle and Southern Coastal Plain and Northern Israel**, 1992, p.248).

The same textbook gives a general explanation of traditional farming without specifically mentioning that the reference is to Arabs. However, underneath the explanation is a photo of an Arab plowing land, and beneath it the caption states: “In one of the Galilee villages – an Arab plows his land with a hand-held plow pulled by a donkey to prepare the land to for growing vegetables in the midst of an olive grove.”
(69, **The Middle and Southern Coastal Plain and Northern Israel**, 1992, p.135).

A book published by Educational Television, which contains programs that were broadcast on television, depicts traditional farming in a positive light, explaining its advantages from a functional perspective. At the end, it tells of changes in, and the modernization of, Arab agriculture.

“Until recently traditional farming was the main economic base of the mountain region. The term traditional farming refers to a method of working the land that was handed down from generation to generation and did not involve the use of modern technologies and know-how.

“One of the characteristics of traditional farming is self-sufficiency, i.e., it is agriculture whose goal is to provide the basic sustenance needs of families or villages in an independent manner. This type of agriculture enables those who engage in it to support themselves even if they are isolated or cut off and it did indeed enable the communities in the mountain region to sustain themselves throughout history, even in times of war and occupation...

‘During my wanderings through the villages of Judea and Samaria, I am always moved anew by the fellahin’s (peasants farmers) ability to build their villages in the scenery and integrate into it, as they did in this beautiful mountaintop village, Ras Karkar. The distance from the urban center to the fellahin villages is an hour and a half and the trip in essence brings me to the land of the Bible. You see the piles of sheaves in the barns. You see the fellahin women seated beside the piles and threshing... the seeds are scattered among the sheep and goats and this is important fodder for the animals’...

“Traditional Arab farming has undergone many changes in recent years. In some places, I see that tractors and state of the art harvesters are being used and replacing the scythe and the threshing sledge. Mechanization is gradually taking over traditional Arab farming”

(163, **The Central Mountain and Jerusalem**, Educational Television Publications, 1994, pp.19, 24, 25).

A textbook for second graders in general schools stresses that the Jews are the ones who brought modernization to Arab agriculture: "A portion of the Arab population currently earns a living from agriculture. From the Jews, they learned how to use modern and innovative methods to work the land. They saw the Jews developing new branches of agriculture and using modern methods of raising crops, such as greenhouses, using airplanes for spraying insecticides, raising chickens in coops sealed with a plastic material, growing and producing flowers, and more. The Arabs learned how to use most of these modern methods. Even the Arab peasant farmers engage in industrial growing of crops for export to foreign countries, such as strawberries, peanuts, tobacco, olives, flowers and more."

(25, **New Israel Reader**, second grade, 1987, p.74).

Problems of the Arab Sector

A geography book for high schools in the state-run stream presents the development of the Arab village in Israel in a substantive manner, without pejorative statements or stereotypes, and also discusses the problems of Arab settlements, without saying that they stem from the Arabs' backwardness or nature. The problems are presented without noting explicitly who is responsible for them. The student is exposed to the difficult situation in the Arab settlements and can conclude that the state neglected the Arab sector and must see to finding solutions:

“The Arab settlement was not planned in advance. Houses were built close together in the old nucleus of the village, in order to create a concentrated settlement with good protection. The traditional Arab village is built on the basis of housing for the expanded family – the Hamula (family of parents and children together). In recent years, there has been a rise in the residents' standard of living, which happened as a

result of non-agricultural employment that occurs outside the settlement ... Various services are also developing within the Arab settlements: traditional services, banking and personal services. At the same time, almost no industrial plants have been built in them, and most Arab settlements still lack a developed urban infrastructure of lighting, water, sewage and sidewalks." (71, **Man and Environment**, 1999, p.194).

Another geography book in the state-run sector makes the following suggestion to students: "If you also want to learn about the Arab village located in our area, plan this activity in class with the teacher." Underneath the text is a picture of an Arab village. (320, **Our Moshavim**, 1988, p.95).

Another geography book describes things in similar fashion, while focusing on problems, in a way that arouses empathy for the problems of Israeli Arabs:

"Since the establishment of the State of Israel, fast changes have been occurring in the non-Jewish settlements... new neighborhoods were built... various services are developing in the settlements... One of the most prominent changes is that most of these settlements grew and developed, and they are now urban communities... Since the establishment of the state, sanitation and medical services have developed greatly in the non-Jewish settlements... the educational system in these settlements has problems and difficulties".

Further on, a statement by a teacher is quoted:

"I wish we had many more and expansive schools. With new equipment and more textbooks that are appropriate for us".

The author of the book continues saying: "It is important to emphasize that there are almost no industrial plants in the non-Jewish settlements and in many of them the internal roads and sewage and water systems have not been completed... Employment possibilities in Nazareth [the biggest Arabic city in Israel] are insufficient for the city's many residents... There is a problem of unemployment, crowding of the large population... a severe shortage of apartments. Public buildings such as schools and kindergartens are lacking". (164, **The Southern and Northern Mediterranean Coastal Plain**, 1992, pp.248, 250, 252-254).

A book dealing with geography and demography contains photographs of traditional and modern agriculture, and of traditional and modern building in Arab settlements. The title of the illustrations: "The transition from a traditional lifestyle to a modern lifestyle in the non-Jewish population". (8, **People and Space**, 1997, p.110).



The statement that the Jews developed the economy in Israel is repeated in a history book:

"Another issue related to relations between Jews and Arabs was the economic development of Eretz Yisrael at the end of the Nineteenth Century and the beginning of the Twentieth Century. The Jewish sector played a considerable part in this. The importing of capital and development of means of production by Jews advanced the economy of Eretz Yisrael and greatly developed it. This fact also helped advance the Arab economy, and added another dimension to the new relations that were formed between Arabs and Jews".

(299, **The World and the Jews in Recent Generations**, 1998, p.226).

Monologues

Another book that combines geographic, historical and demographic analysis devotes a broad chapter to non-Jewish settlements and the changes occurring in them, accompanied by pictures and statistical data about sources of employment and the education system (69, **The Southern and Northern Mediterranean Coastal Plain, and Northern Israel**, pp.250-254). What is different about this book is that it presents monologues from several Arab speakers: a construction worker, an elderly man and a teacher. The use of first person underscores for the student, in a way that arouses empathy, the speakers' feelings – both positive and negative – regarding changes in sources of livelihood, lifestyle, economic development and family life, alongside nostalgia for life in the past, and complaints about the problems and difficulties in the present.

Section 1: A construction worker

"I have lived in my village since I was born, 40 years ago. Today, unlike when I was born, it's incorrect to call this place a 'village.' I walk around the village and see changes on every corner: new and expansive neighborhoods, many cars, stores, banks, offices and cafes. All of these did not exist when I was a boy. On the one hand, these changes are good – modern life, more convenient and easier. On the other hand, however, our village is no longer quiet and tranquil as it once was: there is a lot of noise and traffic accidents – and that is not good, not good at all. And another difference between then and now. Then, most people worked in the village, in agriculture. Today, most of the residents work in all sorts of places outside the village: in factories, hospitals, or they teach in schools, and a great many work in construction in large cities. I too work building houses. Every day I wake up early in the morning, travel a long time to the city and return home in the evening, very tired, and I have no time to meet friends or to play with my children."

Section 2: An elderly man

"I am already an old man, 70 years old, but I still have strength to work our land. Only my 14-year-old grandson helps me in this work. His father, and almost all of his father's brothers, work outside the village, in the big city. Only my eldest son has a store here in the village. Today, it is easier to work the land – my sons added a lot of innovations to the orchard: our trees are watered by drip irrigation and I spray the bad weeds at night, with the help of the tractor and the sprayer. We spend a lot of money on the orchard and earn only a little. In general, life today is not like it used to be. Then, people treated an elderly person with respect, listened to his advice and to his stories. Less so, now. Today, it's the young people who are important. I think that's justified, because they earn our livelihood. They learn many things in school and our village has grown and developed thanks to them. But for me, things used to be better in the past. Then, everyone worked in the village and there was time to be together. I hope that in the future people will return and work in the village. If, for example, industrial plants are built in the village, then there will be work for people here locally, and they will not have to travel every day to the big city."

Section 3: A teacher (woman)

"I am a teacher in my village. It is difficult being a working woman, a housewife and a mother of four children. But I like my profession and the children in my class, and I am not willing to give up the work. When I went to study at the teachers college, my family was angry with me. They did not understand the step I took. At that time, only a few girls left to study and work, and my family thought that I was rebelling against tradition and the family. But I was persistent and I succeeded! And now I am willing to reveal that, at the time, there were many moments when I was very frightened and almost gave up on everything. My husband agrees with me on the issue of my work, on the condition that it does not harm the home and the family. It is difficult, sometimes very difficult, but I am happy and do everything willingly. Our school has developed a lot in recent years: new classrooms have been built and each year more and more children come to study in it. Once, only a very few girls came to study, but today nearly all the girls do, and I encourage them to continue with their studies. I feel bad about the children who do not come to school, and about those who come only occasionally. I wish we had many and more spacious schools, with new equipment

and more textbooks suitable for us. I think it is very important to develop education, because that is the way to advance in life."

(69, **The Southern and Northern Mediterranean Coastal Plain, and Northern Israel**, 1992, pp.251, 252).

Concluding Remarks

The Challenge of Israel's Education System

Every education system, in any society, is supposed to transmit to its students the society's goals and values. In Israel's case, it fosters the belief in the justness of the Zionist enterprise, i.e. the legitimacy of the Jews' return to their historic homeland, to establish a sovereign Jewish state and live a normal life after thousands years of exile and suffering as minority among other peoples. As long as a state of war existed, the Arabs were portrayed as trying to prevent the Jews from realizing their national liberation, acting to threaten their very physical existence and claiming exclusive right to the territory to which the Jews had returned, their historic homeland. The education system had to instill an identification with Israel's positions in the conflict, to the extent of being willing to sacrifice their lives in times of threat to the existence of Israel.

Today - following the signing of peace agreements with Egypt and Jordan and the ongoing negotiations with Syria, Lebanon and the Palestinian Authority - the education system has to contend with a complex situation. The nature of the conflict has been changed. It is less intensive but has not yet been resolved. There are contacts between Jews and Arabs on various levels but at the same time violent incidents, attacks and displays of opposition to the Israeli control in Judea and Samaria still occur. Simultaneously, there are attempts to reach peace and build confidence between the two sides, the results of which are still far from certain. The education system needs to present yesterday's enemy as tomorrow's neighbor, with whom relations of mutual respect and peace will be maintained. At the same time, it is possible that peace may not be achieved. To further complicate matters, Israeli society itself is divided ideologically and the authors of the books do not remain neutral on controversial issues. There is no unanimity on the analysis of the development of the conflict, or regarding the price both sides should pay for peace.

The conclusion of this report is that the textbooks which are currently used in the state-run and the religious state-run streams - which together make up 85% of the students - meet these objectives.

Two Languages

A distinction between two languages is discernable in Israeli textbooks: in the state-run and the religious state-run streams, the language is factual without using offensive terms and there is a sincere effort to remove stereotypes and educate towards tolerance. Here there are expressions of sensitivity and empathy towards the distress of Arabs, respect for Islam and for the contribution of the Arabs to human civilization, tales of friendship, stories and poems written by Arab authors, detailed information about the Muslim holy places and the strong attachment of the Arabs to Jerusalem. In a few books there is criticism of the Israeli positions during the conflict. The two main atlases which are used in the schools give updated maps of the areas of the Palestinian Authority according to the accords between Israel and the Palestinians.

In the ultra-orthodox stream the attitude is quite different: derogatory adjectives, prejudices, patronizing expressions and disrespect to Arabs. Two examples reflect the two attitudes:

A first grade reader in the ultra-orthodox stream presents the following story:

"The Holy One, Blessed Be He, came to the Ishmaelites and asked them: 'Do you want to receive the Torah?' They said: 'What is written in it?' He said to them: 'Thou shalt not steal.' They said to Him: 'We cannot accept the Torah, it is difficult for us not to steal.' And so, the Holy One, Blessed Be He, went from nation to nation, and not one of them wanted to receive the Torah. When He went to the Jewish people, they immediately said: 'We will do and we will hear.'" (45, **Everything in its Time**, first grade reader, 1995, pp.233-234)

A seventh grade reader used in the state-run stream states the following:

"Many people think: The dove is a bird that pursues peace. This belief is incorrect; it is a prejudice: people believe it without checking it. There are a lot of prejudices. For example:

1. The Jews control the world and exploit all those who live in it.
2. The blacks are inferior; they are incapable of being scientists.
3. The Arabs only understand the language of force.

During the year, make a long list of prejudices. Write them down and keep them in a special folder called, 'That's what they say, but it is not true – prejudices.' Try to find a drawing or caricature that fits each prejudice. Be ready to explain orally why these are prejudices." (78, **I Understand**, 1993, p.259).

The Common Beliefs

It should be emphasized that there are fundamental beliefs common to all the textbooks, despite the differences mentioned.

The books of all the streams share the basic values of Zionist ideology that the existence of a sovereign Jewish state on the territory of the Land of Israel and immigration of Jews to it (Aliyah) are legitimate and justified. This belief is taken for granted even if not all of them use the Zionist terminology. In no book is there any indoctrination against the Arabs as a nation or call to violence. All of the books express a yearning for peace and for an end to war.

A Hope for the Future

"We did not have a common language, but the hatred of the adults also had not affected us yet. Children's games do not need words," says the narrator in a story about his friend Abed, who disappeared after the war started. Removal of prejudices, derogatory terms and suspicions from textbooks is one of the steps that need to be taken to prevent hatred from attaching itself to adults as well, and to promote mutual understanding and respect between the peoples.

The objective of this report is to support the realization of this hope.

Glossary

Aliya (Hebrew) – Immigration of Jews to Israel. The literal meaning of Aliya is “ascent”, expressing the ideological motive - religious or Zionist – for Jewish migration to the Land of Israel.

In the pre-state period there were five waves of immigrants (Olim):

1. The First Aliya, 1882-1904;
2. The Second Aliya, 1904-1914;
3. The Third Aliya, 1919-1923;
4. The Fourth Aliya, 1924-1928;
5. The Fifth Aliya, 1933-1939.

During the years 1882-1948 550,000 Jews immigrated to Israel.

Ashkenazim (Hebrew) – Jews who originate from central and eastern Europe.

Balfour Declaration – A statement of British policy conveyed by the British Foreign Secretary Arthur J. Balfour on November 2, 1917, declaring that “His Majesty’s Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people”.

British Mandate – Under the League of Nations system of mandates Britain assumed the Mandate for Palestine on July 24, 1922. The Balfour Declaration was included in the text of the Mandate.

Caliphs (Arabic)–The Muslim rulers who succeeded Muhammad, the founder of the Islam, and ruled the states conquered by the Muslims.

Eretz-Yisrael (Hebrew) – The Land of Israel. The term refers to the Promised Land which extends over both banks of the Jordan River. During the British Mandate, Eretz Yisrael was part of the official name of Palestine.

Fallah (Arabic. Plural: Fallahim) -A peasant farmer.

Goy (Hebrew. Plural: Goyim) – A gentile, non-Jew.

Hamula (Arabic) – Enlarged family that includes three or four generations who live in the same village.

IDF – Israel Defence Forces.

Intifada (Arabic) – The term refers to the uprising of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip against Israeli occupation. It broke out on December 9, 1987. The uprising gradually expanded from initial local riots in refugee camps into full conflagration with mass participation. By the end of 1991 it had almost totally ended.

Kibbutz (Hebrew. Plural: *Kibbutzim*) – A voluntary collective community based on the principles of collective ownership of the means of production, communal responsibility for all the needs of the members and equal income.

Moshav (Hebrew. Plural: *Moshavim*) – An agricultural village which is Israel's predominant type of rural settlement, based on private ownership of the farm unit combined with cooperative arrangements. The settlement is on national land and basic means of production e.g. land and water, are equally distributed among the members of the *Moshav*. Marketing of produce and joint purchase of equipment are organized through a cooperative agency.

Moshavot (Hebrew. Plural of *Moshavah*) – Small towns established by the new Jewish immigrants to Israel in the late nineteenth century.

PLO – Palestine Liberation Organization. An umbrella organization, established in 1964, which represents the Palestinian people. Its main goal is the liberation of Palestine and the establishment of a Palestinian state.

Sephardim - Jews who originate from Islamic countries.

Yishuv (Hebrew) – The literal meaning is “settlement” or “community”. The word was used to refer to the Jewish community in Eretz Yisrael in the period until the establishment of the State of Israel.