



A senior Hamas figure delivers a speech replete with anti-Semitic motifs – yet another expression of Hamas’s long-standing tradition of anti-Semitism

December 20, 2018

On November 5, 2018, **Hamas’s senior official Ismail Radwan** held a speech during a demonstration that accompanied the weekly mini-flotilla in the Gaza Strip. Radwan said in his speech that the “return marches” and the flotillas would be carried on until they achieve their goals, mainly the complete lifting of the “siege” on the Gaza Strip, the realization of the “right of return,” and the elimination of the “century deal” (of the United States). During his speech, Ismail Radwan called for supporting “our resistance and our Jerusalem” **and threatened those who will not support it:** “The land will spew them out, Allah will be fed up with them, **and they will be burned in the fire (hell fire) along with the apes and pigs** (a video uploaded to Ismail Radwan's Facebook page, November 6, 2018). **Note: In Arab-Islamic anti-Semitism, the “apes and pigs” serve to refer to the Jews**, who are portrayed as “inferior” animals **in order to instigate hatred against them.** It is not Ismail Radwan's first anti-Semitic statement. In the past, he gave an anti-Semitic sermon calling on Muslims to kill Jews on Judgment Day.



**Ismail Radwan's anti-Semitic speech during the weekly flotilla on November 5, 2018
(Ismail Radwan's Facebook page, November 6, 2018)**

► In his speech during the march that accompanied the flotilla, Radwan cited a hadith referring to “the apes and pigs.”¹ Following is the relevant excerpt:

“... You know who the apes and pigs are? They are the Jews, whom Allah transformed into apes and pigs [...] Only the most evil people will remain, which the land will spew out, and they will be burned along with the apes and pigs, that is with the Jews, whom Allah transformed into apes and pigs [...] Do you know who the most evil people are? Those who carry out normalization with the occupation and those who open their capitals before the Zionist occupier [...] Do you know who the most evil people are? Those who maintain security coordination with the occupation; those who shirk “ribat” (i.e., those who shirk fighting on the front against Israel) and supporting the steadfastness of our people; those who conspire against Gaza and against Palestine. It is here that we are sending a message to those who engage in normalization: Stop the normalization with the occupation. You encourage the occupation to carry out further criminal acts against our Palestinian people [...] We say that the Jews and Zionists are your enemies and the enemies of the Arab and Islamic nation [...]”

Equating the Jews with apes and pigs in Islamic anti-Semitism²

Equating the Jews with apes and pigs, animals considered unclean, was intended to instigate **instinctive hatred** against them, without relating to them as human beings, as people who were created in God’s image. **Islamic anti-Semitism added the apes and pigs to the snake and octopus**, which had been equated with the Jews in European Christian “classic” anti-Semitism.

► The issue of equating the Jews with apes and pigs became the subject of a Muslim fatwa (religious ruling), published in **Germany** (on April 15, 2002) and disseminated on the Internet throughout the entire Islamic world. The author of the fatwa was **Egyptian Sheikh Atiyya Saqer**, former chairman of the **Committee for Muslim Fatwas at Al-Azhar University of**

¹ **Hadith** is a collection of religious precepts, sayings and quotes attributed to the Prophet Muhammad and passed on as an oral tradition in Islam throughout the ages. Hadith is a source of Islamic religious law which is secondary to the Quran.

² For more information on anti-Semitism with Islamic roots, see the ITIC's study from April 2008: “Contemporary Arab-Muslim anti-Semitism, its significance and Implications (Updated to March 2008).”

Egypt. The fatwa was entitled “The sons of Israel reincarnated in the bodies of apes and pigs:”:

- ◆ **Wording of the question addressed to the sheikh:** “The Holy Quran states that the souls of some of the Jews were reincarnated by Allah in the bodies of apes. **Did the apes exist beforehand, and do they** (i.e., the Jews that have turned into apes) **still exist today?”**
- ◆ **The main points of the answer:** “[...] Allah, may He be praised, said: “And you had already known about those who transgressed among you concerning the Sabbath, and we said to them, ‘**Be apes, despised**’” (Surah 2, Al-Baqarah, 65). The verse warns the Jews who were living in the time when the Quran was given (and also afterward) not to deny the existence of the Prophet, peace and prayer be upon him [...] **For their punishment was that their souls were reincarnated by Allah in the bodies of apes and pigs, and they were rendered humiliated – that is, banished, despicable, and unwanted [...].”**

Hamas’s anti-Semitic tradition

► **The Hamas movement has had an anti-Semitic tradition since its establishment.** Most of the time (albeit not always), this anti-Semitism has its roots in Islam. **The Hamas Charter from 1988** features classical anti-Semitic myths, claiming that **the Jews rule the media, the film industry and the education of the world** and that Jews were behind most of the revolutions and wars throughout history. **The charter also mentions The Protocols of the Elders of Zion as “proof” that the Zionists (who are not distinguished from the Jews) aspire to extend their control from the Nile to the Euphrates and throughout the world (Para. 22).**³

► **The Hamas Charter demonizes the Jewish People**, which is described, among other characteristics, as “of Nazi behavior, treating women and children brutally [...] (Para. 20). **Portraying the Jewish people negatively and demonizing the Jews as wishing to take**

³ On May 1, 2017, Hamas published a political document which was intended to update its ideology and basic concepts without replacing the Charter (which is regarded by Hamas as a basic ideological document). The political document distinguished between the struggle against Zionism and the State of Israel on the one hand, and the relation to Judaism as a religion, and anti-Semitic sections which appeared on the Charter were omitted from it. For more details, see the ITIC's publication from May 8, 2017: “The goals and significance of Hamas’s new political document.” **The speech delivered by Ismail Radwan during the Gaza flotilla indicates that anti-Semitic myths still prevail among Hamas’s leadership.**

control of the Middle East and the entire world were first and foremost intended to legitimize a war to the death against Israel. This war to the death, whose goal is to “liberate” the entire territory of Palestine and annihilate the State of Israel, is carried out according to the Hamas Charter through jihad (holy war), which is a personal obligation of every Muslim.

► Throughout Hamas’s existence, there appeared, from time to time in its leaders’ statements and in the Hamas publications, **anti-Semitic motifs**. The most prominent in his anti-Semitic statements is **Mahmoud al-Zahar**, one of Hamas’s senior leaders, who even authored an anti-Semitic book. Following are some examples:

- ◆ In two speeches, delivered by **Mahmoud al-Zahar** during commemoration ceremonies for Palestinians killed in Operation Protective Edge (September 18 and 30, 2014), which were broadcast on Hamas’s Al-Aqsa TV, **Al-Zahar added blatant anti-Semitic and anti-Israeli messages**. In his speeches, he presented a pseudo-historical theory, **according to which it is the Jews who brought upon themselves the persecution and harassment throughout the generations.**⁴ Mahmoud al-Zahar showed understanding of the killing of Jews by Hitler, explaining that Hitler killed them “because there were German Jews who betrayed their own country ... and collaborated with the enemy.”⁵

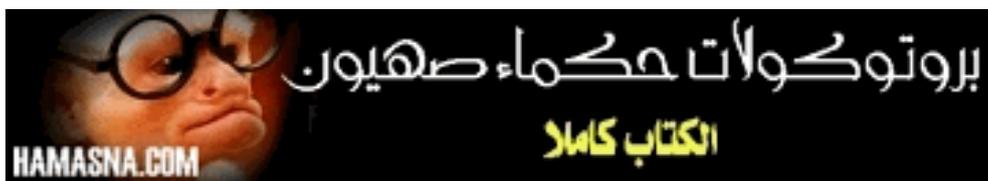
⁴ Mahmoud al-Zahar’s claim, according to which it is the Jews who brought upon themselves persecution and even the Holocaust, **is not original**. Similar allegations were brought up by anti-Semitic Arab Muslims in the past. Through this theory, they tried to prove that it wasn’t the Arabs and the Muslims who were guilty of hating the Jews and persecuting them, but the Jews themselves. According to this argument, it is the Jews who brought upon themselves hatred and persecution in the times of the Prophet Muhammad, in every generation and even in our days. According to the claim, **the Jewish victims actually become the criminals, giving legitimacy to continue harassing them** (and even the State of Israel, the country of the Jewish people).

⁵ For more details, see the ITIC’s publication from October 21, 2014: “At memorial ceremonies for Gazans killed in Operation Protective Edge, Mahmoud al-Zahar reiterated his vicious anti-Semitic theory, intended to justify attacks on Jews and the destruction of the State of Israel.”



Mahmoud al-Zahar delivering an anti-Semitic speech during a ceremony commemorating operatives of the Hamas security services killed during Operation Protective Edge (Filastin Al-Aan, September 30, 2014)

- ◆ **On November 5, 2010, Mahmoud al-Zahar delivered a speech** which was also broadcast live on the Al-Aqsa TV, in which he reviewed the history of murder and persecution of the Jews in various countries in Europe. In his speech, he reiterated the claim that **the Jews were expelled because of their reprehensible behavior (murder, theft, treason etc.).**

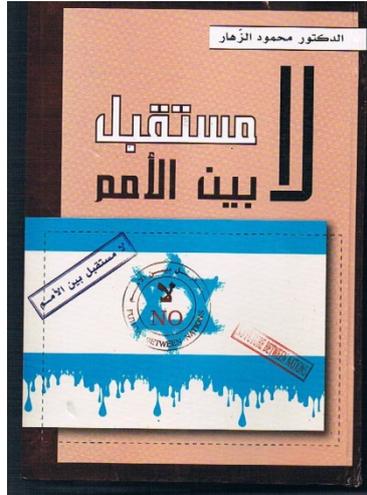


Example of the use made by Hamas of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion and the image of the Jews as apes can be found in a link to the Protocols, which appeared at the time on the Hamas website on the issue of Jerusalem (www.hamasna.com). The website no longer exists.

- ◆ **Mahmoud al-Zahar authored an anti-Semitic book entitled “No Future Between Nations,”** which was published in 2008 by an Algerian publishing house.⁶ Al-Zahar’s book is in line with the leading European “classic” anti-Semitic literature of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. In his book, **Al-Zahar elaborates on the thesis that Jews and Zionism have no future among the nations.** He equates the Jews **to a foreign entity which the human body constantly rejects.** As usual, he **portrays the Jews and the Zionists as responsible for anti-Semitism and for their persecution** which, he claims, stems from the Jews’ actions **and from their enmity to**

⁶ **A copy of the book was found on board the Mavi Marmara.** In the ITIC's assessment, the book belonged to one of the passengers, a member of the Algerian delegation to the flotilla.

the peoples among which they lived. Al-Zahar claims that Zionism plays a considerable role in creating the enmity towards the Jews.⁷



**The cover of Dr. Mahmoud al-Zahar’s book “No Future [for the Jews] Between Nations”
The book was found on board the Marmara.**

◆ **Fawzi Barhoum, Hamas’s spokesman in the Gaza Strip**, published an anti-Semitic and anti-American article on Hamas’s organ, blaming the Jews for the economic crisis of 2008 (Palestine Info, October 7, 2008). Following are the main points of the article:

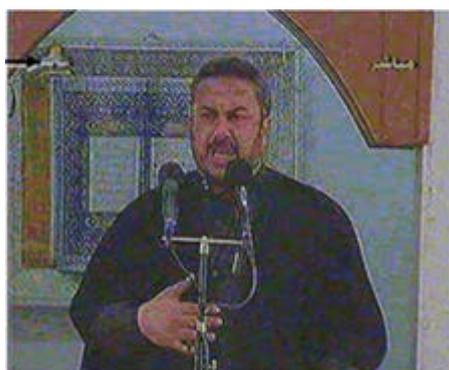
- Behind the collapse of the American economy are **the managerial and financial corruption of a despicable financial and banking system controlled by the “Jewish Lobby.”** It is the “Jewish lobby” which **controls the American capital and economy.** President Bush and the White House personnel are well aware of this “truth” but they hide it from American public opinion.
- **The United States has become a club in the hands of the “Jewish Lobby” and a means for it to take control of the entire world.** This is carried out while ignoring the American people, which pays a heavy price in the form of bankruptcy and the collapse of the economy. According to the article, the US has inflicted destruction and pain on the nations of the world, including Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Somalia, and Palestine.

⁷ For details, see the ITIC’s publication from November 11, 2010: “Hamas senior Mahmoud al-Zahar has recently given a vicious anti-Semitic speech to justify the elimination of Israel and the deportation of Jews from the “entire territory of Palestine”. The speech contains themes reminiscent of those found in Al-Zahar’s anti-Semitic book No Future Between Nations, found on board the Mavi Marmara.”



Hamas's spokesman Fawzi Barhoum: The Jewish Lobby in the US is behind the American economy (photo: Palestine Info, October 7, 2008)

◆ **Hamas's senior official Ismail Radwan** (who recently delivered an anti-Semitic speech during the Gaza mini-flotilla), delivered an anti-Semitic sermon on March 30, 2007, calling for “the liberation of Palestine.” At the time when he delivered the speech, Radwan was serving as **Hamas's spokesman**, and the sermon was **broadcast live on Palestinian official TV**. The sermon included a call **to fight the Jews and kill them**, citing a hadith entitled “**Vision of the Apocalypse**.”⁸ Ismail Radwan cited in his sermon, among other things, the following verse: “... **The Day of Judgment will not arrive until the Muslims fight the Jews and kill them**, until the Jew hides behind the stones and the trees; and each stone or tree will say: O Muslim, O servant of God, there is a Jew hiding behind me, come and kill him; except for the *gharqad*, which is the tree of the Jews.”



Ismail Radwan delivering the Friday sermon, calling on his audience to “liberate” Palestine and kill the Jews (Palestinian TV, March 30, 2007)

⁸ “**Vision of the Apocalypse**” is a hadith attributed to the Prophet Muhammad, which includes what could be interpreted as a call to kill the Jews.

◆ On December 24, 2007, **Hamas’s Al-Aqsa TV broadcast a program portraying the Jews in an anti-Semitic and stereotypic manner, ugly with long noses, mean and cruel.** The program was about the false narrative that the Jews were carrying out excavations under the Al-Aqsa Mosque in order to physically destroy it. On February 29, 2008, a Saudi scholar, Dr. Walid al-Rashudi, head of the Department of Islamic Studies at King Saud University, Saudi Arabia, appeared on Al-Aqsa TV. He claimed that “what is going on in Palestine today **is a real holocaust.**” He noted that “**burning 50-60 Jews in Germany or Switzerland is not a holocaust, but the Jews continue to call it the Holocaust.**” Subsequently, Al-Rashudi argued that the Jews had blackmailed Germany and Switzerland based on a claim that a holocaust allegedly took place.

◆ **Dr. Younis Astal, senior Hamas official in the Gaza Strip and Hamas’s representative to the Legislative Council,** wrote in his column in Hamas’s organ Al-Risala an article entitled “**The torments of hell are the fate of the Jews in the world to come and they are about to be realized in this world**” (Al-Risala, March 13, 2008).

The highlights of the article:

- In the beginning, the article quotes a Quranic verse, according to which **the Jews, who unjustly killed their prophets, were condemned to be burned in hell** (Surah 3, Aal ‘Imran, 181).
- **The Jews aspire to spread corruption throughout the globe and they do not cease to provoke war.** Therefore, the Jews are worthy of the fire of hell, both for offending Allah and His prophet and for offending the Muslim believers.
- Dr. Younis Astal cites a reference from the Quran, according to which whoever persecutes the believers and does not repent is **doomed to be burned in hell.** According to Astal, “**the torments of burning**” of the Jews **will take place in this world even before the next world.**
- At the end of his article, Dr. Younis Astal says that he is confident that burning (the term used in the original, *muhraqa*, also means “holocaust”) **will be the fate of the Jews.** He says that an indication for that was the suicide attack in a yeshiva in West Jerusalem (i.e., the terrorist attack in Merkaz Harav Yeshiva, on March 6, 2008, where eight yeshiva students were murdered).

Appendix

Ismail Radwan – Profile



**Hamas’s senior official Ismail Radwan
(Facebook page of Ismail Radwan, October 2, 2013)**

- ✓ **Ismail Sa’id Muhammad Radwan is a senior official in the Hamas movement in the Gaza Strip.** He comes from the Abdel Rahman neighborhood in western Gaza.
- ✓ **His official position is deputy chairman of the board of directors of Hamas’s Al-Aqsa media network. He is also a member of the Supreme National Authority for the Return Marches and the Breaking of the Siege,** the coalition that organizes the activity as part of the “return march.”
- ✓ **He was formerly a Hamas spokesman.** During 2012-2014, he served as the minister of religious endowments in Ismail Haniya’s government.
- ✓ **He has a Ph.D. in Hadith Studies from the University of Quran and Islamic Studies in Sudan,** 1995. He is a lecturer on the Sharia (Islamic religious law) in the Islamic University in the Gaza Strip.
- ✓ He has several Facebook pages, where he regularly uploads posts documenting his activity and statements. In most of the posts, he is described as a “Hamas senior official.” His posts reveal that he often accompanies Ismail Haniya on condolence calls and other activities carried out by Haniya throughout the Gaza Strip.
- ✓ **Recently,** Radwan visited Istanbul. Before that, he participated in the Conference of Islamic Unity held in Tehran (November 24-26, 2018), and subsequently he visited Lebanon.