

Arab Media Review: Anti-Semitism and Other Trends

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On the cover: *Al-Akhabar*, Egyptian government sponsored daily, April 18, 2004
Bush is saying: "Yes, I agree to all that Sharon said. Don't you have an opinion?" On the
bag in Arabic: "America's Jews."

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Introduction

Anti-Semitism is widespread throughout the Arab and Muslim world, manifested in every segment of society. The following report is a compilation of select anti-Semitic expressions in the Arab and Muslim world in April 2004.

There was an increase in anti-Semitic expressions in the Arab and Muslim media in April, in part due to events such as the killing of Hamas leader Abed al-'Aziz ar-Rantisi (a few weeks after the spiritual leader of Hamas, Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, was killed) and the meeting of President Bush and Israeli Prime Minister Sharon, in which President Bush praised Sharon's disengagement plan. The meeting was perceived by the Arab and Muslim world as another expression of the alliance between Israel and the US.

April also saw an increase in references to Mel Gibson's film, "The Passion of the Christ," with Israel depicted as crucifying Arabs.

As in recent months, the upcoming U.S. presidential elections and alleged Jewish/Israeli control of the U.S. political system continued as a major theme. Newspapers continued to feature anti-Semitic caricatures and themes that include demonic images of Jews/Israel as animals, conspiracy theories of Jews plotting to control the world, anti-Semitic blood libels and depictions of the stereotypical Jew (big nose, black coat and hat, skull cap etc.) along with Jewish symbols such as the Star of David and the menorah. Jews and Israelis are compared to Nazis using symbols such as the swastika, while at the same time Holocaust denial articles are pervasive in the media, using the claims of Holocaust deniers such as David Irving and Roger Garaudy.

Material in this compilation was translated by ADL from the original Arabic or from English language sources in the Middle East.

Bahrain

Cartoons



Akhbar al-Khalij, April 23, 2004

On the right - Bush; on the left - Sharon

Egypt

The expressions in the Egyptian papers during the month of April reflect a new wave of anti-Semitism, and a sharp rise in the level of incitement against Jews\Israel. Three major factors brought to the rise in the level of anti-Semitism in the Egyptian press: the killing of Rantisi (after Yassin's assassination in the month of March); the screening of Mel Gibson's "The Passion" and the public debate around it; and the Bush and Sharon meeting at the White House.

Cartoons



Al-Ahali, April 21, 2004

The cartoon's headline: "Bush-Sharon Negotiations Are Blowing Up the International Legitimacy and Resolutions". The American is asking: "Who brought the story of international legitimacy?"



Al-Akhbar, April 18, 2004

Bush is saying: "Yes, I agree to all that Sharon said. Don't you have an opinion?"
On the bag in Arabic: "America's Jews".



Rouz al-Yousuf, April 17, 2004

The Jew is saying: "Yes, we opposed the film 'The Passion' because it was the Hamas organization who tried to crucify him, and not us"



Al-Akhbar, April 11, 2004



Al-Ahram, April 8, 2004

Sharon and Bush (with a hat decorated with the Star of David) are drinking Palestinian and Iraqi blood (respectively). In Arabic, at the bottom: "Sharon - to my life".



Al-Wafd, April 6, 2004
In Arabic: "The veto".



Al-Ahram weekly, April 1-7, 2004



Karikatir, April 2004

Newspapers

- “The ideal solution that Israel dreams of reaching is the final solution that Hitler dreamed of in order to get rid of the Jews who, according to him, were refusing to assimilate in the European societies and were insisting on isolating themselves in spite of their living within those societies...”

Ahmad ‘Abed al-Mu’ti Hijazi, “First Israel, Then America”, *Al-Ahram*, April 28, 2004

- “‘I’m sure some Arab members of the audience identify with the suffering of Christ in the film and that of the Palestinians now,’ said Abdel-Wahab El-Misseiri, professor of comparative literature and author of many works on Zionism and Jewish thought. El-Misseiri finds that those who believe the film incites hatred against the Jews and thus serves the Palestinian issue ‘are completely mistaken’, unaware of the fact that ‘Israel is a non-Jewish, secular and colonial state.’ According to El-Misseiri, anti- Semitism actually helps the Zionist project, because the more the Jews are hated in the world the more they will be driven to establish an exclusively Jewish colonial state in Palestine and other Arab lands”.

Gihan Shahine, “Explaining the Passion”, *Al-Ahram weekly*, April 15-21, 2004

- The writer compares the scenes shown in Mel Gibson’s film, “The Passion”, and the views on TV screens showing the reactions to Yassin’s killing in the territories, saying:

“... Because when Israel blew up the Sheikh, it defended itself, as the Jewish Rabbis and learned men defended themselves when they killed Christ; as if two thousands years did not change anything about their cruelty, barbarity and blood thirst!!”

Gamal Badawi, “The Passion of Christ”, *Al-Wafd*, April 13, 2004

- “...Israel is implementing the same logic, punishing all of the Palestinian people collectively as a revenge for single action of resistance...”

But the Jews always want to be above all of the people. And they are innocent of all sins. Aren’t they God’s chosen people?”

Salama Ahmad Salama, “Exculpation of the Jews”, *Al-Ahram*, April 12, 2004

- "...And we see that the kids' stoning of Judus Iscariot as a symbol of the rock throwing kids, and may the virgin, may peace be upon her, with her oriental cloth and the head cloth can be a symbol of any Palestinian mother whose son is being killed in front of her. It is to say that Israel's Jews today are a continuation of Jesus' Jews, and hence, the conviction of the Jews in the film is the conviction of Israel today".

Muhammad Salmawi, "The Debate Concerning the Passion of Christ", *Al-Ahram*, April 12, 2004

- "... After the message of the director and producer, Mel Gibson – a message saying that the Jews are the heads of the biggest torture school, and that in spite of the document that they received from the Vatican in the sixties of the last century, exculpating them from Christ's blood, the truth proves differently. In spite of all of the power that they own in the media, propaganda and internationally, there is still a man that can stand all of the pain and shout the truth!"

Salah Muntasir, "Only a View – A Shout of the Truth", *Al-Ahram*, April 11, 2004

- An interview with Sheikh Yousuf al-Qardhawi¹

A: "...They [the Jews] are carrying the crime regardless of whether Christ was killed or not. They made efforts to kill him..."

Q: "Can the Jews killing of Christ, may peace be upon him, be considered as a premeditated killing?"

A: "The Muslims believe that Christ, may peace be upon him, was neither killed nor crucified, as we clarified, and as appeared in the noble Qur'an. But that does not negate the Jews' historical responsibility for the killing attempt, the preparations for it and the support [meaning 'the aid'] of it. [Even] if they did not kill Christ practically, they killed him in the sense of intention, belief and admission..."

¹ Sheikh Yousuf al-Qardhawi is one of the most (if not the most) important religious figures in the Arab world. Al-Qardhawi was born in Egypt, but currently works out of Qatar. He has a very successful TV program on the Al-Jazeera satellite network, in which he comments about Islamic related issues and current issues. Al-Qardhawi enjoys strong popularity and credibility throughout the Arab world, allowing him to affect large audiences.

[Even] if the Jews did not kill Christ practically, they killed before God's prophet, Zakariya and his son Yahya, and others from the prophets and the pious people".

Dr. Hasan 'Ali Daba, "The Crime Occurred in the Sense of Intention, Thought and Belief – The Blood of Christ in the Jews' Neck", *Al-Ahram al-'Arabi*, April 10, 2004

- "...The most important thing in Mel Gibson's film, 'The Passion of Christ', is that it stands forcibly and clearly against the Jews' blind fanaticism and their racism throughout history. How today resembles yesterday... You will not find a big difference between those learned people and the Jewish governors who stood with arrogance, intimidation and abominable haughtiness, asking the Roman governor to torture and kill Christ – and between the Jewish learned people and governors today, who are bringing the Palestinian people different kinds of tortures and destruction of the churches and mosques. Everything that is in there, (except that) the cross, was replaced by Apache helicopters...

This film gives absolute proof that the Children of Israel were those who acted with hostility towards Semitism and the Semites, and (that) they are terrorists since the beginning of history and up until today. They cannot stop spilling blood, do not listen to good advice, and do not have success in (making) peace. When will they get rid of this disease and this epidemic and return to humanity as all of the people?"

Muhammad Salah ad-Din, "The Passion of Christ and the Palestinians – Both Sides of the Coin! Terror is a Jewish Skill, and Their Shout is an Indication to the Power and Fascination of the Cinema Art", *Al-Gumhuriyya*, April 8, 2004

- "...The principle of modifying the facts and fabricating history is not new in Israel's controversial method. Moreover, this is old and preceded their insistence to crucify Christ. This principle defines their relationship with others – the relationship that is always based on subjection, racism, extremism and terror...

(Israel) simply wants to crucify the Arab regimes and people, and does whatever it can do, so that this time the American governor will join it.

The crucifying of Christ represents the insistence of the Jewish people's Khakhamim to bury the sound of truth and freedom, and the right of worship and the right to live in peace. The crucifying of

the Arab people represents the insistence on burying the life in the region...”

Dr. Hasan ‘Abed Rabbo al-Masri, “The Jews Insisted on Crucifying Christ and Are Insisting on Crucifying the Palestinian People”, *Al-Wafd*, April 7, 2004

Jordan

Cartoons



Ad-Dustur, April 20, 2004

Sharon is saying to Bush: "Join me for some Iraqi blood. Let me use balsam shampoo".



Ad-Dustur, April 15, 2004

Bush is signing on the Israeli demands, writing: "Your wishes are (my) commands".



Ar-Rai, April 10, 2004

Sharon is holding Bush while spilling oil into Iraq.



Ar-Rai, April 8, 2004

Sharon and Bush are dipping into Palestinian and Iraqi blood (respectively). Sharon is drinking "to the life (freedom) of Iraq, and Bush is drinking "to the life (democracy) of Israel".

Oman

Cartoons



Al-Watan, April 21, 2004

In Arabic: "Balfour passed through here".

United Arab Emirates

Cartoons



Al-Ittihad, April 23, 2004

Hitler is saying to Sharon (with Jewish uniform): "Hi Hitler!"

Arab Newspapers

Akhbar al-Kahlij (Bahrain) - a pro-government daily and Bahrain's oldest newspaper; editor in-chief - Anwar Muhammad 'Abd ar-Rahman.

Al-Ahram (Egypt) - an Egyptian daily owned by the Egyptian government: the president appoints the editor. He (as the editor of the other government owned dailies, *al-Gumhuriyya* and *al-Akhbar*) is given substantial leeway in his editorial practices, assuming he avoids certain "taboos". *Al-Ahram* is the largest Arabic paper in the world and has established the *Al-Ahram* Regional Press Institute.

Al-Ahram al-'Arabi (Egypt) - a weekly published by the Dar al-Ahram publishing house. The editor-in-chief of the newspaper is Usama Saraya, but the chairman of the publishing house is Ibrahim Nafi', who is *Al-Ahram*'s editor in-chief. Although both newspapers are published by the same publishing house, *al-Ahram* and *al-Ahram al-'Arabi* are different. The editorials in *al-Ahram* are always supportive of government positions, while the editorials in *Al-Ahram al-'Arabi* are critical of the government and also other countries. The paper publishes very strong anti-Israeli views. In addition, Sheikh Qardhawi has a platform to publish his views there, which in turn, gives the paper a religious dimension.

Al-Ahali (Egypt) - a weekly mouthpiece of the leftist Tagammu Party (The National Progressive Unionist Party). Chairman of the Board - Dr. Rif'at Muhammad as-Sayyid (Secretary General of the Progressive National Unionist Party); editor in-chief - Mr. Nabil Zaki.

Al-Akhbar (Egypt) - a government sponsored daily published by Dar Akhbar El-Yom; editor in-chief - Galal Duweidar; Head of Board of Directors - Ibrahim Sa'do.

Al-Gumhuriyya (Egypt) – a government daily.

Al-Wafd (Egypt) - the main opposition paper in Egypt. The paper criticizes the regime on a wide range of issues - from economy to internal and foreign policy. However, it is important to note that the criticism is on subjects that are allowed by the regime. The paper is one of the most acceptable channels of opposition activism, since the Egyptians see themselves as supporters of freedom of the press, and the paper is supposed to be concrete proof of this idea. *Al-Wafd* expresses extreme anti-Israel and anti-Semitic views in articles and cartoons.

Karikatir (Egypt) - a independent monthly; previously, it was owned by a businessman and a playwright who both expressed positive views on Israel and even received a prize from the UN for their work on promoting understanding.

Today the paper publishes anti-Israel views, but the monthly enjoys very low circulation.

***Rouz al-Yousuf* (Egypt)** - a prominent state-owned, intellectual weekly; editor in-chief - Muhammad 'Abed Al-Mun'im. The magazine tries to promote a friendly government/anti-Islamist/secular face.

***Ad-Dustur* (Jordan)** – a government-owned paper that expresses pro-Palestinian and anti-Israeli views. It is considered a high quality paper.

***Ar-Rai* (Jordan)** – a government daily; expresses the approaches of the Jordanian regime.

***Al-Watan* (Oman)** - the only privately owned daily - owned by a business group; established in 1971; Editor in-chief - Muhammad Ibn Suleiman at-Tani; enjoys high popularity; has a circulation of 40,000.

***Al-Ittihad* (United Arab Emirates)** - a semi-official daily.



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