

# Yes, Palestinians Teach Their Children to Hate the Jewish State

By [Rima Najjar](#)

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Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

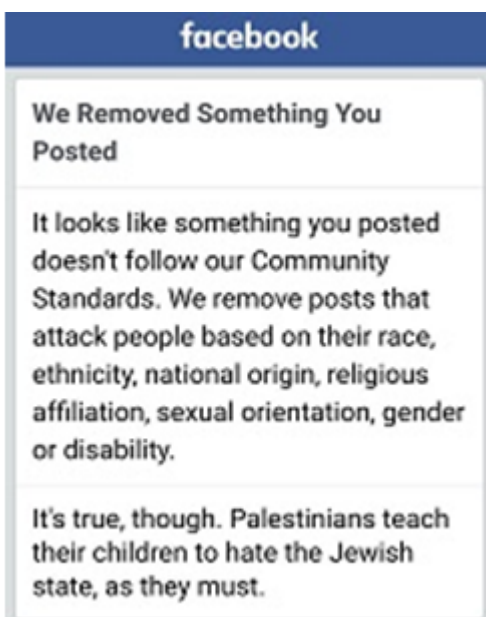
Theme: [Media Disinformation](#), [Police State & Civil Rights](#)

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*Featured image: Dima Wawi, the youngest Palestinian prisoner in Israeli jails, being comforted by her parents. She was released in April 24, 2016 after 75 days on charges of allegedly trying to stab an IDF soldier while on her way to school. (Source: Rima Najjar)*

Zionism [see [this](#)] is an insidious ideology. Its ideologues often gain traction by well-placed and oft repeated constructs – in films and [TV series](#), in posts and comments on social media, and even in [academia](#). So, it is no wonder that people end up having ideas about certain things, like the nature of Israel, the Zionist Jewish state, or the nature of Palestinian Arab culture and [identity](#), or the nature of Jewish culture and [identity](#), as if by osmosis.

One of these “memes” in the air, if you will, is the oft repeated comment by [hasbara](#) agents on social media that says Palestinian children teach their children to hate Jews. This notion can also be found in numerous attacks on the Palestinian Authority curriculum with the same accusation of “teaching children to hate Jews”, when in fact, the opposite is true, as is often the case with Zionist propaganda [see NuritPeled-Elhanan’s Palestine in Israeli School Books: Ideology and Propaganda in Education (Library of Modern Middle East Studies)].



An experience that caused me to be suspended from posting on Facebook for three days illustrates the above.

The comment cited in the Facebook warning (image on the right) is clearly out of context – the fourth word (bolded in what follows) indicates a continuity with something that came before it:

“It’s true, **though**, Palestinians teach their children to hate the Jewish state, as So they must.”

Zionist hasbara about Jewish identity is so ingrained that Facebook takes an attack on the Zionist Jewish state to be synonymous with attacking “people based on their religion, etc. ...”

The censured comment was in response to an assertion during discussion that Palestinians teach their children to hate. I objected to that, making the distinction between hating Jews and hating Israel, the Jewish state that continues to dispossess and oppress Palestinians, to “exist” on stolen Palestinian land and property, keeping Palestinians languishing in refugee camps for close to 70 years now [See [Palestine refugees | UNRWA](#)], its politicians stating shamelessly that Palestinian children are a “demographic threat”. [See [To understand the history of Palestinian dispossession look to the words of Zionist and Israeli leaders](#)]

Put another way, as Rafeef Ziadeh, the Canadian-Palestinian spoken word artist and activist, put it in a powerful [poem](#), we teach our children life, we teach them to survive.

Sari Nusseibeh, professor of philosophy at Al-Quds University in Jerusalem and president of the University for seventeen years, wrote an article titled [Why Israel can’t be a ‘Jewish State’](#). He cites several implications for why not, the most important of which is the following:

In short, recognition of Israel as a “Jewish State” in Israel is not the same as, say, recognition of Greece today as a “Christian State”. It entails, in the Old Testament itself, a Covenant between God and a Chosen People regarding a Promised Land that should be taken by force at the expense of the other inhabitants of the land and of non-Jews. This idea is not present as such in other religions that we know of. Moreover, even secular and progressive voices in Israel, such as former president of the Supreme Court of Israel, Aharon Barak, understand the concept of a “Jewish State” as follows:

“[The] Jewish State is the state of the Jewish people ... it is a state in which every Jew has the right to return ... a Jewish state derives its values from its religious heritage, the Bible is the basic of its books and Israel’s prophets are the basis of its morality ... a Jewish state is a state in which the values of Israel, Torah, Jewish heritage and the values of the Jewish halacha [religious law] are the bases of its values.” (‘A State in Emergency’, Ha’aretz, 19 June, 2005.)

Palestinian parents do not teach their children to hate Jews; they teach their children to hate the Jewish state – for their own survival [See [Are Palestinian children less worthy?](#) and [Palestinian children’s rights focus of new US bill](#)].

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