

Profiles in Terror (II)

THE PALESTINIAN CAMPAIGN TO DELETE, DISTORT, AND DIMINISH THE JEWISH HISTORY OF THE HOLY SITES IN JERUSALEM AND TO PREVENT THE FREEDOM OF WORSHIP IN THE CITY FOR ALL NON-MOSLEM FAITHS

THE FATE OF the Jewish holy sites in Jerusalem—as well as those belonging to the other religions represented in the city—will be in grave peril if the Palestinians ever seize control of parts of the Israeli capital.

Freedom of faith in Jerusalem is a global imperative. The city is holy to billions of followers of the world's monotheistic faiths. The State of Israel has protected the sanctity of the city's religious landmarks since 1967, ensuring that people from all over the world can worship freely and safely. But what will happen if the city is ever divided, and control of the holy city is placed in the hands of the Palestinians and policed by their preventative security forces and the terror factions they control and work with? ¹

What will the Palestinian Authority (PA)—and groups within its jurisdiction, such as the fundamentalist Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, along with communist entities such as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—policy toward freedom of religion and, more importantly, their respect of all religions to have their places of

¹ The protection of the sanctity of these houses of worships and holy sites does not only include the maintenance and safety of the actual locations. They also encompass maintaining the utilities at these sites and their facilities, and they also include upkeep of the roadways and access points that enable worshippers, pilgrims, and tourists to be able to visit said areas safely, without risk of harassment or prejudice.

worship be safe from terror, discrimination, and retaliation? Will the PA—and the terror groups that fall under their control—turn a blind eye to incidents of hate and intolerance? Does the PA have any intention of respecting other religions and customs, cultures, scriptures, and archaeological heritage of faiths other than Islam?

If we are to base our assessments on publicly stated Palestinian policies toward Judaism and Christianity, and the PA's views regarding the sanctity of the Temple Mount and the Western Wall to followers of the Jewish faith, then the foreboding possibilities of the PA assuming control of these holy sites should set off alarm bells of dread and apprehension.

DEFEND JERUSALEM contends that if the Palestinians are ever given authority over these locations, they will restrict, prohibit, deny, and harass any worshipper who is not Muslim. At first, this policy will apply solely to Jews in Jerusalem and the Temple Mount and, later, the Western Wall and its plaza. DEFEND JERUSALEM is certain that such discriminatory practices will ultimately extend to other holy places² and the holy sites of other faiths.³

² Although the political agreements between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Palestinian Authority (PA) explicitly protects the access of Jews to sites of Jewish religious importance that are within the territories, i.e. Area A (Territories under full control of the Palestinian Authority), when it came to adherence of the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement of September 1995 – the “Shalom on Israel” synagogue in the territory A In Jericho, and Joseph’s Tomb in the Field A In Nablus, the Palestinians did a everything they could to prevent the freedom of worship of Jews at these sites. This is even though Palestinian attempts undermine the freedom of worship of Jews at other sacred sites, some of them bordering the PA territories, by violence, terror, and force (incidents at Rachel’s Tomb near Bethlehem, for example). Political agreements never prevented the Palestinians from harming or even completely denying freedom of worship to Jews; Thus, the armistice agreement signed in Rhodes between Israel and the Kingdom of Jordan in 1949 guaranteed the right of access of Jews to the Western Wall (which, at the end of Israel’s War of Independence in 1949, remained under Jordanian control) – but in practice, this commitment was not honored and The Wall’s access to the Western Wall was only possible after its liberation in the Six-Day War (June 1967).

³ The persecution of Christians (indigenous Palestinians) and others by the Palestinian Authority and its security and propaganda services, will be addressed in a separate DEFEND JERUSALEM report to be published later.

The Palestinian have made the distortion of Jewish history—and particularly the denying of any Jewish connection to Jerusalem—a pillar of their nationalistic and terrorist narrative. The PA’s efforts to dismiss the historic and religious significance of the Temple Mount and the Western Wall to the Jewish faith and people constitute nothing less than an insidiously executed plan campaign to delegitimize an entire people, their religion, heritage, history, holy scriptures, and sacred places. This egregious cultural appropriation of the historical Jewish presence in Israel and expropriation of any vestige of a Jewish connection to their rightful heritage is abhorrent. Removing the Jewish connection to *their* land, as well as diluting the religious significance of the territories to Christians and other faiths inside Jerusalem and the Land of Israel, is a key element of the Palestinian strategy to ultimately seize control of these areas and have them transferred to the PA. The mere threat of seizing control of these historic Jewish and Christian sites is explosive both politically and religiously, and it has been used by the Palestinians as a weapon to incite, recruit, and motivate individuals to commit acts of terror.⁴

Lives have been lost and property destroyed because of actions perpetrated by individuals and terror groups that have heeded official Palestinian calls to erase both a Jewish and Christian presence in the city. Perhaps most worrying, is the fact that these tactics are employed by those in the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and PA who are considered somewhat “moderate” and mainstream.

The PA’s distortion of history as a strategy makes maximum use of ignorance, hatred, and the power of fake news in the various social media networks. The PA is relying

⁴ To be covered in a separate report.

on the fact that most people in the Arab and Muslim world, as well as many in the West, know little of the true history of ancient Israel, Judaism, and how Jerusalem is the intersecting key to an entire people and their faith. By propagating ignorance, the PA is trying to rewrite the facts of Jewish history and the thousands of years that connect the Jewish people to the land and the holy city of Jerusalem.⁵

The PA has created the mindboggling lie that Arabs and Muslims were present in Jerusalem “centuries before Judaism” existed.⁶ They claim that the Palestinians were the ones who were expelled the Romans, Byzantines, and Crusaders from Jerusalem.⁷ The lie

⁵ <https://besacenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/1625-What-If-Israeli-Palestinian-Case-Bouchnik-Chen-final.pdf> (“What’s in a Name? The Israeli-Palestinian Case,” 5.7.2020: “The Palestinian-Arab propaganda machine incessantly fuels aggressive anti-Israel campaigns. The PA’s public diplomacy is based on manipulation: it takes advantage of the ignorance and superficial historical knowledge of the rest of the world about the Israeli-Arab conflict to invent a new history. The Jewish State may have committed a historic misjudgment by selecting the name ‘Israel’, as the choice has damaged the state’s strategic interests.”). <https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/14909/jerusalem-jewish-history> (“Denying Jerusalem’s Jewish History Despite Archaeological Evidence,” 26.9.2019: “As has been true with previous archaeological discoveries in Israel, however, this one is unlikely to put a dent in the long-term international campaign to delegitimize the Jewish state by rewriting and distorting its history, even by renaming the Jewish sites Rachel’s Tomb near Bethlehem to the ‘Bilal ibn Rabah Mosque’ (it was never a mosque) and Hebron’s Tomb of the Patriarchs the ‘Ibrahimi Mosque’. Rewriting the history of the Land of Israel to deny Israel’s right to exist is central to Palestinian Authority (PA) policy. Long before it started the PA terror campaign (the Second Intifada of 2000-2005), the PA was fighting a history war – erasing Jewish history and replacing it with a fabricated Palestinian history.” — Palestinian Media Watch <https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/16329/palestinian-war-on-history> (“The Palestinian War on History,” 11.8.2020: “Every person, irrespective of whether or not they are disabled, should have the opportunity to visit the tomb, which is an important Jewish heritage site... The tomb belongs to us after Abraham bought it with his own money 3,800 years ago.” — Former Israeli Defense Minister Naftali Bennett. Palestinian leaders continue to deny any Jewish connection to the holy sites on the pretext that it belongs exclusively to Muslims. Palestinian Authority Foreign Minister Riad Malki has condemned the plan to install an elevator as an Israeli war crime and a violation of international law. The winners? The Iran-backed Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad, who dream of extending their control from the Gaza Strip to the West Bank. This dream, thanks to the lawless and lethal regime of the Palestinian Authority -- funded by the West -- appears closer than ever.” <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/made-by-history/wp/2017/08/07/to-secure-peace-palestinians-must-accept-jewish-history/?outputType=amp&arc404=true> (“To secure peace, Palestinians must accept Jewish history,” 7.8.2017: “The use of historical memories as weapons has fueled the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.”). Recently (November 2020), the Dutch Senate adopted a resolution calling on the government to oppose any UN resolution mentioning the Al-Aqsa Mosque and ignoring the fact that it is the Temple Mount, i.e. the Jewish history and belonging of the place. <https://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/290987> (“Dutch Senate: Present pro-Israel position at UN,” 10.11.2020: “Dutch Senate calls government to take active pro-Israel position at UN: Clear message against attempts to erase Jewish connection to Jerusalem). This conduct by the Palestinians is strongly criticized even by people who are not affiliated with the right in Israel or abroad but understand and correctly accept that distorting the history and denying the rights of the Jewish people in the Land of Israel in general, and in Jerusalem and its holy sites, is a dangerous phenomenon that distances, and does not bring peace closer.

⁶ https://www.palwatch.org.il/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=15318 (“PA: There Has Never Been a Jewish Temple in Jerusalem,” 28.7.2015: “The Palestinian Authority: Israel ‘Judaizes’ Jerusalem, creates a misrepresented Jewish history for it, destroying the Arab-Islamic-Palestinian heritage. PA Minister: ‘Palestinians were in Jerusalem centuries before Judaism’ and Israelis ‘steal history and geography’; Official PA TV: “The Israeli excavations are ‘malicious projects’ designed to achieve a ‘vile ambition’: ‘Full control of the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque and the construction of the mock temple in its place’; ‘The Jewish octopus deploys [its arms] to swallow what is left of the remains and historical sites [the Palestinians]’”).

⁷ <https://hodhodpal.com/post/3081/> (“Friends House Holy,” 19.2.2020 [Hamas choir in song and video *Ishab Beit al-Maqdis*, i.e. my husband [“my friend”] the sacred house, and that means the Temple Mount; The song, sung in Hebrew, claims that the Palestinians will “expel” the Jews from the country, just as “they” supposedly expelled the Romans, Byzantines, Greeks and Crusaders]; It is worth noting that the Arabic moniker *Beit al-Maqdes* for Jerusalem is nothing more than a disruption of the words “Temple.” https://youtu.be/CpSp1_v6ItA?t=469 [From Dr. Mordechai Kedar’s remarks on the program “The Opposite Direction” on Al-Jazeera TV]).

states that the Temple Mount has never existed; the blatant falsehood calls Jewish temples and places of worship “mock temples.”⁸

The PA’s premeditated campaign of malignant deceit to obfuscate the reality of Judaism’s past, current, and future presence in Jerusalem is orchestrated from the very top of its leadership: by government officials—ministers and representatives of the PA and administered through Wafa, its official news agency and propaganda arm. Their fabrications are vocalized and published on the record⁹ and consumed as fact by the Palestinian public and its supporters around the Muslim world. The blitzkrieg of untruths includes such preposterous nonsense that the State of Israel plans to demolish the Al-Aqsa Mosque and build a “mock temple” atop its ruins.¹⁰ These lies are spoon-fed on multiple platforms: in speeches, sermons, online, and on social media.

⁸ https://www.palwatch.org.il/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=7297 (“Mahmoud Abbas and the PA leaders have used the term ‘pseudo-temple’ more than 100 times since the beginning of 2011 as part of the ongoing campaign to deny Jewish history in Jerusalem,” September 5, 2012; Abbas: “There will be no peace, security or stability without the evacuation of the Jews from Jerusalem – our holy city”), https://palwatch.org.il/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=7973 (“Palestinian TV News: There is no sign of Jewish history ‘in our country’,” 14.11.2012: “The temple exists only in the minds of extremist organizations”), <https://palwatch.org/page/2974> (*The PA denies Jewish history in Jerusalem: The Jewish Temple is ‘the alleged Temple* (Examples from April - July 2011), 11.8.2011), <http://www.memri.org.il/cqi-webaxy/item?212> (“Palestinian reference to Jerusalem problem,” 30.8.2000). <https://palwatch.org/page/8605> (*Abbas’ description of Jewish history as ‘delusional myths’ repeated on PA TV*, 9.9.2015: “Official PA TV: The Jews’ ‘so-called Temple’ is ‘legends and myths’ and ‘greatest crime and forgery in history’ [Official PA TV, Aug. 1, 2015]; Mahmoud Abbas says Jerusalem’s Jewish history is ‘delusional myths’: ‘The occupation authorities are continuing... their attempt to change Jerusalem... to serve delusional myths... They imagine that by brute force they can invent a [Jewish] history’ Official PA TV, Jan. 17, 2014]). <https://palwatch.org/page/4038> (*Abbas and PA leaders use the term ‘alleged Temple,’* 28.2.2012: “Abbas and the PA used term ‘alleged Temple’ at least 97 times in 2011 and 2012 in its ongoing campaign to deny Jerusalem’s Jewish history; Mahmoud Abbas: ‘No peace, security, or stability’ without evacuation of Jews from Jerusalem – ‘our holy city’”). <https://palwatch.org/page/18138> (*PA says “Jewish history in Jerusalem is ‘fabricated’, ‘forged’, ‘delusional myths’, ‘lies’, ‘libels’, ‘legends’, and ‘stolen heritage,’* 29.7.2020: The Palestinian Authority: “[Israeli] plots are being woven against it [Jerusalem] to forge its identity”; ‘The stones in the ground are fabricated graves planted [by Israel] to prove... an ancient Israeli and Jewish presence’; ‘The greatest liar is [Israel]... stealing our heritage’; ‘[Jewish history is] delusional myths and the arrogance of power’; ‘They [Israel] imagine that by this brute force they can invent a [Jewish] history’; ‘Their so-called ‘Temple’ - the greatest crime and forgery in history’”). https://info.wafa.ps/ar_page.aspx?id=3569 (“Jerusalem Cross Date,” Wafa, the PA’s official news agency [“Jerusalem through history” – a review that purports to show the chronology of Jerusalem throughout history but is paved with distortions as is custom of the Palestinians]). https://info.wafa.ps/ar_page.aspx?id=9290 (“Jerusalem Dates and Events,” Wafa, the PA’s official news agency, [“Dates and Events in Jerusalem” – another review purporting to present, as it were, the chronology of Jerusalem, is also rife with lies and distortions]).

⁹ https://info.wafa.ps/userfiles/server/pdf/i_2014.pdf (“Confrontation Novel Jewish Around Building Alleged,” the ninth Jerusalem Day Conference, 2007, edited by Abbas Neymar, head of the Jerusalem Affairs Unit at the Islamic-Christian Authority for the Protection of Jerusalem and the Holy Places, which is an official PA body: dealing with the “Jewish narrative of the mock temple”).

¹⁰ <https://info.wafa.ps/userfiles/server/pdf/q12.pdf> “The Religious Zionist Jewish Movements Working to Destroy the Mosque and the Establishment of the Mock Third Temple.” https://www.palwatch.org.il/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=15318 (PA: “There has never been a Jewish Temple in Jerusalem,” 28.7.2015: “The Palestinian Authority. https://www.palwatch.org.il/main.aspx?fi=1118&doc_id=22870 (Minister of Religious Affairs in PA Repeats PA plot: Israel plans to “Destroy Al-Aqsa and establish the mock temple in its place,” 24 .7.2017 [Remarks by Yusuf Idais, current Minister of Endowments and Religious Affairs in the PA government, on Palestinian Television.

The PA's slick propaganda onslaught conveniently omits the one glaring truth: The State of Israel has been responsible for protecting and preserving the Temple Mount since the June 1967 Six-Day War. The State of Israel has *never* tried to harm the Al-Aqsa Mosque (or any mosque), and it has invested enormous resources to protect the mosque from extremists of all faiths. Most importantly, the Jewish state has made the full freedom of worship for people of all faiths (and if it has restricted freedom of worship on the Temple Mount itself, this restriction, unfortunately, applies only to Jews and Christians, and not to Muslims) a cornerstone of its national policy. It is of paramount importance to note that the State of Israel did *not* restrict the freedom of Muslim worship on the Temple Mount during the most tumultuous of times, even when terrorists have used their access to the mosque to incite violence, concealing weapons inside the mosque and its surrounding areas, and perpetrate attacks with firearms, explosives, and rocks.

According to the Palestinians, Jews "have nothing to do with Jerusalem and that the city is not scared to the religion."¹¹ These preposterous claims¹² conveniently and intentionally omit the fact that Jerusalem was sacred to Jewish about 1,500 years before the

https://www.palwatch.org.il/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=15757: In a caricature published by Fatah: "Israel executes the Palestinian people by means of 'Judaization' and beheads the Dome of the Rock structure," 24.9.2015: "The PA and Fatah fan the riots in Jerusalem, spreading the narrative that Israel is destroying Al-Aqsa Mosque; Fatah spokesman: Israel plans to 'destroy Al-Aqsa Mosque and build the mock temple on its ruins'; former PA prime minister: Israel is sympathizing and destroying Al-Aqsa Mosque in order to establish the mock temple."

https://www.palwatch.org.il/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=21615 (*Oh Allah, Free Our Mosque From the Impurities of the Occupation* – *Our Jerusalem*," 25 .7.2017: "The Muslim and Christian holy sites need 'protection'; Abbas spokesperson for Israel's actions on the Temple Mount: these are a 'step on the way to the establishment of the mock temple'; an editorial in the PA newspaper: 'Harming holy places... who pass Judas'). https://www.palwatch.org.il/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=13353 ("Minister of Religious Affairs continues to stoke the conflict in Jerusalem: 'Israel only wants to Judaize the Holy City, usurp Al-Aqsa Mosque, destroy it and build the mock temple'," 9.12.2014).

https://www.palwatch.org.il/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=9272 ("Abbas insults Israel: 'Evil and dangerous plot [of Israel] to destroy [Al-Aqsa Mosque] and build the mock temple,'" 30.6.2013); <https://palwatch.org/page/4153> ("The PA's Jerusalem libel continues: Organizations and officials claim Israel plans to destroy Al-Aqsa Mosque; All deny Jerusalem's history, referring to 'alleged Temple'," 2.10.2012). As mentioned above, the use of the issue of Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Temple Mount in general for incitement to hatred and violence, and the allegations of alleged plans to demolish the mosque, will be discussed at length in a separate report published later.

¹¹ <https://memri.org/tv/former-pa-mufti-sheik-ikrima-sabri-jerusalem-not-holy-jews> ("Former PA Mufti Sheik Ikrima Sabri: Jerusalem Is Not Holy for the Jews," 11.5.2012).

¹² <http://www.memri.org/cgi-webaxy/item?4747> (Mahmoud al-Habbash, The PA's Supreme Sharia judge and an advisor to Mahmoud Abbas: "Jews have nothing to do with Jerusalem, it is an imperialist legend that distorted history," 10.6.2018). See (remarks of a Jordanian Sharia lecturer) http://www.memri.org/cgi-webaxy/item?69_5 ("Lecturer sharia in Jordan: I want to break the head of a Jew who says Jerusalem belongs to him," Yarmouk Channel [Jordan], 14 .7.2019).

creation of Islam. The Palestinians also make the unsupportable claim that *they* are the true Canaanites.¹³

The Palestinians have also “determined” that there are no Jewish holy sites in Jerusalem.¹⁴ According to this completely bizarre revisionist fantasy, the Palestinians even

¹³ According to the chairman of the PA and the PLO, Mahmoud Abbas (“Mahmoud Abbas”), at the Beit al-Maqdas conference, April 2018 (as presented in the official PA news agency, Wafa) https://wafa.ps/ar_page.aspx?id=PQcLHga817968887802aPQcLHg, and <https://twitter.com/KhaledAbuToameh/status/845001566667100160> (“President Mahmoud Abbas (in Berlin): Palestinians are an extension of the Canaanite peoples and civilization from 3500 years ago,” 23.3.2017). <https://sethfrantzman.com/2017/12/13/palestinian-authority-president-abbas-accuses-jews-of-faking-and-fabricating-history/>; (PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY PRESIDENT ABBAS ACCUSES JEWS OF “FAKING” AND “FABRICATING” HISTORY,” 13.12.2017); <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M287I3TYVXQ&feature=youtu.be&t=2h42m35s> (“LIVE: OIC holds an extraordinary summit and ministerial meetings on Jerusalem,” 12.12.2017); <https://freebeacon.com/national-security/j-street-found-abbas-speech-condemning-trumps-jerusalem-decision-divisive/> (Even J Street Found Abbas Speech Condemning Trump’s Jerusalem Decision ‘Divisive and Inflammatory’, 15.12.2017). <https://freebeacon.com/national-security/fiery-speech-palestinian-president-abbas-condemns-united-states-threatens-violence-denies-jewish-history/> (“In Fiery Speech, Palestinian President Abbas Condemns United States, Threatens Violence, Denies Jewish History,” 14.12.2017). Such statements by Mahmoud Abbas himself are not unusual; see <https://palwatch.org/page/6042> (“PMW op-ed in Jerusalem Post; Abbas: Jewish history is a “delusional myth,” 17.3.2014); http://www.wafa.ps/ar_page.aspx?id=GDojKwa749951859657aGDojKw, and https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/app/uploads/2018/05/H_117_18.pdf (“History lesson” formulated by Mahmoud Abbas: At the opening of the Discussions of the Palestinian National Council, Mahmoud Abbas gave a speech filled with historical distortions and an anti-Semitic scent. This is to negate the existence of a Jewish people and its connection to the Land of Israel and to establish Palestinian nationalism,” May 3, 2018, where the phenomenon of rewriting history and distortion, as well as the combination of clear antisemitic statements in Mahmoud Abbas’s words. Mahmoud Abbas repeated similar things, for example, in a speech he gave in August 2019 – <https://palwatch.org/page/16109> (“Abbas: ‘We are the Canaanites! [Israel is] the enemy,’” 20.8.2019: ‘Mahmoud Abbas: ‘This land belongs to the Canaanites who were here 5,000 years ago.’; ‘Every house you have built on our land - there is no escaping that they will disappear and will be in the garbage dump of history.’”). And the Arab source, according to him, from the official PA news agency Wafa, includes a variety of distortions and lies in addition to lying about the so-called “Canaanite” origins of the Palestinians: https://www.wafa.ps/ar_page.aspx?id=0G5v6sa859451994060a0G5v6s (“President Inspecting camp Calzone: not Accept that Consider Our Martyrs Terrorists,” 10.8.2019, remarks made by Mahmoud Abbas in Jalazon, as published by the official PA news agency Wafa). See also a speech from January 2018: https://www.wafa.ps/ar_page.aspx?id=F6NF5ya809138523468aF6NF5y. “Mahmoud Abbas’s speech at the opening session of the 28th PLO Central Council meeting at the presidential headquarters in Ramallah, as published in full by the official PA news agency Wafa, 14.1.2018); and, in May 2018, on the occasion of Nakba Day – <http://www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2018/5/15/page1.pdf> and <http://www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2018/5/15/page19.pdf> Mahmoud Abbas’s response to the opening of the US Embassy in Jerusalem: “What happened in Jerusalem is the opening of an American settlement, not an embassy.” See also (Remarks by Palestinian Culture Minister Atef Abu Sayyaf) – PA’s *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, 5.9.2018 [“Our struggle against the occupier is about the narrative”]; And more generally, again by Atef Abu Sayyaf (blanket denial of Jewish history) – <https://palwatch.org/page/16291>. Additionally, please reference: <https://www.memri.org/tv/palestinian-historians-discuss-jewish-history> (“Palestinian Historians Discuss Jewish History,” Palestinian Authority TV, 20.5.2004); Mahmoud al-Bash (advisor to Mahmoud Abbas, former minister of endowments in the PA government and now also the Supreme Sharia judge of the PA) – <http://www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2020/1/9/page6.pdf>; <https://palwatch.org/page/10321>; and, (“Abbas falsely claims 6,000-year-old Palestinian nation,” 6.6.2016: “Abbas falsely claims 6,000-year-old Palestinian nation ; Mahmoud Abbas: ‘The Bible says that the Palestinians existed before Abraham’, ‘The invention of the Canaanite-Palestinian alphabet [was] more than 6,000 years ago’; Abbas’ advisor claims 5,000-year Palestinian history in the land: Mahmoud Al-Habbash: ‘We have been here for the last 5,000 years, and have not left this land’, ‘Our forefathers are the monotheist Canaanites and Jebusites’”); and, to review, see <https://www.meisai.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/EastWind9.pdf> (“Palestinian-Canaanite Identity: Lines for the Development of a National Narrative,” Eyal Hartstein; in: “Mizrahi Spirit,” The Israeli Assoc. for Middle East and Islamic Studies (and Moshe Dayan Center for Middle East and African studies, Tel Aviv University, Issue 9, May 2009, p. 16-22).

¹⁴ https://info.wafa.ps/ar_page.aspx?id=3589 In the Palestinians’ view, the very existence of any synagogues in Jerusalem is something to be fought; See, for example (The Islamic-Christian Authority for the Protection of Jerusalem and the Holy Places). https://info.wafa.ps/userfiles/server/pdf/j_2014.pdf (“Confrontation Novel Jewish around building chassis Alleged,” The ninth Jerusalem Day Conference, 2007, held by Abbas Nimr, head of the Jerusalem Affairs Unit at the Islamic-Christian Authority for the Protection of Jerusalem and the Holy Places, which is an official PA body: dealing with the “Jewish narrative of the mock temple”; The publication is from Wafa, the official PA news agency).

decline to accept the fact that Jewish neighborhoods in Jerusalem even exist, especially the thriving neighborhoods such as the Jewish Quarter in the Old City.¹⁵ Every irrefutable physical fact—archaeological, historic, religious, cultural, national, social, and economic—connecting Jerusalem to the Jewish people is whitewashed, erased, and rebranded by the PA for the benefit of its disinformation campaign.”¹⁶

This Palestinian fictitious rewrite of undeniable fact and history is not reserved solely for the Jewish faith. Christianity, according to the PA, did not evolve from Judaism in the first century AD.¹⁷ The PA insists that Jesus wasn’t Jewish at all. They claim that he was, in fact, Palestinian¹⁸ and that *all* Palestinians are the descendants of Jesus.¹⁹ These exaggerated

¹⁵ https://info.wafa.ps/ar_page.aspx?id=4242 (“Alive And neighborhoods. city Jerusalem,” “Jerusalem Neighborhoods,” PA’s official news agency, Wafa; The Jewish Quarter does not exist).

¹⁶ https://info.wafa.ps/userfiles/server/pdf/quds_tari5_final_1.pdf (“History of Jerusalem, 3000 BC-1099 to Sepana,” PA’s official news agency Wafa, 2003); https://info.wafa.ps/userfiles/server/pdf/Book_Jerusalem_Population_Land.pdf (“Jerusalem: residents and the territory [Arabs and Jews], 1858-1948,” PA’s official news agency Wafa). <https://info.wafa.ps/userfiles/server/pdf/ghazi4.pdf> (“Book of Jerusalem Arabism,” in the official PA news agency Wafa); https://info.wafa.ps/ar_page.aspx?id=3634 Consistently, when the PA, PLO, and other Palestinian elements speak out in Arabic, Islam is always at the center; When expressed in English, for the purposes of propaganda aimed at the wider world, they are also willing to mention Christian heritage in Jerusalem; In any case, they ignore the importance and centrality of Jerusalem to the Jewish people and Judaism, both in Arabic and English. See, <https://twitter.com/KhaledAbuToameh/status/867473957343178753> (“Palestinian Authority: East Jerusalem, with its Islamic and Christian holy sites, will remain the eternal capital of Palestine.” 24.5.2017).

¹⁷ Although this is not enough to overcome another difficulty: in the New Testament, visits by Jesus to the temple are mentioned, both when he was a child and in adulthood; Of course, if the temple is “simulated,” then the Palestinians despised not only the sanctities of Judaism but also the foundations of the Christian faith.

¹⁸ https://www.palwatch.org.il/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=8283 (“Palestinian Holy Trinity: Jesus, Arafat and Abbas,” 27.12.2012: “Jibril Rajoub: ‘The Greatest Palestinian in History Since Jesus, Is He Is Yasser Arafat’” [and other senior Palestinian statements, including the governor of Ramallah and the PA’s Grand Mufti]); https://www.palwatch.org.il/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=13571 (“PA and Fatah: Jesus was Palestinian,” 1.1.2015: “Abbas: ‘Jesus, the Palestinian messenger of love, justice and peace’; Senior PA official: ‘Jesus Christ is Palestinian’; Senior Fatah figure: ‘Jesus, the First Palestinian’”). <https://palwatch.org/page/15102> (“Christmas is a ‘Palestinian symbol’ and ‘Jesus was the first Palestinian’, says senior Fatah leader,” 25.12.2018: <https://www.ipost.com/Diaspora/Antisemitism/Linda-Sarsours-Jesus-was-Palestinian-ignores-Jewish-history-594875> (“Linda Sarsour’s ‘Jesus was Palestinian’ comment ignores Jewish history,” 8.7.2019: “Sarsour’s attempt to embrace a Palestinian nationalism through Jesus is part of a larger effort of cultural appropriation of the history of Jesus.”); <https://www.vnet.co.il/articles/0.7340.L-4162440.00.html> (“Palestinian Prime Minister: Christmas - An Opportunity to ‘Mark the Palestinian Identity of Jesus,’” 15.12.2011), as well as other references, below. The head of the PLO delegation in Washington at the time, Hossam Zomlot, claimed that Miriam, the mother of Jesus, was a “Palestinian” and that Jesus could not leave but from a “Palestinian womb”; <https://twitter.com/PalestineUSA/status/943691430349897728> (“Christmas is a very special day for billions of people across the globe, and that is a great source of pride for us the Palestinians. From the occupied Jerusalem, the city of one God, and from Bethlehem, the city of peace, we wish you and your loved once a Merry Christmas.” 21.12.2017); The lie, it turns out, permeates and buys him a strike among Palestinian sympathizers; See: <https://twitter.com/ReaganBattalion/status/1328022984515260417> (“Exclusive Video: Georgia Senate Candidate @ReverendWarnock preaches Marxism, calls Jesus a ‘poor Palestinian prophet’,” 15.11.2020).

¹⁹ <https://palwatch.org/page/17965> (“Israel is foreign ruler to be defeated by Muslim conqueror - in PA music video,” 14.6.2020). There was also the “claim” that Moses was a Muslim (!), and that he led the Palestinians (!) when they left Egypt; See - https://www.palwatch.org.il/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=6719 (“Moses was a Muslim who led the Muslims to the exodus from Egypt - the words of a lecturer on Palestinian television,” 3.4.2012); In addition, the Palestinians claim Jewish archaeological findings that they are “Palestinian” remains; See, for example - <https://palwatch.org/page/3606> (“PA historical revision: Hebrew Shekel coin from 66 CE is ‘ancient Palestinian coin’,” 12.3.2012). In addition, the false claim is made that Jewish places (most of them ancient), are originally Arabs and bear Arab names; See, for example -

claims are enhanced with outlandish blood libel accusations that the Jews were the ones who routinely crucified Palestinians.²⁰

The PA also claims that Jesus was the first *Fida'i*—or “martyr,” someone who sacrifices his soul for Allah, in the struggle against the enemies of Islam. According to this completely incredulous PA propaganda, Jesus was the first the “honorable and loyal son of Palestine” who was persecuted by the Jews and ultimately crucified by them.²¹

But the PA’s attempts to re-engineer the basic tenets of Christianity highlight the absolute hypocrisy of their campaign. Although the PA claims that Jesus was a Palestinian, the discrimination of their Christian population inside the areas it governs is well documented.

<https://palwatch.org/page/2944> (“PA distortion: Jerusalem, Hebron, Atarot, Shechem, Ashkelon and Tel Aviv originally had Arabic names,” 2.8.2011); Because there is no sign of Jewish history in the Land of Israel, and that the temple “exists only in the imagination of extremist organizations” – <https://palwatch.org/page/4229> (“PA TV News: No trace of Jewish history in ‘our land’, ‘Temple exists only in the minds of radical organizations’,” 12.11.2012); and that the verse “If I forget you Jerusalem will forget my right” (Psalm 16:5), is not taken from Jewish sources but originates from a Crusader and that it was copied by the Jews in a later period, for the purposes of the Zionist movement.

https://www.palwatch.org.il/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=5177 (“Palestinian Distortion: ‘If I forget you Jerusalem’, was a sentence by a Crusader king taken by the Zionist movement,” 16.6.2011). On another occasion, broadcast on Palestinian television, the Palestinians performed a blatant cultural appropriation, using the aforementioned verse as if it were part of Arab heritage, not a cornerstone of Jewish heritage, history, religion and culture; See - https://www.palwatch.org.il/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=7032 (“Imitation of Jewish tradition on Palestinian television: “Forget my right arm... If I forget Jerusalem,” 28.6.2012).

²⁰ https://www.palwatch.org.il/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=9059 (“PA’s official newspaper: ‘The Palestinians, [they are] descendants of Jesus’,” May 26, 2013: “The official PA newspaper: ‘The Palestinians [are] descendants of Jesus’, and ‘The Story of Jesus is the story of his [Palestinian] people’; ‘Jesus... The honest Palestinian national ancestor... Established his new covenant and spread it among the creatures—causing the Jews to persecute him until they caught him, crucified him, and then murdered him.’ ‘The Zionist movement... Wanted to falsify the historical facts, exile and crucify the Palestinian Arab people, and then murder them’). <http://www.memri.org/il/cqi-webaxy/item?1218>. (“Arafat’s advisor: The Jews crucified Jesus; Writers in Al-Sharq al-Aust quote from the Franklin Speech, March 30, 2002 [Bassam Abu Sharif and others]).

²¹ <http://www.memri.org/il/cqi-webaxy/item?4901> (“PA’s Daily for Christmas: Jesus was “The First Martyr and The Fida’i,” “The Faithful Son of Palestine,” a symbol of the Palestinian national struggle against the Persecuted and Crusading Jewish Selfies,” 2.1.2019). Also, see <https://palwatch.org/page/17144> (“Fatah: Jesus was first Palestinian and first Islamic Martyr,” 29.12.2019: “Fatah leader: Jesus was ‘first Palestinian’, and ‘first Islamic Martyr’; PA Prime Minister: ‘Christmas is a national holiday for the Palestinian people’; Abbas: ‘For all of us Palestinians, this holiday [Christmas] is ours’; Fatah: ‘Christmas is a Palestinian holiday’”); <https://www.ipost.com/Middle-East/Senior-Palestinian-claims-Jesus-was-an-Islamic-martyr-612519> (“Senior Palestinian claims Jesus was an Islamic martyr,” 30.12.2019). This is the Arabic source: (Tirawi repeated similar things twice: on December 24 and 25, 2019)

<https://www.facebook.com/122756057972/photos/a.10150227021032973/10157964545952973/?type=3&theater> (“no holiday Birth Glorious, generator Our master. Jesus Christ Palestinian the first and the martyr. The first, in remembrance Birth Get into Jingle on road Salvation which Take it. And we become People from Sacrifices on road Salvation from Occupation, Peace You in your feast Glorious, And peace on People Stubborn in Patience And resilience. To be Free in Jerusalem Capital, every year And you Fine” (“Christmas, [date] the birth of Jesus, the first Palestinian and the first martyr...,” from the Facebook page of Tawfiq Tirawi, senior PA official, 24.12.2019), and <https://www.facebook.com/Tawfiq.Altirawi/posts/2986187448066524> (Tawfiq Tirawi Facebook page, 24.12.2019).

Murdering terrorists are accepted by the Palestinians to the “Palestinian” Jesus. <https://palwatch.org/page/16672> (“Palestinian terrorist is like Jesus, according to official PA daily,” 29.10.2019); and, the Arabic source (here the cartoon appears in its original size) <http://www.alhayat-i.com/pdf/2019/10/16/page16.pdf> (*Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, 16.10.2019, p. 16).

The PA, through its official news agency Wafa, has called for the Temple Mount to be accessible solely to Muslims. When the office of U.S. President Donald J. Trump insisted that worship atop the Temple Mount be open to followers of the three monotheistic religions, the PA's response was an emphatic no,²² with the official response being that the Mount [including its surrounding plaza and other areas] belongs only to Muslims.²³

The PA's demand that it must control the Temple Mount is a denial of the Jewish connection to not only the Western Wall and its plaza, but all of Jerusalem.²⁴ The Palestinians identify the Western Wall as the "wall of al-Buraq,"²⁵ a mythical winged horse

²² <http://darifta.ps/news/shownew.php?title=%D8%B1%D8%AF%D8%A7%20%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89%20%D8%AA%D8%B5%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%AA%20%D9%83%D9%88%D8%B4%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%B1%20%20%D9%85%D8%AC%D9%84%D8%B3%20%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D9%81%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%A1%20%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89:%20%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%AC%D8%AF%20%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%82%D8%B5%D9%89%20%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%83%20%D9%84%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B3%D9%84%D9%85%D9%8A%D9%86%20%D9%88%D8%AD%D8%AF%D9%87%D9%85> ("Response to Remarks Kushner council Fatwa Top: Al-Aqsa Mosque is for Muslims Alone." In response to [Jared] Kushner's statements [on freedom of worship in Jerusalem], the Supreme Halachic Ruling Council: The Blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque belongs solely to Muslims," The Council of the Palestinian Halachic Ruling Council *Dar al-Ifafa*, 27.8.2020).

²³ <https://wafa.ps/Pages/Details/8304> ("Fatwa Top" Response on Kushner: Al-Aqsa Mosque is For Muslims Alone," Supreme Islamic Ruling Council in Response to Kushner: Al-Aqsa Mosque Belongs only to Muslims," PA's official Wafa news agency, 27.8.2020). On the other hand, when the Palestinians want to "wink" at their supporters in the West, they take a slightly different approach to distorting history, which is characterized by double-tongued and characteristic hypocrisy—erasing the rights of the Jewish people, and an attempt to be seen as not denying the rights of Christians: https://www.palwatch.org.il/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=6893 ("Mahmoud Abbas: Jerusalem has only Islamic and Christian history," May 24, 2021): "Mahmoud Abbas: Jerusalem has only Islamic and Christian history, "Judaization" Jerusalem is the theft of its 'Cultural, Human and Religious Islamic-Christian History'; Mahmoud Abbas's advisor: Israel creates in Jerusalem an 'artificial heritage with a Jewish character at the expense of the original real [identity] as an Arab, Islamic and Christian city'). This type of statement came as a natural continuation of the antisemitic motifs made by senior Palestinian figures in general, and Mahmoud Abbas in particular.

²⁴ See <https://palwatch.org/page/15484> ("Abbas' hypocrisy: To Palestinians - hatred of Jews; to foreign audience - tolerance," 4.4.2019: "Jew hatred to Palestinians and tolerance to foreign audience - Abbas' contradictory messages: The Temple Mount belongs to Muslims only, Jews have no rights to them; Abbas to visiting American students: 'We are honestly not against the Jews. No. The Jews, the Christians, the Muslims - for us they are equal... The holy sites will remain open to the three [monotheistic] religions at all times, and no one can prevent anyone- Christian, Jew, Muslim - from going and performing his religious rituals'; Abbas to Palestinians: 'The Al-Aqsa [Mosque compound, includes the Temple Mount] is ours... and they [Jews] have no right to defile it with their filthy feet'; 'We have to prevent them, in any way whatsoever, from entering the Sanctuary (i.e., the Temple Mount)... They have no right to enter it. They have no right to defile it. We must prevent them. Let us stand before them with chests bared to protect our holy places'."). Also see https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/Data/pdf/PDF_10_329_1.pdf, ("News of Terrorism and The Israeli-Palestinian conflict, November 23-30, 2010; The Then Palestinian Information Minister, Al-Multhwacha Ta [Extremely venomous antisemitism, even by the strict standards of venomous Palestinian antisemitism] presents a "study" that negates the affinity between the Jewish people and the Western Wall, according to which the place has never been used as a place of prayer for Jews, and the "first right" in which it belongs to Muslims [published on the PA's Information Ministry website, 22.11.2010]); Jamal Mohissen, a senior Fatah figure and associate of Mahmoud Abbas – <https://palwatch.org/page/5934> ("Fatah official denies Jewish historical connection to Western Wall," 19.2.2014). Also, PA's Grand Mufti, Mohammed Hussein: <https://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/199904>

²⁵ <https://info.wafa.ps/userfiles/server/pdf/q12.pdf> ("The Religious Zionist Jewish Movements Working to Destroy the Mosque and the Establishment of the Mock Third Temple"). Also see <http://www.memri.org/cgi-webaxy/item?4347> ("A columnist for the Palestinian Authority Daily in response to the UN Secretary-General's comments on the Jewish affinity for Jerusalem: Jews have no affiliation with Jerusalem and Palestine at all," February 2, 2017 [from Omar Hilmi al-Ghoul's article in *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*) of the PA and statements by other senior Palestinian figures, in response to UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres's remarks that no one can deny the sanctity of Jerusalem to the three monotheistic religions and that the temple destroyed by the Romans was the Jewish Temple). Also see <https://palwatch.org/page/11680>

that transported the Prophet Mohammed from Mecca to Jerusalem and then to paradise, even though history has proven that Mohammed never set foot inside Jerusalem. No matter how hard the Palestinian propaganda machine works at speeches, sermons, Facebook posts, and Tweets, there is *absolutely* no connection between Islam and the Western Wall.²⁶ The Palestinians even dare to claim that Jewish artifacts found at the Western in archeological excavations are part of the Al-Aqsa Mosque and are an “Islamic endowment.”²⁷ The PA’s

(“PA TV criticizes Palestinian newspaper for using term ‘Wailing Wall’ and not ‘Al-Buraq Wall’ - as instructed by PA Ministry of Information,” 10.2.2017). As per the Western Wall plaza being “Al-Buraq Square,” see <https://wafa.ps/Pages/Details/12221> (“Waqf: 23 Break in. To the max. And prevent lift Adhan 50 Time in Campus Brahimi Month past” Ministry of Religious Affairs, PA); 23 Onslaughts on Al-Aqsa and preventing the reading of the muezzin 50 times in the Cave of the Patriarchs,” PA’s official Wafa news agency, 8.11.2020).

²⁶ As claimed Mahmoud al-Bash, minister of religions and endowments in the PA government at the time, and the PA’s supreme Sharia judge today—see https://www.palwatch.org.il/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=8387 (“Minister of Religious Affairs in the PA: “The Western Wall... No one but Muslims has ever used it as a place of worship throughout history,” 20.1.2013). See also the words of the Pascal General Mufti at the time, in 1998, Akrama Sabri (Al-Shabaab, May 25, 1998, as presented by MAMRI), according to “Religiously, the Western Wall is the al-Barak Wall and is part of the western wall of the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque, it is property of Muslims and Judaism has nothing to do with it. However, in the early 1930s, the Council of Nations wanted to solve problems that arose between the Arabs and the Jews and to appease the Jews and solve the problems, they allowed [the Jews] to pray in front of this Wall only, without making any change in it.”; See - <http://www.memri.org.il/cgi-webaxy/item?83> (“Palestinian Media Review 25-31.5.1998”); and Sabri’s remarks in a Friday sermon on the Temple Mount, 12.6.1998, which was broadcast on the PA’s official radio station, “The Voice of Palestine” (as presented by MAMRI), according to “The Al-Barak Wall is part of the Al-Aqsa Mosque wall. I say this to the foreign journalists who treat the Western Wall al-Barak in their reports as if it belongs to the Jews, who call it the Wall of Tears. We emphasize that the Al-Barak Wall belongs only to Muslims. It is not my personal opinion, but the position of Islam.” See <http://www.memri.org.il/cgi-webaxy/item?85> (“Weekly Palestinian Media Review 8-14/6/98”);

Also saw the remarks of Yasser Arafat and Akram Sabri on the Western Wall in the summer of 2000; According to Arafat (Al-Hayat, London, 27.7.2000, as brought by MEMRI): “Already the Mandate government established in 1929 that the Western Wall was a Wall al-Buraq and was considered an Islamic endowment and historical right of the Palestinians”. And according to Sabri (All of Al-Arab, 18.8.2000, as brought by MEMRI); see: “The Western Wall, according to the UN Resolution of 1930, is part of Al-Aqsa Wall, i.e., Islamic sanctity. No stone from the Al-Buraq Wall has anything to do with Judaism. The Jews have been praying for this wall since the 19th century, when aspirations developed, as Yossi Beilin said. They want not only the Western Wall but [all] Al-Aqsa”: <http://www.memri.org.il/cgi-webaxy/item?212> (“Palestinian reference to Jerusalem problem,” 30.8.2000). It should be noted that while various speakers, including Arafat and Sabri themselves, claimed in the same statements that Jews would be allowed freedom of worship at the Western Wall, their insistence on total control of the entire Old City, including of course the Western Wall and its plaza; Insist that Jews can get there through a narrow “corridor” that is supposed to pass through the territories that they and only they will control; And you also denied the very right of the Jewish people there – all of which lead to the conclusion that these are empty “promises” that the Palestinians have never intended to honor, similar to their signed promises and contractual obligations (such as the pledge to refrain from using violence, the threat of violence or incitement to violence, which the Palestinians have repeatedly accepted, and have never ceased to violate them). See <http://www.memri.org.il/cgi-webaxy/item?223> (“The formulas for an arrangement on the Jerusalem issue,” 30.9.2000). Also see Palestinian Police Bulletin Al-Shurta, issue 36, September 2000, p. 47-48, an article by Colonel Abdulrahman al-Rahman al-Lamzan, in charge of political guidance in the Palestinian police. These claims are, of course, false. Muslims did not pray at the Western Wall, and they do not do so today. However, Muslims often harassed Jewish worshippers at the Western Wall, physically harmed Jewish worshippers there, and as mentioned when the Old City was controlled by the Kingdom of Jordan (1948-1967), Jews were completely denied access to the Western Wall, and of course with it, the freedom of worship of Jews there was also completely revoked.

²⁷ See <https://palwatch.org/page/13482> (“PA to US: “Give Israel the White House or Washington”, 19.12.2017: “PA to US: ‘Give Israel the White House or Washington’ but don’t touch Jerusalem! ; Palestinians burn posters of US Vice President Mike Pence; PA official denies Jewish ties to the Western Wall and Jerusalem, repeats lie: ‘The Al-Buraq is an Islamic waqf, and Israeli archeologists have not found any Jewish antiquities under the Al-Aqsa Mosque’”). According to an Islamic fatwa issued by the PA’s Grand Mufti, Mohammed Hussein, the whole of Jerusalem is an Islamic endowment and there is no permit to divide its control with non-Muslims. <https://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2018/04/19/1137887.html> and <http://www.alhayatj.com/pdf/2018/4/13/page1.pdf> and <http://www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2018/4/13/page15.pdf> (“Mufti deprives Facilitate Titling Jerusalem And land. Palestine for enemies.” Coverage of the Mufti’s decision and the Supreme Islamic Halachic Ruling Council, PA’s Al-Hayat Al-Jadida, 13.4.2018). See: “Senior Palestinian figures: The Western Wall is an Islamic waqf and should not be given up.”

determination to rewrite history and discount irrefutable facts buried under the grounds for thousands of years and state that anything uncovered belongs to Islam.²⁸

The political ramifications of these falsehoods are explosive. In December 2017, Mohammed Hussein, the PA's Grand Mufti, condemned the opening of a synagogue in the Western Wall Plaza,²⁹ deeming it as a provocation—an act that could spark conflict. These incitement-laced statements are a harbinger of worse to come should the Palestinians ever have control of the Temple Mount and its surrounding areas.³⁰

“Senior Palestinian officials issued condemnations of the Israeli government’s decision to renovate the Western Wall plaza: Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad said that the Western Wall was part of occupied East Jerusalem and Jerusalem’s historical, cultural and religious characteristics should not be changed; The PA’s deputy information minister, al-Mawdal Ta, claimed in his research that the Western Wall is an Islamic Waqf and an integral part of Al-Aqsa, that the Jews have nothing to do with it and should not give up a stone or grain of land from it, or from other holy places; The Mufti of Jerusalem and Palestine, Sheikh Mohammed Hussein, said that Al-Aqsa Mosque belonged to Muslims alone and the occupation would “not succeed in robbing the Arab and Islamic identity of Jerusalem.” (Al-Hayat, London, 23.11.2010; PA’s official news agency, Wafa, 22.11.2010; as brought by MAMR - <http://www.memri.org/cgi-webaxy/item?2586> [“What’s new? Summary of news from the Middle East 23.11.2010”]. See <https://pulpit.alwatanvoice.com/articles/2010/11/23/214803.html> and http://www.wafa.ps/ar_page.aspx?id=mpiMiga562554549216ampiMig (“Grand Mufti: operation alteration Landmarks yard Buraq Aggression New on Al , Aqsa.” “Grand Mufti: The Changes in Al-Buraq Square are a New Aggression Against Al-Aqsa,” 22.11.2010). <https://web.archive.org/web/20171123124144/http://www.alhayat.com/Details/196326> (“Washington Condemns With an article. Palestinian Deny Connection Jews Wall Buraq.” Washington condemns a Palestinian article denying the Jews’ affiliation with the Al-Buraq Wall,” 1.12.2010). In a manifesto published in February 2013, on the eve of then-President Barack Obama’s visit to Israel and Jerusalem in particular, the preacher of Al-Aqsa Mosque and the former Mufti of the PA, Akrama Sabri, in charge of the Fatah Jerusalem case, Hatem Abd al-Qader, and the head of the Islamic Movement in Israel, Ra’ad Salah, stated, “We emphasize that Al-Aqsa Mosque belongs only to Muslims and others have no rights. His land, the space of his land and its land are an Islamic vein [belonging] to all Muslims from all over the world and is part of his Islamic faith and our national rights. We emphasize that the Al-Barak Wall, which is an integral part of Al-Aqsa Mosque and belongs only to Muslims, kneels under Israeli occupation and has become a Jewish place of worship... Occupied Jerusalem, which is undermined by the occupation by expropriation of its lands, the destruction of its homes, and the imposition of a policy of ethnic cleansing on its inhabitants, needs someone to remove the occupation from it, not those who establish or support it. Mr. President, following the false statements made by the Israeli occupation establishment, we warn against any position that implies that Jews have a right to Al-Aqsa Mosque, the Al-Buraq Wall, and occupied Jerusalem. We emphasize that sooner or later Jerusalem and its pearl, Al-Aqsa Mosque will return to the Islamic, Arab and Palestinian control.” (as presented by MEMRI) <http://www.memri.org/cgi-webaxy/item?3345> [“Senior Palestinian officials warn against Obama’s visit to Al-Aqsa accompanied by an Israeli escort,” March 14, 2013])

²⁸ <https://palwatch.org/page/17267> (““The Muslims have the absolute right” to the Western Wall - PA denial of Jewish history persists,” 21.1.2020: “Fatah spokesman: ‘We will defend our Al-Aqsa Mosque and our holy sites, and we will not allow them to violate them... whatever the cost may be.’”). Arab sources according to Iyad Nasser, Fatah spokesman https://wafa.ps/ar_page.aspx?id=sm8HQia868624037721asm8HQi (“Open: storming Occupation For the maximum Profession For the holy places. ” The onslaught of the occupation of Al-Aqsa is the expropriation of American-sponsored holy sites,” PA’s official Wafa News Agency, January 17, 2020. <http://www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2020/1/18/page2.pdf> (“Ministry Foreign Affairs Condemn By Breaking In.”)

²⁹ And his words Published on official PA stage - Wafa Agency: http://www.wafa.ps/ar_page.aspx?id=EkOZOXA807590973090aEkOZOX (“Grand Mufti Deplores inauguration synagogue Jewish lower al-Buraq Wall and The Grand Mufti condemns the opening of a synagogue at the bottom of the Al-Buraq Wall,” 21.12.2017).

³⁰ See <https://palwatch.org/page/5153> (“PA flag superimposed on picture of Western Wall on Abbas’ Presidential Guard’s Facebook page,” 12.8.2013); <https://palwatch.org/page/2984> (“PA TV: Western Wall area to be turned into Arab housing neighborhood,” 17.8.2017: “Palestinian Authority TV: Western Wall area to be turned into Arab housing neighborhood - Jewish presence in Jerusalem will be erased from history”). http://www.palwatch.org/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=3187 (“Palestinian TV: Jews praying at the Western Wall are “sin and impurity,” 14.9.2010). The Palestinians also saw the praise shared by the Palestinians for terrorists who carried out an attack at the Western Wall Plaza (the throwing of hand grenades, resulting in the injury of about 70 worshippers) in 1986, which is also inconsistent, of course, with the promise of freedom of worship: http://www.palwatch.org/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=3501 (“Terrorists who threw explosive grenades at Israelis near the Western Wall – ‘Prisoners and Heroes’,” October 26, 2010).

Typical in this context is the statement of Jibril Rajoub (former head of West Bank Preventative Security for the PA as well as legislator and minister) regarding the Western Wall in an interview on Israel's Channel 2 in June 2017. Rajoub said that the Western Wall can remain under Israeli sovereignty because it has no religious significance.³¹ Still, there was an angry backlash, including violence on the "Palestinian street," to his apparent willingness to cede any territory to Israel and he was forced to backtrack his comments and claim that he had not said what was attributed to him, and had no intention of "giving up" the Western Wall. ³² Other Palestinian figures also made it clear at the time that the Palestinians would never "give up" any part of the Western Wall and its plaza to the Jews or anyone else.³³

Some Palestinian leaders have stated that, as part of any future political and diplomatic accords, they might "allow" Jewish rituals to take place at the Western Wall *only* when the PA assumes control over East Jerusalem.³⁴ This is merely Diplo-speak that is meant for the ears of Western ambassadors and politicians in the United States and European Union

³¹ <https://vimeo.com/220178928> (Excerpt from the interview with Jibril Rajoub on Channel 2 in Israel; Rajoub was interviewed in Hebrew).

³² See https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/Data/articles/Art_21216/H_110_17_777355750.pdf ("News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, June 2-6, 2017," Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, p. 8-9). <https://palwatch.org/page/12424> ("Rajoub lies to Palestinians: 'I did not mention the word sovereignty' re. the Western Wall," 7.6.2017: "Rajoub lies to Palestinians: 'I did not mention the word sovereignty' regarding the Western Wall [Facebook page of Jibril Rajoub, June 4, 2017]; ... after saying to Israelis: 'The Western Wall... in the end it has to be under Jewish sovereignty. We have no argument with that' [Israeli TV Channel 2, June 3, 2017]"). Also see <https://icpa.org.il/2017/06/%d7%94%d7%99%d7%94%d7%a4%d7%95%d7%9a-%d7%92%d7%91%d7%a8%d7%99%d7%9c-%d7%a8%d7%92%d7%95%d7%91-%d7%a2%d7%95%d7%a8%d7%95/>

³³ <https://www.memri.org/tv/mahmoud-habbash-western-wall-inseparable-islam/> ("Abbas' Advisor Mahmoud Al-Habbash: We Shall Not Relinquish a Single Micromillimeter of the Western Wall, "Palestinian Authority TV, 9.6.2017: "In a Friday sermon, Mahmoud Al-Habbash, advisor to PA President Abbas on Religious and Islamic affairs, said that the Al-Aqsa Mosque, along with the Al-Buraq Wall (the Western Wall) was an Islamic religious endowment and could never belong to non-Muslims. 'We cannot possibly relinquish a single millimeter, a single stone, a single micromillimeter of the Al-Buraq Wall and of the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque', he said in the sermon, which was delivered on June 9 and broadcast by the official Palestinian Authority TV.").

³⁴ <http://www.memri.org.il/cqi-webaxy/item?212> ("Palestinian reference to Jerusalem problem," 30.8.2000).

who allocated benevolent funding of the government in Ramallah. The Palestinians have no intention of allowing a foothold of non-Muslims, at the Western Wall and in the plaza.³⁵

Taysir Tamimi, the PA's former top Sharia (Islamic law) judge and an activist in the Islamic-Christian Authority for the Protection of Jerusalem and The Holy Places (an official PA body), said in remarks published in *al-Hayat al-Jadida*, an official PA newspaper (February 17, 2014), that: "Allah will boast and praise [that] the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque is Islamic and belongs only to Muslims... It is part of the faith of one and a half billion Muslims, and the Jews have no right to it. No party, no matter how much international power and support it has, can change this fact by giving Jews any right to it, or the right to pray in any part of it. Al-Aqsa Mosque includes all its plazas, foundations, its names, gates, domes, walls, and specific to the al-Buraq wall since it is part of it... We remember with great pride the position of President Shaheed Yasir Arafat. Who refused to give the Jews any right over the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque."³⁶

Judge Tamimi's was not a lone voice. In remarks published in *al-Hayat al-Jadida* on March 26, 2014, PA Grand Mufti Mohammed Hussein said, "In light of the intensifying occupation attack on the city of Jerusalem, to completely Judaize it, to obscure its Islamic characteristics, [and] to lay a hand on the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque... In addition to the threat to demolish Al-Aqsa Mosque to build the mock temple on its ruins—God forbid—we would like to emphasize our previous rulings on the matter. The plazas of Al-Aqsa Mosque, its walls, buildings, courtyards, domes, its stubs, its stone benches, what are beneath Al-Aqsa

³⁵ http://www.palwatch.org.il/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=11204 ("Religious leaders in the PA: Jews are not allowed to pray at the Western Wall; the PA claims that the Western Wall is part of Al-Aqsa Mosque and is therefore off limits to Jews," April 6, 2014).

³⁶ <http://www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2014/2/17/page2.pdf>: "Taysir al-Tamimi warns against applying Israeli sovereignty to Al-Aqsa," PA's Al-Hayat Al-Jadida, 17.2.2014).

Mosque and what above it, are an Islamic endowment until judgment day, and are the exclusive right of Muslims, with whom no one shares it.”³⁷

Mahmoud al-Habbash, the PA Religious Affairs Advisor and a supreme Sharia judge said in an interview on Palestinian television on December 6, 2013,³⁸ that, “Jerusalem is a deposit of religion and a deposit of history in the hands of all Muslims, in the hands of *this* nation.” He went on to say, “We are the ones who inherited Jerusalem, in its conquest... We as Palestinians, Arabs, and Muslims must also visit the Western Wall. The al-Buraq Wall is an authentic part of the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque only... [The Wall] is our right, it’s our permanent right. It is part of our [Al-Aqsa Mosque], without thinking of any violation of the rights of others. And without infringing on the rights of others. The freedom of worship in our Jerusalem is guaranteed to everyone... We don’t argue with anyone’s tradition, and we don’t argue with anyone’s religion. However, we have rights, principles, and positions that cannot change.” Al-Habbash’s words of tolerance were, of course, empty ones since he has also stated, “the Western Wall is nothing more than part of Al-Aqsa Mosque, and it is the Mosque of the Palestinians, only Muslims! Al-Aqsa Mosque will remain, based on the divine decision, an Islamic mosque, and that it will not be shared by anyone, will not become promiscuous and will not pray in it to anyone but the people of Islam.”³⁹

³⁷ https://www.palwatch.org.il/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=11204: (“Religious leaders in the PA: Jews are not allowed to pray at the Western Wall; the PA claims that the Western Wall is part of Al-Aqsa Mosque and is therefore off limits to Jews,” April 6, 2014). <http://www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2014/3/26/page11.pdf> (“The Grand Mufti explains the ruling regarding Muslim visits to Palestine and Al-Aqsa Mosque,” PA’s Al-Hayat Al-Jadida, March 26, 2014).

³⁸ As brought by “Looking at Palestinian Media” – https://www.palwatch.org.il/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=11204 (“Religious leaders in the PA: Jews are not allowed to pray at the Western Wall; the PA claims that the Western Wall is part of Al-Aqsa Mosque and is therefore off limits to Jews,” April 6, 2014).

³⁹ Translation It is of a “view of the Palestinian media” – https://www.palwatch.org.il/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=11204 (“Religious leaders in the PA: Jews are not allowed to pray at the Western Wall; the PA claims that the Western Wall is part of Al-Aqsa Mosque and is therefore off limits to Jews,” April 6, 2014). <http://www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2014/2/28/page6.pdf> (“minister Waqf: That is Side advance Same Alternative Legitimacy Palestinian Will under feet Our “Minister of Endowments [and Religious Affairs]: Anyone who presents himself as an alternative to Palestinian legitimacy will be under the feet of our people,” 28.2.2014). According to Al-Bash, the Western Wall (“Keir al-Buraq”) is an “Islamic endowment”; See, for example, his remarks (Palestinian TV, 7.11.2014). “All of these [Western Wall and Al-Aqsa Mosque] are our Waqf... And no one should sell it or negotiate it or abandon it. It is ours and will remain ours” (as presented and translated by “Looking at Palestinian Media” – https://www.palwatch.org.il/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=13031. “PA adopts Hamas’ religious beliefs that present peace with Israel as a violation of Islamic laws,” 13.11.2014: “Pashnah adopts Hamas’ religious beliefs that present peace

If parts of Jerusalem are under Palestinian control, the PA will rule the areas under their discriminatory beliefs and policies. Any political or diplomatic agreement reached, like others that the PA has been a signatory to, will not be worth the paper it was written on. If control of the Temple Mount is ceded to the PA, they will quickly deny other faiths the religious freedom to worship where—and how—they choose.

The conclusion that can be drawn is fighting: the PA will do everything in its power to prevent non-Muslims⁴⁰ from worshipping in the Holy Places in the Old City.

with Israel as a violation of Islamic laws; Mahmoud al-Habbash, Abbas's religious advisor: 'The entire land of Palestine is Waqf land and is a welcome land that is prohibited from selling, buying ownership or facilitating the takeover even a millimeter from it.' [Al-Hayat al-Jadida, 22/10/2014]; 'What are we [Fatah and Hamas] divided about? Do we disagree with Jerusalem, for example? Disagree on the liberation of Palestine from the sea to the river.' [PA's official TV, 26/09/2014]; 'All of these [Western Wall and Al-Aqsa Mosque] are our Waqf... And no one should sell it or negotiate it or abandon it. It's ours and it'll stay ours. It is the occupation that will leave.' [PA's official TV, 07/11/2014]”).

<https://memri.org/tv/pa-president-abbas-advisor-mahmoud%20habbash-western-wall-palestinian-sovereignty>

(“Eid Al-Fitr Sermon by Advisor to PA President Abbas: Not a Single Millimeter of the Western Wall Will Fall under Non-Palestinian Sovereignty,” Palestinian Authority TV, 25.6.2017: “In a recent sermon, Mahmoud Al-Habbash, advisor to PA President Mahmoud Abbas on Religious and Islamic Affairs, said that the Al-Buraq Wall (the Western Wall) was part of the Al-Aqsa Mosque and ‘more important than all the others’. ‘The Al-Buraq Wall, the Al-Aqsa Mosque, and Jerusalem, the capital of the State of Palestine - not a single millimeter of them may fall under any sovereignty other than that of the Palestinian people,” he said. The sermon, marking Eid Al-Fitr on June 25, was broadcast by the official Palestinian Authority TV channel and was attended by President Abbas.”); <https://www.memri.org/tv/mahmoud-habbash-western-wall-inseparable-islam> (“Abbas’ Advisor Mahmoud Al-Habbash: We Shall Not Relinquish a Single Micromillimeter of the Western Wall,” Palestinian Authority TV , 9.6.2017: “In a Friday sermon, Mahmoud Al-Habbash, advisor to PA President Abbas on Religious and Islamic affairs, said that the Al-Aqsa Mosque, along with the Al-Buraq Wall (the Western Wall) was an Islamic religious endowment and could never belong to non-Muslims. ‘We cannot possibly relinquish a single millimeter, a single stone, a single micromillimeter of the Al-Buraq Wall and of the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque’, he said in the sermon, which was delivered on June 9 and broadcast by the official Palestinian Authority TV”). Indeed, a Christian worshipper (in this case, by US Vice President Mike Pence) is met with angry responses from PA officials, including the PA’s Grand Mufti, Mohammed Hussein,, Saeb Erekat, and senior Fatah figures; See – <https://palwatch.org/page/13744> (“Fatah: ‘Pence defiles the Al-Buraq Wall’,” 25.1.2018: “Fatah on Pence’s visit to the Western Wall: ‘Pence defiles the Al-Buraq Wall’”; “Fatah secretary: The US ‘is an enemy of the Palestinian people’; Fatah official: Pence’s visit to ‘the Al-Buraq Wall’ - the Western Wall – ‘is an attack against the Palestinian people’; Fatah official: ‘The activities of rage will continue’; PLO Chief Negotiator Erekat: Pence’s speech was ‘a crusade’ and ‘an attack’ that ‘proved the US administration is part of the problem and not part of the solution’; PA Mufti: ‘The Al-Buraq Wall is an inseparable part of the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque, and it is an Islamic site’”).

⁴⁰ In fact, the Palestinians try to prevent freedom of worship in the region even from Muslims – if they see them as not automatically supporting Palestinians. Recently,, the Palestinians have been harassing UAE citizens visiting the Temple Mount, due to the “Abraham Accords” and the warming of relations between the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and other Arab countries and Israel; and the PA’s Grand Mufti, Mohammed Hussein, issued a fatwa stating that Muslim visits to the Temple Mount are “permitted” only under the conditions set by the Palestinians, and not through the Mughrabi Gate (used for visits of Jews and Christians on the Temple Mount); See: <http://wafa.ps/Pages/Details/7853> (“Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Confirms Embargo Visits Normalization for Palestine and its sanctities. “The Grand Mufti approves the prohibition of normalization visits to Palestine and its holy sites,” PA’s official Wafa news agency, 18.8.2000). The mufti’s remarks were widely quoted by the Turkish official Anadolu news agency, followed by a variety of media outlets opposed to normalization: <https://www.aa.com.tr/ar/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A9/-%D9%85%D9%81%D8%AA%D9%8A-%D9%81%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%B7%D9%8A%D9%86-%D9%84%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%B6%D9%88%D9%84-%D8%B2%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%82%D8%B5%D9%89-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%AA%D9%81%D8%A7%D9%82-%D8%AA%D8%B7%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%B9%D9%8A-%D8%AD%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%85/1943712> (“Mufti Palestine Anatolia: Visit ‘Al , Aqsa’ agreement naturalist ‘Haram’”The Mufti of Palestine to the Anadolu Agency: Normalization Visits to Al-Aqsa – Forbidden,” August 16, 2020: The Grand Mufti said in a special statement to The Anadolu Agency. <http://www.memri.org.il/cgi-webaxy/item?5297>

The fate of Jewish worshippers in the Old City—and Temple Mount in particular—in a Holy City even under partial PA control is even more daunting. Anything connected to Judaism and Jerusalem is taboo—even among the officials who are “moderate.” Negating the city’s Jewish history, culture, religion, heritage, and sensitivities are the pillars of a false narrative campaign that the PA has been waging for years and that is carried out on two simultaneous fronts. The first is aimed at an international audience to diminish support for Israel and the importance of Jerusalem as the capital of the modern Jewish state. The second front is for Palestinian domestic consumption, in the PA’s effort to provide its people with a fictitious version of history that can be weaponized to incite violence and acts of terror.

It is abundantly clear—as seen by the statements by PA officials, and by the PA’s incessant propaganda campaign to legitimize its planned practice of religious discrimination—that the only hope to ensure the security, stability, and freedom of religion for all faiths in Jerusalem is for the State of Israel to continue to protect, govern, and maintain the entire city and the Old City in particular. It is the only formula for possible for there to be peace, spiritual fulfillment, and respect for all in the holy city and capital of the Jewish state.