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Date : Published 2011 by ??? (first published September 2008)

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his youth on Gaza's beach, and his teenage years in the same circumstances that the vast majority of Palestinian kids of that time suffered, which inspired him to do something different in his life, rather than depressing him; A positive way of thinking the Palestinians master due to the fact that they got used to oppression, and got rid of the irrational decisions and acts that come with it, and decided to fight the occupation in his way, by exposing the Israeli cruelty and oppression on the Palestinians, along with any regime or Leader helping the Israelis or covering up their crimes, which gained him lots of enemies and several bans from entering some Arabic countries or distributing his daily newspaper in it.

Abdel Bari Atwan started his when he was only 18 journey moving within the Arab world, among Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia & Libya, for education then for a living, such as most of the Palestinians, a sad truth that he embodies in describing how he went hiding at the graduation ceremony from his colleagues because he didn't have a mailing address to exchange with them as he didn't know where is he going next!

"As a Palestinian, it would have been impossible not to have been involved in politics" as Atwan states in his book (pg 91), describing his participation in demonstrations and protests in Alexandria and Egypt during his higher education, being chosen as the spokesman of the Palestinians in Cairo university at the time where the Palestinian cause was supported by Jamal Abdel Nasser, then ending up being deported in Sadat's era.

A few startling anecdotes in his life that eventually ended up with him working for "Alsharq Al Awsat", a Saudi Arabian funded newspaper in London office, until when, after a day of the first intifada on which many Palestinians had been killed, the paper ran a football story as front-page news instead of pictures of Israeli atrocities. This pushed him to set up the newspaper al-Quds al-Arabi which has made him a household name in the Arab-speaking world, despite being fought and bullied by many Arabic regimes, and through times where the staff of the newspaper in a very touching and brave decision decided to go for months without wages, it managed to pass the pipeline and gain recognition.

He says he could not go along with an "Arab media (that was) conservative, state-controlled and complacent". Al-Quds has been a brave, much-needed, critical voice and despite its criticisms of them Atwan has been able to obtain interviews with many Arab figures and a well known voice hosted often by many Satellite channels such as Al-Jazeera, CNN, Sky News & BBC.

London became known as 'Beirut on Thames' in the 1980s and 90s, and Atwan provides a fascinating social anthropological description of the city's many and varied Arab communities, including a great description of the famous Edgware road in London with a new light.

He devoted a whole chapter for Yasser Arafat, he had what he describes as a 'love-hate' relationship with the PLO leader and here we find many previously untold personal recollections and anecdotes about Arafat; some hilarious, some deeply moving.

Insisting on his right to return to Palestine, where he hopes to be buried, Atwan relates three, sometimes painful and awkward, visits to the Gaza strip in the 1990s and the difficulties faced there by his children, born and raised in London, visiting their relatives who live surrounded by barbed wire. He identifies the irony of this two-way culture shock, and concludes that he has become a perpetual exile, never truly at home either in London or his native homeland.

Atwan proclaims, "I am Palestinian, anti-Zionist and socialist" and that "my own belief in the principles of justice and fair distribution of wealth, while definitely left-wing, are pragmatic". For him, journalism is a weapon of resistance. Some of his comment is reserved for the Western media's pro-Israeli bias. He points out: "When an atrocity was committed against the black people of South Africa we did not witness a rush to

provide 'balance' in the form of an Afrikaner carefully explaining his agenda."

A revealing memoir, put together with humor and honesty one can't read without having a strong opinion about it, and can't help but to admire Atwan's success story, because at the end of the day, a Palestinian cannot afford not to succeed in his path, as there is no home to go running to...

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### **Oday Abu Ajamieh says**

“ההגות של אודאי אבן עמיה היא חריגה מכלל ההגות העברית, והיא מביאה עימה רעיונות חדשים, רעיונות של חירות, של אחריות, של גאון, של אומץ, של אהבה, של אמונה, של איתנות, של אחריות, של אהבה, של אמונה, של איתנות.”

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### **Mona M. Kayed says**

הספר של מונה מ. קאיד הוא ספר מרתק, מלא חוכמה ורגישות. הוא מביא לידי ביטוי את חוכמתה ואת רגישותה, ואת אהבתה לארץ ולעם. זהו ספר שכל אחד צריך לקרוא, כדי להבין את המציאות הישראלית, ואת האתגרים שהיא מציבה בפנינו.

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### **Ammar Madan says**

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