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“Haj Amin al-Husseini, the Nazis and the Holocaust: The Origins, Nature and Aftereffects of Collaboration”

Abstract

In the fall of 2015, when the Palestinian Authority claimed that the State of Israel posed threats to the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, public attention in Israel turned again to Haj Amin al-Husseini, the former Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, a collaborator with Nazi Germany and the leader of Palestinian nationalism before and immediately after World War II. Some historians and, briefly, Israel’s Prime Minister also attributed to Husseini a significant decision-making role in the Holocaust in Europe. The following essay draws on scholarship on Holocaust decision-making in order to demonstrate that Husseini did not have an impact on Hitler’s decisions to murder the Jews of Europe. Rather his historical importance may be found in the texts of his speeches and essays of the 1930s and 1940s. They offer abundant evidence of his impact on Nazi Germany’s Arabic language propaganda aimed at North Africa and the Middle East during World War II and the Holocaust. Before, during and after his presence in Berlin from 1941 to 1945, Husseini played a central role in shaping the political tradition of Islamism by offering an interpretation of the religion of Islam as intrinsically anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist and in connecting that version to the anti-Semitic conspiracy theories of modern European history.

I. The Grand Mufti’s Collaboration with Nazi Germany: Defining the Historical Problem

Haj Amin al-Husseini (1897-1974) collaborated extensively with Nazi Germany but had no impact on Nazi decision making concerning the Final Solution of the Jewish Question in Europe. He did have a profound impact on Nazi Germany’s Arabic language propaganda to the Arab societies during the Holocaust. He left a legacy of anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism that remains an enduring element of Palestinian and Arab politics. If we are to understand his importance for the history of politics and ideas in the Middle East, we must draw a clear distinction. On the one hand, the Mufti was an important regional leader and Nazi propagandist. In this capacity he engaged in lethal incitement against the Jews, and this is now recognized under international law as a crime because it is an essential step in the process leading to genocide. On the other, the Mufti did *not* participate in the decision-making process which led to the Holocaust. It is the purpose of this article to demonstrate this proposition by making use of verifiable historical evidence.

Most recently, the issue of the Mufti’s historical responsibility became a subject of public controversy when, on October 20, 2015, Benjamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister of Israel, stated in an address at the 37th Zionist Congress in Jerusalem that Haj Amin al-Husseini convinced Hitler to change his anti-Jewish policy from one of forced emigration to one of

extermination. Mistakenly, he claimed that Hussein "was one of the leading architects of the Final Solution," but later he retracted this statement.¹ It is important to note that authoritative historians of the decision-making sequence leading to the Holocaust found no such role for Hussein. The implication of their work is that, had he never arrived in Hitler's Berlin in 1941, the Holocaust would still have taken place.

Hussein was a leading figure of the Palestinian national movement from the time of his appointment as the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem in 1921 to his leadership of the Palestinians during the first Arab-Israeli war of 1948.² After the defeat of 1948, his political star declined but his rejection of any compromise settlement with Israel had a continuing ideological impact on Palestinian politics. He claimed that Zionism was a threat to Arabs and the religion of Islam and that Zionists and later, Israelis would destroy or eliminate the Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. During World War II and the Holocaust, having been chased out of the Middle East by the British, he found refuge in Hitler's Berlin. His rejection of Zionism was inseparable from his enthusiasm for National Socialism. However, Hussein did *not* influence Hitler's decisions to launch the Final Solution of the Jewish Question in Europe.

Yet if some exaggerate Hussein's importance for developments in Europe, it would be equally misguided to minimize the depth of his collaboration and its deep roots in his political and religious convictions. In Hitler and the Nazis he recognized ideological soul mates who shared his profound hatred of the Jews, Judaism and Zionism. He expressed his enthusiasm to German diplomats in Jerusalem as early as March 1933.³ In his confidential conversations with German diplomats and then in a major public speech in Syria in 1937, Hussein made clear that his opposition to Zionism was rooted in his interpretation of the religion of Islam. Hussein's importance in the history of politics and ideas lay in his ability weave together an interpretation of the religion of Islam with the secular language of Arab nationalism and anti-colonialism. In his reading of the Koran and the commentaries on it, Islam emerges as a religion that is inherently anti-Semitic and is hostile both to the religion of Judaism and to the people who follow it. He was one of the founding fathers of the ideological tradition known as radical Islam or Islamism. That tradition, which continues in our own time, has Sunni and Shia variations. Its original base was in the Sunni Muslim Brotherhood that inspired subsequent organizations such as Al Qaeda, Hamas, Hezbollah, and ISIS but there also is a Shia variation in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Despite their differences, they both share a conviction that, among other things, the message of Islam is inherently anti-Jewish and anti-democratic and that it provides justification for terrorism against Jews, "non-believers" and "infidels" such as Christians, as well as Muslims who take a different view of the Islam. It is "Islamist" because its key texts rest on selected readings of the Koran, the commentaries on it and the Hadith. It is, of course, only one interpretation of Islam but however plausible or distorted its interpretations of the texts of Islam, it could not exist without those texts.⁴

II. The Islamist Message of the Mufti

The first of Hussein's canonical texts, "Islam and the Jews," was delivered in Bludan, Syria at an Arab political conference held on September 8-9, 1937.⁵ It took place four years before he arrived in Nazi Berlin and the fact that it was not yet dependent on the Third Reich is important. The speech displays the Islamist message that he brought with him to Berlin and was the product of his very own beliefs. In 1938, a press controlled by the Nazis published a German language translation in Berlin. It became one of the founding texts of the Islamist tradition, one that defined the religion of Islam as a source of hatred of the Jews. By 1938, the Nazi political elite were able to read Hussein's message. An Arabic edition was made available in the Middle

East. As Israeli historian Zvi Elpeleg noted in his 1993 study of Husseini, following delivery of “Islam and the Jews,” the 400 delegates in Syria elected Husseini as honorary president of the pan-Arab organization gathered at the meeting.⁶

As Husseini was in hiding in order to avoid capture by the British, the text was read in his absence. He wrote:

The battle between Jews and Islam began when Mohammed fled from Mecca to Medina...In those days the Jewish methods were exactly the same as they are today. Then as now, slander was their weapon. They said Mohammed was a swindler...They tried to undermine his honor...They began to pose senseless and unanswerable questions to Mohammed...and then they tried to annihilate the Muslims. Just as the Jews were able to betray Mohammed, so they will betray the Muslims today...the verses of the Koran and the Hadith assert that the Jews were Islam’s most bitter enemy and moreover try to destroy it.⁷

While anti-Jewish passages are present in classic Islamic texts, Husseini’s distinctive contribution was to give them greater importance than had previously been the case and thereby to define Islam as a religion inherently hostile to the Jews. He engaged in what historians and literary scholars call the labor of selective tradition, that is, the selective interpretation of texts in light of contemporaneous concerns. That effort is not possible if the original texts lack relevant material. Husseini’s reading of the Koran drew legitimacy and authority from the ancient texts.

Between 1941 and 1945, Husseini became a major contributor to the Third Reich’s Arabic language propaganda aimed at North Africa and the Middle East. In the process, his speeches and essays of the 1930s and 1940s became canonical texts of the tradition of Islamism and were distributed in thousands of print editions and to hundreds of thousands of listeners through Arabic language radio broadcasts of the Nazi regime. In one of the successor trials in Nuremberg after World War II, Otto Dietrich, Nazi Germany’s Reich Press Chief was indicted and convicted for crimes against humanity due to his role in the Nazi regime’s anti-Semitic propaganda campaigns.⁸ Husseini’s key role in producing Arabic language anti-Semitic propaganda could have served as the basis of a similar indictment. In 1946-1947, the United States delivered 3,914 persons for trial to sixteen European countries, two-thirds to France and Poland.⁹ Husseini was not among them.

In June 1945, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) examined the willingness of Arab governments to bring Husseini and other Arab collaborators to trial. It concluded that “in the Near East the popular attitude toward the trial of war criminals is one of apathy. As a result of the general Near Eastern feeling of hostility to the imperialism of certain Allied powers, there is a tendency to sympathize with rather than condemn those who have aided the Axis.”¹⁰ Therefore, it was not likely that an Arab country would have put him on trial while Britain, France and Yugoslavia (where he played a role in organizing a Bosnian SS Division) declined to do so. Had such a trial taken place, the centrality of Husseini’s role in spreading anti-Jewish hatred and his open appeals for murdering Jews in the Middle East would have become better known to a global audience. His role in Nazi propaganda alone would have justified indictment in Nuremberg either as a crime against humanity or under the terms of the incitement clause of the 1948 UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide.¹¹

In June 1947 American intelligence officials reported that Husseini “promised to produce documents disproving his ‘alleged pro-Axis activities as claimed by the Jews and proving his

‘innocence,’ but he never did so. To neutralize any U.S. effort to pursue him as a war criminal, al-Hussaini lied by claiming he had ‘never spoken against America’ in his Berlin radio talks.”¹² Neither the United States nor Great Britain indicted him. The government of Yugoslavia which could have indicted him for his role in helping to form the Bosnian SS Division also declined to press charges. In the absence of a trial, Husseini and his apologists have had an easier time obscuring his record of collaboration with Nazi Germany or in excusing or misrepresenting it as due to desperate opportunism rather than ideological conviction. It was not until 2009 and the publication of *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World* that the extensive record of his most important collaboration with the Nazis became adequately known. Among much else, that record also confirms that beginning in the 1930s, Husseini’s efforts to make the Arab-Israeli clash also a Muslim-Jewish clash included a focus on supposed Zionist designs on the Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. If the same standards were applied to Husseini as to Dietrich, the former’s role in Nazi Germany should have led to an indictment and a trial for crimes against humanity and incitement to the newly named crime of genocide.

III. Husseini’s Unimportance in Holocaust Decision-Making

Contrary to suggestions made by Barry Rubin and Wolfgang Schwanitz in their recent work *Nazis, Islamists and the Making of the Modern Middle East*, Husseini did not play a role in Hitler’s decisions of 1941 to implement the Final Solution of the Jewish Question *in Europe*.¹³ To be sure, both in the 1930s when he was in Palestine and during his stay in Berlin from 1941 to 1945, Husseini was one of those Arab leaders who exerted a constant pressure on Berlin—and earlier on Britain—to prevent further Jewish emigration to Palestine.¹⁴ His views and actions on that issue had been a matter of public record and were known to the Nazi regime since its earliest days. However, in 1941, Husseini was not an official or a decision maker in the Nazi regime. Rather he was a refugee seeking political asylum, a man on the run who owed his life and freedom to the governments of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. Both enabled him to escape capture by the British in the Middle East. He was in no position to influence the decisions of his benefactors regarding the fate of European Jewry. His meetings with Hitler; the head of the SS, Heinrich Himmler; German Foreign Minister Joachim Von Ribbentrop and the SS specialist on Jewish affairs, Adolf Eichmann, concerned three matters: firstly, Nazi Germany’s efforts to win battles and spread Arabic language propaganda in North Africa and the Middle East during World War II; secondly, the Nazi regime’s very extensive and, remarkably successful efforts to gain the support of tens of thousands of Muslims fighting with the Wehrmacht on the Eastern Front in Europe; and thirdly, pleas to prevent any Jewish emigration from Europe to Palestine during the Holocaust.¹⁵

The view that Husseini exerted influence on Hitler’s decision-making rests partly on a misinterpretation of the meeting that the two had in Berlin on November 28, 1941. Hitler was pleased to meet him as Husseini’s hatred of the Jews and of Britain and his enthusiasm for Nazism were well known in Berlin. The official transcript of the meeting indicates that Hitler told the Mufti that when the German armies drove south from the Caucasus, “Germany’s objective would then be solely the destruction of the Jewish element residing in the Arab sphere under the protection of British power. In that hour, the Mufti would be the most authoritative spokesman for the Arab world. It would then be his task to set off the Arab operations, which he had secretly prepared.” Hitler also referred to “the total destruction of the Judeo-Communist empire in Europe,” a typically vague and sinister reference to his anti-Jewish policies in

Europe.¹⁶ At the meeting, Hitler's eagerness to enlist Husseini in plans to extend murderous policies to encompass the Jews of North Africa and the Middle East was apparent. Husseini's importance also lay in his contributions to this effort to extend the Final Solution beyond the shores of Europe. Such an extension was the logical consequence of the Nazis' belief that an *international* Jewish conspiracy existed and that therefore Jews all over the world were a threat to Germany. This policy was inherent in the radical anti-Semitism of the Nazi regime and needed no added stimulus from Husseini or other Arab collaborators in wartime Berlin.¹⁷ Yet it merged with Husseini's efforts to prevent the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. His collaboration was therefore *both* a matter of shared political interests *as well as* ideological agreement.

IV. The Decisions that led to the Holocaust and the State of the Scholarly Literature

Confirmation of Husseini's *unimportance* in Holocaust decision making appears in key historical studies of the subject. Even before the German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, Hitler had given orders to Heinrich Himmler who communicated them to his deputy Reinhard Heydrich. Heydrich, in turn, ordered leaders of the SS *Einsatzgruppen* to murder Jews in occupied Soviet territory. The mass murders began immediately after June 22, 1941. In mid-August 1941, having expanded the number of killers to include members of Order Police battalions, following Hitler's orders, Himmler extended the policy of mass murder to include Jewish children. As Jürgen Mattäus has written, by mid-August 1941 "genocide of the Jews in the territory of the occupied Soviet Union had become a reality. No further escalation in the process was conceivable. It implied the physical elimination of all Jews, irrespective of gender, age, occupation, or behavior, and led directly to the destruction of entire communities and the 'de-Jewification' of vast areas. The question [for Nazi officials] was no longer why the Jews should be killed, but why they should *not* be killed."¹⁸ From June to December 1941, the SS *Einsatzgruppen* and battalions of the Order Police murdered approximately 700,000 Jews on the Eastern Front. Most of them were shot but some were gassed in newly constructed mobile gas vans. Six months before Hitler met Husseini in Berlin his policy toward the Jews living in the Soviet Union had shifted from a policy of persecution adopted since 1933 to one of extermination.¹⁹

The question of when Hitler decided to exterminate all of the Jews in Europe is the subject of impressive scholarship. In his 1991 study, *Architect of Genocide: Himmler and the Final Solution*, historian Richard Breitman wrote that military victories in Western Europe in 1940 gave Hitler and Himmler "the confidence to set in motion a vast killing operation during the forthcoming campaign in the Soviet Union" planned for spring 1941. Breitman summarized his findings as follows:

By March 1941 the Final Solution was just a matter of time—and timing. The date is months earlier than the juncture most specialists have selected, but the evidence is compelling. Hitler had rejected other, lesser plans (Madagascar, sterilization). He had already approved a liquidation plan for Jews in the Reich and Bohemia-Moravia (at the minimum). Heydrich had already started negotiations with the army regarding the *Einsatzgruppen* in the Soviet Union, and the SS Reich Security Main Office had sent 'Jewish specialists' to other European countries to prepare for deportations. Emigration of Polish Jews had been banned months earlier, and closed ghettos and work camps had

created the preconditions for easy disposal of Jews in Poland. Eichmann spoke of the ‘final evacuation’ of Jews to Poland at a time when Hitler was promising to remove all Jews from Poland. A month later Himmler referred to a new task he had for [Otto] Globocnik. Extermination in Poland was purely a technical problem. So the argument does not rest on Hitler’s rhetoric alone. None of these sources spells out everything; none is a perfect contemporary blueprint. But they are all independent sources and, taken together, form a coherent picture of far-reaching plans and fundamental decisions made during the preparations for the campaign against the U.S.S.R. As Hitler told Hans Frank in December 1940: ‘After the victory, bind the helm faster.’ Plans, of course, are still only plans until they are implemented, but it would have taken a political or military earthquake to have derailed the process.²⁰

According to Breitman, that earthquake did not happen. In his view, the mass murder of the Jews of the Soviet Union in the six months before Hitler met with Husseini was only the first phase of what was already intended to be a policy for all of Europe.

Historians who have focused attention on Hitler’s ideological motivations, above all his radical anti-Semitism and the paranoid vision of an international Jewish conspiracy regard such an “early” decision as a plausible conclusion.²¹ As both his public and private statements of summer and fall 1941 indicate, the application of his anti-Semitic interpretation of the unfolding events of World War II was central to Hitler’s decision-making regarding the Holocaust. Hitler famously had first made his “prophecy” in a speech in the Reichstag on January 30, 1939, that if “international Jewry inside and outside Europe should succeed in plunging the nations once more into a world war, the result will not be the Bolshevization of the earth and thereby the victory of Jewry, but the annihilation of the Jewish race in Europe.” According to Hitler, Goebbels and other Nazi leaders, the events of summer 1941 appeared to confirm the truth of this conspiracy theory.²² In their speeches and in the regime’s propaganda, the Nazi leaders interpreted the emergence of the alliance between Britain and the Soviet Union following the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, the declaration by Roosevelt and Churchill of the Atlantic Charter in August and Roosevelt’s decisions to send Lend-Lease aid to Britain across the Atlantic as evidence of the existence of a Jewish dominated world conspiracy. The beginnings of the anti-Hitler coalition confirmed for Hitler the truth of his radical anti-Semitism as a method of interpreting these aspects of world politics in summer and fall of 1941. As “international Jewry” appeared intent on waging what Hitler called a war of extermination against Germany, he would “exterminate the Jewish race” in Europe in retaliation.²³ Goebbels reported that in a conversation on August 19, 1941, Hitler said that his prophecy about the Jews and the war was “coming to pass in these weeks and months with an almost eerily graceful certainty.”²⁴ Hitler’s interpretation of events owed nothing to suggestions from anyone outside the highest levels of the Nazi dictatorship. It was embedded in ideas which he had expressed since 1919.

Christopher Browning, who since the 1980s has taken a leading role writing the history of the decisions that led to the Holocaust, argues for a “later” date for the decision than Breitman proposed. He has done so in a series of works culminating in 2004 in *The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939-March 1942* published by Yad Vashem and the University of Nebraska Press.²⁵ Browning documents the radicalization of policy to mass murder conducted by the *Einsatzgruppen* and other German killing units on Soviet territory that took place from mid-July to mid-August in 1941. During those months, Hitler and the German military leadership believed that the war against the Soviet Union would be won by the fall of 1941. Browning concludes that “victory euphoria in mid-July,” that is, Hitler’s belief that Nazi Germany was soon going to win the war against the Soviet Union, “marked not only the conclusion of the decision-making process leading to the mass murder of Soviet Jewry but also the point at which Hitler inaugurated the decision-making process that led

to the extension of the Final Solution to European Jewry.”²⁶ As is well known, on July 31, Heydrich obtained Herman Göring’s signature on an order that authorized him to “make all necessary preparations” for a “total solution of the Jewish question” in European territories under German influence and to submit a “comprehensive draft” of a plan for a “Final Solution to the Jewish Question.”²⁷

Browning concludes that between August and October 1941 the Nazis invented the extermination camp, the infamous *Vernichtungslager*, as the best means of perpetrating mass murder. The extermination camp had several advantages over mass shootings. Firstly, it reduced the psychological burden on the killers, a problem that had emerged in the *Einsatzgruppen* and Police Battalion units that summer as some of the killers broke down under the strain of such massive repeated killing of civilians. Secondly, camps also preserved the secrecy of the crimes. Shooting scenes on the Eastern Front had become much too public. Thirdly, it was in such obscure places hidden as much as possible from public view, that construction of gas chambers and industrial strength crematoria could take place. Browning dates the Nazi invention of the extermination camp as having taken place from mid-summer to mid-fall 1941.

Browning reports that in August 1941, SS *Einsatzgruppen* leaders on the Russian front met with experts from the euthanasia program who possessed experience in using gas to murder the physically handicapped and mental patients in the euthanasia program. Walter Rauff, a high ranking official of the SS Reich Security Main Office, oversaw development of mobile gas vans which used carbon monoxide coming from the exhaust of hermetically sealed trucks to murder victims locked inside. In the first half of September, Rudolf Höss, the Commandant of Auschwitz, tested Zyklon B to murder Russian prisoners of war in sealed basement cells of the Auschwitz concentration camp. On October 1, German planning began for construction of a second large camp at Birkenau. In late October, the engineer Kurt Prüfer of Topf and Sons designed and contracted for the new, larger crematoria that would be necessary for the expected expansion of the camp. In mid-October, Himmler approved construction of what became the extermination camp in Belzec. That same month construction began there as well as for a similar extermination camp in Chelmno. Browning writes that “inevitably, as the invention of the extermination camp passed from conception and experimentation to preparation, other people within the Nazi regime began to receive unmistakable signals from their colleagues in the SS that Nazi Jewish policy had passed a fateful divide. Mass murder and not expulsion awaited the European Jews.” On October 23, 1941, the Nazi regime officially ended all Jewish emigration from Europe.²⁸ In mid-September 1941, Hitler approved deportations of Jews from Germany and Austria to German occupied territories in Poland. On October 15, the first rail transport of Jews from Vienna for the Lodz ghetto took place, followed by deportations from Prague, Luxembourg and Berlin. By November 5, twenty more transports carried Jews from Germany and Austria to the East.²⁹

Browning acknowledges that in the months after October, “many important decisions were yet to be taken concerning how, when, where, at what rate, and with what exceptions the task of murdering the European Jews was to be accomplished.” Yet by the end of October at the latest, “the Nazi regime had crossed the key watershed.”³⁰ By October 1941 at the latest, Hitler had made the fundamental decisions to shift from deportation and murders on the Eastern Front to implementation of a plan to exterminate the Jews of Europe. The decisions had been communicated first to Himmler, then to Heydrich in the Reich Security Main Office and from there to those officials whose task was to design and build the extermination camps and to develop the necessary methods. Whether we opt for the “early” decision suggested by Breitman

or the “late” decision elaborated by Browning, both historians date the shift from deportation to extermination from between eight months to one month before Hitler met the Grand Mufti when the latter arrived in Berlin in November. Neither Husseini’s name nor that of any of his associates appears in these historical reconstructions.

The historian Christian Gerlach has argued that it was not until the week of December 7-14, that Hitler took the decision to exterminate the Jews of Europe.³¹ He asserts that though deportations of Jews from Germany and Austria began in November, the policy of murdering them all had not yet been implemented. He recalls Hitler’s above-mentioned “prophecy” speech of January 30, 1939. Following Hitler’s declaration of war against the United States in the Reichstag on December 11, 1941, the European war became a world war. “Thus the situation Hitler had envisioned in 1939 had come about. With complete logical consistency—consistent within the framework of his anti-Semitic world view—Hitler then proclaimed his decision to exterminate all Jews in Europe.”³² On December 12, 1941, Hitler spoke to a meeting of Nazi Party *Reichsleiter* and *Gauleiter* in Berlin. His speech, which was summed up by Goebbels in his diary entry, expressed the connection between the war which “the Jews” had allegedly launched against Germany and his decision to exterminate the Jews of Europe.

In regard to the Jewish question the Führer is determined to wipe the slate clean. He prophesied to the Jews that if they once more brought about a world war, they would be annihilated. These were not mere words. The world war is here, the extermination of the Jews must be its necessary consequence. This matter has to be envisaged without any sentimentality. We are not here to have any compassion for the Jew, but to have compassion for our own German people. As the German people has once again sacrificed some 160,000 dead in the eastern campaign, those responsible for this bloody conflict will have to pay for it with their lives.³³

For the remainder of World War II and the Holocaust, this connection between what Nazis propagandists called “the Jewish enemy” and Hitler’s decision to “exterminate” and “annihilate” the “Jewish race” in Europe remained a constantly repeated and core theme of their public pronouncements.³⁴ Yet Gerlach, advocate of the latest decision point among historians of the subject, focuses his attention on the same Nazi leaders as did Breitman, Browning, Friedlander and others, namely on Hitler and the highest ranking officials of the SS Reich Security Main Office, to be sure, with encouragement from Goebbels. The name of Haj Amin al-Husseini does not come up at all in his account simply because the Mufti was not in the chain of decision-making of the German government.

Thus, even if, as Gerlach argues, Hitler’s ultimate decision to exterminate the Jews of Europe took place in December 1941 rather than, as Breitman argues, in the spring or, as Browning claims, from August to October, none of them attribute any causal importance at all to the Mufti and what he said to Hitler when they met in Berlin on November 28, 1941. The fundamental point on which all of these historians agree is that Hitler took the key decisions regarding the Holocaust and communicated them to a small but expanding concentric circle of officials in Himmler’s SS Reich Security Main Office. At no point was Haj Amin al-Husseini an important figure in the decision-making process. Hitler decided to murder the Jews of Europe as the logical outcome of his fanatical belief that an international Jewish conspiracy was waging a war of extermination against Germany. Extremists in Hitler’s inner circle such as Goebbels and Himmler shared his views. Yet Hitler himself was one of the extremists and needed no

encouragement from others to transform his long expressed hatred of the Jews into a policy to murder them all. Though Haj Amin al-Husseini could tell Hitler and other leading officials of the Nazi regime that he approved their policy toward the Jews, he was in no position to exercise influence over Hitler's decision-making. There is no evidence that at any time he was a part of the circles of decision makers and that he did so. Hitler took decisions for reasons of his own, in a chronology that resulted from events that he had set in motion. As the leading historians of Holocaust decision-making have demonstrated, whether Hitler decided to kill the Jews in spring, summer/fall or early winter of 1941, he did not need Husseini to push him from a policy of deportation to extermination of the Jews, nor was his meeting with Husseini a factor in his decisions. It was inherent in his most deeply felt beliefs and hatreds. In short, had the British managed to capture Husseini *en route* from Teheran and he never arrived in wartime Berlin, his absence would have had no appreciable impact at all on the history of the Holocaust in Europe.

V. The Rubin-Schwanitz Interpretation

Unfortunately, in their study, *Nazis, Islamists and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (2014), Barry Rubin and Wolfgang Schwanitz ignore the previous scholarship on Holocaust decision-making as well as the existing scholarship on Husseini's collaboration with the Nazis. Partly as a result, they exaggerate the Mufti's impact on Nazi policy.³⁵ They turn a series of coincidental correlations in time into causal chains. For example, they wrote, with regard to a statement by Hitler of March 11, 1941 to block Jewish emigration from Europe, that "by closing this escape route [to Palestine] for the Jews and discouraging any alternative strategy, al-Husaini helped make the 'Final Solution' inevitable."³⁶ Yet small amounts of emigration from Europe continued into late summer 1941. Since the early days of the Nazi regime in 1933, Husseini had urged Nazi Germany to halt Jewish emigration to Palestine. Yet other factors came into play, above all Hitler's own ideological convictions. After September 1939, however, the realities of wartime and British naval power made mass deportation of Europe's Jews a completely unrealistic and undesirable "solution" for the Nazis. As noted above, the genocide of Jews all over the world, a global Holocaust of the Jews, was the logical conclusion to be drawn from Hitler's vision of an *international* Jewish conspiracy. It was not an idea planted in Hitler's head by Husseini. Nevertheless, Schwanitz and Rubin wrote that after Hitler promised on March 11 [1941] to stop Jewish emigration, "Germany's expulsion of the Jews was impossible and only mass murder remained."³⁷ Yet there is no logical reason to assume, especially before the invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, that because the Jews could not be deported from Europe, "only mass murder remained." A continuation of the previous policy of persecution rather than extermination was a logical possibility. Yet even if Breitman is correct and an "early" decision had already been taken, there is no evidence that it was done because of Husseini's influence or suggestions. It is important to remember that in June 1941, he was not the head of state but a refugee on the run and was not even in Germany but hiding from the British on his way from Tehran to Italy. The key point is that it was Hitler, not Husseini, who had the decision-making power, who was driving policy forward and was deciding what was and was not possible.

The Rubin and Schwanitz conflation of an accident of timing with causal significance appears again in their discussion of Husseini's meeting with Hitler on November 28, 1941. They write that on November 29, 1941, Hitler "ordered Heydrich to organize a conference within ten days to prepare the 'final solution of the Jewish question.'" Thus Hitler made his key decision to

begin the genocide with al-Husaini's anti-Jewish rhetoric and insistence on wiping out the Jews fresh in his ears."³⁸ Certainly, Hitler was pleased to learn that in Husseini he had a supporter and collaborator among the Arabs. Yet the fact that the day following their meeting of November 28 Hitler ordered Heydrich to send invitations to what became the Wannsee Conference was not evidence that Husseini had any impact at all on his decisions. Rather the far more plausible interpretation of the aftermath of the November 28 meeting is that Hitler, having already decided to murder Europe's Jews, wanted to inform Husseini of his desire to extend the policy to North Africa and the Middle East should the war in Europe proceed according to his hopes and plans. As the work of both Breitman and Browning suggest, the decision to convene the various heads of German governmental Ministries to inform them of the decision regarding the Final Solution would have been in the works well before November 28, 1941.

VI. The Mufti's Importance as a Regional Leader and Axis Propagandist

As the scholarship on Husseini has established, and as Schwanitz and Rubin remind us, the Mufti's primary contacts in Berlin were with officials in the German Foreign Ministry including Foreign Minister Von Ribbentrop, the Ministry's Foreign Propaganda Office as well as with Heinrich Himmler and officials in the SS Reich Security Main Office.³⁹ Yet, as the major speeches he gave in 1942 and 1943 indicate, the Mufti's importance to the Third Reich in these years lay primarily in his contribution to Nazi propaganda policy toward North Africa and the Middle East, the region he cared and knew most about. *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World* draws upon German archives and on the files of the United States Department of State and US intelligence agencies to present the most extensive documentation available about the vast Arabic language propaganda radio broadcasts and printed leaflets that the Nazi regime sent to the Arab societies during World War II. Husseini played a central role in those broadcasts both through his occasional broadcasts on the radio himself and through his influence on the texts of other broadcasts. At that time, he became internationally famous for his incitement on the radio to "kill the Jews" in the summer of 1942 as Rommel's Afrika Korps threatened to overwhelm the British at El Alamein, occupy Egypt and capture the Jews of pre-state Palestine and again, in 1944. On March 1, 1944, in response to support in the United States Congress for a Jewish homeland in Palestine, Husseini made the following statement on a Berlin in Arabic radio broadcast.

The wicked American intentions toward the Arabs are now clearer, and there remains no doubt that they are endeavoring to establish a Jewish empire in the Arab world. More than 400,000,000 Arabs oppose this criminal American involvement...Arabs! *Rise as one and fight for your sacred rights. Kill the Jews wherever you find them. This pleases God, history and religion. This serves your honor, God is with you.*"(emphasis in original)⁴⁰

With statements such as these, Husseini joined Goebbels as one of the first political actors to use means of mass electronic communications to support genocide. Article III, Clause D of the United Nations 1948 "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide" stated that "direct and public incitement to commit genocide" was included as part of the crime that would be subject to indictment. Under those terms, Husseini's appeals to "kill the Jews" should have led to his indictment for the crime of genocide. As German historians Klaus Michael Mallmann and Martin Cüppers have documented in *Nazi Palestine: Plans for the Extermination*

of the Jews of Palestine, had the Germans won the Battle of El Alamein, an SS *Einsatzgruppe* was prepared to come to Egypt to carry out mass murders with techniques that had been perfected on the Eastern Front in Europe.⁴¹ Husseini and his unnamed colleagues working on Nazi Germany's Arabic broadcasts in the summer of 1942 were cheering the Germans on from Berlin and urging Arabs to support the Axis forces as liberators from Britain protectors and against the Jews.

In 2002, in the aftermath of the attacks of September 11, 2001 carried out by an Al Qaeda cell based in Hamburg, German political scientist Mathias Kuentzel published *Djihad und Judenhaß: Über den neuen antijüdischen Krieg*. In 2007 it appeared in English under the title *Jihad and Jew-Hatred: Nazism, Islamism and the Roots of 9/11*.⁴² Küntzel draws upon German archives to reveal the importance of Nazi Germany's Arabic short wave radio broadcasts to North Africa and the Middle East. In light of that finding, I decided to examine the files of the American Embassy in wartime Cairo to find possible further evidence about what the Nazis were saying to Arab audiences. It was the renewed interest in the link between radical Islam and terror in the aftermath of 9/11 that led to revival of scholarly examination of Nazi Germany's efforts to influence Arab opinion during World War II and the Holocaust. That is the reason why scholars of modern German history gained access to some of the most important documents of the political career of Haj Amin-al Husseini only in 2007.

Until the publication of *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World* in 2009, evidence of Husseini's most important activity in Nazi Berlin remained fragmentary and incomplete. That work draws partly on several thousand pages of English translations of Nazi Germany's Arabic language broadcasts. From 1941 to 1944 Alexander Kirk, the Ambassador of the United States in Cairo, sent weekly reports about "Axis Broadcasts in Arabic" to Secretary of State Cordell Hull in Washington. In 1944 and 1945, Kirk's successor Pinckney Tuck continued to do so. It is regrettable that these translations of then famous public broadcasts remained classified until 1977. The transcripts of the "Axis Broadcast in Arabic" document the depth and passion that Husseini and his fellow collaborating Arab exiles brought to Nazi Germany's Arabic language propaganda. These documents are inconvenient evidence for those who view the Arab anti-Zionist campaigns since the 1930s primarily as expressions of a global, *leftist* anti-colonial campaign and who wish to deny or obscure elements of continuity and cultural affinity with the Nazi hatreds that they reveal. The texts of "Axis Broadcasts in Arabic" expose Husseini along with unnamed Arabic-speaking broadcasters as profoundly reactionary figures. In the early years of the Cold War, as the attention of the United States and Western Europe turned toward the containment of Communism and insuring regular supplies of oil from the Arab states, Husseini and other Arabs who collaborated with the Nazis were able to avoid punishment for their role in inciting others to kill Jews during World War II either under the terms of the Nuremberg trials or the UN Genocide Convention.

As British historian David Motadel recently has shown in his important work *Islam and Nazi Germany's War*, Husseini and other Muslim clerics did play an important role in German policy in Europe but not by exerting an influence on Holocaust decision-making. Instead his primary focus in Europe was to recruit imams who preached to the tens of thousands of Muslims who fought along with the Wehrmacht, especially on the Eastern Front against the Red Army. He was one of a number of Muslim leaders who contributed to what Motadel calls "the Third Reich's pro-Islamic stance" and the related efforts of the German military and the SS to mobilize Muslims on the Eastern Front in the war against the Soviet Union and the Jews.⁴³ Motadel writes that the previous

biographical research on the mufti tends to overestimate his influence in Berlin. In the end, his impact was strictly limited. His plan to gain concrete concessions and to secure guarantees for Arab and Palestinian independence—his main concern—failed. His proposals were successful only insofar as they coincided with German interests. The most dramatic example was his intervention to hinder the emigration of Jews from Germany's southeastern European satellite states to Palestine. Instead of putting the mufti at the center of the narrative, it seems more reasonable to see him as part of a more general German policy directed toward the Islamic world. German officials used him as a propaganda figure when circumstances necessitated. He received a monthly salary of no less than 90,000 *Reichmarks* and was provided with several residences for himself and his entourage.⁴⁴

The enormous size of Husseini's monthly salary indicates the importance that the Nazi regime attached to him and his entourage. 90,000 *Reichmarks a month* was a fortune at the time. In his study of the Nazi economy, Adam Tooze writes that in 1936 "62 percent of all German taxpayers reported annual incomes of less than 1,500 *Reichmarks*." Another 21 per cent reported annual incomes of between 1,500 and 2,400 *Reichmarks*. "Only 17 percent of all taxpayers recorded incomes of more than 2,400 *Reichmarks*, or 50 *Reichmarks* per week."⁴⁵ A monthly salary of 90,000 *Reichmarks* was paid only to the very wealthiest persons in the German economy. It was designed to support both Husseini's luxurious life-style as well as his considerable political entourage. While Husseini's *influence* on Nazi decision-making was limited, his *importance* to the Nazi regime was considerable.

On December 18, 1942, the German Foreign Office chose Husseini to deliver the main address at a ceremony to inaugurate the opening of the Islamic Central Institute in the center of Berlin. It had been inactive for several years and was reopened with support from and control by the German Foreign Office. Husseini's speech was approved by Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop. It echoed the themes he had expressed in Bludan, combined with themes of Nazi propaganda. It was broadcast both in German (in German-speaking Europe) and in Arabic across North Africa and the Middle East. The German press also gave it prominent coverage.⁴⁶ He repeated the core theme of Nazi propaganda during World War II and the Holocaust, namely that the Jews were responsible for starting World War II.⁴⁷ "This war, which has been unleashed by world Judaism, offers Muslims the best opportunity to free themselves from persecution and oppression, if they capitalize on this opportunity properly. Such an opportunity will not arise again for a very long time." As was the case in his address in Syria in 1937, he drew heavily on his interpretation of the religion of Islam to fan hatred of the Jews, a "labor of selected tradition," as follows:

Among the most bitter enemies of the Muslims, who from ancient times have shown them enmity and met them everywhere constantly with perfidy and cunning, are the Jews and their accomplices... The holy Qur'an and the life story of the Prophet are full of evidence of Jewish lack of character and their malicious, mendacious and treacherous behavior, which completely suffices to warn Muslims of their ever-constant, severe threat and enmity until the end of all days. And as the Jews were in the lifetime of the great Prophet, so they have remained throughout all ages, conniving and full of hatred toward the Muslim, wherever an opportunity offered itself to them.⁴⁸

Husseini added denunciations of Britain and the United States for invading Muslim lands in North Africa and the Bolsheviks for persecuting Muslims. This key text is yet another example not of Nazism's influence on Husseini but of the commonality of interests and ideology that brought them together despite their very different cultural starting points. Ribbentrop approved the text because Husseini's own message about the Jews coincided with that of the Nazi regime.

On November 5, 1943, again speaking at the Islamic Central Institute in Berlin, Husseini delivered another version of the Bludan speech. He did so on the occasion of "Balfour Day," marked to denounce the Balfour Declaration. The Nazis again distributed the speech in German and broadcast it on the radio in German in Germany and in Arabic abroad. The Americans in the US Embassy in Cairo recorded it.⁴⁹ His Balfour Day speech in Berlin became another of the canonical texts of the Islamist tradition but again to a far larger German and global audience than the 400 listeners in Bludan, Syria.

The Mufti again expresses his hatred of the Jews and the British for helping the Zionists. The Jews, he said, had tormented the world for ages, and have been the enemy of the Arabs and of Islam since its emergence. "They lived like a sponge among peoples, sucked their blood, seized their property, undermined their morals yet still demand the rights of local inhabitants. All of this brought the hostility of the world down on them and nourished the Jews' hatred against all peoples that had been burning for two thousand years." He states that "God's anger and the curse on the Jews mentioned in the Holy Koran" was due to the Jews' supposed awful characteristics. The Jews had "tormented the world for ages [,] have been the enemy of the Arabs and of Islam since its emergence. The Holy Koran expressed this old enmity in the following words: 'You will find that those who are most hostile to the believers are the Jews.' They tried to poison the great and noble prophets. They resisted them, were hostile to them, and intrigued against them. This was the case for 1,300 years. For all that time, they have not stopped spinning intrigues against the Arabs and Muslims."⁵⁰

As in the Bludan text, the Mufti asserted that the actions of contemporary Jews and Zionists in the Twentieth Century reflect the supposed long-standing Jewish hatred of Muslims. The Jews were "the driving forces of the destruction of the regime of the Islamic Caliphate" in the Middle East. They wanted to seize Islamic holy sites, including the Al Aqsa Mosque and "to build a temple on its ruins." He claimed that many "official documents and statements of responsible Jewish leaders," none of whom he cited, confirmed such plans.⁵¹

Though a Jewish state in Palestine would be a great danger for all of humanity, it would be even more dangerous and important for Arabs and Muslims. Such a state would be a barrier between the Arab-Islamic countries in Asia and those of Africa. It is a bloody stab in the heart of the Arab fatherland! The establishment of a Jewish commonwealth in Palestine would subject the Arab countries and all the countries of the Middle East to the danger of Jewish economic exploitation and to the Jewish world conspiracy.⁵²

Husseini then refers again to "secret Zionist documents" which he does not cite.

They had proven that the Kingdom of Israel would encompass the space between the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf. In addition to Palestine [such a kingdom would include] Lebanon, Syria, Transjordan, Iraq, a part of the Saudi Arabian Kingdom, and a part of the Egyptian Kingdom. The Jews place the holy sites of the Hadj in greatest

danger and rob the Arab and Islam of the fruits of their land, which they have defended for thirteen centuries with the blood of their martyrs.⁵³

Husseini claimed that the establishment of a Jewish state would endanger not only the Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem but also the holy sites of Hadj in Saudi Arabia. In so doing, as he had in Bludan in 1937, Husseini connects the secular, political conflict over territory to a theological clash between Islam and the Jews. He links the conflict between Jews and Arabs in Mandatory Palestine to a religious conflict between the a million or so Jews and hundreds of millions of Muslims around the world. He and his fellow exiles informed Arab listeners that a victory for the Allies was a victory for the Jews and defeat for the Arabs. Some broadcasts went so far as to blame Zionism as the cause of World War II.⁵⁴ They offer clear evidence of the connection between Husseini's understanding of Islam to his uncompromising enmity to Zionism and the State of Israel.

VII. The Mufti's Long-Lasting Legacy

From that time to the present, Islamists have asserted that the religion of Islam is an inherently anti-Jewish religion and that this hatred of Judaism and the Jews has everything to do with the classic texts of the Koran and the Hadith.⁵⁵ As we have seen, in light of the Bludan text, Husseini brought these convictions with him to Berlin in 1941. These beliefs and an uncompromising opposition both to the Allied coalition as well as to Zionism constitute part of the foundation for his collaboration with Hitler. As the archives of the Nazi regime made very clear, not only was Hitler but also officials in the German Foreign Office, the Propaganda Ministry, the SS officials in the Reich Security Main Office and the German military intelligence officers fighting in North Africa pleased to learn that there was an indigenous form of Islamic, that is, a non-Christian, non-European tradition of hatred of the Jews with apparent theological foundations. For Husseini and the Islamists of the 1930s and 1940s, the secular political battle against Zionism was inseparable from the religious battle against the Jews. Starting from very different cultural and ideological first premises, anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism converged at the same time in Bludan, Syria and in Nazi Berlin. Hitler, Himmler and others in the Nazi regime displayed an admiration for what they understood Islam to be, namely a warrior religion in contrast to pacifist currents in Christianity and one that shared their animus against their Jews.⁵⁶

Following World War II, Husseini received a hero's welcome in Egypt and Palestine. In 1946, Hassan al-Banna, founder of the Muslim Brotherhood (1906-1949) called Husseini a "hero who challenged an empire and fought Zionism with the help of Hitler and Germany. Germany and Hitler are gone, but Amin Al-Husseini will continue the struggle."⁵⁷ It was Husseini's experience fighting the British and his collaboration with Nazism that al-Banna and his fellow members of the Muslim Brotherhood found so inspiring. So did the members of the Arab Higher Committee and the Palestine People's Party which chose Husseini as their leader in 1945.⁵⁸ Following the Arab-Palestinian defeat of 1948, Husseini's political fortunes declined, yet he remained a revered figure in parts of Arab and Palestinian societies. The evidence of his collaboration with the Nazis was either forgotten, ignored or excused as a form of justified anti-colonialism in an alliance of convenience, not shared ideological passion, against a common enemy.

To repeat, the historical importance of Haj Amin al-Husseini did not consist in his contribution to the decision to carry out the Holocaust in Europe. Rather it lay in his

collaboration with Nazi Germany's unsuccessful effort to win the war in North Africa and the Middle East and to extend the Holocaust to the Jews of the region. By doing so, he created his most important and longest lasting legacy. It was both by creating some of the canonical texts of the Islamist tradition and in combining elements of European and Islamist Jew-hatred. He thus founded a tradition of absolute and uncompromising rejection of Zionism and later, of the State of Israel. The impact of Husseini the ideologue is as important and as destructive as Husseini the political figure. His own texts before and during the crucial years of exile in Nazi Berlin reveal the real Husseini, the unifier of an extremist but influential interpretation of Islam and its founding texts with the modern secular language of anti-imperialism and anti-Zionism. His target, first and foremost, was the Jews of North Africa and the Middle East, and subsequently, the State of Israel. They were the objects of his greatest hatred and of his considerable political energy. Husseini played a vital role in spreading the falsehood that a Jewish state would be determined somehow to threaten the Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.

Though Haj Amin al-Husseini was not a decision maker in wartime Berlin, he certainly was in the post-war Middle East. In this regard, Rubin and Schwanitz make a convincing case about his destructive impact on events up to and including the war of 1948. They refer to the impact of Husseini's charisma, determination to avoid any concessions to the Zionists, ability to incite his followers to violence "as well as internal pressures from Islamist and nationalist radicals who incited flammable public opinion." While acknowledging pressure from other groups that made war in 1948 seem inevitable, the war of 1948 and the Arab-Israeli conflict may not have taken place "without al-Husaini and his allies...No one individual made this outcome more likely than him...Without al-Husaini's presence as the Palestinian Arabs' and [as] a transnational Islamist leader there might have been other options. And al-Husaini was well funded by money and well-armed with rifles that had been provided by the Nazis...Once al-Husaini was allowed to reestablish himself as unchallengeable leader of the Palestine Arabs, this ensured that no compromise such as Partition or the "two-state solution" would be considered, while making certain that Arab leaders would be intimidated and driven to war."⁵⁹ We cannot know how events would have transpired if Husseini had been absent in the crucial years before and during the 1948 war. He was, after all, one of a number of Arab leaders who decided on war rather than partition and compromise in 1948. We do know that he was an emphatic opponent of compromise and that he had the means, the arms and the men with which to exert his will in post-war Palestine. The logical outcome of the views he expressed before during and after his collaboration with Nazi Germany, from the Bludan speech of 1937 to the speeches from the Islamic Central Institute in Berlin and the post-war calls for war against the Zionists, was a determination to expel all or most of the Jews living in Mandatory Palestine. This was a policy that could be achieved only by a war to prevent the establishment of a Jewish state.⁶⁰

One precondition for a peaceful end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict lies in an Arab and Palestinian rejection of the reactionary Islamist political theology that Husseini did so much to create. A frank and well-grounded coming to terms with the history of his collaboration with Nazi Germany should be part of that reckoning. In the fall of 2015, Palestinian leaders repeated the falsehood that Israel was threatening the Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. Those assertions in their own right are evidence of the continuing impact on elements of Palestinian and Arab political culture of the no longer under-examined history of the origins, nature and after-effects of Haj Amin el-Husseini's collaboration with Nazi Germany.

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¹ “Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s Speech at the 37th Zionist Congress,” (October 21, 2015) <http://www.pmo.gov.il/English/MediaCenter/Speeches/Pages/speechcongress201015.aspx>. Netanyahu’s comments about Hussein’s false assertions regarding Zionist and then Israeli plans to attack or destroy the Al Aqsa Mosque rest on sound evidence. It is regrettable that his comments on that theme were overshadowed by his statements about Hussein’s role in Europe.

² On Hussein, see: Zvi Elpeleg, *The Grand Mufti: Haj Amin al-Hussaini, Founder of the Palestinian National Movement*, trans. David Harvey (London: Frank Cass, 1993); Klaus Gensicke, *The Mufti of Jerusalem and the Nazis: The Berlin Years* (London: Vallentine, 2011); Jeffrey Herf, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); David Motadel, *Islam and Nazi Germany’s War* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2014); Barry Rubin and Wolfgang G. Schwanitz, *Nazis, Islamists and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014). On Hussein’s role during the war of 1948, see: Benny Morris, *1948: A History of the First Arab-Israeli War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); and Efraim Karsh, *Palestine Betrayed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

³ Herf, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World*, 16.

⁴ On the distinction between Islamism and Islam, see: Bassam Tibi, *Islamism and Islam* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).

⁵ The German political scientist, Matthias Küntzel recently has drawn renewed attention to “Islam and the Jews.” For the German edition, see: Haj Amin El-Husseini, “Islam-Judentum: Aufruf des Grossmufti an die islamische Welt im Jahre 1937,” in: *Mohamed Sabry, Islam, Judentum-Bolschewismus* (Berlin: Junker and Dunnhaupt, 1938), 22-32; and Matthias Kuentzel, “Das Erbe des Mufti,” in: *Tribune: Zeitschrift zum Verständnis des Judentums*, 46, no. 184 (December 2007), 151-58; also at <http://www.matthiaskuentzel.de/contents/das-erbe-des-mufti>. On Hussein and the Bludan conference, see also: Zvi Elpeleg, *The Grand Mufti: Haj Amin al-Hussaini, Founder of the Palestinian National Movement*, trans. David Harvey, ed. Shmuel Himelstein (London: Frank Cass, 1993), 47-48.

⁶ Zvi Elpeleg, *The Grand Mufti: Haj Amin al-Hussaini, Founder of the Palestinian National Movement*.

⁷ Haj Amin al-Husseini, “Islam-Judentum,” 23-24,32.

⁸ On the postwar trial of the Reich Press Chief, Otto Dietrich, see: Jeffrey Herf, *The Jewish Enemy: Nazi Propaganda during World War II and the Holocaust* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006), 272-73.

⁹ Jeffrey Herf, *Divided Memory: The Nazi Past in the Two Germanys* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 272.

¹⁰ “The Near East and the War Crimes Problem,” in: Herf, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World*, 233-38.

¹¹ For the text of the genocide convention see:

<https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%2078/volume-78-I-1021-English.pdf>. See also Klaus Michael Mallmann and Martin Cüppers, *Nazi Palestine: Plans for the Extermination of the Jews of Palestine* (New York: Enigma Books, 2010).

¹² Rubin and Schwanitz, *Nazis, Islamists and the Making of the Modern Middle East*, op. cit., 194.

¹³ On Rubin and Schwanitz, see the review by Johannes Houwink Ten Cate in the *Jerusalem Political Studies Review* (Fall 2013), vol. 25, no. 3-4, <http://jcpa.org/article/book-reviews-jpsr-fall-2013/#br2>.

- ¹⁴ See: Herf, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World*, 28-30. See also: Francis Nicosia, *Zionism and Anti-Semitism in Nazi Germany* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008); and Lukasz Hirszowicz, *The Third Reich and the Arab East* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966).
- ¹⁵ See the valuable discussion in: Motadel, *Islam and Nazi Germany's War*, 133-94, 230-322.
- ¹⁶ On the meeting, see: Herf, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World*, 74-78. For the English language translation, see: "No. 515, Memorandum by an official of the Foreign Ministry's Secretariat, Record of the Conversation between the Führer and the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem on November 28, 1941, in Presence of Reich Foreign Minister and Minister Grobba in Berlin," Berlin (November 30, 1941), *Documents on German Foreign Policy, Series D (1937-1945)*, vol. 13, (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1956-1964), 881-85.
- ¹⁷ On the international implications of the Nazi anti-Semitic conspiracy theory, see: Yehuda Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001); and Herf, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World*.
- ¹⁸ Jürgen Mattäus, "Operation Barbarossa and the Origins of the Holocaust," in: Christopher Browning with Jürgen Mattäus, *The Origins of Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939-March 1942* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska; Jerusalem, Yad Vashem, 2004), 297
- ¹⁹ On the two eras of persecution and extermination, see: Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews: 1939-1945* abridged by Orna Kenan (New York: Harper, 2009).
- ²⁰ Richard Breitman, *Architect of Genocide: Himmler and the Final Solution* (New York: Knopf, 1991), 247.
- ²¹ For example, see: Eberhard Jäckel, *Hitler's World View: A Blueprint for Power* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1981) and *Hitlers Herrschaft: Vollzug einer Weltanschauung* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1986).
- ²² Cited in Jeffrey Herf, *The Jewish Enemy: Nazi Propaganda during World War II and the Holocaust* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), p. 52. On Hitler's statements from 1939 to 1941, see also: Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews* and Richard Evans, *The Third Reich at War* (New York: Penguin Press, 2009).
- ²³ Saul Friedländer drew similar conclusions about the intersection of the war, Hitler's anti-Semitic conspiracy theory and his decision to launch the Final Solution at some point between August and December 1941. See: *Nazi Germany and the Jews: 1939-1945: The Years of Extermination* (New York: Harper-Collins, 2007), 272-88.
- ²⁴ Goebbels, cited by Herf, *The Jewish Enemy*, 116. See: Elke Fröhlich, ed. *Die Tagebücher von Joseph Goebbels. Sämtliche Fragmente*, entry for August 20, 1941, II/I, (Munich: Saur, 1987-2001), 278.
- ²⁵ Christopher Browning, *The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939-March 1942* (Lincoln, Nebraska and Jerusalem: University of Nebraska Press and Yad Vashem, 2004). His important previous works on Holocaust decision-making include: *Fateful Months: Essays on the Emergence of the Final Solution* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1985); *The Path to Genocide: Essays on Launching the Final Solution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992); and *Nazi Policy, Jewish Workers, German Killers* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).
- ²⁶ Browning, *The Origins of the Final Solution*, 314.
- ²⁷ Discussed in Browning, *Origins of the Final Solution*, 315.
- ²⁸ Browning, *The Origins of the Final Solution*, 368-369.
- ²⁹ Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews, 1939-1945: The Years of Extermination*, 262-67; Browning, *Origins of the Final Solution*, 329.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, 373.
- ³¹ Christian Gerlach, "The Wannsee Conference, the Fate of the German Jews and Hitler's Decision in Principle to Exterminate All European Jews," *Journal of Modern History*, vol. 70, no. 4 (December 1998), 759-812. See also: *The Extermination of the European Jews* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016).
- ³² Gerlach, "The Wannsee Conference...", 784.
- ³³ See: Elke Fröhlich, ed. with the *Institut für Zeitgeschichte*, Munich and the Bundesarchiv, *Die Tagebücher von Joseph Goebbels: Sämtliche Fragmente* (Munich: Saur, 1987-2001), part 2, 1941-1945, vol. 2, 498f. See the entry for December 13, 1941); cited in Gerlach, "The Wannsee Conference, 785; and in Saul Friedlander, *Nazi Germany and the Jews, 1939-1945: The Years of Extermination*, 279-280.

- ³⁴ For abundant evidence of the “paranoia and projection” of the Nazi interpretation of World War II, see: Herf, *The Jewish Enemy*, op. cit.
- ³⁵ Barry Rubin and Wolfgang G. Schwanitz, *Nazis, Islamists and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014).
- ³⁶ Ibid, 161.
- ³⁷ Ibid., 161.
- ³⁸ Ibid., 162.
- ³⁹ On Hussein in Berlin, see: Klaus Gensicke, *The Mufti of Jerusalem and the Nazis: The Berlin Years* (London: Valentine, 2011). On links with the Foreign Ministry and the SS, see: Herf, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World*. On his role dealing with Muslims in Europe, see: Motadel, *Islam and Nazi Germany's War*.
- ⁴⁰ Cited in Herf, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World*, 213. Original cite: “Weekly Review of Foreign Broadcasts, F.C.C. [Federal Communications Commission], No. 118/3/4/44, Near and Middle East,” United States National Archives, College Park, Record Group 165, MID, Regional File, 1922-44, Palestine, entry 77, Box 2719, folder 2930. See also, Matthias Küntzell, “National Socialism and Anti-Semitism in the Arab World,” *Jewish Political Studies Review* 17:1-2 (Spring 2005), <http://jcpa.org/article/national-socialism-and-anti-semitism-in-the-arab-world/#sthash.8i8LWp28.dpuf>. For the text of the genocide convention, see: <https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%2078/volume-78-I-1021-English.pdf>
- ⁴¹ Klaus Michael Mallmann and Martin Cüppers, *Nazi Palestine: Plans for the Extermination of the Jews of Palestine* (New York: Enigma Books, 2010), translation of *Halbmond und Hakenkreuz: Das Dritte Reich, die Araber und Palästina* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007).
- ⁴² Matthias Küntzel, *Jihad and Jew-Hatred: Islamism, Nazism and the Roots of 9/11* (New York: Telos Press, 2007); *Djihad und Judenhaß: Über die neuen antijüdischen Krieg* (Freiburg: Ca Ira, 2002).
- ⁴³ David Motadel, *Islam and Nazi Germany's War*, 165.
- ⁴⁴ Ibid., 43-44.
- ⁴⁵ Adam Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction: The Making and Breaking of the Nazi Economy* (London: Penguin Books, 2006), 141-142.
- ⁴⁶ Motadel, *Islam and Nazi Germany's War*, op. cit.,. 46-48.
- ⁴⁷ On this theme, see: Herf, *The Jewish Enemy*, op. cit.
- ⁴⁸ “Al-Husayni, Speech, 18 December 1942,” Berlin Politisches Archiv des Auswärtiges Amt, Berlin, R 27327, as cited by Motadel, *Islam and Nazi Germany's War*, . 46-47.
- ⁴⁹ See: Herf, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World*, 185-88.
- ⁵⁰ Haj Amin al-Husseini, “The Protests of the Moslems of Europe against the Balfour Declaration,” cited in Herf, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World*, 185.
- ⁵¹ Ibid., 186.
- ⁵² Ibid., 186.
- ⁵³ Ibid., 186.
- ⁵⁴ Ibid., 184.
- ⁵⁵ Description of Islam as inherently anti-Jewish is an important theme in the writings of Sayyid Qutb. See: Sayyid Qutb, *Our Struggle with the Jews*, trans. Ronald Nettler, in: Ronald L. Nettler, *Past Trials and Present Tribulations: A Moslem Fundamentalist's View of the Jews* (Oxford: Vidal Sassoon Center for the Study of Antisemitism, Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Pergamon Press, 1987), 72-89; Herf, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World*, 255-259. On Islamism and antisemitism, see: Tibi, *Islamism and Islam*, 54-93.
- ⁵⁶ Hitler regretted that the Muslim effort to conquer Europe had been turned back in the eight century at the Battle of Tours. “You see, it’s been our misfortune to have the wrong religion...The Mohammedan religion...would have been much more compatible with us [Germanic peoples, JH] than Christianity. Why did it have to be Christianity with its meekness and flabbiness.” Cited in Albert Speer, *Inside the Third Reich* (New York: Avon Books, 1971),. 143. On Hitler’s enthusiasm for Islam as he understood it, see: David Motadel, *Islam and Nazi Germany's War*, 64-65.
- ⁵⁷ Hassan al-Banna, cited by Herf, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World*, . 244.
- ⁵⁸ See Herf, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World*; Elpeleg, *The Grand Mufti*; Benny Morris, *1948: A History of the First Arab-Israeli War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); and Efraim Karsh, *Palestine Betrayed* (New

Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 233-260. On Hussein and the place of jihad in the war of 1948, see: Benny Morris, *1948: A History of the First Arab-Israeli War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

⁵⁹ Rubin and Schwanitz, *Nazis, Islamists and the Makings of the Modern Middle East*, 200-201.

⁶⁰ On the logic of expulsion that emerged from Hussein's views, see Benny Morris, *1948: The First Arab-Israeli War*, pp. 406-410.