

Islamic Resistance Movement

Hammas

Studies of
Thought & Experience

Editor

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Chapter Three

*Hamas' Conceptualization of the Other
Its stance towards Judaism, Jews, Zionism, Zionists
and Israel*

Prof. Mustafa Abu Sway

Hamis' Conceptualization of the Other

Its Stance Towards Judaism, Jews, Zionism, Zionists and Israel

*Introduction*¹

Is there a connection between conflict and the creation/ spread of stereotyped images about certain groups or parties? Does every time a religious, ethnic or national entity is mentioned critically or negatively constitute a demeaning narrative? Is there a possibility of objective criticism of these cases? One thing seems to be universal; every community suffers from cruel and denigrating narratives, which continue to fuel conflicts.

As for the choice of the term "Judeophobia" or the "fear of Jews" instead of "anti-Semitism" in this paper, for the most part, it is because Arabs are Semites, although beyond the oneness of humanity, almost everything else is a "social" construct, including colonial anthropological racial categories. The statement that "color is skin deep" might still have some negative connotations because there is an assumption that "skin color" is not appreciated in all cases, and that one could only recognize the equality of human beings beyond the skin façade. The Qur'an goes one step further by declaring these colors as positive signs from *Allah*, and as signs positively pointing to Him:

*"And of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your languages and your colors. Indeed in that are signs for those of knowledge."*²

The Qur'an invites people to celebrate these differences. No one is superior because of her genome. Speaking from an Islamic perspective, all "skins" being equal, only faith and moral action can make a difference. How could one discriminate against another or persecute someone else because of her physical appearance, including imagined and constructed appearance (as in stereotyped images) let alone committing the heinous crime of massacres and genocide?

¹ Although this introduction seems to be relatively long, and does not serve directly the purpose of this research, the writer believes that it is very important to understand the points in question.

² *Surat Ar-Rum* (The Romans): 22, <http://quran.com/30>

One has to be objective in assessing this sensitive topic; there should be no double standards when addressing the same phenomenon. This paper will address Hamas' narrative vis-à-vis Judaism, Jews, Zionism, Zionists and Israel. I will try to deconstruct or respond to major "Judeophobic" statements when possible, with these responses being based primarily on Islamic sources and principles, and a deep understanding of the Palestinian context in which such statements are constructed.

We shall begin with two examples, one "Islamophobic" or "fear of Islam" and the other "Judeophobic," simply to show that these two narratives are similar as they dehumanize and demean the other:

Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, spiritual leader of the Shas party, the largest ultra-Orthodox Israeli political party, declared on August 2000 that [at the time] Prime Minister Ehud Barak has "no sense" because he is trying to make peace with the Palestinians, who are "snakes." Yosef was speaking in his weekly Saturday night sermon broadcast over the party's radio stations and is even beamed overseas by satellite. Yosef, who ordered Shas to quit the coalition with Prime Minister Barak as the latter was leaving for Camp David's summit to hold negotiations with the Palestinians, described the Arabs as "snakes" interested mainly in murdering Jews. Yosef wondered "What kind of peace is this?" "Will you put them beside us? You are bringing snakes beside us. ... Will we make peace with a snake?"³

A preacher delivering the Friday sermon at al-Jami' al-Kabir mosque in the city of Khan Yunis, in the Hamas controlled GS, which was aired on Al-Aqsa TV on 24/2/2012, a media outlet that must be associated with Hamas on one level or the other, said about Jews: "A bunch of the grandchildren of the apes and pigs."

As for Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, his theology of exploitation vis-à-vis Gentiles (a category that includes Palestinians) is that they were "born to serve Jews" and that "Goyim have no place in the world only to serve the People of Israel."⁴

The Muslim Imam's anti-Jew position is a constructed phrase that distorts and betrays the Qur'anic message, such as in the following verse:

³ Site of ABC News, 6/8/2000, <http://abcnews.go.com/US/story?id=96252>

⁴ *Haaretz* newspaper, 20/10/2010.

“And you had already known about those who transgressed among you concerning the Sabbath, and We said to them, ‘Be apes, despised’.”⁵ The context for this Divine punishment is upholding the sanctity of the Sabbath. Muslims also have their “mini-Sabbath”; they are also required not to do business during the Friday prayer,⁶ and those who violate this Divine commandment obviously did not benefit from the story about transgressing on Sabbath in the Qur’an.

One can add that this Imam’s statement is a direct and stark negation of the status bestowed on humanity, which *Allah* dignified:

“And We have certainly honored (*karramna*) the children of Adam....”⁷ Furthermore, the Qur’an addresses all mankind saying:

“O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted.”⁸

This behavior of the Friday preacher reflects part of folk literature, widespread among Arabs and Muslims, which means to belittle the status of Jews as a reaction against the attacks perpetrated by the Israeli occupation and its usurpation of the Palestinian people’s land and rights. But it does not accurately reflect the understanding of the Islamic Shari‘ah (Islamic law), which treats Jews as People of the Book, who have their own rules and precepts, including citizenship, protection and full civil rights. It is also known among Muslim scholars that those of the children of Israel, who, because of their sins, were transformed into monkeys and pigs, died and left no children or grandchildren.

“That you may know each other” (*lita‘arafu*) became the banner that many prominent contemporary Muslim scholars raised as the antithesis of Samuel Huntington’s *Clash of Civilizations*, a thesis that saw a future engulfed in a clash based on cultural differences, rather than economic and material resources, including land clash. The latter is usually occupied and confiscated to the detriment of indigenous people, such as the Palestinians who include indigenous Jews,

⁵ *Surat al-Baqarah* (The Cow): 65, <http://quran.com/2>

⁶ *Surat al-Jumu‘ah* (The Congregation, Friday): 9, <http://quran.com/62>

⁷ *Surat al-Isra’* (The Night Journey): 70, <http://quran.com/17>

⁸ *Surat al-Hujurat* (The Rooms): 13, <http://quran.com/49>

Christians and Muslims. “That you may know each other” is understood as the norm where different people are invited to subscribe to *convivencia*, to live in peace and harmony together and not to despise each other.

The Qur’an, furthermore, designates a special status for the People of the Book, a beautiful affirmative action that manifests itself in social and economic openness and, most importantly, confirming the original theological common roots of all revelations, despite the fact that the post-revelational constructs put by the scholars of each faith took Jews, Christians and Muslims in different directions. Vagaries of transmission coupled with human subjectivity increase the distance between the various communities and produce new collectives.

The essential story of Jewish suffering in modern times is European per se. Karl Marx writing about the Jewish question reflects the unwelcoming ethos that prevailed in Europe. The pogroms in Russia and the publication of the so called *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* were clearly Judeophobic, and the latter generated or provided support for fraudulent theories of an international Jewish conspiracy, with the underlying message denouncing Jews as disloyal citizens. The “voelkisch movement” which included German intellectuals and reject what is foreign, viewed the Jewish spirit as alien to Germandom—shaped a notion of the Jew as “non-German.” They considered Jews as outsiders.

This is similar to the “Islamophobes” in the US who portray US Muslims as disloyal citizens who have a conspiracy to rule the US (and Canada and Europe) and along with them Arabs and Palestinians who are considered as “outsiders” and savages who are not compatible with the civilized west. The “Islamophobes” vilify all the key words pertaining to Islam, including Shari‘ah (Islamic law) are doing to the Muslims exactly the same thing that was done by the authors of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, and members of the “voelkisch movement” to the Jews. What else one would make out of Robert Spencers’ *The Truth about Muhammad: Founder of the World’s Most Intolerant Religion*, and *Stealth Jihad: How Radical Islam is Subverting America without Guns or Bombs*. Pamela Geller co-founded the “Stop the Islamization of America” with Robert Spencer, and campaigned against Park 51 Islamic community center in New York, near Ground Zero. In the aftermath of the massacre (77 total killed) committed by Norwegian terrorist Behring Breivik, Geller said that the camp were the youth who were killed gathered was an anti-Israel indoctrination center. Behring Breivik praised Pamela Geller’s blog in his manifesto. This shows the direct influence of “Islamophobes”

over the minds and souls of many people. Britain just banned Geller and Spencer by the Home Secretary's Office from entering the United Kingdom (UK) because their presence "is not conducive to the public good."⁹

The rise of Nazis to power in Germany signaled trouble to Jews who began to lose their citizenship rights and privileges, only to be followed by Kristallnacht (The night in which the windows of Jewish-owned stores were smashed) on 9–10/11/1938, resulting in hundreds of damaged synagogues, thousands of homes and businesses, many deaths and the incarceration of thousands of Jews. The worst was yet to come; the Jews (and the Polish and the gypsies...) suffered from pre-planned and systematically carried out genocide. The Jews should have been protected from the Nazis, but the powers that could have made a difference didn't act immediately.

One of the most important and difficult issues when one is discussing modern Jewish suffering is the shift to the root of contemporary Palestinian suffering at the hands of Zionists and those who support them. But who are their major supporters? On 22/2/2013, Rabbi Michael Lerner, editor of *Tikkun Magazine*, commented on Uri Avnery's article, *The Fantasy of an American Peace Initiative to end the Israel/Palestine struggle*, he said:

The Israel Lobby is not primarily AIPAC [The American Israel Public Affairs Committee] and the Jewish world, but the tens of millions of Christian Zionists who mistakenly believe that the best way to be friends with the Jewish people until Jesus returns and forces all Jews to convert or go to suffering eternally in hell is to give a blank slate of approval to whatever the Israeli government decides to do, including holding on forever to its Occupation. AIPAC takes the credit (or blame) for its hold on American foreign policy, but the Christian Zionists are the ones who deliver the Congress for Israel (and even J Street, the well-intentioned voice of some liberal Jews, often ends up being so concerned to prove its pro-Israel credentials that it doesn't often stand up to the clammer from AIPAC and the Christian Zionists, and instead lobbies for the aid package for Israel to NOT be conditional on ending the Occupation).

Beginning with the First Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland, in 1897, the 200 western Zionist delegates who arrived in formal dress, tails and white ties, along

⁹ *The Washington Times* newspaper, 27/6/2013.

with ten non-Jews, began working on the establishment of a Jewish nation-state in Palestine. The Zionist's influence over Britain was reflected with the iconic Balfour Declaration on 2/11/1917:

His Majesty's government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing *non-Jewish communities* (emphasis is mine!) in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.

It is this denial of the indigenous Arab Palestinian people of the Land of Canaan and reducing them to the nameless "non-Jewish communities" that continues to be the core issue. Forgotten are old Jericho, the first city in the world dating back 10 thousand years ago, and Jebus, the city of Arab Canaanites before the old and new testaments were revealed, which is being reproduced as the City of David. But even if there were no Palestinians in existence except for Ghassan Kanafani, who would write in 1969 "*Return to Haifa*" in which he reflects the complexity of the *Nakbah*, the Palestinian catastrophe, that is still unfolding since 1948, he would have qualified as a people and not as a non-Jewish community!

And the Palestinians fell under the colonial British Mandate that prepared the ground for the establishment of Israel. The Palestinians were ethnically cleansed and forced to exile and massacred, as in Deir Yassin and other places, paving the way for demolishing and wiping out more than 400 Palestinian villages off the map. Mosques and Churches were destroyed or desecrated. Moreover, about 800 thousand Palestinians out of 1.4 million Palestinians (57.1%) were expelled from their land during the 1948 war. The ethnic cleansing continues but this time using laws that target the Palestinians. Israel admitted revoking the ID's of tens of thousands of Palestinians since the 1967 war until now. East Jerusalemites continue to suffer from this policy. In 2008 alone, 4,577 Palestinians from East Jerusalem lost their ID's and they were expelled from the city of their birth. They can only visit now as tourists, if the Israeli Authorities grant them visas at border crossings.

A Peruvian church that was converted to Judaism and subsequently "returned" as part of the "Aliyah" to Palestine, ended up settlers in the WB!¹⁰ Native Americans replacing native Palestinians! What a *chutzpah*?

¹⁰ *How 90 Peruvians became the latest Jewish settlers, The Guardian newspaper, 7/8/2002.*

The Zionist project led to the emergence of many Palestinian resistance movements and parties. While the right to resist occupation is entrenched in International Law, not every action against it is legitimate and not every narrative is acceptable. This paper deals with the latter. It does not claim to be comprehensive covering all statements and narratives attributed to Hamas or its leaders.

The Charter of Hamas

Dr. Ahmad Yusuf, the former adviser of Isma'il Haniyyah who is the head of the government ruling the GS, wrote an article in Arabic titled "*Mithaq Hamas... Al-Waqi' wa al-Ro'yah wa al-Riwayah*" (The Charter of Hamas... The Reality, the Vision and the Narrative).¹¹ Yusuf began his article by stating that Israel accuses Hamas with being anti-Semitic and that Israel employs certain parts of the Charter out of context. He said that it was written under exceptional circumstances in 1988 as a response to the Israeli occupation, and that its wording was not scrutinized enough and that it reflects the opinion of only one scholar who was the author. He added that Hamas's leadership discussed modifying the Charter in the 1990's, but they decided against the change for fear of being compared to Fatah faction, therefore, being construed as making concessions [to Israel]. The alternative to modifying it was the political platform of the "Change and Reform" bloc, which ran for the PLC elections in 2006, which Yusuf described as pragmatic. It reflected political openness, including the acceptance of a Palestinian state on the 1967 borders, therefore bypassing the Charter. From his perspective, the Charter is a historical document, not a constitution that Hamas has to abide by. The ethos of his article could be detected in his statement: "Our people never denied one day that Jews and Christians form one component of the Palestinian people, and that its land is historically the land of all the prophets". He affirmed, despite the accommodation of certain religious dimensions, that the "current struggle against the occupation is political." The latter statement should be compared to the introduction of Hamas Charter in which it was said that "Our battle against the Jews is very big and dangerous."

¹¹ *Al-Quds* newspaper, Jerusalem, 12/1/2011.

The Charter of Hamas was adopted by its administrative office inside Palestine in 1988, but it was neither adopted officially by its *Shura* Council, nor inside or outside Palestine, knowing that the *Shura* Council is the only body legally authorized to adopt charters and legislations in Hamas. The Charter was respected by Hamas which de facto dealt with it, but at the same time bypassing it. One can say with a degree of certitude that for the last twenty years, some articles of the Charter have fallen out of favor. The narrative coming from some Hamas leaders, such as Khalid Mish'al, has become more sophisticated. In an article that was published by *The Guardian* on 31/1/2006, Mish'al said:

Our message to the Israelis is this: we do not fight you because you belong to a certain faith or culture. Jews have lived in the Muslim world for 13 centuries in peace and harmony; they are in our religion 'the people of the book' who have a covenant from *Allah* and His Messenger Muhammad (peace be upon him) to be respected and protected. Our conflict with you is not religious but political. We have no problem with Jews who have not attacked us—our problem is with those who came to our land, imposed themselves on us by force, destroyed our society and banished our people.

It is true that essentially the Israeli Zionists are Jews, but a generalization concerning the Jews would be a fallacy. There are Jews who are anti-Zionists such as the Haredi or ultra-Orthodox Neturei Karta, and there are their equivalent ultra-Orthodox, yet larger, Agudat Yisrael community, who are non-Zionists but not anti-Israel, and there are secular Jews who are post-Zionists in their worldview, and who seek to de-legitimize the Zionist project as a colonial project. This also shows that to be anti-Zionist is not restricted to the Palestinians, not to mention the Syrians of the Golan Heights and others, who continue to suffer under Israeli occupation.

It should be noted that tolerant statements about Judaism and Christianity are not rare in Hamas literature. Article 31 of the Charter of Hamas states the following:

The Islamic Resistance Movement is a humanistic movement that takes care of human rights and follows the tolerance of Islam with respect to people of other faiths. Never does it attack any of them except who show enmity toward it or stand in its path to stop the movement or waste its efforts. In the shadow of Islam, it is possible for the followers of the three religions— Islam, Christianity and Judaism—to live in peace and harmony...¹²

¹² *Charter of Hamas*, Article 31.

Yet, in the presence of articles in the Charter of Hamas that do contain “Judeophobic” content, attention is diverted by the supporters of Israel and the Zionist project away from good statements that carry a positive humanistic approach. Thus, the Charter should be looked at in its totality. Article 32, for example, associates the Zionist project with the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Such Russian forgeries, as the so called *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* should never be part of any Islamic, Arabic or Palestinian narrative. In fact, it should not be part of any narrative at all, except when addressing modern Russian “Judeophobic” literature. Abdel Wahhab El-Messiri, the late Egyptian intellectual and one of the leaders of the Egyptian Movement for Change, *Kifaya*, in *Al-Protokolat, wa al-Yahudiyyah wa al-Suhyuniyyah* (The Protocols, Judaism and Zionism), reaches the conclusion that the *Protocols* are forgeries based on contextual and textual analysis, and that conspiracy literature is reductionist. He explains that the claim that the Jews maintain and inherit fixed unethical traits, generation after generation, is not compatible with Islam which considers virtue or vice a matter of choice and not a matter of inheritance. He also said that Zionism is rooted in anti-Semitism and western colonialism, and that “Judeophobia,” when translated into persecution, does help Zionism by driving Jews out of their home countries to end up as settlers in Palestine. Another point that el-Messiri puts forward in deconstructing the *Protocols* is that the false claim of Jewish powers plotting to control the world fails to recognize the enormous and comprehensive support that Zionism gets from the US.

It seems that the *Protocols* were part of the discussion between Hamas and a delegation of American “personalities” in Beirut. In what appears to be a good gesture, Musa Abu Marzuq, one of Hamas’ top political leaders, said that Hamas agreed to remove the *Protocols* from its website.¹³

Yet, not all of Hamas leaders are keen to address “Judeophobic” narratives. On 2/3/2009, Al Jazeera program *Akthar min Ra’i* (More than One Opinion) interviewed Sami Abu Zuhri, a Hamas leader, Palestinian Ambassador to the UK Manuel Hasassian and Martin Linton, chair of the Labour Friends of Palestine & the Middle East. Regarding the Charter of Hamas, four times in a row Sami Abu Zuhri dodged the question regarding the “Judeophobic” clauses (Article 22 was used as an example), shifting the narrative as much as he could away from the

¹³ *Al Bayan* newspaper, Dubai, 20/4/2005.

straightforward question. Hasassian's position is that there is a clear contradiction between the Charter and Hamas' pragmatic policies. Former MP Linton said that Hamas will do itself a favor if it reviews its Charter, which he said its principles include a lot of nonsense.

Yet, reviewing the Charter, though a necessity, does not seem possible anytime soon. Hamas leader Mahmud al-Zahhar, the former foreign minister in the Hamas-led government, said in an interview with the Jordanian newspaper (*Alghad*), one day after Hamas won the Palestinian legislative elections in 2006, that "[Hamas] will not change a single word of [its] Charter."

Sheikh Ahmad Yasin, one of the founders and spiritual leader of Hamas, who was assassinated on 22/3/2004 by an Israeli helicopter gunship missile as he was wheeled from early morning prayers, mentioned the word *Israel* and referred in an interview with Al Jazeera on 29/5/1999 to Hamas operatives as "brothers entering Israel" during their operations, that he was "a human being acting against the occupation" but he also said that Izz al-Din al-Qassam, after whom the military wing of Hamas was named, "fought the Jews and the British." In reference to his prison wardens, he said that the "Jews did not choose" those who would accompany him in prison from amongst other Palestinian political prisoners. He needed personal assistance because he was quadriplegic. The use of this expression (i.e., Jews) is common among Palestinians and Arabs, and normally it is meant to define the intended party, and not as an insult to any particular religion or any particular people. Moreover, the use of the word "Israel" does not necessarily mean recognizing it as a legitimate entity; as the term is used among Palestinians and Arabs to define the intended party, for the benefit of the listener. However, it is useful for us to point out that the Palestinians and the others should select precise terms and synonyms that do not confuse Judaism with Zionism; while the Palestinian leaders can certainly make the distinction between the two if they need to.

In 2005, Isma'il Haniyyah said that "Hamas's struggle was restricted to the Zionist enemy, and not against the Jews in general."¹⁴ When Haniyyah was asked to form the new Palestinian government by President Mahmud 'Abbas, after Hamas won the PLC elections, he reiterated in several interviews with local and western media the position that Hamas harbors no animosity towards the Jews for just being Jews, and that it has no interest in sustaining the cycle of violence.

¹⁴ PIC, 4/7/2005, <http://www.palestine-info.co.uk/en/>

There is no doubt that pragmatic policies became the hallmark of Hamas's political platform and policies during its tenure in the Palestinian Government, and that the narrative of many Hamas leaders, evolved in directions that depart from its Charter. The head of the political bureau of Hamas, Khalid Mish'al, expressed in the same *The Guardian* article mentioned above his position regarding the relationship between the Holocaust and the creation of a state for its Jewish victims. Mish'al, who accepts a Palestinian state on the pre-1967 borders, pledged in the same article never to recognize the

legitimacy of a Zionist state created on [Palestinian] soil in order to atone for somebody else's *sins* [emphasis is mine] or solve somebody else's problem. But if [Israelis] are willing to accept the principle of a long-term truce, we are prepared to negotiate the terms. Hamas is extending a hand of peace to those who are truly interested in a peace based on justice.

Of interest is Mish'al's alluding to the Holocaust as "sins." As for Mahmud al-Zahhar, he explained in his book *La Mustaqbala bayna al-Umam* (No Future Among the Nations), a response to Benjamin Netanyahu's *A Place Among the Nations: Israel and the World*, the roots of the expulsion of Jews from all European countries over the past centuries "of their involvement in assassinating their Caesars and rulers, and for their spread of discord and hatred amongst all the peoples of the world." He also said that the Jews were the first ones to become anti-Semitic.¹⁵

The explanation of al-Zahhar is an inaccurate understanding of the European anti-Semitism, which has roots in Christian theological constructs about Jews being responsible for the death of Jesus Christ, something that the Qur'an denies categorically and provides an alternative narrative about what happened that could potentially help bridge a gap here. This constructed deicide led to the development of the "blood libel" myth in England during the middle ages. This "Judeophobic" myth accuses the Jews of using the blood of Gentile children for religious purposes. In Greece, the Easter ritual of "burning [the effigy] of Judas" is still taking place in numerous local ceremonies, which is sometimes described as the "Burning of the Jew." There are still people who believe that Jews drink the blood of Christians on Passover. Killing the Christian Lord by the Jews continued to be the Catholic official position until the declaration of the Vatican II Council "*Nostra Aetate*" in 1965, which abolished the collective responsibility of the Jews for the "Crucifixion

¹⁵ Site of Felesteen Online, 2/12/2010, <http://www.felesteen.ps/>

of Jesus.” Nevertheless, old theologically based anti-Semitism is still lingering around. This is the crux of the matter.

The Palestinian Information Center (PIC), providing an entry on Hamas on 15/9/2006, it cited Qur’anic verses advocating freedom of religion, justice and excellent relations with non-combatant non-Muslims.

Hamas respects the rights of the followers of the other monotheistic religions, and considers the Christians who reside on the land of Palestine as partners in the homeland; they were equally subjected to the same treatment at the hands of the Occupation Authorities, similar to their Muslim brethren, and they participated in facing the Occupation and confronting its Apartheid policies. They are part and parcel of the Palestinian people, entitled to having full rights and required to perform full duties.¹⁶

The following paragraphs in the same article speak about the “Hebrew State,” making sure that the word Israel is not used to delegitimize it. The same idea applies to the use of “Zionist enemy,” “Zionist presence,” “enemy,” “Zionist project,” “Zionist Occupation” and “fighting the Zionists until they leave Palestine the way they immigrated to it.”

The previous quotation, while mentioning “the other monotheistic religions” (the plural form is original), and while it mentions Palestinian Christians, it fails to mention Palestinian Jews. The Question is, is it Islamic to advocate a reversed ethnic cleansing of Jews in response to what had happened to Arabs in 1948, since the narrative does not make room for other solutions? Isn’t resistance primarily concerned with ending the Zionist project in Palestine and the occupation that favors one people over another?

Let us assume for one moment that the occupiers belonged to a fourth religious background (i.e., other than Judaism, Christianity and Islam), wouldn’t the Palestinian national narrative include Jews as part of the social fabric? Wouldn’t our events include a rabbi, a priest and a Sheikh, with all of them speaking the same language of unity?

It appears that the text referred to does not concern itself with the Jews in Palestine and their future, because it is preoccupied mainly with the mobilization against the Zionist project and Israel; and it does not want to enter into a debate

¹⁶ An Entry About Hamas, PIC, <http://www.palestine-info.com/arabic/hamas/who/who.htm> (in Arabic)

about who is the Palestinian Jew and who is the Jewish immigrant, the colonizer, the usurper of rights, and whether he can have the same privileges if Palestine became liberated, or if the Zionist project in it ended.

The original "Palestinian Pan-Arab Charter" *Al-Mithaq al-Qawmi al-Filastini* (1963) stated that "Jews of Palestinian origin are considered Palestinians..." It was replaced in 1964 with *Al-Mithaq al-Watani al-Filastini* (Palestinian National Charter) of which article 7 was changed in 1968 (as a result of the 1967 war) effectively restricting Palestinian Jews only to those "who had resided in Palestine until the beginning of the Zionist invasion." This article was nullified, among many other articles that were considered not compatible with the Oslo Accords (Israel was not required to nullify any of its numerous racist laws), in 1996 by the PNC then in 1998 in the presence of US President Bill Clinton in Gaza.

"Judeophobia" is real, but working to eliminate it should not be used to silence legitimate criticism of Israel. A state is not a moral entity, and it should not be construed in this case as the "ultimate Jew." Nothing short of the end of Israeli Occupation will remove the structural violence that manifests itself in all sorts of policies and practices that breed misery and hatred.

The Charter of Hamas is not a revealed book, but it is a historical document that reflects (or reflected!) the thinking of someone or a group in Hamas. To distance Hamas itself from "Judeophobic" or anti-Semitic statements and to educate its rank and file about these sensitive issues is a moral issue. It does not mean that it has to accept injustices that befell the Palestinians, but it is a step in the right direction. This is not to please any one, but as a matter of compatibility with the nature and fundamentals of the Islamic understanding itself, on which Hamas relies.

This Book

The Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas is a prominent Palestinian resistance movement. It enjoyed, and continues to enjoy, broad popularity in the Palestinian arena. Hamas adopts Islam as a creed, way of life, and a code. It belongs to the school of Muslim Brothers movement.

Credit for the idea behind this book is owed to the late Prof. Ibrahim Abu Rabi'. 17 academicians, researchers and senior Hamas leaders participated in writing the chapters of this book.

This book is indeed one of the most specialized references regarding Hamas thought and experience, and it is an indispensable source for those interested in studying the Movement. It committed itself to the methodologies of academic research and all this entails in terms of accuracy, objectivity, and documentation. The contributions by several Hamas leaders shed additional and up-to-date light on a number of controversial issues surrounding Hamas and its experience.

Dr. Mohsen Mohammad Saleh

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Hamas

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