

Wiesenthal Centre Exposes Distortion and Denial Campaign Against Jewish Bond to Israel

Paris, 15 December 2022

Wiesenthal Centre Director for International Relations, Dr Shimon Samuels, expressed disgust at a conference, purportedly held at Sciences Po Menton (Political Science University of Menton, France) on 8 December, entitled “The Plundering of Palestine, Between Biblical Archaeology and Biblical Myths' Narratives.” The guest speaker was Ahmed El Dabash, a pro-Palestinian activist and a self-proclaimed researcher on ancient history. The conference was apparently organized by “Sciences Palestine” student club, though no trace of the event could be found on the Menton campus’ website, nor does this club appear on the university’s list.



Left to right: the invitation to the conference with El Dabash; his latest book; speaking (note the BDS cartoon on screen). Photos BNVCA

El Dabash’s most recent book, “Palestine: From Here Emerged Civilization: From the Palaeolithic to the Chalcolithic Age,” is a travesty on “the usurpation of Palestine by Zionist propaganda.” Claiming to provide the “true history of Jerusalem”, El Dabash “deconstructs the Torah narrative” rehashing verbatim the thesis of his main source, “Biblical minimalist” historian Keith W. Whitelam (author of “Rediscovering Palestine” and “The Invention of Ancient Israel: the Silencing of Palestinian History”).

See: <https://www.amazon.com/Palestine-Emerged-Civilization-Paleolithic-Chalcolithic-ebook/dp/B091SJPH7R> (<https://www.amazon.com/Palestine-Emerged-Civilization-Paleolithic-Chalcolithic-ebook/dp/B091SJPH7R>)

(The link provides a brief summary that sets the tone, but also access to the table of contents, the preface and a partial bibliography. The book’s dedication reads “For the bodies of the martyrs captive in the enemy’s mortuary”).

Other books and authors listed in the bibliography are unambiguously biased: “Zionism and Violence, vol. 2” by Abdel Wahab El Messiri (Dar El Shourouk, Cairo); “Holy Crime: Genocide: from Ideology of the Hebrew Bible to the Zionist Project” by Issam Sakhnini (Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, Beirut).

Among other more scholarly references in El Dabash's bibliography is historian and harsh critic of American foreign policy, Lawrence Davidson, apparently a board member of the U.S. Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel.

More discrediting is the original publisher of Ahmed El Dabash's book, Dar Safahat. "Throughout our two decades monitoring Arab Book Fairs, stated Samuels, the Wiesenthal Centre has found Dar Safahat often listed as operating out of the United Arab Emirates, yet its +963 telephone country code reveals its true headquarters in Damascus, Syria."

Among Dar Safahat's most infamous books displayed in past book fairs:

- "The Great Deception: Are the Jews Really the Chosen People?", by Muhammad Jamal Tahhan;
- "How the Jews Fabricated the Holocaust" (an embellished Arabic version of Norman Finkelstein's "The Holocaust Industry");>
- "In Defence of Jihad" (Arabic version - no photo available), by reportedly neo-Nazi South African author Archie Augustine.

Though originally published in Syria in 2017, the English edition (2021) of El Dabash's above mentioned book denying Israel's historical roots appears published by the Centre for Arab Unity Studies (CAUS), Lebanon. The latter was established in the wake of the Six-Day War in 1967 – to "revitalize the then moribund pan-Arab movement... free of ties to any Government, far removed from partisan politics... [but] with political unification [of the Arab world]... as its final culmination" - i.e. more or less, the Muslim Brotherhood agenda!

See: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23063711> (<https://www.jstor.org/stable/23063711>)

French philosopher and psychoanalyst Daniel Sibony commented on the conference: "Wanting to prove that there was no Jewish people in Israel 2000 years ago, El Dabash contradicts not only the Jewish Bible, but also the Christian Gospels and Islam's Quran... his cause must be desperate!"

"I would add that his denial of the ancestral Jewish bond to Israel – a historical fact proven by archaeological findings and coherent narratives – is a clumsy attempt to extinguish the constant trinity of Judaism: The People, The Book and The Land," concluded Samuels.

* * *

For further information, contact Shimon Samuels at csweurope@gmail.com (<mailto:csweurope@gmail.com>)