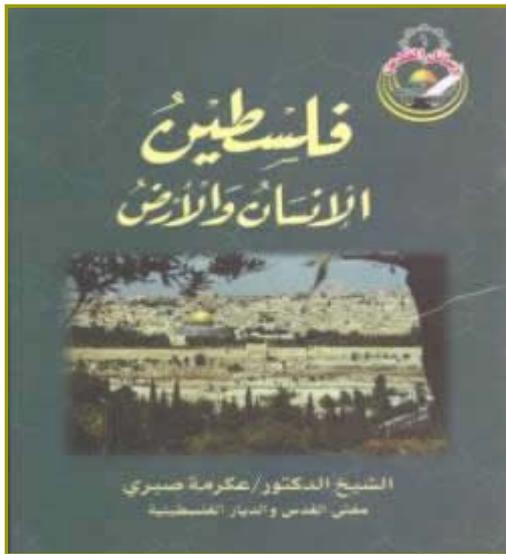




Delegitimizing Israel:

Palestine – the Human Factor and the Land

A booklet with anti-Israeli and anti-Semitic contents by Sheikh Ikrima Sabri,
the Mufti of Jerusalem and Senior Preacher of the Al-Aqsa Mosque



Palestine – the Human Factor and the Land

By : **Sheikh Ikrima Sabri, Ph.D .**, the “Mufti of Jerusalem
and of the Palestinian Territory”

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Sheikh Ikrima Sabri

Abstract

- **Sheikh Ikrima Sabri** holds the position of **Mufti of Jerusalem and Senior Preacher of the Al-Aqsa Mosque** , and is in fact the **supreme Islamic authority in the Palestinian Authority** . A booklet of his writing titled ***Palestine – the Human Factor and the Land*** was published in **Egypt** in August 2002, and is currently distributed in the Palestinian territories. Its **main message** is that **the Jews have no claims on the land of Israel, hence the total illegitimacy of the State of Israel** . Interwoven in the text are **anti-Semitic motives clearly inspired by the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*** : the allegation of Jewish “conspiracy”, aimed not merely at occupying Palestine, but at stirring up conflicts between states and eventually dominating the **entire world**.

Overview

- Sheikh **Ikrima Abdallah Sabri** , since 1994 the Mufti of Jerusalem and Senior Preacher of the Al-Aqsa Mosque, is in fact the highest ranking Islamic clerical authority in the Palestinian Authority .¹ The Sheikh's appointment by the Palestinian Authority was meant to serve the purpose of Palestinian foothold in the Temple Mount area, a place pregnant with connotations to the Arab and Muslim world.

¹ *On the booklet's cover pages, Sabri is designated as the “Mufti of Jerusalem and of the Palestinian Territory” [al-Diyar al-Filastiniyyah]. This implies that Sabri is the **Mufti of Palestine** and not merely of Jerusalem. The booklet also refers to the Sheikh as “the Preacher of the Blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque”.*

- Sheikh Ikrima Sabri is renowned as a **gifted speaker** with **radical views** . During sermons delivered in the past, he expressed support for **jihad** (holy war) and Palestinian violence, including **suicide acts** . These he regarded as a means of “liberating” Jerusalem and the whole of Palestine – stretching from the coast in the West to the Jordan River in the East. His preaching often featured anti-Jewish and **anti-Semitic** messages, alongside fierce criticism against the **United States** and its Arab allies.
- The booklet ***Palestine – the Human Factor and the Land*** (1 st edition) was published in **Egypt** in August 2002 as part of a series titled ***Letters of Jerusalem*** . It was issued by the “ **Arab Information Center** ”, a frequent publisher of incitement and slander literature directed against Israel and in favor of terrorism – **including suicide terrorism** . This literature is exported from Egypt to the Arab and the Muslim world, and finds its way also to the **Palestinian territories** . The following are some examples of anti-Israeli, anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic expressions found in the booklet.

Forewords to the booklet

- In the **publisher's foreword** (p. 3), the “ **Arab Information Center** ” welcomes the opportunity of issuing an essay by Sheikh Ikrima Sabri, Ph.D., which provides a simple and brief description of the “Palestinian problem” for the benefit of the **Arab and the Muslim reader** . In the author's preface (p. 5), Ikrima Sabri conveys to the readers the blessing of their Palestinian brothers who stand guard in Palestine “from the Mediterranean coast in the West to the Jordan River in the East”. He adds that, according to some religious scholars, this blessing encompasses the **Greater Syria** (Bilad al-Sham – The Land of Sham) as well.

'The Jews' ambitions in Palestine'

- In a pseudo-historical survey titled “ **The Jews' ambitions in Palestine** ” (pp. 9 – 12), Sheikh Sabri states:
 - “It is quite obvious that the Jews have coveted Palestine for many centuries. They convened several congresses in absolute secrecy, in order to devise strategic schemes that will help them achieve their goals. This was most clearly evidenced at the **[Zionist] Congress [in Basle], in which decisions were formulated, [as documented in] the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*** ; in the latter there is explicit mention that a **Jewish state must rise in Palestine**, and that there is no choice but to **strive to Jewish supremacy over the other nations of the world, and achieve control over them by disseminating corruption and stirring up artificial conflicts amongst them** ” (p. 9).



The *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* – the alleged origin of the resolutions to found a Jewish state in Palestine and establish Jewish control over the world's nations (p. 9)

- “...Then world Zionism took an additional step: during World War I, the Jews around the world joined forces with the Allies ... and received their reward at the expense of their fellow people... This [the Balfour] Declaration was proclaimed by ‘those who did not own on behalf of those who did not deserve’. Indeed, Balfour did not own any of Palestine, **whereas the Jews did not deserve this promise, since they had no presence in Palestine**” (pp. 9 – 10).
- “Following the end of World War I... the **terrible catastrophe of the Palestinian people** took place... Great Britain had planned for some time to establish a Zionist entity on behalf of the Jews on Palestinian land... **The mesh of conspiracy stretched from Great Britain all through Palestine.**
I emphasize this fact in order that the future generations should be aware of the huge extent of the conspiracy against Palestine, and in order that the subsequent generations will not forget . For this conspiracy went far beyond the power of the Palestinian people...” (pp. 10 – 11).
- “...In 1948, a **strange and alien entity was founded in Palestine under the name ‘State of Israel’**, on a sizable portion of the Palestinian territory situated along the coastal plain. It included the Western part of Jerusalem, the lands of the Negev and Beersheba... In 1967, the June war broke out... and the remaining portion of Palestine fell into the hands of the Israeli occupiers... The Israeli occupation authorities began carrying out their wantonly destructive and violent acts against the city of Jerusalem... **For the Jews envisioned that the Al-Aqsa Mosque was built on the ruins of the imaginary Temple of Solomon...**” (pp. 11 – 12).

With the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* as reference, Sheikh Sabri draws his inspiration from “ **classical** ” European anti-Semitism. In the past, he used to flavor his sermons with anti-Semitic messages that **drew their roots from Islam** . The following is a passage from a sermon with anti-Semitic features delivered a few years ago by Sheikh Sabri: “Oh prayers, there has lately been an upsurge in the number of liquidation crimes committed against our fighting sons by the Israeli army and undercover forces disguised as Arabs, with the help of collaborators and spies. **It is not surprising that the Jews resort to liquidation; they have been doing this for hundreds of years. They murdered the prophets and the messengers, and even attempted liquidating Prophet Muhammad** , but Allah protected him from their schemes and conspiracies.” (Source: a Friday sermon on the Temple Mount, the “**Voice of Palestine**” radio station , July 27, 2001).

‘The Jewish settlement in Palestine’²

■ The following are some excerpts from the chapters dealing with the Jewish “settlement” in Palestine:

- “...The Jews clearly focused their conspiracies on **two main factors, the human factor and the land** [this phrase also features as the booklet’s title]. As regards the human factor, they initiated extensive immigration to Palestine from various countries in the world, in order to bring about the gradual growth of their population, and thus outnumber the **original Palestinian population** ... As for the land, they prompted the **occupation of state lands in Palestine** by the British government... and **thus established their settlements** – ‘colonies’ [in the original: “*musta‘marat*”, with quotation marks] **on this land ...**” (p. 14).
- “... The most obvious goals of establishing the settlements – ‘colonies’ in Palestine: completely surrounding Palestine...; cutting off Palestine from the Jordan River...; separating Palestine from the Arabs of [the] 1948 [territories] by a settlement belt...; separating the Gaza strip from the rest of the Palestinian territories; isolating Palestinian towns from one another ...” (p. 22).

² According to Palestinian terminology (such as the one used in the school textbooks of the Palestinian Authority), the concept “**settlement**” (*istitan*) refers not only to the Jewish communities in the Palestinian territories, but to **Israel as a whole, including the pre-1967 territories** . This is yet another expression of denying the legitimacy of the Jewish presence in the land of Israel.

Conclusion

■ The last passage of the booklet is a quotation from a *Hadith* (sacred text that recounts the words and actions of Prophet Muhammad), frequently used in Islamic contexts with reference to the Palestinian people. It hints at the possibility that a Palestinian elite group from Jerusalem and vicinity, currently in distress, is preparing to wage *jihad* for the purpose of liberating Jerusalem and Palestine (p. 27):

“There still is a **group of people from within our nation** who abide by Truth [i.e. by Islam]; they prevail over their enemy; they are undisturbed by those who challenge them or by misfortunes that befall them; until the day when Allah’s word [i.e. Judgment day] will come onto them in this state [i.e. while they persist in abiding by Truth]; and we shall say: Messenger of Allah, where are they [the people of this elite group]? And he [Allah’s Messenger] shall reply: **in Jerusalem and her daughters [i.e. and the surrounding territories]...**”