

Study of PA-funded magazine, Zayzafuna



"Zayzafuna – A monthly magazine for children – cultural, educational, informative and healthy – for children aged 8-15," January, 2011

Contents:

Chapter 14 – Hitler admired in Palestinian youth magazine because he killed Jews

Introduction

1. Hitler admired because he killed Jews
2. Glorification of fighting against Jews and Israel, Jihad and dying a Martyrdom death (*Shahada*)
3. A world without Israel – cities and areas in Israel presented as "Palestine"
4. Hate speech against Israelis and Jews
5. Positive messages

Conclusion

Chapter 14

Hitler admired in Palestinian youth magazine because he killed Jews

In a Palestinian youth magazine, *Zayzafuna*, published with the sponsorship of the PLO's Palestinian National Committee for Education, Culture and Sciences and funded by the Palestinian Authority, Hitler tells a Palestinian girl in her dream:

**"I killed them [the Jews] so you would all know
that they are a nation which spreads destruction all over the world."**

Introduction

The Palestinian Authority funds a monthly educational magazine for children called *Zayzafuna*.¹ The magazine is made up of material written by the magazine's staff, and essays and poems written by children. *Zayzafuna* thereby represents the values of the educators and serves as a window into the minds of the participating Palestinian children.

Most of the content in *Zayzafuna* is positive and educational. It promotes family values, encourages children to read and to participate in building a modern, democratic society, and more. However, these positive messages are directed at Palestinian society, Muslims, Christians and Druze.² When it comes to portraying Israel and Jews, *Zayzafuna* changes its tone and includes items glorifying Jihad fighters against Israel and praising *Shahada* (dying a Martyrdom death for Allah) and the *Shahids*, the Martyrs.

In addition, the magazine portrays a world where "Palestine" has replaced Israel by referring to Israeli cities as places in "Palestine," denies Israel's right to exist by saying that Israel is on "stolen land," and demonizes Israel and Jews. Approximately one fourth of the children's submissions are on nationalistic topics, and among them are expressions of hatred that undermine peace and mirror the messages transmitted by the PA leadership through official media, PA education and other structures under their control.

¹ *Zayzafuna* means a certain kind of tree, a Tilia tree. The magazine defines itself on the front page of every issue as "a monthly magazine for children – cultural, educational, informative and healthy – for children aged 8-15". [<http://www.alzayzafona.com/upload/AL-ZAYZAFUNA%2031.pdf>]

² *Zayzafuna*, July 2011

The magazine is published by the *Zayzafuna* Association for Development of Children's Culture, and sponsored by the PLO's Palestinian National Committee for Education, Culture and Sciences.³

The magazine's advisory board is comprised of Palestinian Authority officials and educators, including PA Deputy Minister of Education Jihad Zakarneh, and former PA Minister for Women's Affairs Zuheira Kamal.⁴ The *Zayzafuna* magazine is part of a larger education program funded by the Palestinian Authority which contributed 90,000 Shekel (\$24,370) in 2010 and 10,000 Shekel (\$2,700) a month in 2011.⁵ Since August 2011, the magazine is also sponsored by UNESCO and the MDG Achievement Fund (MDG-F), a UN humanitarian foundation funded by the Spanish government.⁶

Positive messages are blended with hate and violence

What is striking about *Zayzafuna* is that the messages that encourage hatred and undermine peace are blended by the editors with the positive educational messages that make up the majority of the content. It is specifically because this is not a hate magazine, but in general a positive publication promoting good values, that the hatred expressed towards Israel and Jews is so damaging. Whereas promotion of peace and tolerance is common in *Zayzafuna*, it is not applied to Jews and Israelis. Indeed, the only references to Jews and Israelis are negative. For example, "those who are called the Jews" are the ones who "killed like this sword,"⁷ and "the Jews adopted a policy of assassination... a Jewish plane killed him..."⁸

At the same time, *Zayzafuna* serves as a platform for calls for Jihad and glorification of Martyrdom: "The mighty Jihad fighter died as a Martyr and Jerusalem is proud of its heroes... Victory, victory, victory..."⁹ and dreams of destruction of Israel: "They [Israel] used nothing but weapons to achieve their goal. And that is the greatest proof that they are

³ Published by The *Zayzafuna* Association for Development of Children's Culture
General Director: Sharif Samhan, Editor in chief: Abd Al-Salam Attari, Legal advisor: Lawyer Mufid Hamouda
Palestinian National Committee for Education, Culture and Sciences (a PLO body)
Founding Executive Council: Abla Sa'adat, Muhammad Shuqeir, Dr. Walid Al-Sharfa, Abd Al-Karim Ziyada,
Dr. Farouq Khaled Al-Ahmad, Buthayna Duqmaq Esq. [*Zayzafuna*, February 2011]

⁴ Advisory Board:
"Dr. Munir Fasha, lecturer and expert in children's literature
Dr. Mahmoud Al-Atshan, lecturer in Arabic language, Bir Zeit University
Zuheira Kamal, lecturer, former PA Minister of Women's Affairs
Jihad Zakarneh, lecturer, PA Deputy Minister of Education
Dr. Widad Al-Barghouthi, Dean of the Faculty of Journalism and Communications, Bir Zeit University...
Abd Al-Hakim Abu Jamous, poet and journalist." [*Zayzafuna*, February 2011]

⁵ Deputy Chairman of the *Zayzafuna* organization Abd Al-Karim Ziyada on the funding of *Zayzafuna*: "The magazine has advertisements, which cover some of the costs. For the year 2010-2011 we have subscriptions by students and schools, and that also helps [funding the magazine]. We are fortunate in that the Palestinian Authority and the Prime Minister [Salam Fayyad] have helped us this year with aid in the amount of 90,000 Shekel (\$24,370) to cover the magazine and organization costs, and that has given us a push forward. Allah be praised, there is a new agreement for a monthly [PA] payment of 10,000 Shekel (\$2,700) to cover the magazine [costs]." [PA TV, May 9 and 13, 2011]

⁶ The August 2011 issue reported that UNESCO and the UN MDG-F had joined as sponsors of the *Zayzafuna* magazine. [*Zayzafuna*, August 2011] In the October 2011 issue a note appears: "Opinions expressed in this magazine don't necessarily express UNESCO's views."

⁷ *Zayzafuna*, May 2010

⁸ *Zayzafuna*, April 2010

⁹ *Zayzafuna*, May 2011

cowards. 1948 was the year they entered our land... Oh Palestine, wipe away your tears for I shall not close my eyes until you are liberated.”¹⁰

The most extreme expression of demonization of Jews is the inclusion of an essay by a teenage girl in which Hitler is presented as a positive figure to be admired because he killed Jews in order to benefit the world.

The girl in her dream asks Hitler: “You’re the one who killed the Jews?” Hitler responds: “Yes. I killed them so you would all know that they are a nation which spreads destruction all over the world.” Like the other hate messages, this appears in a story with positive messages by other admired figures, including a Muslim Nobel Prize recipient and a math scholar.

All the positive messages about coexistence and peace, which abound throughout the magazine, apply to everyone but Israelis and Jews. The implicit message of *Zayzafuna* is that Israelis and Jews are in a unique category separated from other peoples and religious groups: For others – peace, cooperation and coexistence; for Israelis and Jews – hatred, confrontation and Jihad.

This overview includes material from issues of *Zayzafuna* from May 2010 through August 2011,¹¹ and focuses on messages relating to Israelis and Jews. A short summary of the many positive messages in *Zayzafuna* that are unconnected to Israel appears below in section 5 of this chapter.

1. Hitler admired because he murdered Jews

The *Zayzafuna* magazine chose to publish an essay written by a girl in 10th grade in which Hitler is admired because he killed the Jews – an act that is presented as a positive accomplishment for the benefit of humanity. The girl describes a dream in which she meets four historical figures, all of whom are presented as admired role models, and each one’s special accomplishment is the topic of a short conversation with the girl. Three of them are the ninth-century Muslim mathematician Al-Khwarizmi; Nobel Prize-winning Egyptian author Naguib Mahfouz; and Saladin, the Muslim leader who defeated the Christian Crusaders and conquered Jerusalem in the 12th century. The fourth and only non-Muslim role model in the dream is Adolf Hitler.

All four are presented as positive figures, and each one offers advice to the young girl, which she accepts. Hitler is admired because he killed the Jews “so you would all know that they are a nation which spreads destruction all over the world.” Hitler advises the girl to “be resilient and patient” in facing the suffering the Jews are causing. The girl thanks Hitler for his advice.

Significantly, *Zayzafuna’s* editors chose to include this submission in the magazine, without dissociating themselves from the admiration of Hitler. Nor did they choose to add a comment describing the Holocaust or Hitler’s genocide of Jews. They found it an acceptable message to have Hitler appear with other role models for Palestinian children.

¹⁰ *Zayzafuna*, April 2011

¹¹ The August 2010 and June 2011 issues are not available on the Internet and are not included in this report.

The following is the text of the essay:

“One hot day, I was very tired after a hard day... and suddenly I saw four white doors in front of me. I opened them in no particular order. I opened the first door and saw a beautiful place full of flowers. I was surprised to see a man there. I asked him, ‘Who are you?’ He said, ‘I am Al-Khwarizmi.’ [Ninth century Persian mathematician who lived in Baghdad, known for his contribution to the development of algebra.] I said: ‘You’re the one who invented mathematics and arithmetic?’ He said: ‘Yes. What’s your situation like today?’ I said: ‘The Arabs and Muslims are in a deep sleep; they can’t do anything. They have moved away from all the sciences.’ He [Al-Khwarizmi] said: ‘Yes, I know that. The day will come when the Arabs will return to their glory. And you – you have a great duty, which is to take an interest in the Islamic sciences and to protect them from being forgotten.’ I said, ‘I promise,’ and left the door.

I turned to the next door; there Hitler awaited me. I said, ‘You’re the one who killed the Jews?’ He [Hitler] said: ‘Yes. I killed them so you would all know that they are a nation which spreads destruction all over the world. And what I ask of you is to be resilient and patient, concerning the suffering that Palestine is experiencing at their hands.’ I said [to Hitler]: ‘Thanks for the advice.’

Then I turned to the third door, and met Naguib Mahfouz [Nobel Prize-winning Egyptian author], who was the one who knew best the value of time and how to use it. He said: ‘People’s pastime, these days, has become killing time and wasting it, as though they are punishing themselves. So strive to use your time in the best way.’

At the fourth door I meet Saladin Al-Ayoubi [Muslim leader who defeated the Christian crusaders and conquered Jerusalem in the twelfth century]. He said: ‘I am Saladin.’ I said: ‘You were the one who liberated Jerusalem and Al-Aqsa [Mosque].’ He answered: ‘Yes.’ I said: ‘Return, oh Saladin, for Jerusalem and Palestine cry out and no one answers.’ He [Saladin] said: ‘I know, but every time has its men, and the right man to liberate Jerusalem is still to come.’

And before I could finish my dream, the alarm clock rang and I woke up. It was seven in the morning, and I needed to go to school early, because I had promised Naguib Mahfouz that I would use time well.”

[Zayzafuna, February 2011]

Although repugnant, a Palestinian teenager's admiration for Hitler alongside other Muslim role models, specifically because he killed Jews, is not unexpected. As *Deception* documents, Palestinian children are brought up with the teaching that killing Israelis and Jews is heroic. The PA has named streets, schools, sporting events and more after Palestinian terrorists who have killed hundreds of Israeli civilians. In Palestinian cultural, educational and social events, every Palestinian child is exposed to repeated glorification of terrorists who have killed Jews. Palestinian children have participated in summer camps named after Dalal Mughrabi who led a bus hijacking in which 37 civilians were killed, and played in football tournaments named after Abd Al-Basset Odeh, a suicide bomber who killed 31 Israelis at a Passover dinner. It is not surprising that a Palestinian child who has been educated to see those who have murdered Jews as heroes and role models will conclude that Hitler, the one who murdered the most Jews in history, is likewise worthy of admiration.¹²

2. Glorification of fighting against Jews and Israel, Jihad and dying a Martyrdom death (*Shahada*)

Encouraging both children and adults to seek death as “Martyrs” and to sacrifice their lives for the “liberation of Palestine” has been at times a significant part of the PA messages transmitted to the population, especially during the PA terror campaign, the Intifada, from 2000-2005. While it is promoted less in official and public discourse today, Martyrdom death is still presented as an ideal in Palestinian schoolbooks, and the impact of the Martyrdom death promotion is still felt. For example, PA TV continues to interview parents of “Martyrs” – including parents of suicide bombers – who express pride and satisfaction that their children died as “Martyrs.”

This impact of Martyrdom promotion is apparent in some of the children's contributions to *Zayzafuna*, and the message is kept alive by the magazine's editors, who have chosen to include these writings in the children's magazine.

The following are examples of children expressing the opinion that Israel and Jews are the enemy to be fought through violence, and that Martyrdom death is something to aspire to and worthy of praise. The examples appear chronologically.

A poem written by a high-school girl promises “resistance,” which will lead to the fall of the “occupiers.” “Resistance” (in Arabic *Muqawama*) is a term used for all types of violence against Israel, including suicide bombings.¹³ The term “Palestine” routinely refers to all of Israel:

“Palestine, be resilient
 The sun of liberty will never set on you...
We will not despair of resistance.
 We will uproot these [Israeli] thorns from your soil.
 We will defeat the occupiers; they will certainly be caught in your net.”
 [Zayzafuna, October 2010]

¹² See Chapter 11 and www.palwatch.org

¹³ See page 155

A poem written by a boy in 6th grade depicts a “Martyr’s” death as a wedding. The Palestinian Authority gives prominence to the Islamic tradition that a “Martyr” marries the 72 dark-eyed virgins in Paradise:

“My mother went to the home of the Martyr (*Shahid*) to express condolences...

My mother said [to the Martyr’s mother]: **‘Why do you weep? He died as a Martyr, do not be sad.**

‘His mother said: ‘My tears flow from sadness over his youth... But **in my heart I am very happy, because he died as a Martyr.**

I will contain myself.’

Following the afternoon prayer, the whole village set off on a **grand funeral procession. Muhammad’s mother accompanied her [dead] son as though he were not a Martyr, but rather at a wedding ceremony.**

[Zayzafuna, February 2011]

Zayzafuna published an essay by a high school girl entitled “The Palestinian Mother,” presenting Martyrdom death as an achievement to be applauded:

“I am the Palestinian mother, I am the mother of the **Martyr (*Shahid*) who sacrificed himself for the sake of liberty, and followed the path of Martyrdom (*Shahada*) for the sake of the homeland... He fell upon the land of Palestine, quenching it with his pure blood.** My son died as a Martyr with a bullet, a treacherous bullet, to his chest. But the main thing is that he died as a Martyr upon the land of Palestine; oh the land of Divine missions, the blessed land and the homeland of the prophets and the messengers; oh the place of the Prophet’s [Muhammad’s] Night Journey... **Congratulations [you are in] Paradise and [in] the heavenly dwellings, oh Palestinian Martyr. With our lives we will redeem you, Palestine.**”

[Zayzafuna, April 2011]

In an essay entitled “Journey to the occupied land,” a girl in 8th grade promises to liberate “Palestine,” which is defined as land that Israel “entered” in 1948. The promise to “liberate” the land Israel has had since 1948, the year the State of Israel was established, is giving expression to the goal of destroying of Israel: “I shall not close my eyes until you [Palestine] are liberated”:

“I swear by Allah, I long for this journey... to the land stolen from us in a moment of distraction. They asked us [to have] a permit to enter our [own] land (i.e., to enter Israel)... **more precious than our lives;** since when does an owner need permission to enter his land? And how could he relinquish his land and his honor... They [Israel] used nothing but weapons to achieve their goal. And that is the greatest proof that they are cowards. 1948 was the year they entered our land, and again in 1967, when they thought that our dreams of restoring our homeland had come to an end. Indeed... **those who thought that after the occupation no one would dream of entering his [the Palestinian’s] land (i.e., enter into Israel) as a victor were mistaken. Oh Palestine, wipe away your tears for I shall not close my eyes until you are liberated.**”

[Zayzafuna, April 2011]

The following poem written by a girl in 8th grade expresses pride in the Palestinian people, which has no fear of Martyrdom, in contrast to Israel, described as an enemy "whose heart is full of hatred and loathing; a cowardly immigrant seeking stability."

"How sad for the homes destroyed by imperialism,
And a people [the Palestinians] which has no fear of Martyrdom
(Shahada)
 And never thinks of fleeing,
And a man whose heart is full of hatred and loathing,
A cowardly immigrant [Israeli] who seeks stability...
 And how sad for occupied Palestine
 And for our blessed, neglected Jerusalem
 And for our pure, stolen land
 And for the sky filled with clouds of smoke...
 And for the prisoner awaiting an Arab liberator
 And for the mother awaiting her son with love, as a Martyr:"

[Zayzafuna, May 2011]

The following poem by a girl in 8th grade, expresses pride in the heroic Jihad fighters who have died as Martyrs "for the sake of the liberation of Jerusalem."

The poem ends with a promise to sacrifice lives for victory and the liberation of Jerusalem and the Al-Aqsa Mosque:

"Look at Jerusalem and at the Dome of the Rock [Mosque]
 Whose moon is high in the sky
 Raising its head [in pride] at **its sons who have**
Died as Martyrs for its [the mosque's] liberation
There the mighty Jihad fighter died as a Martyr
 And Jerusalem is proud of its heroes who defend it with stones.
 Oh Jerusalem, do not be sad, for your victory is near
 With the song of birds up high
Asking its people to stone the enemy
 Oh bride of time
 Oh third holy place [to Islam] - **we will redeem you with our life**
 Oh compass of the nation - do not be sad
 For your victory is near, Allah willing
Victory, victory, victory, oh city of Jerusalem."

[Zayzafuna, May 2011]

A girl in 8th grade wrote the following poem praising children who are "waging Jihad":

"The doors began to call... the houses began to call: Palestine,
 [Your] time of liberation is yet to come
Here are your children who are waging Jihad
Fighting [for] liberty with red [blood] -
 No submission!
 A free and Arab Palestine...
 I am the Palestinian girl."

[Zayzafuna, May 2011]

A girl in 10th grade wants to sacrifice her life – die as a “Martyr” – for the redemption of Jerusalem:

“A Palestinian, I am a Palestinian
With my life I will redeem you, Jerusalem...” [Zayzafuna, May 2010]

A poem by a high-school girl expresses her wish to liberate “Palestine” violently with “sword and gun”:

“Oh flower of the valleys, oh my Jerusalem
 Oh mother of Arabness and of the Arabs,
 I belong to you since my birth
 And to your soil after my death...
If only I were a sword and a gun to liberate you, oh Palestine.“
 [Zayzafuna, July 2010]

One way that terror is supported in the PA, as documented in Chapter 11, is through glorifying terrorists. Although it is not a prominent part of *Zayzafuna*, there is some terrorist glorification, including the honoring of Hamas leaders. The following are examples.

The magazine published a piece in memory of arch-terrorist Abu Jihad, entitled *The Last Page*, by Hassan Saleh, Mayor of Jericho. Abu Jihad was one of the founders of Fatah and deputy to Yasser Arafat. He headed PLO’s military wing and planned many deadly Fatah terror attacks, including the most lethal in Israeli history, the hijacking of a bus and killing of 37 civilians, 12 of them children:

“Khalil Al-Wazir (**Abu Jihad**) –
**With every step, you brought with you a handsome and practical
 Palestinian presence,**
 interwoven with hope.
 With you [were] speech and action.
Such is heroism and the era of men, oh master of men.”

[Zayzafuna, June 2010]

On the anniversary of Yasser Arafat’s death, *Zayzafuna* published a page with photographs of Arafat, presenting him as the armed military figure he was most of his life, rather than a man of peace who received the Nobel Peace Prize towards the end of his life. At top right, he is kissing Ahmed Yassin, the founder of the Hamas terror organization, and awarding him an official certificate. In other pictures, he is shown with a loaded automatic weapon, and wearing a pistol while praying. Although Arafat signed a treaty with Israel and promised to give up terror, the pictures chosen by the magazine focus on the militant Arafat and not the diplomat. Moreover, publishing a picture of his kissing Yassin, leader of the terror organization whose suicide bombings caused the deaths of hundreds of Israelis, glorifies an arch-terrorist and sends a message of approval of the terror Yassin masterminded.



[Zayzafuna, November 2010]

Poem by a girl in 7th grade honors Hamas leader Ahmed Yassin and other terrorists:

“From proud Gaza a thousand greetings
 It is the land of the righteous, the free.
 In it, **Ahmed Yassin** [founder and head of Hamas, responsible for the
 deaths of hundreds of Israeli civilians]
The light of the rebel’s eyes,
 Raised the generations there [in Gaza]
On strength and combat.
 And in it, **Yasser [Arafat]**, Abu Amar,
Symbol of sacrifice and determination
 You, people of Gaza, are brave
 Do not fear death.
 In it [Gaza] generations grew up: **Faris [Ouda**, a 14-year-old boy who
 aspired to die as a Martyr and prepared his own memorial before going off
 to seek his death]
 And **Imad [Aqel]**, Hamas commander]
 Muhammad [Al-Dura, Palestinian boy killed in crossfire in the Gaza Strip]
 and
Yahya Ayyash [initiated the Palestinian suicide bombing tactic and built
 the first bombs]
 A call to every Palestinian mother not to fear death.”

[*Zayzafuna*, February 2011]

Praise for Hamas leader Abd Al-Aziz Rantisi

The regular *Zayzafuna* column, *Poet from Palestine*, chose to write about the “poet” Abd Al-Aziz Rantisi (1947-2004), who succeeded Ahmed Yassin as head of Hamas. The text expresses support for Rantisi as a poet, as a political leader, as someone who fought against Israel and as someone who glorified Yahya Ayyash – the initiator of suicide terror against Israel. The editors also chose to include Rantisi’s specific words of praise for Ayyash, calling him “a school that spreads culture” and “the university of heroism and resolve”:

“Poet from Palestine – the poet Dr. Abd Al-Aziz Rantisi (1947-2004)”
 “On Dec. 9, 1987, the first Intifada broke out. On that day he [**Rantisi**]
joined Sheikh Ahmed Yassin and others in founding the Hamas
 organization... the Jews imprisoned him several times. In 2000 the Al-
 Aqsa Intifada broke out. The Jews adopted a policy of assassination against
 Palestinian leaders, and a Jewish plane killed him with a missile in April
 2004. His funeral was attended by masses, more than any [other] Arab
 leader.

Abd Al-Aziz contained within him all attributes and qualities: He
 was a skilled and brilliant doctor and an experienced leader... a preacher
 and a poet... He wrote, **mourning the Martyr (Shahid) Engineer Yahya**
Ayyash, [who initiated the Palestinian suicide bombing tactic and
built the first suicide bombs] who was assassinated by the Jews:
Ayyash lives; do not say that he is dead... Ayyash lives on in [our]

**hearts, in which the blood of revenge will storm the tyrants...
Ayyash is a school that spreads culture Ayyash is the university of
heroism and resolve.”** [Zayzafuna, April 2011]

While the glorification of terrorists in *Zayzafuna* is not a major component of the total texts, even the few examples complete the general PA message that violence and killing of Israeli civilians is honorable. The attitude of the magazine is that Israel is the enemy to be fought violently and that Martyrdom death is heroic. It is significant that these messages appear in the writings of the children. The *Zayzafuna* magazine reinforces these hate messages of the children by publishing them along with the many positive social messages in the magazine. They are given the stamp of approval and presented as exemplary writing, thus reinforcing them as positive values for children.

3. A world without Israel – cities and areas in Israel presented as “Palestine”

Following the lead of PA education and ideology, *Zayzafuna* delegitimizes Israel's existence and its right to exist. *Zayzafuna* mirrors the general and frequent PA messages, documented in Part One, by referring to cities and areas in Israel as “Palestine” as though the State of Israel did not exist.

A poem by a girl in 12th grade presents a world as if Israel did not exist by defining the Israeli cities Haifa, Jaffa, Acre, Ramle, Be'er Sheva and Tel Aviv as cities in “Palestine”:

“I am **the spirit of Palestine**
Seek and find me in the depths of the Dead Sea
You will find me **in Haifa, in Jaffa, in Acre, on the rocks of Ramle** (i.e.,
all Israeli cities)I walk with the sun on the beach in Gaza

I am the rose of Palestine
You will find me upon **the Galilee mountain** (i.e., in Israel)
On the banks of **the Lake of Tiberias** (i.e., the Sea of Galilee, in Israel)
At the center of the Yabad plain (i.e., Jenin area)
At the top of Mount Hebron
At the center of **the captive Negev** (i.e., desert in Israel)
I quench my thirst from **the authentic Be'er Sheva** (i.e., Israeli city)
You will find me **in Tel Al-Rabi'a** (i.e., Arabic translation of the name of
the Israeli city of Tel Aviv)
Looking out over the spectacular sea

I am the bride of Palestine
You will find me in every loving heart
In the heart of every youth who loves
The land of Palestine...
I am Jerusalem
Seek and find me
In every place in Palestine
Because I am the heart of Palestine.”

[Zayzafuna, June 2010]

A poem by a girl in 8th grade describes Jews as murderers who “killed like this sword” and whose “name in their countries of origin is ‘the tigers,’” while “Palestine” is named “the easiest prey.” The poem promises the defeat of the Jews at the hands of Palestinians who will be “liberating Palestine and its heart”:

“Palestine, today I sense what is inside you... your voice tells me that the guest [Jews]
Who has prolonged his stay, like the summer,
And [who] limits everyone, and **has killed like this sword**
Indeed, **those who are called the Jews**
Those who cross the borders
At first we considered them close friends
But their name in their countries of origin is ‘the tigers’..
They [Jews] believe that you [Palestine] are the easiest prey
But we will give them the taste of defeat
So that they will know that **we stand firm, and we are coming**
And liberating Palestine and its heart.” [Zayzafuna, May 2010]

A parable describes a donkey that on TV sees a group of lions brutally devouring a zebra. The donkey wants to ask the UN to save the forest animals from the predators, but then remembers the following:

“He [once] saw on TV **Israeli soldiers who open fire on Palestinian children** in the streets and in their bedrooms and at the doorways to their homes, and the UN Secretary-General is unable to defend the children.” [Zayzafuna, May 2010]

The magazine defined Israel as “the Israeli enemy” while it reported on a ceremony marking the “anniversary of the death of the Martyr commander Yasser Arafat”:

“The director of the education department and the mayor praised the role of the deceased leader [Yasser Arafat]... and his outstanding ability to unite the Palestinian ranks and aim the compass towards **the Israeli enemy.**” [Zayzafuna, December 2010]

In this narrative, Israelis are the “Zionist enemy”:

“The city of Ramle – a deeply-rooted Arab Palestinian city... was founded by Suleiman Bin Abd Al-Malik, on the day he assumed control of the district of Palestine... Among the city’s landmarks: The Al-Anziya [Goats’] Pool, in north-eastern Ramle... the Christians called it ‘Helena’s Pool,’ while the **Zionist enemies** named it the ‘Pool of the Arches.’ On July 12, 1948, the city fell under the rule of the **Zionist gangs**, and most of its Arab inhabitants were driven away...” [Zayzafuna, January 2011]

Another issue featured a composition by a girl in 7th grade about the Palestinian flag. At the end of the composition, as she writes about the black stripe on the flag, she addresses the Israelis as “Allah’s enemies” and warns them, “Beware, just wait for me”:

“With its green color [on the flag] my country will be a sister to Tunisia, and with its white – a sister to Lebanon and Syria... and with its red color a

sister to Algeria, the 'land of a million Martyrs'. **And the black [color], which was our point of weakness, will be for you, oh enemies of Allah [Israelis/Jews], the color which will never leave you, by day or by night, and even in your dreams. That is a promise from a Palestinian girl – beware, just wait for me.**"
 [Zayzafuna, April 2011]

As documented, an important component of PA ideology is to deny that there ever was a Jewish Temple in Jerusalem. Following this lead, *Zayzafuna* defines Jewish activity on the Temple Mount as the search for "the alleged Temple" and a "desecration of the Al-Aqsa Mosque":

"As a show of solidarity with our beloved Al-Aqsa [Mosque], the girls of Deir Sudan school held... activities expressing condemnation and anger over **the actions of the Jews – desecration of Al-Aqsa** and the construction of a Jewish synagogue in proximity to it, and a search for **the alleged Temple** under the foundations of Al-Aqsa. The students expressed their anger and sorrow over what is happening.."

[Zayzafuna, May 2010]

Slogans calling for boycott of all Israeli products

At the bottom of every page of every issue of *Zayzafuna* is a slogan or motto, usually reflecting an educational message or idiom, such as: "Children's tears are supplications, but if they are not answered, they become commands (Rousseau)." However, the most common slogan is: "**Boycott Israeli products – support national products.**" Significantly, this call to boycott Israel has appeared at the bottom of the pages more often than any other message. In addition, in some issues it has appeared at the bottom of every other page while all the other messages appear only once. This boycott message is a very strong statement of rejection of Israel.

5. Positive messages

As stated above, most of the messages included in *Zayzafuna* are very positive. However, when hate messages are blended in between the promotion of good values, these positive messages give the hate messages legitimacy. If *Zayzafuna* were exclusively promoting hatred, it would be dismissed as outside mainstream children's education, and therefore not relevant. But the magazine's promotion of positive values validates all the content, including those messages that demonize Israel and its existence, or that present Hitler's murder of Jews as something beneficial to the world.

The following are examples of some of these positive messages that *Zayzafuna* promotes and activities that it encourages:

- Participation in social activities (cleaning, participation in building a modern, democratic society, etc.)
- Studying, education and culture
- Seeking knowledge (information about science and famous, successful Arab scientists)

- Short stories with lessons and morals (returning lost items, being good to neighbors, water conservation)
- Palestinian folklore: stories, fables, proverbs
- Section on traditional crafts (weaving, embroidery, basket weaving, etc.) and cooking
- Section on Arabic language
- Section on children's games
- Information / interviews with Arab youth who excel in academics, sports, culture and/or politics
- Historical and geographical information (places, sites, villages)
- Information on health and body hygiene
- Information on agriculture / zoology (animals and birds of the land)

Positive children's contributions in the magazine include essays on emotions, love, philosophical material, separation, loss, sadness, disappointments and friendship.

PA policy is to not recognize the religious significance of Jerusalem for Jews. In most cases Jerusalem's religious significance for Judaism is ignored and the city said to be holy only to two monotheistic religions, Islam and Christianity. However, the magazine includes a rare acknowledgment of the fact that Jerusalem is holy also to Judaism.

A Palestinian girl writes about Jerusalem:

"Jerusalem is a city that is holy to the three monotheistic religions: Islam, Christianity and Judaism. It is the largest of the cities in historical Palestine, which is currently under Israeli rule. In this district there are two refugee camps: Shuafat and Qalandiya." [Zayzafuna, July 2010]

The following is a positive essay by a student in 5th grade on the need for a peaceful world:

Title: "International essay competition: 'My role in building a peaceful world'"

"There are many slogans about freedom and democracy and human dignity. If we were to take a practical interest in human dignity, and in everyone having equal rights, and every nation on earth having the right to exist with dignity, and every person deserving respect, regardless of the color of his skin, or his religion, or his nationality, or his political opinions – we would be living in a nicer world.

Acceptance of the other and listening to the other, and distancing oneself from fanaticism, is the magic key to solving most of the problems among people, in all spheres. In the classroom I listen to my friends and to my teacher, and I want them to listen to me...

I want a culture of discussion and free expression to reign in our lives... as the philosopher Hegel said: 'In the dispute between two minds there is great benefit for many others.' The dispute exists, there is no getting away from that, and a person cannot change that fact. But we can handle this dispute in a good way, bringing benefit to all." [Zayzafuna, March 2011]

Conclusion

Zayzafuna is a magazine that encourages Palestinian children to strive for excellence and positive values. However, the positive values do not apply to the Jews or Israelis mentioned in the magazine. Although the references to Jews and Israel are a minority of the total texts, all the references are negative. It is as if one component of the excellence suggested by the magazine includes disdain for Israelis, Jews and Israel. Whereas violence is rejected in general, in the context of Israel it is glorified, along with the aspiration to Martyrdom.

If there is to be peace, Palestinian educators must extend the positive values of tolerance and acceptance to Jews and Israel as well. As long as children are taught to see the entire world as worthy of respect and tolerance, with only Jews and Israelis worthy of hatred and disdain, peace will remain an illusion.