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## **Hamas, Antisemitism and Social Media Incitement**

Hamas, Antissemitismo e Incitação nas Redes Sociais

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### **RESUMO**

Nos últimos anos, os palestinianos têm vindo a difundir a sua ideologia através das redes sociais com apelos à resistência contra Israel. Atualmente, a organização Hamas é a organização mais forte e mais influente na sociedade palestiniana. A maioria dos palestinianos acredita que o Hamas os representa ainda melhor do que a organização Fatah no que diz respeito ao problema palestiniano. Os apoiantes da organização Hamas apresentam por vezes os judeus de forma antissemita. Porquê? A resposta está neste artigo. Os judeus são retratados como pessoas que correm atrás do dinheiro e do lucro, que compram os árabes com dinheiro, ou como soldados cruéis que atacam os inocentes. Por vezes, em momentos de tensão, aparecem caricaturas que apelam explicitamente a que se faça mal aos judeus. Um exemplo disso é

a caricatura de um jovem Haredi com armas apontadas para si próprio. A legenda ao lado da imagem diz que eles precisam de ser mortos. Este artigo apresenta as redes sociais palestinianas que os apoiantes do Hamas utilizam para apresentar o conflito contra Israel como uma guerra religiosa com uma atitude antisemita.

**Palavras-chave:** Hamas; Faixa de Gaza; Conflito Palestina-Israel

#### **ABSTRACT**

Over the past few years, Palestinians have been spreading their ideology through social media with calls for resistance against Israel. The Hamas organization of today is the strongest and most influential organization in Palestinian society. The majority of the Palestinians believe that Hamas represents them even better than the Fatah organization in regard to the Palestinian problem. Supporters of the Hamas organization will sometimes present Jews in anti-Semitic way. Why? The answer is in this article. The Jews are depicted as running after money and profit who buy the Arabs with money or as cruel soldiers who attack the innocent. Sometimes, in times of tension, caricatures will appear that explicitly call for harming the Jews. An example of this is a caricature of a young Haredi man with weapons aimed at himself. The caption on the side of the picture reads that they need to be killed. This article will present the Palestinian social media that supporters of Hamas use to present the conflict against Israel as a religious war with an anti-Semitic attitude.

**Keywords:** Hamas; Gaza Strip; the Palestine-Israel Conflict

## **1. Hamas, Antisemitism and Social Media Incitement**

Over the past few years, radical Palestinians, especially supporters of Hamas (*Ḥarakat al-Muqāwamah al-Islāmiyyah*) and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad have been spreading their ideology through books, pamphlets and social media calling for the murder of Jews and resistance against Israel. In radical Islamic eyes the Jews are impure, always trying to destroy the al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem and murder or expel the Palestinians from their homeland. Most of them believe that the armed struggle (read using weapons of violence) is the only way to deal with the Jewish danger. This article is based on Hamas' conceptualization of the Jews.

Sheik Nizar Rayan, a senior official in the Hamas organization killed in the 2014 Gaza War, wrote (in his 2009 will) that he became involved in the conflict against Israel after he saw the great corruption of the Jews and the contamination of the al-Aqsa Mosque. (Al-Nasser and 'Abd al-Rahman, 2017, p. 356)

I command [you] to believe in the good of Allah in every way... and to trust in God that he will purify the land from the Jews as he promised us, that God will become elevated, a true promise... the *jihad* work which continues until our land Palestine

and all the other Muslim lands that are oppressed by the infidels and the secular, the American mercenaries and the enemies of the religion that is our belief. (Al-Nasser and 'Abd al-Rahman, 2017, 2017, p. 372)

In other words, according to Nizar Rayan's understanding, and we can bring many additional examples that show that Hamas sees the Jews as enemies of God who contaminate the land of Palestine which is the land of the (Holy) Waqf, mainly in regard to allowing the Jews to go up to pray on the Temple Mount.

The Hamas organization of today is the strongest and most influential organization in Palestinian society. The majority of the Palestinians believe that Hamas represents them even better than the Fatah organization in regard to the Palestinian problem. The majority of polls taken in Palestinian society over the past few years show that Hamas overtakes the Fatah in its percentage of support among the Palestinians. (PCPSR 2022, 2021) In light of this, the Hamas organization represents a good portion of the Palestinian society when it comes to attitudes toward the Jews and it has great influence on the social networks. The premise of the study is that the antisemitic bias that exists in the Hamas organization will also be expressed in the social media of the supporters who are identified with the organization.

Social media often uses caricatures to display political views. The media where caricatures are displayed are varied and reach the entire Palestinian society — religious and non-religious alike. Quite often the political views of the advertisers become obvious. For example, supporters of the Hamas organization will sometimes present the head of the Palestinian Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, as a collaborator with Israel. Gaza can be described as an "island of *jihād* and war" which has to contend with its alienation from the whole world including Arab countries. Jews are depicted as running after money and profit and who buy off Arabs with money, or as cruel soldiers who attack the innocent. Sometimes, in times of tension, caricatures will appear that explicitly call for harming the Jews. An example of this is a caricature of a young Haredi man with weapons aimed at himself. The caption on the side of the picture reads that he needs to be killed.



Facebook page of Shabaka al-Quds al-Akhbaria, November 18, 2014.

An additional way of expressing a need for violence is the glorification of martyrs on social media platforms. The whole culture of glorifying martyrs who have given up their lives to hurt the Jews and to protect Islam's holy places is well-developed among the Palestinian public and especially for Muslim Brotherhood supporters and Hamas. (Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 2010, pp. 137-139) Starting with the 1948 War, the fighters from the Muslim Brotherhood in Palestine were described as competing with each other for the honor of carrying out *jihad* in the Holy Land so as to merit one of two attainments – victory over the Jews or martyrdom for God. They would purify themselves before joining the campaign “with faith in their hearts, Qur’anic texts in their pockets, and machine guns in their hands.” Clearly the martyrs internalized the motto, “Freedom is not granted by the oppressors it is taken by the fighters with their blood.” (Khatina, 2014, pp. 63-64) This way of thinking has been adopted by Hamas and other Palestinian groups up until today.

After every terrorist attack, especially after the terrorist attacks of the “knife intifada” during the years 2014-2016, many advertisements appeared which praised the culture of death and sacrifice and called for additional youth to follow in the footsteps of the hero martyrs. (Bartal 2017) This digital activism can be seen as “social terrorism.” It had a definite impact on Palestinian society, influencing it to continue using violence in the Israeli-Arab struggle. The technological revolution in the Palestinian society in Gaza is widespread. Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) reported that 28.7% of Palestinian households in Gaza have a computer, 97.3% have a minimum of one cell

phone, and 72.7% have internet access (PCBS 2019, pp. 19-23). This article will report on the Palestinian social media that supporters of Hamas use to present the conflict against Israel as a religious war with an anti-Semitic attitude.

## 2. Hamas Perception about the Jews

Hamas' ideological documents speak in two voices regarding the Jews. In one voice, Hamas describes the battle against the Jews with national, anti-colonial colors. In an official book by Dr. Ahmad Yousef, the former adviser of Isma'il Haniyya, (today chairman of the Hamas Political Bureau,) Hamas described its stand regarding the Zionist project by emphasizing that the struggle with the Zionist project is not a struggle with the Jews because of their religion. Hamas does not go fight with the Jews because they are Jews. The organization works against the Jews because they capture and attack. They captured the land of Palestine and exiled its residents. (al-Yousef, 2017, pp. 13, 207, 235, 243) Hamas declares that it "differentiates between the enemy that exploits and captures the land of Palestine and the Jews who live outside of occupied Palestine" (al-Yousef, 2017, pp. 251) whom Hamas does not attack. On May 1, 2017, Hamas publish its document of General Principles and Politics. Hamas described itself as a "Palestinian nationalist movement" and the anti-Semitic overtones of the Charter were entirely scrapped, replaced by a distinction between Zionists and Jews (Seurat 2022, p. 17).

Hamas' objection to the normalization agreements between Israel and the Arab states stems from the Hamas perception that all of these agreements also weaken the ability of the Arab world to unify and attack Israel. (al-Yousef, 2017, pp, 127-128) The Hamas objection to the normalization agreements (the Abraham Agreements) are presented with arguments of real politics.

Major complaints against the Jews appear on Palestinian social networks, mostly Facebook and Instagram. Some of the complaints relate to how they see the Jews – corrupt, money chasing and controlling the world. These complaints show a belief that the Jews are all-powerful and control everything that occurs in the world. One place that this can be seen is in the Hamas Charter which quotes "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion" which accuses the Jews of causing all the wars in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as well as responsibility for communism and capitalism.

You may speak as much as you want about regional and world wars. They [the Jews] were behind World War I, where they were able to destroy the Islamic Caliphate, win financial gains and control resources. They obtained the Balfour Declaration and then formed the League of Nations through which they could rule the world. They were behind World War II, where

they made huge financial gains by trading in armaments, thereby paving the way for the establishment of their state. It was they who instigated replacing the League of Nations with the United Nations and the Security Council to enable them to rule the world through them. There is no war going on anywhere, without their having their fingers in it. ( Hamas Covenant, Article 22)

In his book, Hamas activist Ahmad al-Yousef, mentioned above, claimed that Palestine's capture by the Jews has religious significance. The Holy Quran nicknamed them: "You will find that the people most hostile towards the Believers are the Jews and the polytheists (Quran 5, 82) who killed the Prophets." "As for those who defy Allah's revelation, and kill the prophets unjustly, and kill those who advocate Justice among the people." (Quran 3, 21)

Among the Jews are some who take words out of context, and say 'we hear and we disobey,' and 'hear without listening' and 'observe us,' twisting with their tongues and slandering the religion... but Allah has cursed them for their disbelief. They do not believe except a little. (Quran 4, 46)

According to Hamas' outlook, the Jews are the enemies of God and the Islamic faith and that is why the Hamas organization continues the anti-Jewish tradition of the Muslim Brotherhood described above. (al-Yousef, 2017, p. 101) In addition, even in the Hamas Covenant, Article 7, and in the book by Hamas activist Achmud al-Yousef, the Hadith of the "Stone and the Tree" foretells that on Judgement Day there will be a heavy battle between the Jews and the Muslims over Jerusalem and the stones and the trees will cooperate with the Muslims and will turn in the Jews to those who worship God. This Hadith, which appears in Şaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī (d. 870) and in Şaḥīḥ Muslim (d. 875) where you cannot separate between the struggle over Jerusalem with its religious link. (al-Yousef, 2017, p. 52) In other words, the war between the Jews and the Muslims in Palestine is a religious war and the establishment of the State of Israel proves, so as to speak, the correctness of the prophecy hidden in the Hadith. And if so, the Israeli-Palestinian struggle is not a national war or an anti-colonial war but a religious war. Speakers for Hamas, including al-Yousef, argue that the Hamas Covenant was written in 1988 at the start of the first Palestinian intifada and represents a period of time as well as the writings of those who founded the organization. Israel and its supporters take the anti-Jewish statements that are attributed to the charter out of context. The Muslims admit that there are antisemitic sayings in the Hamas Charter but this does not lessen their criticism on Israel. (Abu Sway, 2017, pp., 121-122, 127)

Professor Mustafa abu Sway from al-Quds University has tried to show that despite the antisemitic motifs in the charter, especially the quotes from the protocol of the Elders of Zion, there are also positive statements about the Jews as well. If this is so, why don't they change the charter. Arab factors who lead the organization, including Mahmoud al-Zahar who heads the organization, stand believe that the charter represents the symbols of the organization and therefore there is no room to change it. (Abu Sway, 2017, 124) Abu Sway agrees that in their world of Jewish concepts, the differences between the meanings of these names — Jews, Zionists and Israelis — have been blurred when they appear in Hamas advertisements. This is not on purpose. It stems from the continuation of the conflict. According to him, Hamas' description of the enemy as a Jew is not necessarily Judeophobia. It is however useful to point out that Palestinians and others should select precise terms and synonyms and not confuse Judaism with Zionism. Palestinian leaders have no problem making a distinction between the two when and if they need to. (Abu Sway 2017, p. 124)

Other complaints deal with the Jewish occupation of the West Bank, the abuse of Palestinian prisoners and the Judaization of Jerusalem — turning Jerusalem Jewish by removing the original residents. But the most widespread complaint is the feeling that the Jews will destroy the Temple Mount (*al-Haram al-Šarīf*), and build in its stead the new Holy Temple which they call *al-Haykal al-mazoum*, (the imaginary temple). (Al-Qarađāwi, 2012; Zanati, 2010, pp. 63-111; al-Yousef, 2017, p. 56) Al-Yousef also quoted David Ben Gurion, Israel's first prime minister who said: "There is no meaning to Israel without Jerusalem and there is no meaning to Jerusalem without the Haikal." (al-Yousef, 2017, p. 53)

An additional argument is that in 2012 the Israeli parliament, the Knesset, made a decision to divide the Temple Mount between the Jews and the Muslims in regard to time and place of prayer similar to what existed in the Cave of the Patriarchs where there is separation between the entrance of the Jews and the Muslims. In the eyes of Hamas, the fact that the Jews can now go up to the Temple Mount is a violation of the status quo even though Jews are not allowed to pray there and their visiting times are severely limited.

They also see this as a Jewish attempt to control the Temple Mount. (al-Yousef, 2017, p. 58) In addition, Yahyah Sinwar, the current Hamas leader of the Gaza Strip, in his speech of April 30, 2022, defined the Jews visiting the Temple Mount as part of a trend of the Jews taking control over al-Aqsa. To them, this justifies the terrible attacks inside of Israel. Twenty-two Jewish lives were taken since the beginning of 2022, up until the time of his speech (Sinwar 2022).

The process of the Judaization of Jerusalem that exists according to Hamas advertisements since the establishment of Jerusalem (Sinwar, 2022) is seen as a part of a religious campaign against the Muslims (al-Yousef, 2017, pp. 53-54). Their response to this is jihad which they believe will protect the Islamic holy places and save the Muslim world from the Jews. (Bartal 2016, pp. 229-265)

How will this saving occur? When it comes to weapons and equipment availability, the Palestinians find themselves in an inferior position to that of Israel. Since 2014, the Palestinians have adopted the theory of the Islamic Revolution of Umar Abd al-Hakim, nicknamed, Abu Mus'ab al-Suri. (Bartal, 2017, pp. 15-16, 72) Abu Mus'ab al-Suri is an ideologist of the Islamic State. His 1,600-page book won widespread distribution in the Arab world. In this book he calls for a new Islamic revolution and a change in the operational theory of the Islamic organizations while examining the military systems of Palestine, Chechnya, and other places. In a cold analysis of the reality, he concludes that the chance of an Islamic terrorist organization succeeding against the stronger forces of the West are low. The solution, in his opinion, is hidden in a widespread attack on the enemy, sort of a war of attrition of small attacks that do not stop, and which include many who are willing to sacrifice themselves for the goal. The use of individual terrorism, (*jihad al-irhab al-fardi*) and secret operational activity of small units totally separated from each other, is the way to deal with America and its allies (including Israel). (Lia 2014, pp. 371-439; Abd al-Hakim, 2004, pp. 1367-1404)

The method of Global Islamic Resistance considers fighting God's invader enemies and those who help them and fight Muslims along with them, to be an individual duty like prayer and almsgiving. The timing of performing this duty under the present conditions is regarded immediate. The only obligation is to embrace Islam. As the Prophet Muhammad peace and blessing upon him said: "Embrace Islam, then fight." (Lia 2014, p. 428; Abd al-Hakim, 2004, p. 1397)

Among the tools available in order to maintain enthusiasm levels and move the population to activities of "individual terror," these same revolutionary factors are using social media. (Stern and Berger, 2016, pp. 24, 60-61; Abd al-Hakim, 2004)

Already between the years of 1990-1991, Hamas adopted this model of individual terror and used it. As an example, Umar abu Sirhan, a Hamas activist, carried out a stabbing attack in the first *intifada*. This activity opened the "first "knife *intifada*" that was announced by Hamas. Hamas called the use of the terror by individuals "white terror" (al-Yusuf, 2017; Al-Baba, 2010, pp. 80-



85). Since then, from time to time, according to Hamas' policy there have been waves of attacks from lone organizational attackers who are influenced by the calls of their Hamas leaders to carry out these attacks against Israelis. A good example is the attack which took place on April 30, 2022. Yahyah Sinwar, turned to the Palestinians in Jerusalem and in the West Bank and asked them to continue carrying out terror attacks against Israeli targets. (Sinwar, 2022) Hamas' purpose is not only to hurt soldiers or policemen but to hurt any Jew who lives in Palestine no matter what sector he comes from or whatever his age or sex. (Al-Yusuf, 2017, pp. 106-107)

Hamas makes no distinction between Judaism and Zionism, and uses Zionists and Jews synonymously and interchangeably. Judaism is a "religion that stipulates racism and hostility towards others in its books and incites to unjustly usurp Palestine under the slogan of the Holy Land." Zionism, according to this view, transforms these Jewish ideas into reality. Likewise, terrorism is an integral and inherent pillar of Judaism, which stems from the teaching of the Torah, and which finds its expression in the Zionist massacres in Palestine. (Litvak, 2005)

Hamas' main belief is also expressed in the official announcements of the organization which was already publicized in 1995 under the name "*Filastin al-Muslima*". It was publicized according to which the conflict with the Jews is a divine decree. The struggle is forever and according to the Quran the only way to solve it is through *jihad*.

That is what God decreed upon us that we must live in this period and we will see the rebirth of the Jewish nation. And a Jewish attack on the Holy Land until the Jews will succeed in establishing a state and an entity of their own on the State of Palestine and they covet to rule over all the blessed land that sits between the two rivers of Islam: the Nile and the Porat. Whoever looks at the Jews through the eyes of the Quran will never ever trust them. Whoever walks in the way of *jihad* against the Jews according to the Quran will not turn [to another way] but only to the way of *jihad* alone. Whoever studies the Palestinian problem according to the true meaning of the Quran will not relinquish it. And will not relinquish even a piece of it [from the land of Palestine] and will not carry out a negotiation with the Jews and will not make peace with them. (Al-Khalidi, 1995, p.17)

### **3. Islamic Anti-Jewish Ideology**

Already in the 1940s, the Muslims perceived the Jews as the leaders of world heresy who used their influence to control the world as set out in the booklet,

“The Protocols of the Elders of Zion.” This type of radical Islamic thinking appears in Hajj Muhammad Amin al-Husayni’s booklet against the Jews, *Islam and Judaism*, which appeared in German and Bosnian. (Al-Husayni, 1943) This booklet declares that the Jews have been described as a corrupt, anti-Islamic nation since the beginning of Islam in Medina in the seventh century. The Jews even tried to kill Muhammad a number of times. It was only after Muhammad exiled the Jews, had some Jews from Medina killed, captured Khaybar, exiled and killed the rest of the Jews and succeeded in standing up to the international coalition that rose up against him, that the Islamic empire flourished.

The Jews who fled to Khaybar, however, would not concede defeat and decided to avenge themselves on Muhammad. For that purpose, they turned to other Khaybar Jews and to the Jews of Taima and of Wadi Qura. Together they plotted a conspiracy: With large sums of money, they agitated non-Muslim Arab tribes to attack Medina. When Muhammad discovered their plan, he quickly armed his men and set out toward the plotters’ base in Khaybar. Muhammad’s companions captured Khaybar and expelled most Jews from the site. (Havel, 2015)

In this booklet the Jews are also accused of trying to poison Muhammad with a poisoned sheep. Muhammad did not eat the sheep but his taster who did eat it was poisoned and died a slow death. When the Jews saw that they could not beat Muhammad in battle, they began to incite non-Muslims and Muslims against the believers. The Mufti Hajj Muhammad Amin al-Husayni (d. 1974) summarized it thusly: “That idea has been even better expressed by words of Muhammad: ‘It will never be possible for you to see a Muslim and a Jew together without a secret intention in the [heart of the] Jew to destroy the Muslim.’”(Havel 2015)

Among all the anti-Jewish religious leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood, the leader who presented his hatred for the Jews in the most convincing philosophical manner and who enabled the generations that followed him to also hate the Jews was Sayyid Qutb. During the 1950s, Sayyid Qutb, who was the main philosopher of the Muslim Brotherhood, publicized his book, *Our War against the Jews*. In this book he determined that Jews stood behind every conspiracy against Islam.

The Islamic nation has never stopped suffering from the Jewish plots and their deceptions. Already [at the beginning of Islam] the forefathers of the nation suffered from the frauds and the intrigues of the Jews. Despite the fact that the Muslim nation doesn’t receive any benefits [from their battle against the

Jews], with all the sorrow in this Qur'anic battle and with the direct guidance of Islam [that are derived from them]. (Qutb, 1993, p.20)

The Palestinian Islamic organizations, headed by Hamas and the Islamic Jihad, adopted this hatred of the Jews. There is a clear connection between Qutb's antisemitic ideology from the 1950s to the Hamas antisemitism that is also described in the Hamas Charter. (Tibi, 2010) The Jews are seen as a threatening factor and an enemy of Islamic order as defined by Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaraḍāwi. Today, al-Qaraḍāwi is considered to be the spiritual leader of the Muslim Brotherhood as well as Hamas activists who give him the respect of kings. In a visit to Gaza in May 2013, the Hamas and the Islamic Jihad activists paid him a lot of respect. Ismail Haniyya, the leader of the Hamas government at that time and head of the political bureau of Hamas today, worked very hard during that visit as he served as a close aide to Qaraḍāwi throughout the entire visit. (Bartal and Robinstein-Shemer, 2018, pp. 73-98) In his book *The Enemies of the Islamic Order*, al-Qaraḍāwi spends a whole chapter on the danger that the Jews but he does not really differentiate between Zionists and Jews. Qaraḍāwi mainly quotes traditions that relate to the relationship of the Prophet Mohammad and the Jews of the Saudi Peninsula in the seventh century AD. (al-Qaraḍāwi, 2001, pp. 61-83) In 2011, the Hamas organization even publicized a thick book that Isma'il Haniyya, edited along with others. In this book Qaraḍāwi good attributes are mentioned along with approval for his support over the years for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. (Haniyya et al., 2012)

Qaraḍāwi describes the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from an historical point of view. He argues that it is a continuation of the war which began in the days of Muhammad and the Jews of Medina. "War with the descendants of monkeys and pigs and the workers of the Ta'ath [a nickname for the Jews according to the Quran]." (Qaraḍāwi, 2001, pp. 61-62) In this way, Qaraḍāwi continues the Qutb commentary regarding the roots of the Jewish-Muslim conflict. (Qutb, 1993, pp. 30-36)

Qaraḍāwi argues that Judaism was hostile to Islam from its beginning — even when Islam was not yet hostile to Judaism. Just the opposite. In the Quran, the Jews and the Christians are called "The People of the Book," due to the celestial revelation that they were privileged to see. According to Quran 2:285, "Faith in all of the prophets and the Holy Books that were brought down by Allah requires every Muslim to believe in Moses and his Torah as a holy book as part of the Muslim faith." As a result of this attitude, when Muhammad reached Medina, he organized the relationship between the Muslims

who came with him from Mecca with the residents of Medina — including three Jewish tribes in a contract called “The Contract of the Nation” (*A’ad al-Ummah*). But very soon, the faulty nature of the Jews appeared and tribe after tribe broke the covenant with Muhammad.

The *Banu Quraytha*, tribe made an agreement with the *Mushrikūn*, (an Arabian polytheistic sect who opposed Muhammad and his Muslims), who besieged and attacked Medina in a battle that took place in 627 AD. The *al-Khaybar*, preferred to sign an agreement with the Mushrikūn infidels instead of being loyal to the Muslims who believed what is documented in Quran 51-2:4. For these reasons, the Muslims were forced to fight the traitorous Jews in order to enable the true religion. The war of the Muslims against the Jews, is not just a military-political war but also an ideologic, religious and moral one. (Qaradawi 2010)

In a speech given by Yusuf Al-Qaradāwi on the *al-Jazeera* website on January 28, 2009 and also publicized on the site of the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades (the military arm of the Hamas organization), he said the following:

I pray to Allah that he will grant me, not at the end of my life, the chance to reach Palestine the land of struggle and *jihad* and not in a wheelchair in order for me to shoot at the enemies of Allah, the Jews. And then as a reaction will throw a bomb at me and then I will finish my life as a martyr in the land of Palestine and I will praise Allah for this. (Al-Qaradāwi 2009)

In his view, an act of terror against the Jews is not an act of terror in the western definition of the word but an observance of a religious commandment from Allah. The Jews are the true terrorists.

Hamas and the Islamic Jihad are not terrorist organizations. Hamas protects the motherland, defends its land, its nation, its people and it protects its honor...The so-called terror by Hamas is justified terrorism according to the law and is not terror in the accepted meaning of the word. But is more in line with deterrence of the enemy. This is the meaning of Quran sura 8: 6 — *terhaboun beu ‘adou allawa- ‘adoukum* (to thereby terrify Allah’s enemies and your enemies). (Al-Qaradāwi, 2003, vol. 5, p. 144)

According to Muslim Brotherhood scholars such as Sheik Yusuf Al-Qaradāwi and others from al-Qaida and ISIS ideologies, the Jews are the real terrorists as they have established a state based on terror, one that is illegitimate (*ghair mashro’a*), evil and is filled with arrogant terrorist oppressors. These expressions are the basis for the *fatwa* that permits Muslims to hurt every Jew no matter where in Israel he lives. As Israel is defined as a military society,

permission is given to carry out suicide attacks against Israeli citizens without differentiating between them. (Israeli, 2003, pp. 185-186; Patterson, 2015, pp. 80-106) Islamic scholars also adopted European tropes such as holocaust denial. For example, the Jews consciously invented the “Auschwitz lie,” the “hoax” of their own extermination as part of a diabolical plan to overwhelm Islam and achieve world domination. In this surrealistic, super-Machiavellian scenario, the satanic archetype of the conspiratorial Jew — author and beneficiary of the greatest “myth” of the 20<sup>th</sup> century — achieves a gruesome and novel apotheosis.” (Wistrich, 2013, p. 12)

Another Egyptian Islamic scholar, Sheikh Muhammad Hussein Yaqoub (b. 1956), put it clearly:

If the Jews left Palestine to us, would we start loving them? Of course, not... They would have been enemies even if they didn't occupy a thing... Our fighting with the Jews is eternal, and it will not end... until not a single Jew remains on the face of the Earth... As for you Jews the curse of Allah upon you, you pigs of the earth! (Patterson, 2015, p. 80)

#### **4. The Palestinian – Umya Joha Caricatures**

As we saw, antisemitism is a major pillar in the ideology of Hamas which perceives and articulates its conflict with Israel in absolutist religious terms. In the world of caricatures, the image of the Jew is influenced by classic European antisemitism. For the most part, the Jew is described with a long nose and a face that is slightly twisted. A very talented caricaturists who stands out in Palestinian society is Umya Faiz Joha, a resident of Gaza. Umya is a graduate of the al-Azhar University in Gaza and, according to the caricatures that she presents, she is a supporter of the Hamas organization which has controlled the Gaza Strip since 2007. Her two husbands were killed, one at a time, by Israel. Her first husband was killed in 2003 as a result of a terrorist attack in which he took part on behalf of the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades. After she remarried, her second husband died in 2009 as a result of a background explosion that took place as part of the rounds of fighting in Gaza. Umya is very active not only in the newspapers but also on Hamas internet websites, Twitter and Instagram. She has won wide recognition throughout the Arab and Muslim world. (Al-Hilu, 2020) She usually criticizes the policy of the West which has surrendered to normalization with Israel, criticizes the Palestinian President, Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), due to his relationship with Israel and other inner-Palestinian issues. In regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Arabs in her caricatures are not just anti-Israel but anti-Semitic and remind us of other caricatures from Europe where the Jew is seen as a

threatening and satanic character. Attached here are a number of examples that were publicized between the years 2020-2021 which present the Jews as a danger to the Arab world due to the normalization agreement of Israel with other Arab States (The Arab Emeritus, Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco). (Joha Facebook March 22, 2022)

In the caricature on the left, the Jews and the State of Israel are described as a black wolf who is plotting against the Arabs while the Arab world desire to hug him. Written above: “In the lap of normalization.”

In the caricature on the right one sees Israel represented by the Angel of Death with the symbol of the shield of David. Peace with the Arab world is a death trap. Written above the Arab Emeritus: “The normalization with Israel in order in order to put an end to terror.”



Facebook page of Umya Faiz Joha, September 14, 2021

Those caricatures and others present the struggle as an unbridgeable dichotomy between two absolutes: A “war of religion and faith” between Islam and Judaism and between Muslims and Jews, rather than one between Palestinians and Israelis or Zionists. It is a historical, religious, cultural and existential conflict between the true religion, which supersedes all previous religions, i.e., Islam, and the abrogated superseded religion, Judaism. It is a war between good personified by the Muslims who represent the party of God (Hizballah) against “evil incarnated... the party of Satan” (*hizb al-shaytan*) represented by the Jews. (Litvak, 2005)

Even when Israel offers peace, it is a bad agreement that drips with blood. Israel is not a negotiating factor but just an evil factor that will increase the bloodshed. Thus, for example, the caricature that was published on March 7<sup>th</sup> which described Israel’s attempt to negotiate between Russia and the Ukraine

showed Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennet attempting to negotiate peace. The caption reads: “Israel, the Dove of Peace for Russia.” In the caricature we see the President of the Ukraine, Vladimir Zelensky, wearing a hat of a clown as he is practically strangled by the “Dove of Peace” which is holding him. On the dove is a Star of David. (Joha, Facebook March. 22, 2022)



Facebook page of Umya Faiz Joha, March 22, 2022

The blood libel is also included in Umya Joha’s work. The libel, which states that the Jews drink the blood of Christians and bake the blood of little Christian children into the dough used for baking the Matzos used for the Passover holiday, has become widespread even among Islamic and Palestinian bodies. (Karsh, 2006, 1-5) In the caricature below, one which was publicized close to the Jewish New Year (Rosh Hashana) contains all the classic antisemitic stereotypes which existed throughout the generations in both the Arab and Christian worlds. The picture is of a Jew against the background of an Israeli flag who is drinking blood poured from two goblets upon which is written: “The slaughter of the Palestinian people.” This is a not-so-subtle allusion to Jewish blood libels. (*Sawaleif website*, 2021)

Maḥmūd az-Zahhār, who served as Hamas’ foreign minister in the Hamas-dominated Palestinian Authority Government of March 2006, described the Jews in a very antisemitic way. In his book, “No Future among the Nations” (az-Zahhār, 2010), writes that the roots of Jewish expulsions from all European countries over the centuries were because of “their involvement in assassinating their Caesars and rulers. The Jews were the first ones to become antisemites.” Az-Zahhār also blames the Jews with a blood libel -- that Israel kills Palestinians and drinks their blood. This is classic antisemitism that no one should justify. (Abu Sway, 2017, p. 125)

Of course, no mention is made of what slaughter or what cause started the war between the Jews and the State of Israel and the Palestinian Arab people. The demon is the Jew. Umya just continues the traditions of Hamas publications that employ harsh derogatory descriptions of the Jews, often taken from the Koran, such as “blood suckers,” “brothers of apes,” “killers of the prophets,” “human pigs,” “warmongers, the descendants of treachery and deceit,” and “butchers.” They are a “cancer expanding” in the land of Palestine, “threatening the entire Islamic world.” They are “spreading corruption” in the land of Islam. “Deceit and usury are stamped in their nature,” and they are all “thieves, monopolists, and usurers. (Litvak, 2005)



Sawaleif.com website, September 19, 2021

What is the solution to the State of the Jews? In the caricature below, Umya Joha adopts the position of Sheikh Bassam Jarrar, one of the Hamas leaders in the West Bank. His approach is expressed in his book “The Destruction of Israel in the Year 2022,” which was written in Marj al-Zahour in southern Lebanon where he was exiled from Israel in December 1992 together with additional Hamas and Islamic Jihad activists. The numerical Arabic equivalent of the name Banu Israil and the al-Aqsa Mosque is 361. The only sura in the Quran where both of these expressions appear together is in Sura 17 where one can find hints and expressions about the future of the struggle with Israel. (Jarar, 1993, pp. 88-89) His starting point is based on the Islamic and Jewish commentaries on “The Book of Leviticus” on the meaning of keeping the Sabbatical year (letting the land lay fallow):

I will make the land desolate; and your foes who dwell upon it will be desolate. And you I will scatter among the nations. I will unsheathe the sword after you; your land will be desolate and



your cities will be in ruin. Then the land will be appeased for its sabbaticals during all the years of its desolation, while you are in the land of your foes, then the land will rest and it will appease for its sabbaticals. All the years of its desolation it will rest, whatever it did not rest during your sabbaticals when you dwelled upon her. (Leviticus 27:32-35)

The exile after the destruction of the first temple lasted 70 years due to the failure of the Children of Israel to keep 70 sabbaticals according to the commentary by Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki (Rashi) Leviticus 27:35. Sheikh Jarrar says that the matter of the years of sabbaticals is also critical for our generation in order to calculate the lifespan of the State of Israel. (Jarar, 1993, pp. 84-85)

According to Jarrar, the first time that Jewish control ended was in the year 586 BCE when the first temple was destroyed. From 586 BCE, until the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, there were 361 sabbatical years. This number is the same as the numerical equivalent of the name Banu Isrā'il and of the al-Aqsa Mosque. From the year 586 BCE, until the Six Day War in 1967, there were 364 Sabbaticals like the numerical equivalent of the name Banu Isrā'il in the accepted Ottoman script. After the entry onto the Temple Mount and the capture of Jerusalem, the Children of Israel entered the 365<sup>th</sup> sabbatical year since the year 586 BCE.

Sura 17 explains that Israel will only exist for a short time. "And indeed, they were about to drive you from the land to evict you from there. And then [when they do], they will not remain [there] after you, except for a little." (Quran, 17:76)

What will be the length of time of Israel's existence? Sheikh Jarrar explains that the meaning of verse 76 is in reality 76 years of *hajra* (Islamic years) that are counted as lunar years. In other words, the *hijra* year 1443 will be 76 years for the State of Israel and this will fall in the year 2022. Due to the differences that exist between the Gregorian calendar and the Islamic calendar, 76 Islamic years are in actuality 74 regular years. Verse 77, which has 11 words in the original Arabic, defines the period of time for the existence of the State of Israel: (Jarar 1993, 90-93) "That is Our] established way for those We had sent before you of Our messengers; and you will not find in Our way any alteration." (Quran, 17:77)

Every word represents a sabbatical year. After Israel enters its 11th sabbatical year, it will be destroyed. A quick calculation reveals that from 1948 we are now in 2022 and have already been in the 11<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical year that started on September 9, 2021 and ends on September 25, 2022. The destruction of the

State of Israel, according to Sheikh Jarrar's system, will occur at the end of the seventh year as it appears in length in the Talmud regarding the destruction of the first and second temples. (Babylonian Talmud, Arachin 12, pp. 31-71) Umya Joha described what she thinks will happen to Israel until September 2022. According to her, the end of Israel is inevitable.



Facebook page of Umya Faiz Joha, March 1, 2022.

Does Israel have any chance to protect itself from its inevitable destruction by the Islamic resistance and from its destiny according the Quranic prophecy? Not according to Umya Joha. In another caricature that was published at the end of 2018, Umya drew Benjamin Netanyahu, Israel's Prime Minister, as a bird with a with a long nose trying without success to hurt a hand that is holding a weapon. In the caricature she writes: "Israel's miserable attempts to weaken the *muqawama*" (resistance). (*Sawaleif website*, 2018)

Umya expresses the Hamas' feelings that, *jihad* against the Jews is a prerequisite for fulfilling God's promise to establish His rule over the earth. Citing the tradition (*hadith*) of the Saltbush, the Hamas Charter states that the final hour will not come until the day when the Muslims will fight the Jews and kill them. Lest the meaning of this passage remain unclear, Hamas author Mukhlis Barzaq pointed to the fact that the Prophet had killed more Jews than any other infidels during his wars. The Prophet revealed in a "firmly established Tradition" how the Jews should be handled if they betray the Muslims, and he ordered his followers to carry it out without any feelings of sorrow for this "detested group". He made it clear that the fate of the Jews should be "complete killing, total extermination and eradicating perdition (*al-qatl al-tam wal-ibada al-kamila wal-fana' al-mahiq*).” Perhaps equally significant, considering its intended readership, is the editorial in *al-Fatih*, Hamas' children's publication,

appealing to the children of Iraq to pray to God and ask him “O God exterminate the Jews, the tyrannical, the usurpers” (*Allahuma, ahlik al-yahud al-zalimin al-mughtasibin*). (Litvak, 2005) Is this genocide in the future or will arrive by the end of 2022 or during any other year after this date?

In the last survey made in March 2022, the vast majority of the Palestinians — 73 percent — believe that the Qur’an contains a prophecy on the demise of the State of Israel, while 22 percent say it does not. A majority of 57 percent do not believe the assessment stated by a number of Qur’anic scholars, that verses in the Qur’an predict the exact year of the demise of Israel and that it is the year 2022. Only 32 percent say they believe that. The belief in the existence of the prophecy is higher in the West Bank where 74 percent believe and in the Gaza Strip 70 percent. Among the believers, 82 percent are Hamas supporters. (PCPSR 2022)



Sawaleif.com website, December 20, 2018.

## 5. Conclusions

Hamas is described in many research papers as a national Islamic movement whose purpose is the immediate freeing of Palestine from the foreign conqueror. Hamas is described as a religious version of the anti-colonist resistance movement. But, a closer examination of Hamas’ literature and its supporters shows that we are talking about a movement that is antisemitic or one where the hatred of Jews is an integral part of the ideology of the organization. In Hamas literature the Jew is described as the leading factor that rules over world politics and this is in the creative spirit of the fake antisemitism of the “Protocols of the Elders of Zion” which are mentioned in the Hamas Charter. The entry of Jews onto the Temple Mount is described by Hamas factors as impurity that enters the mosque. This is despite the fact that the Temple Mount is

✗ in in  
✓ in

the holiest place for the Jews. In Muslim literature and in different caricatures on various Hamas sites, the Jews are described as bloodsuckers. Apparently, this antisemitic description has its origins in European antisemitic culture as shown by Maḥmūd az-Zahhār who is described above. In light of this, it is no surprise that any agreement with the Jews is described as an agreement with the people of Satan as Umya Joha described well in the caricatures that she drew.

The antisemitic approach of Hamas is absorbed from the world views and Islamic commentary as it relates to the Jews that were publicized by religion leaders with great and constant influence from among the Muslim Brotherhood. In regard to this topic, the Mufti Haj Muhammad al-Husayni, the father of Palestinian nationalism from the days of the British mandate who stood himself as head of the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood in Palestine that was established in the 1940s and also Sayyid Qutb and Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaraḍāwi, show light on the roots of religious hatred between Muslim and Jews according to the understanding of Hamas who express it in different ways. One of the many ways of expressing the antisemitic attitude of the Hamas organization and what stands behind it is through caricatures which is very accepted in the Arab world and in general as a tool to spread cultural messages. As far as this is concerned, Umya Joha is not an individual incident but is one incident that shows the attitude of the many. Umya Joha is one's own flesh and blood of the Hamas organization and her personal life has turned into a life as the "widow of the martyrs" whose husbands died one after another.

As long as the Palestinian-Israeli struggle continues, there is a tendency to adapt more antisemitic symbols in regard to the Jews which will only continue more forcefully with continued bloodshed between Jews and Muslims in the Holy Land.

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