

Texts or Praxes: How Do We Best Understand Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad After October 7?

By Erik Skare

There is a renewed focus on Palestinian armed movements in general and on Hamas in particular following the October 7 attacks and the ensuing Israeli military offensive in the Gaza Strip. How one understands the Palestinian actors involved is of utmost importance because they inform policy recommendations and choices with real consequences on the ground. This understanding necessarily depends on the approach chosen and the sources relied on; solely examining the literary production of Hamas and PIJ, their texts and ideology, or solely looking at their actions is methodologically flawed. Only by approaching Hamas and PIJ holistically can one appreciate the movements' complexities, *modus operandi*, ideology, and contradictions.

Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) are two of the most important factions in the Palestinian struggle in terms of military power and political influence. While the former has governed Gaza since 2007, the latter has developed into the second-largest armed movement there. Although other conflicts such as the Syrian civil war, and other military non-state actors such as the Islamic State, have caught the attention of Western analysts and policymakers, Hamas (and to a lesser extent PIJ) have reclaimed the spotlight following the October 7 attacks, which caused the death of 1,200 Israelis—the largest death toll in Jewish history since the Holocaust. The shock does not merely pertain to the quantitative but also the qualitative aspect of the attack: Civilians were brutally executed at point-blank range, coupled with disturbing reports of children having been tortured.¹ The Israeli military offensive in Gaza, which, at the time of writing, the United Nations assesses has killed more than 11,000 (40 percent of them children) and internally displaced 1.6 million Palestinians (70 percent of the total population of Gaza),² means that the relevance of Hamas and PIJ will remain strong for the foreseeable future.

Yet, in an endeavor to understand and analyze these Palestinian actors, is it better to rely on the texts of Hamas and PIJ (their

political and ideological literary production), or to rely on their actions (what they actually do)? The question matters because earlier studies and analyses on Hamas and PIJ have traditionally fallen into each of their own respective methodological pitfalls throughout the years—by either focusing too heavily on their texts or focusing too heavily on their actions. For example, although the pioneering academic research on Hamas has nuanced our analysis of the movement,³ there has nonetheless been an issue of critics reading the movement's texts—specifically its 1988 charter—as proof of the movement's inflexibility or its anti-Semitism, thus essentially ignoring the actual pragmatic maneuverability of Hamas in its daily political practice.⁴ As journalists and academics try to analyze Hamas following the atrocities, they can fall into the same pitfalls.

Ironically, the problem has been the opposite for PIJ, as research has predominantly limited the movement to its actions while essentially ignoring its ideological and political texts. What differentiates PIJ and Hamas is supposedly the degree of militancy, that PIJ has no interest in being a social movement, and that it differs in its approach to governance and political participation.⁵ Others refer to PIJ's lack of social and political agenda beyond armed struggle.⁶ Limiting the movement to nothing but its actions, without looking at its texts to understand how it sees the world, how the movement justifies itself and its praxes, and without analyzing the symbolism and significance behind its actions, makes it difficult to see the movement as anything more than the more radical and more violent 'little sister' of Hamas.

The question is also relevant because it is not a methodological issue limited to the study of Islamist movements in general or of Palestinian ones in particular. Instead, there are similar problems in political science and economics, mentioning just two. Revealed preference theory in economy is one pertinent example, and it can be described as the following, although simplified. Because actors may not be honest, either consciously or unconsciously, and there is an inconsistency between what they say and what they do, the former is largely irrelevant. It is thus more methodologically sound to study what actors actually do, because if an actor's behavior is consistent over time, then it must be possible to explain that behavior without reference to anything other than that particular behavior.⁷ One may then argue that a political actor can be best understood by assessing how it votes with its feet.

The central argument of this article is that researchers are best served by a textual analysis combined with an action-based approach in order to obtain a greater understanding of Hamas and PIJ. The following methodological discussion demonstrates that one obtains a greater understanding of both PIJ and Hamas by combining the two approaches as Hamas has traditionally come forth as far more radical if one limits oneself to its texts, while PIJ is portrayed as one-dimensional and dogmatic if one only analyzes its praxes.

Erik Skare is a researcher at the University of Oslo and an associate researcher at the Center for International Studies (CERI) at Sciences Po in Paris, France. He is the author of A History of Palestinian Islamic Jihad: Faith, Awareness, and Revolution in the Middle East (Cambridge University Press, 2021) and Palestinian Islamic Jihad: Islamist Writings on Resistance and Religion (I. B. Tauris, 2021).



Palestinian members of the Ezzedine al-Qassam Brigades, the armed wing of the Hamas movement, are pictured on January 31, 2016, in Gaza City. (Mahmud Hams/AFP via Getty Images)

This article is divided into four main sections. In the first section, the author explores the limitations of using textual analysis and advocates for an action-oriented methodology as a more effective means to gain insight into the real-world activities of both movements. The second part delves into the dual significance of actions, while the third section highlights the advantages of employing textual analysis to uncover subtle ideological distinctions between Hamas and PIJ. Despite the merits of an action-oriented approach, the author asserts that the study of ideology remains crucial because ideas are translated into actions. Finally, the concluding section discusses the October 7 attack and what it means for our understanding of Hamas.

Analyzing Text Without Context

Islamist movements tend to have end goals that essentially are “very vague, similar and utopian”—all of which can be used to rationalize a vast range of political and military strategies. Just like the declared aim of a “better world” reveals very little about the political preferences of Western political parties, Islamist slogans such as “establishing the Caliphate” are too vague to disclose anything about the expected political behavior of a group in the short- or mid-term.⁸ Alluding to what Islamist actors have in common semantically shows just how fragile analyses of this Islamist lexicon are, simply because one cannot infer from their discourses the complex and changing modalities according to which they behave: “whether

[these modalities are] social or political, local or international, facing the ethical, social, or political challenges of their centuries.”⁹ A semantic analysis is in other words insufficient because there is a significant gap between the apparent unity of Islamist rhetoric and the extreme diversity of its followers.

Precisely because research on Islamist movements and actors has traditionally depended too heavily on their texts, Islamists have mostly, if not exclusively, been portrayed as being driven by rigid and ‘out of context’ ideological ideals. Because the ideology of these movements is characteristically orthodox, allowing little room for negotiation with surrounding and changing contextual conditions, a strict textual interpretation thus often leads to an “ideologization” of Islamists that ignores their pragmatic maneuverability.¹⁰

Hamas is symptomatic of these methodological limitations as early analyses of the movement often restricted it to its infamous 1988 charter with its polemical tone, religious determinism, conspiratorial thinking, and anti-Semitism. The communiqués produced by Hamas during the commencement of the Oslo Agreement further cemented the image of a movement rejecting the peace process on ideological or theological grounds coupled with a fiery rhetoric. Hamas stated, for example, that “the only way and the only method that the occupying enemy understands, is the method of force, through the escalation of the blessed intifada, and by raising the banner of jihad and resistance.”¹¹ PIJ, on the other hand, described in this period the necessity of obtaining Palestinian

Islamist unity to counter the peace process as an effort despised by the idolaters and the infidels.¹²

These communiqués were employed by critics of Hamas to ‘prove’ its fundamentalism. Yet, while the peace process and the narrowing of Palestinian Islamist opportunities contributed to their fiery rhetoric and violence in the 1990s, it did also cause Hamas to vacillate in its approach to the changing realities in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. After Hamas’ initial two years, for example, it softened its former uncompromising positions to avoid political isolation. While Hamas, on the one hand, cooperated with rejectionist PLO currents such as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) against a political and diplomatic settlement, it also discussed the possibilities of participating in elections under the Oslo Agreement, on the other.¹³

Equally important, while Hamas has remained ideologically inflexible by stressing the liberation of Palestine in its entirety, the movement has in the past nonetheless offered pragmatic concessions when dealing with the conditions of renouncing violence, recognizing Israel, and accepting past diplomatic agreements. Hamas has, for example, first, issued repeated offers to end its violence in return for Israeli reciprocity. Second, despite the ideological resistance to the Oslo Agreement, Hamas has previously made great strides to accept past agreements, offering to abide by whatever outcome a reformed and representative PLO put forward, and the movement declared in 2007 its willingness to respect international agreements and defer to the PLO in negotiations with Israel.¹⁴ Third, while Hamas has refused to recognize the legitimacy of Israel, the movement has nevertheless in practice recognized its existence by repeatedly indicating its willingness to accept the creation of a Palestinian state on the 1967 borders.¹⁵

Put differently, Hamas’ ideology calls for uncompromising activism and a focus on maximalist gains. Yet, the practice of the movement shows how it has adopted a policy that is more pragmatic than dogmatic and more reformist than revolutionary. Indeed, Hamas has in practice shown itself capable of distinguishing between a permanent and temporary settlement; and between a short-term policy temporarily delaying its ultimate goals and a long-term strategy. Additionally, Hamas has shown itself capable of distinguishing between its willingness to accept ad hoc arrangements of coexistence and its denial of the legitimacy of the PLO and of the Palestinian National Authority. In other words, focusing too selectively on Hamas’ ideological tenets would mean missing its actual pragmatic maneuverability, and Shaul Mishal and Avraham Sela have consequently suggested that adjustment has become the main feature of Hamas’ political conduct.¹⁶

Similarly, PIJ extols martyrdom in the path of God as one of the greatest virtues and one of the great honors one can obtain. A deed rewarded with blessings in the hereafter, PIJ describes martyrdom as the lifeblood of the Islamic *umma*.¹⁷ Yet, immediately preceding the Israeli military invasion of Jenin in 2002, the leadership of PIJ ordered its militants to leave the camp because they knew that to stay and fight would equal certain death—thus weakening the organization in the northern West Bank. When the local militants chose to remain in the camp, they were severely reprimanded by their leader, Ramadan Abdallah Shallah, for not focusing on the well-being of the overall movement.¹⁸ In the choice of martyrdom for its militants or the survival of the organization, the leadership opted for the latter. It thus seems unwise to read its militant strategy from its texts on martyrdom, though the two are closely related in

subject matter.

The Double Symbolic Significance of Action

This author does not suggest that Islamist texts and ideology are unequivocally ambiguous—with researchers desperately attempting to decipher their actual, true meaning—while actions are easily understood and straightforward to analyze. On the contrary, it is not always clear how one should read the practices of Islamist actors, how one should analyze their significance, or how one should weigh their importance. While Matthew Levitt, for example, has analyzed the praxes of Hamas’ social services as little more than economic and moral support for violence, Sara Roy perceives the social work of the movement as a civic restoration stressing the well-being of Palestinian local community.¹⁹

The ambiguity of actions is not limited to Palestinian Islamist actors. The Shi’a in Iraq, for example, were not simply targeted by militant Sunnis because of their religious belief, but because they were also perceived as representatives of the Iraqi government.²⁰ Similarly, the attempted assassination of the Christian Iraqi Minister of Environment, Sargon Sulaywah, was quickly employed as a symptom of an Iraqi religious minority’s predicament. It is, however, unclear whether the attack was carried out because he was a Christian or because he represented the Iraqi government.²¹

Because actions may have double symbolic significance, one must analyze what actors are saying about their own struggle,²² and an actor’s political practice cannot be understood without a thorough understanding of its political theory given that ideas are translated into action.²³ In fact, the questions and problems confronting Islamist ideologues are not simply philosophical or theological abstractions, but specific problems created by specific historical stages, practical activities, social relations, grievances, and conflict. The production of ideology is, as such, not merely a theoretical exercise. Due to the pervasiveness and durability of certain texts and doctrines (whether Marx and Engel’s *The Communist Manifesto* or Qutb’s *Milestones*), one may generally assume that they encode, in however mystified a way, genuine needs and desires²⁴ that one would otherwise miss if one only focused on the actions on the ground.

The feasibility of studying Islamist actors’ literary production extends beyond ideology, or even communiqués. Jihadi poetry, for example, matters because it is central to the self-fashioning and self-presentation of jihadis and because it “[lies] at the core of their identity as well as their ideology;” it provides “a window onto the movement talking to itself.”²⁵ The same applies to the martyr biographies of Islamist movements, such as the ones produced by PIJ—providing researchers the opportunity to investigate the common background characteristics of a group or an actor through the collective studies of its members’ lives. While these biographies have clear propagandist purposes, there seem to be few ideological restraints for PIJ to honestly report socioeconomic background, which is reflected in the spectrum of employments and economic situations reported: from student to unemployed.²⁶

Discovering the Ideological Nuances in Armed Palestinian Islamism

The analytical benefits of delving into texts should then be no different for PIJ and Hamas—unless they are somehow exempt from the dynamics of other groups—as the two Islamist movements interpret ideological and theological notions differently in order to

justify their respective actions. For example, both Hamas and PIJ believe Palestine is blessed by God, because the land is so heavily referenced in the Qur'an; because it was the departure point of Prophet Muhammad's midnight journey to the seventh heaven; and because it was the first *qibla* of Islam.²⁷ The Palestinian cause is thus for them a sacred one.

Yet, the two Palestinian Islamist movements drew two distinctively different conclusions on the role of religion in the struggle based on the analysis of the blessedness of the Palestinian cause. Although the religious discourse of Hamas diminished from the early 1990s, the movement's heritage from the Muslim Brotherhood nevertheless caused the movement to stress the importance of religious values and education. An integral part of Hamas' practice was thus proselytization (*da'wa*) and upholding community values (*hisba*). As such, Hamas Islamized the Palestinian cause through the emphasis of religious observance and morality in the struggle and the movement "subsume[d] Palestinian nationalism within one or another form of Islamic identity."²⁸

PIJ, on the other hand, concluded that the conflict between the Palestinians and the Israelis was predestined by God—as was the future destruction of Israel. Yet, from reading the texts of PIJ theoreticians and leaders such as Anwar Abu Taha and Ramadan Abdallah Shallah, one also finds the conclusion that the destruction of Israel would not only lead to the Islamization of Palestine, but also, from their perspective, to Islam's global victory over all other religions.²⁹ PIJ thus essentially turned the priorities of Hamas upside-down. Instead of stressing Islamization for liberation, PIJ stressed liberation for Islamization. As such, PIJ essentially "Palestinianized" Islam by stressing the blessed land of Palestine not only as the launching pad but as the very precondition for the desired commencement of Islam's global victory.

These two differing conclusions on the sacredness of Palestine influenced, and still influence, the political behavior of Hamas and PIJ. Hamas, for example, has traditionally struggled against moral and behavioral impropriety (primarily directed against women) and with its activists patrolling the streets of Gaza. PIJ, on the other hand, has not concerned itself with cinemas in Gaza or stores selling alcohol, what clothes Palestinians have been wearing, or whether sexes have intermingled. Ironically, PIJ's "activist, confrontational and outcome-oriented tactical style," with its strict focus on armed struggle against Israel, has made Palestinians perceive the movement as a more moderate player than Hamas, which has, at times, caused annoyance from the Palestinian civilian population.³⁰

Another example is the issue of electoral participation, democracy, and a future Palestinian state. If one simply looks at PIJ's boycott of the Palestinian Legislative Elections (PLC) in 1996 and 2006 (Hamas participated through unofficial representation in the former before participating fully in the latter³¹), it is easy to simply reiterate the claim that the movement is little more than the angrier 'little sister' of Hamas as it does not engage in democracy, social work, or grassroots initiatives. Yet, turning to the movement's actual ideological works, one sees that the rejection of participation is not constructed on exegesis or theological claims but instead framed by references to the structural constraints and deficiencies of Palestinian parliamentary democracy.³² Further, while Hamas envisions a strong state implementing perceived Islamic values from the top-down, PIJ envisions a weak state with perceived Islamic values maintained and preserved through civil society.³³

Essentially, analyzing PIJ's ideology is beneficial precisely

“October 7 likely signifies the victory of those in the movement who have grown frustrated with an excessive focus on politics, advocating instead for a renewed emphasis on violence to reach their long-term goals.”

because Islamism, also the Palestinian variety, has undergone important theological diversification, and the diversity of Islamist movements goes far beyond the strategies and tactics they employ to maneuver in their political environment.³⁴ By limiting analysis to the violence of an actor, important points of distinction between Hamas and PIJ are lost.

Analyzing Hamas after October 7

The need for analysts to combine an action-based approach with a thorough understanding of the two Palestinian Islamist movements' texts and ideology is required, first, because Hamas, traditionally, comes forth as far more radical if one limits oneself to its texts, while it comes forth as far more pragmatic if one assesses its actions. PIJ, on the other hand, comes forth as a rather one-dimensional organization if one focuses on its actions alone, while its complexity lies in contextualizing and combining its *modus operandi* with its literary production in order to uncover the underlying double significance of its actions.

One reason for the feasibility of understanding Hamas through its actions, is perhaps because it has shown a greater measure of 'context answerability'—quickly responding and adapting to new challenges and threats.³⁵ This does, on the other hand, not seem to apply to PIJ to the same extent, and the benefit of an in-depth textual analysis lies in the fact that it is often described as an ideologically strict movement, but seldom as an intellectual one.³⁶ Partly, this difference may be explained by the importance of organizational structure and size—whether this concerns a mainstream movement or a small fringe group—because, to a certain extent, it may determine the maneuverability with which actors may ignore, circumvent, amend, or stick to the ideological tenets proposed. The meager support for PIJ in the 1990s could also be a blessing in disguise for the movement as "the organization was less constrained by cost-benefit considerations and ideological questioning," and it was thus afforded with less pragmatic maneuverability without losing its base.³⁷ The grassroots movement Hamas, on the other hand, has always been more sensitive to various popular pressures.

The question nevertheless remains: How does one make sense of Hamas after October 7 and how does one analyze the movement? Some attribute the attack to the 'terrorist' nature of Hamas when explaining the attack, while others interpret it as a product of the Israeli occupation. Some also use the attack to settle old scores and ask—almost displaying *Schadenfreude*—how anyone could be so gullible to believe Hamas had actually moderated itself the last 16 years when ruling Gaza. Regardless of their soundness, all analyses share that they are post hoc rationalizations; all analysts share the collective failure to predict the attack and its level of brutality. This applies to those who view Hamas as a terror organization

and those who see it as a pragmatic group utilizing terrorism as one among several means to achieve its objectives. Like all post hoc rationalizations, the author's is also based on preexisting assumptions about Hamas and its internal dynamics.

To the knowledge of this author, Hamas has not published any document foreshadowing the attack. Could, for example, researchers have anticipated the attacks when Hamas announced its new charter on May 1, 2017? Clearly, the answer is no. Still, as Khaled Hroub notes, the 2017 charter was carefully worded and with the deliberate inclusion of opacities on key issues such as a two-state solution and the legitimacy of the State of Israel; the Oslo Agreement and the legitimacy of the Palestinian National Authority (PA); and the diversification of means and tools of resistance. Instead of considering the charter *moderate*, as was the common perception in 2017, it would be more accurate to regard it as *flexible* given how it operated with a number of gray zones that provided Hamas the necessary flexibility to adapt its political and military strategies in response to changing realities on the ground.³⁸

It is, as such, worth noting that Hamas has always been the product of the continuous internal debates between the social change thesis and the armed struggle thesis. The movement has always experienced power struggles between moderates and hardliners and between those who favor political work and those who favor violence. The influence, or control, over Hamas' strategic course has oscillated between the two depending on the situation on the ground. Because Hamas' hardliners were weakened after the Second Intifada, the moderates gained prominence. That entailed ending its campaign of suicide bombings and participating in democratic elections in 2006, initiating reconciliation efforts with Mahmud Abbas' PA in the West Bank, and revising its charter in 2017. During this period, Hamas employed a strategy of restrained violence to secure concessions from Israel. Yet, this approach has yielded few notable victories for Hamas, and October 7 likely signifies the victory of those in the movement who have grown frustrated with an excessive focus on politics, advocating instead

for a renewed emphasis on violence to reach their long-term goals.

Although one must maintain humility and acknowledge that our understanding of the attack is still limited at this stage, this article is nevertheless one input in the debate on whether it is what you say or what you do that defines you. Illustrating this dilemma is Carrie Rosefsky Wickham's study of the Muslim Brotherhood from 2013, where she described how the emergence of Islamist actors as a leading force in Arab politics has triggered competing reactions around the globe. While some have witnessed this development with calmness, others have reacted with dismay. As Wickham argued, such different reactions reflect the fact that the motives of these actors are, in fact, hard to fathom because the information available about Islamist groups is often patchy and incomplete, and observations rely on conflicting interpretations.³⁹

No matter how incomplete our understanding is, it should not serve as an excuse for not attempting to draw a more nuanced and complex picture of Islamist movements in general and of Hamas and PIJ in particular. That is particularly the case now that researchers' analysis may be especially clouded and biased from the shock of the October 7 attacks. Data does not become, ipso facto, neutral in the absence of the Islamist movements' own understanding,⁴⁰ and the information researchers collect is still colored by the ideological horizons and interests of those carrying the analysis. These conflicting interpretations do not merely pertain to the analysis of these movements' texts, but also, as noted, to the nature of what they do, with Hamas' social services used as an example in this article.

Even if one, for the sake of argument, approaches the literary production of Hamas and PIJ as truthful representation of the movements, the two are nonetheless human organizations, and the internal practices of both imperfectly reflect their ideals while simultaneously suffering from the contradictions within those respective ideals.⁴¹ Thus, what they say or write must be placed in context of what they do.⁴² CTC

Citations

- 1 Graeme Wood, "A Record of Pure, Predatory Sadism," *Atlantic*, October 23, 2023; Alia Shoiab, "Hamas militants ate family's meal after they tortured and mutilated parents and 2 young children, Blinken says," *Business Insider*, November 1, 2023.
- 2 "Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel – reported impact | Day 43," United Nations for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, November 18, 2023.
- 3 Khaled Hroub, *Hamas: Political Thought and Practice* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for Palestine Studies, 2000); Sara Roy, *Hamas and Civil Society in Gaza: Engaging the Islamist Social Sector* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011); Jeroen Gunning, *Hamas in Politics: Democracy, Religion, Violence* (London: Hurst & Company, 2009); Shaul Mishal and Avraham Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas: Vision, Violence, and Coexistence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006).
- 4 Anshel Pfeffer, "Hamas charter is an attempt to repackage antisemitism," *Jewish Chronicle*, May 2, 2017; "What Hamas is Hiding," AJC Global Voice, October 7, 2023.
- 5 Ziad Abu-Amr, *Islamic Fundamentalism in the West Bank and Gaza* (Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994), p. 103; Beverley Milton-Edwards and Stephen Farrell, *Hamas: The Islamic Resistance Movement* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010), pp. 49, 268.
- 6 Tristan Dunning, *Hamas, Jihad and Popular Legitimacy: Reinterpreting Resistance in Palestine* (London: Routledge, 2016), p. 58.
- 7 Keith Dowding, "Revealed Preference and External Reference," *Rationality and Society* 14:3 (2002): pp. 259-284.
- 8 Thomas Hegghammer, "Jihadi-Salafis or revolutionaries? On religion and politics in the study of militant Islamism" in Roel Meijer ed., *Global Salafism: Islam's new religious movement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 259.
- 9 Francois Burgat, *Islamism in the Shadow of al-Qaeda* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008), p. 12.
- 10 Khaled Hroub, "Introduction," in Khaled Hroub ed., *Political Islam: Context versus Ideology* (London: Saqi, 2010), p. 13; Hegghammer, "Jihadi-Salafis or revolutionaries?" p. 245.
- 11 Hamas, "hadha al-bilagh li-l-nas wa li-yandhuru bihi," 1992.
- 12 Fathi al-Shiqaqi, "harakatuna muhawala li-l-ijaba an al-su'al al-islami filastiniyyan," in Rifat Sayyid Ahmad ed., *rihlat al-damm alladhi hazam al-sayf: al-a'mal al-kamila li-l-shahid al-duktur Fathi al-Shiqaqi* (Cairo: Markaz Jaffa li-l-Dirasat wa-l-Abhath, 1996).
- 13 Hroub, *Hamas*, pp. 64-65.
- 14 Tareq Baconi, *Hamas Contained: The Rise and Pacification of Palestinian Resistance* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2018), pp. 229-230.
- 15 Conal Urquhart, "Hamas official accepts Israel but stops short of recognition," *Guardian*, January 11, 2007.
- 16 Mishal and Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas*, pp. 147, 151, 169.

- 17 See, for example, Abdallah al-Shami, "falsafat al-shahada," Muhjat al-Quds, 2000.
- 18 Thabit Mardawi, *namut fi al-watan.. wa lan nughadir: Malhamat jinin bi-shahadat al-asir al-mujahid Thabit Mardawi* (Gaza: al-Markaz al-Filastini li-l-Tawasul al-Hadari, 2006), p. 134.
- 19 Matthew Levitt, *Hamas: Politics, Charity, and Terrorism in the Service of Jihad* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006); Roy, *Hamas and Civil Society in Gaza*.
- 20 Hegghammer, "Jihadi-Salafis or revolutionaries?" p. 260.
- 21 Brynjar Lia, "Korsfarernes medløpere eller lydige undersåtter? Jihadistbevegelsens syn på kristne minoriteter i Midtøsten [The crusaders' collaborators or obedient subjects? The jihadi movement's view of Christian minorities in the Middle East]" in Berit Thorbjørnsrud ed., *De kristne i Midtøsten: Kampen for tilhørighet [The Christians in the Middle East: The Struggle for Belonging]* (Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk, 2015), p. 207.
- 22 Hegghammer, "Jihadi-Salafis or revolutionaries?" p. 260.
- 23 Gunning, p. 16.
- 24 Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: An introduction* (New York: Verso Books, 2007), p. 12.
- 25 Robyn Cresswell and Bernard Haykel, "Poetry in Jihadi Culture," in Thomas Hegghammer ed., *Jihadi Culture: The Art and Social Practices of Militant Islamists* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), p. 22.
- 26 Erik Skare, "Affluent and Well-Educated? Analyzing the Socioeconomic Backgrounds of Fallen Palestinian Islamist Militants," *Middle East Journal* 76:1 (2022): pp. 72-92.
- 27 Erik Skare, *A History of Palestinian Islamic Jihad: Faith, Awareness, and Revolution in the Middle East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021); Erik Skare, *Palestinian Islamic jihad: Islamist writings on resistance and religion* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2021).
- 28 Rashid Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), pp. 148-149.
- 29 Skare, *A History of Palestinian Islamic Jihad*.
- 30 Sara Roy, "The Political Economy of Despair: Changing Political and Economic Realities in the Gaza Strip," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 20:3 (1991): p. 65.
- 31 Shaul Mishal and Avraham Sela, "Participation without presence: Hamas, the Palestinian Authority and the Politics of Negotiated Coexistence," *Middle Eastern Studies* 38:3 (2002): pp. 1-26.
- 32 Skare, *A History of Palestinian Islamic Jihad*.
- 33 Erik Skare, "Controlling the State in the Political Theory of Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad," *Religions* 12:11 (2021), p. 1,010.
- 34 John L. Esposito, Lily Zubaidah Rahim, and Naser Ghobadzadeh, "Introduction: Theological Contestation and Political Coalition-Building," in John L. Esposito, Lily Zubaidah Rahim, and Naser Ghobadzadeh eds., *The Politics of Islamism: Diverging Visions and Trajectories* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), p. 8.
- 35 Khaled Hroub, "Hamas: Conflating National Liberation and Socio-political Change" in Khaled Hroub ed., *Political Islam: Context versus Ideology* (London: Saqi, 2010), p. 174.
- 36 Skare, *Palestinian Islamic jihad*, p. 2.
- 37 Meir Hatina, *Martyrdom in Modern Islam: Piety, Power, and Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 119.
- 38 Khaled Hroub, "A Newer Hamas? The Revised Charter," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 46:4 (2016/2017): p. 109.
- 39 Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *The Muslim Brotherhood: Evolution of an Islamist Movement* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), p. 2.
- 40 Bjørn Olav Utvik, *Islamismen [Islamism]* (Oslo: Unipub, 2011), p. 38.
- 41 Gunning, p. 95.
- 42 John L. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?* 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 263.