Participation Without Presence:
Hamas, the PA and the Politics of Negotiated Coexistence

SHAUL MISHAL
Department of Political Science
Tel Aviv University

AVRAHAM SELA
Department of International Relations
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

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Please address all correspondence to:
Professor Shaul Mishal
Department of Political Science
Tel Aviv University
Ramat Aviv, Tel Aviv 69978
Israel
e-mail: mishal@post.tau.ac.il

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Abstract

Much of Hamas's approach towards the issue of political participation can be described in terms of a differentiation between participation through direct and official presence and participation through political involvement in the Palestinian Authority's (PA) decision-making institutions. Nowhere has this strategy of participation found better expression than in the issues of the general elections to the PA's Council, the incorporation of the PA's administration, and the foundation of a political party. A close examination of Hamas's modes of thinking, and its response to the post-Oslo new reality, reveals that to a large extent Hamas's strategies of participation moved away from dogmatic positions in a quest for innovative and pliable modes of conduct, the opposite of doctrinaire rigidity, ready to accommodate to changing circumstances and to respond or adjust to fluid conditions without losing sight of its ultimate objectives. A comparative overview of religious movements affiliated with political Islam in Arab countries reveals the extent to which these movements tended to adapt political strategies that incorporate the danger entailed in rigid adherence to principle, doctrine, or ideology.

Islamic Movements and Strategies of Political Participation

Islamic thinkers discern four main strategies that mark the political behavior of Islamic movements: reformist, operating through education, preaching, and guidance (*sabil al-wa'z wal-irshad*); communal, focusing on the Muslim institution of welfare (*zakat*) and other social services; political, operating through mass mobilization and public conviction aimed at exerting pressure on the rulers to implement the Shari'a; and combatant-political, using military force or violence against the ruling elites.[1] In fact, however, Islamic movements have manifested flexibility, adopting mixed elements from the above mentioned strategies under different social and political conditions.

Although Islamic movements have been traditionally divided by strategies of action even within the same state, the most important variable determining their behavior has been the freedom of social action and access to power made available to them by the ruling elite. By and large, contemporary Islamic movements tended to adopt violence in response to violent repression, as attested by the cases of Egypt, Syria and Algeria, while in those states that tolerated Islamic political movements the latter has been willing to accept the rules of the political game and refrain from violence, such as in the case of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) in Egypt,[2] Jordan,[3] Sudan,[4] and Yemen.[5]

The reformist and communal approaches—often inseparable—have been the mainstay of the MB's activity since its founding in Egypt in the late 1920s and subsequent spread throughout the Arab world, while political and violent Islam remained on the margins in most Arab states till the late 1970s. The 1980s and 1990s, however, have witnessed a novel pattern of action of modern Islamic groups in the form of a growing inclination toward organization in political parties and participation in the political process, and even in power, despite the regime's non-Islamic character. Moreover, this tendency remained essentially valid despite efforts of Arab

regimes to slow down or backtrack on the process of controlled democratization, which by and large had been started under pressure of the Islamic movements. This has been demonstrated in the cases of Egypt, Tunisia, and Jordan, whose regimes, since the late-1980s, imposed restrictions on the freedom of speech and new election laws with the aim of reducing the Islamists' public power and presence in parliament. In Algeria, where the FLN ruling military elite abolished the victory of the Front Islamique du Salut (FIS) in the general parliamentary elections of December 1991, prompting militant Islamist groups to start a nationwide armed struggle against the regime, the mainstream of the Front remained reluctant to employ violence and was involved in efforts to find common ground.[6] In Lebanon, although Hizballah remained committed to armed struggle against Israel's presence in the south of the country, it took part in two consecutive parliamentary elections (1992 and 1996) and won representation.[7]

The most conspicuous advocates of this increasingly dominant trend in the Arab world have been Hasan al-Turabi, leader of the Islamic National Front in Sudan, and Rashed Ghanouchi, leader of the *al-Nahda* movement of Tunisia. This trend adheres to active participation of the Islamic movements in the political process, and acceptance of multi-party system (*ta'ddudiyya*). Drawing on pragmatic approaches prevalent in the MB movement under Hasan al-Banna's lead, Turabi and Ghanouchi claimed legitimacy for incorporation of Islamic movements in an ad-hoc coalition (*tahaluf*) with non-Islamic parties, with the aim of exploiting the opportunity of political participation to seize power and impose Islamization 'from above,' by the official state machinery.[8]

Although this approach recognized the crucial role of religious guidance and education as a necessary phase for creating a wide base of cadres for a mass Islamic

movement, it called for adopting modern strategies of mass mobilization rather than elitist seclusion embedded in Sayyid Qutb's writings.[9] According to this approach, though the use of violence is not illegitimate under circumstances of repression on the part of the regime, it is not recommended because of the overwhelming power of the state and danger of giving the ruling elite a pretext to wage an all-out war against the Islamic movement as it had been done by Nasser in Egypt and Asad in Syria. Hence Turabi's reference to the option of gradual penetration into the armed forces and bureaucratic apparatuses, parallel to participation in the political process.[10]

The prospect of gaining influence and power pitted against the limitations and risks that option entailed underpinned much of the debate conducted within Islamic movements in response to the new opportunity offered them by the ruling elites in the form of 'democratization from above.' The crux of the matter, then, was cost-benefit considerations in the context of political freedom and restrictions determined by the regime.[11] As an official political party, the Islamists would be stifled by the regime, might suffer irreparable damage to their image, and were bound to lose supporters to more radical Islamic groups. However, failure to enter politics and take advantage of political pluralism could frustrate expectations among the young generation of Islamists for participation in the political game and a shortcut to power.[12]

By the early 1990s, however, Islamic movements were chafing under strictly controlled democratization in Egypt, Algeria and Jordan. Participation in general elections and parliamentary life rarely brought the Islamic groups to real power-sharing, that is, co-option to the government. The restrictions—in the guise of administrative regulations and discriminatory legislation—imposed by the ruling elite on the freedom of political organization and speech of these groups successfully limited their power in the representative institutions. The result was a retreat by the

movements from participation in parliamentary elections. In 1990 the MB in Egypt boycotted the elections, as did the Islamic Action Front in Jordan in 1997. The decision by the Jordanian group followed a long and bitter debate triggered by the Islamic movement's declining representation in parliament following the general elections of 1993, when the government amended the election law, effectively marginalizing the Islamists. [13]

The debate within the movement, which followed its participation in the general elections of 1993 and frustration at the disappointing results, revealed the cleavage between Palestinians and Jordanians in the movement; each side endeavored to justify its contradictory attitudes by Islamic argumentation and terminology while in practice representing different interests. Thus, the opponents of political participation, who were markedly Palestinian by origin, argued that to take part in elections and parliamentary life effectively legitimized the Jordan-Israel peace treaty, which contradicted Islamic principles. The proponents of continued participation, on the other hand, constituting a minority of mostly Jordanians by origin, displayed a willingness to cooperate with nationalist and leftist forces, as well as with the regime itself—regardless of its commitment to the peace treaty with Israel—as long as such participation could lead to power-sharing. As in the case of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, the debate in Jordan culminated in a decision by the Islamic Action Front in July 1997 to boycott the elections that November. The decision, however, backfired on the militants, as the more pragmatic elements returned to constitute a majority in the Front's institutions. [14]

The drive of Islamic movements to power sharing, justified on religious grounds and the Islamic community's well-being, is visible across the Arab world, from Algeria and Sudan through Yemen,[15] Lebanon, and Jordan. Even in Israel,

officially defined as a Jewish state, a group from the Islamic movement decided—at the cost of a split within the movement—to run together with a non-Islamic party (the Arab Democratic Party) on a joint list, which won a Knesset seat in the 1996 general elections.[16]

Besides reflecting the new opportunities for political participation afforded by most Arab regimes since the early 1980s, this inclination showed the growing desire of the Islamic movements to abbreviate the process of the Islamization of the society by shifting from an evolutionary to a political strategy in order to gain access to power. Indeed, the very willingness of Islamic movements to take part in varying levels of state-controlled and limited democratic systems demonstrated their belief that they could attain influence and promote their goals by operating within the existing political order.

Hamas and the PA

A close study of Hamas's strategies of action reveals a similarity to other Islamic movements in the Arab world concerning participation in the political process—in this case incorporation into the PA's executive and representative institutions—and its justification in normative terms. Hamas's wish to ensure its sheer survival and continued growth made access to power and resources necessary, based on coexistence with the PA. On the other hand, Hamas was eager to minimize the damage to its political stature as a result of its collaboration with the PA, and even more so regarding participation in its formal institutions, which might be interpreted as a deviation from its Islamic principles. It is this dilemma that underpinned Hamas's strategy; it was a strategy that could be pursued only as long as it left intact, or at

least ambiguous, the movement's commitment to its religious-national vision, on the one hand, and compromise with respect to the Oslo process, on the other.

Indeed, much of Hamas's approach towards the issue of participation can be described in terms of a differentiation between participation through direct and official presence and participation through political involvement in the PA's representative and decision-making institutions. Taking into account Hamas's refusal to recognize the PA, an involvement in its acting administrative apparatuses without an official presence and direct representation would provide useful means to minimize the disadvantages of the existing post-Oslo processes without paying the political cost of its endorsement. Moreover, involvement would serve as a safety valve for Hamas, reducing the threats to its continued activity and public support.

Yet involvement without an official presence entailed a great uncertainty: it may provide political safety in the short-run, but is exposed to threats of instability in the long-run. Presence, on the other hand, increases stability and continuity of resource allocation for the long run but may lead to a renouncement or reduction to a minimum Hamas's public rejection of Oslo and legitimization of the political and legal status of the PA. Given the growing conviction among both Palestinian and Israelis that the Oslo process was irreversible, the more the PA tightened its grip on the society, the more intense became the debate within Hamas regarding participation in the PA's executive institutions.

Alternatives and Preferred Options

The international peace conference held in Madrid in October 1991, with unprecedented PLO-backed Palestinian representation, was a clear indication to the Hamas leadership that the possibility of an Israeli-Palestinian settlement could not be

ruled out, necessitating a clear definition of its position regarding that possibility. Indeed, in its 1992 internal bulletin, Hamas, for the first timem presented its position on elections to representative institutions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Hamas stated that it would not object to non-political representative elections and that it would take part in such elections provided they were fair and just, were not conducted under Israeli occupation, were administered under appropriate international supervision, and were not conditional on the candidates' commitment to support the peace process.[17] In July 1992, while Hamas and Fatah activists had been still clashing, a secret document was circulated among Hamas senior members analyzing a spectrum of alternatives ranging from total boycott of the PA to full and official participation in the election and the PA's institutions.[18]

The document assumed that the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations would lead to an agreement on the establishment of an interim Palestinian self-rule with early conduct of general elections in the territories under its jurisdiction. Based on earlier consultations among leading Hamas figures in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and the diaspora, the document presented a draft analysis of assumptions and a variety of considerations concerning Hamas's response to the new reality. Hamas's policy paper sought to estimate the situation as a results of possible PLO-Israel accord and review the optional inputs against the backdrop of the movement's goals in order to reach a decision regarding its position on the issues of participation. The paper examined possible scenarios, analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of each, as well as the possible responses of the PA and the Palestinian public to each choice of action.

Apart from the detailed and systematic discussion of Hamas's participation in PA elections, the document offers a rare glimpse of decision making in the movement. The recipients of the document were requested to consider the suggested alternatives in

view of the movement's goals and ideology and state their views within a week, in order to assist the leadership to make decisions on the most appropriate election strategy. The document set August 10, 1992, as the latest date for reaching a final decision.

The paper was of a secretive nature, requiring that recipients tackle it with utmost secrecy. It refrained from explicitly identifying Hamas with the document though the discussion clearly revolved around Hamas's prospective action, referring to it as 'the movement.' The document's recipients were requested to consult as many opinionated people as possible to ensure that the final decision would enjoy utmost support within Hamas, preserve the movement's achievements, and coincide with its principles. The document was phrased in a non-ideological tone, bereft of the Islamic phrases and terminology of delegitimization of Hamas's rivals and demonization of its enemies, particularly Israel and the Jews, usually referred to as descendants of Satan, of monkeys, and pigs. Israel was called by its name, and terms such as 'Zionists,' 'Jews,' or the 'enemies of Allah' were avoided. Unlike the normative language of Hamas's leaflets and publications, saturated with Qur'anic verses and oral tradition (*hadith*), the document refrained from using even once terms such as 'Shari'a,' 'Qur'an,' 'Muhammad,' or even 'Islam.'

The full document is furnished hereunder, due to its utmost significance as a reflection of the movement's modes of political thinking, its ability to accommodate to changing circumstances, and the procedure of decisionmaking in the process of evaluation and examination of the available alternatives.

In the name of Allah the merciful the compassionate

Re: The position toward the transitory self-rule and the elections

Distinguished brothers,

The l.s.[19] had suggested to you a paper on our position toward the coming stage, assuming that the negotiations held at present succeed, bringing to the establishment of the transitory self-rule. We then started a debate over the position toward the general elections that might be held in the [West] Bank and the [Gaza] Strip.

We have already received responses from Gaza and the [West] Bank and the brothers abroad. In this paper we are trying to review the consolidation of opinion, suggesting … (sic.) our decisionmaking and examining the most influential factor in this regard. Following this [stage] the final proposal concerning the subject will be consolidated … (sic.) the higher circles. We are obliged to reach the final draft resolution before 10.8.92 … (sic.) to the paper and your evaluation of the most important elements affecting the decision, and your opinion regarding the most appropriate position for the movement … (sic.) within a week from receiving the paper.

Brothers!

We would request that you handle this paper with utmost secrecy because the debate is still going on and no final decision has been already reached. We would also request that you study the paper thoroughly and consult with opinionated people in your places. [This] because we wish to reach a decision acceptable to the widest possible basis of our ranks, and at the same time, would preserve the movement's achievements and coincide with its goals and principles. We would also request that you respond substantively rather than succinctly because we are about to take a fateful decision which might affect the future of our movement in the coming phase. We believe that this decision is definitely the most crucial and most difficult one in the history of our movement. Hence, we wish you accord the issue utmost attention and respond within a week.

First: Introduction on the Next Phase

Most of the analyses, including those of the movement, tend to [assume] that the peace process would reach an agreement between Israel and the Arab parties, and that this agreement would result in the establishment of interim self-rule for the Palestinians. It is suggested that Palestinian elections will be conducted with the possible goal of establishing a Palestinian authority to which the [Israeli] military government's functions and apparatus will be transferred. This might be an administrative authority of a political nature and powers for running most affairs of the Palestinians' life. The working hypotheses are: elections would be conducted and public institutions will be built; the process of transferring most of the functions and apparatus from the military government to the Palestinians will take place; and the first thing to occur might be the elections.

What is the most appropriate position for the movement toward what might take place?

Second: The Alternatives

There are four possible alternatives:
1.   Hamas's participation in the elections.
2.   Hamas's boycott of the elections, contented with calling on the populace to boycott the elections.
3.   Hamas's boycott of the elections and an attempt to foil it by force in order to delegitimize it as well as the whole peace process.
4.   Hamas's participation under another name the essence of which would be defined according to the circumstances of the next phase and what would result from the negotiations.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of the four alternatives? It is clarified by the following table.

Third: Advantages and Disadvantages of the Alternative Positions Toward the Elections

The Alternative	Advantages	Disadvantages
First: Hamas's Participation in the Elections	- Attaining the highest possible percentage of the votes. - Proving the movement's popularity. - Guaranteeing non-political isolation. - Preservation of the popular basis won by the movement during the Intifada and confronting the attempts of its containment. - Facilitating a greater chance to confront the concessions in the phase of the final negotiations from a position of popular election.	- It will be difficult for Hamas to play a role of political participation and resistance at the same time. - A significant legitimacy will be given to the elections, indicating Hamas's surrender of its objection to the self-government as a solution to the problem. - If [Hamas] will not win the majority, which is most probable, the act [of elections] will appear as a [reflection of] popular consensus. - Its impact on the current of Jihadic Islam toward Palestine.

The Alternative	Advantages	Disadvantages
<u>Second</u>: Boycott of the elections by Hamas and its content with calling the populace to boycott.	- Attempt to diminish the legitimacy of the elections and then the negotiating process and the concessions that it entails. - Political corroboration deriving from our objection to the self-rule and its consequences.	- Political isolation and ...(sic.) - Loss of the movement's political cover that supports the attitude of resistance of the occupation.
<u>Third</u>: Boycott and attempt to foil the elections by force.	- If we win, it means foiling the process of negotiations. - Affirming the absence of legitimacy of negotiations and concessions. - Affirming Hamas's capability of political action. - Deepening Hamas's popularity and power.	- It might mean an entrance into a military confrontation with Fatah, that is, a civil war, for which we would be held responsible by the [Palestinian] people. - We might not succeed in the foiling, which might mean sustaining popularity losses in addition to the human casualties, providing the future authority with a pretext to adopt policies of striking the movement and forcing isolation on it.
<u>Fourth</u>: Political Participation under another name	- Guaranteeing non-isolation. - Preservation of the popular basis attained by the Islamic movement during the Intifada. - Exercising a political role in support of the line of resistance, which Hamas continues to follow.	- It might not realize the same rate of votes, which we can attain through participation in the name of Hamas. - Confusing the public [due to the difference] between the position of resistance and the position of participation, even if there was a separation between the placard and the movement.

Fourth: The Elements of Decisionmaking

The responses that have reached us following the initial document have presented many elements that should be taken into account in the decisionmaking process regarding our position toward the self-rule and its institutions as well as toward the general elections that would be implemented. Following is a discussion of the key elements that have been presented in the order of their significance:

1. <u>What are our crucial interests and goals, which we want to realize in the next phase</u>?

The Islamic movement has realized great mass support during the years of the Intifada attracting a large popular sector that resists the concessions and adheres to the Islamic rights in Palestine. The movement has managed to build institutions and train many members and supporters to exercise leading and popular activities. It seems that our basic interests can be summed up as follows:
a.   Preserving the popular base of the movement so that it serve as a strong backing to the continuation of the Jihad in the next campaigns. This means that the political isolation and absence of presence would result in the popular deprivation and loss of much of the popular support which, until this moment, we have not been able to bend (*ta'tir*).
b.   Adhering to Jihad as the road to the liberation of Palestine from the [Israeli] occupation, which will remain during the implementation of the interim self-rule.
c.   Resisting normalization and dragging toward further negligence and surrender of the Palestinian rights….(sic.).

In view of the presented alternatives of our position, it is possible to say that ... [it will be difficult to foil]... the elections and to be content with a call for boycott… No matter how successful we may be in averting the people from participation, the rate of voting will be no less than 30-40% of the electorate. Although we might selfishly benefit from it by arguing that this supports Hamas's position, it would be insufficient to foil the elections. Considering the elections in other states, a low rate of voting has not denied their legitimacy. The Islamic Salvation Front in Algeria won the elections although the rate of voting was no more than a third of the electorate. The same situation [exists] even in the United States where the rate of voting is less than 50% of the electorate. Yet [choosing] this option certainly means abandonment of the political arena to Fatah's leadership to do there as it wishes. It can be anticipated that one of their priorities would be a containment of the movement, striking its institutions, and paralyzing its activity on the pretext of enforcing the self-rule's authority in order to be strong in confronting Israel in the final phase negotiations. This clearly contradicts our interests and goals in the next stage.

2. <u>The Movement's Ideological Position</u>

The movement rejects the [Palestinian] self-rule as a solution to the [Palestine] cause and insists on the liberation of the land and purification of the sanctuaries. Some [people] maintain that the participation in the elections means waiving the

movement's ultimate position. Others maintain that it depends on whether the elections be held before or after the end of the negotiations. Also, it depends on whether it will be conditional that the candidates recognize Israel or to commit themselves to the negotiating process. Objectively, however, there is no doubt that it will be difficult for Hamas to combine participation in the elections and what it requires in terms of flexible language of speech, and the resistance to the occupation and its requirement for clear and distinguished Jihad speech. This is a very important element because it might diminish the opportunity of the first alternative, namely, the participation of Hamas in the elections.

3.   Our Capabilities and Power in the Context of the Internal and External Balances of Power

It is intended in this element to define the alternatives with which our power and capabilities enable us to carry. By our power and capabilities we mean:
a.   The number of prepared members physically and psychologically.
b.   The popular weight ready to support any alternative that the movement might choose.
c.   The quantity of arms and ammunition we possess.
d.   Our ability to reach out the mass media with our viewpoint so that we would not be victim of false propaganda.
e.   Our ability to activate the Arab and Islamic arena in support of the alternative we chose.

We can say that our power enables us to undertake all the presented alternatives except for one which is inevitable to avoid, namely, confrontation and foiling of the elections. The chances of success in realizing this goal seem poor and it entails great risks, primarily entering into an armed struggle with Fatah which would be then supported by Israel and the international media. A large segment of the populace might put the blame on us because it will be easy to accept the allegation that it was Hamas that started the use of force to impose its attitudes on the others.

The elections will be held without any interruption. The result might be that we will defer to ... (sic.)... its boycott which brings us back to the second choice which we had concluded that it would not serve anyone ...(sic.)... our power in the context of the balances of power. On the Palestinian level the movement confronts Fatah which agrees with... (sic.) and will not hesitate to use any method of elimination and bloodshed if Hamas confronts by force the implementation of the settlement which would necessarily mean a civil war …[under these circumstances] we will lose more [than Fatah] because our power is latent in our real popularity while Fatah's power reflects the equation of funds and control of the important institutions.

As to the other Palestinian parties, they will never enter the arena of struggle but will try to earn what the two [major] parties lose. The light weight of these organizations in the street and their commitment to the PLO will prevent them from isolation toward the elections and participation in the institutions to be built. Here is a latent risk that our movement will be on one side while the other forces and currents on the other.

On the Arab and international level, if the negotiations end with success, the United States would exert a significant weight to facilitate the accords, as occurred in Camp David, through [financial] aid to the Palestinian self-rule. On the Arab and Islamic arena it is expected that the Islamic movements will issue statements of rejection to the capitulationist accords but there are no indications that lead us to anticipate any tougher position confronting the accords on the part of the Islamic movement in Jordan, Syria, or Lebanon. In conclusion, this element disqualifies the third choice, namely, the most militant position, because such a position will be isolated even with respect to position of the Islamic movement in the other Arab states which means the easiness of overlooking our movement by the active Palestinian party (Fatah), because the balance of power tips in its favor.

4.   The Chances of Success and Failure in the Elections

Most of the estimates show that we might not be able to realize a majority in case we embark on the elections which [means that] we would have lost it and, at the same time granted legitimacy to the process of negotiations. It is not easy to estimate the rate [of support] that we might realize inasmuch as this will depend on the nature of the system of elections, the political alignments, as well as the level of organization and competence in conducting the election campaign. Yet the question here is, are we to decide on participation if our chance to win is high, and decide on boycott if the chance of realizing a majority is low? Clearly, the elections will not be only a one-time event, yet the way in which we would tackle the next phase, primarily the elections, might be fateful for the movement. Our goal might not be to win by a majority but rather to realize a reasonable rate of [political] presence which would secure the movement's power and political weight. We believe that we can attain a third of the votes which means excellent political presence through which we would ensure our non-isolation. This third is expected on the general level while [the rate] might be higher in areas such as Hebron and Gaza, and lower in others.

5.   [People's Expectations]

It is inevitable to consider the people's expectations and wishes, the economic and security pressures on it, and anticipation that it would support the [peaceful] solution once some gains in these spheres are realized. Among these gains [might be] the freezing of settlement—even if incrementally—and the financial aid from America and Europe, some of the Gulf states, and Japan. Here we must remember that a considerable part of the people ... (sic.) … the negotiating delegation from Madrid for the first time. The local and international propaganda might ultimately focus on ...(sic.). Hence, we expect that a large segment of the people would accept participation in any elections ... (sic.) .... clear interests, regardless of the attitude on the [Palestine] cause as a whole. This means that a boycott of the elections on our part... (sic.)... would not be acceptable but to the close adherents with awareness to the movement's position, which is our basic public. The rate of [public] boycott will not be high unless we employ force, such as a strike, preventing the people from reaching the ballots, or halting the movement of transportation. This would mean an inclination toward the third choice, which we have concluded to be leading to a bloody confrontation with

Fatah in which we would not be able to win. This will deprive us of the people's support and [lead to] expectation for failure of hindering the elections, the self-rule and its institutions.

6.   The Link of the Elections to the Self-Rule

Some people maintain that the linkage between the two issues implies that participants in the elections means agreement to the self-rule as a solution to the Palestinian problem. Others maintain that unless there is a condition in this meaning, the participation in the elections, regarding the Palestinians, does not necessarily mean that the participants' vote in confirmation or rejection of the negotiations conducted by the [Palestinian] delegation and Fatah leadership. Although the … (sic) … causes vagueness in the impression it leaves, we should not preclude any choice that the movement perceives appropriate in view of the more significant factors. As to the vague impression, it is possible to handle it through our political and information input and our movement on the ground which will continue the holy war (*jihad*) against the [Israeli] occupation.
(End of document).

The Hamas policy paper outlines a range of alternatives for decisionmakers to determine the optimal mode of action with regard to elections. It is a document with a clear sense of political opportunities and constraints and its impartial, meticulous analysis of cost-benefit considerations, originating from basic assumptions—such as Fatah's military superiority and the likely massive support of the Palestinian public for elections—and their probable impact on each option. Contrary to Hamas's public discourse, which is saturated with religious and historical symbols and norms that define the boundaries between right and wrong, this document, shown to senior figures only, is marked by unreserved political realism. The key question underlying the document was not the illegitimacy of the Oslo accords but Hamas's future as a social and ideological movement, and the policy it should adopt to preserve its political assets without blurring its ideological distinctiveness.

A close examination of the document will reveal that Hamas seems to have been caught in the middle of the spectrum. Participation in the elections would lend legitimacy to the PLO, but if Hamas called for boycott and the people voted anyway, it would lose all esteem. It is here one should look in order to understand how Hamas

tried to cope with the dilemma of participation by adopting a strategy which combined elements of political involvement with mechanisms of indirect presence. Nowhere has this strategy of participation found better expression than in the issues of the general elections to the PA's Council, the incorporation to the PA's administration, and the foundation of a political party.

Elections to the PA's Council

Elections were held on January 20, 1996, in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank (including the Palestinians of East Jerusalem). The elections were based on the Declaration of Principles (DOP) of September 13, 1993, and on the Israeli-Palestinian agreement of 28 September 1995 (Taba Accord, or Oslo Two).[20] According to Article Three of the DOP:

1. In order to enable the Palestinian people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to govern themselves in keeping with democratic principles, general, direct and free political elections will be held for the Council, under agreed-upon international supervision: the Palestinian police will care for public order.

2. The parties will reach an agreement upon the definite form of the elections and its conditions…in order to hold the elections within a period which shall not be more than nine months after the Agreement of Principles goes into effect.

3. These elections will be an important preparatory step towards the attainment of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and its just demands.[21]

Hamas's position was tightly linked to two overriding questions: first, the PA's political program, that is, the grand policy with which Hamas would be identified by participating in elections that were bound to legitimize the PA and implicitly the DOP; second, Hamas's prospects of playing a significant political role

within the PA. Hamas had been a fierce critic of the DOP and the elections, which it had urged the Palestinian public to boycott. The explanation was an essentially pragmatic one: the movement ruled out participation because elections were bound to be part of a 'humiliating and shameful agreement' and because it was assumed that they would be held under Israeli domination.[22]

Concretely, Hamas spokesmen explained that the Palestinian signatories had made far-reaching territorial concessions, abandoned Arab Jerusalem, failed to secure a satisfactory solution to the predicament of the majority of Palestinians, particularly of the refugees, and committed themselves to a process that would not lead to sovereignty and the establishment of a Palestinian state. Above all, Hamas spokesmen declared that they would not be party to an agreement that legitimized Israel's plundering of Islamic lands in Palestine.[23]

While constantly reviling the Oslo process, the debate within the movement was undecided, with Hamas trying to keep all its options open to be able to capitalize on future opportunities. Thus, despite an initial decision to boycott the elections, Sheikh Yasin announced shortly afterward that Hamas might participate in the elections, provided the PA's council were vested with legislative power. Yasin explained that unless Hamas was represented, the council might make laws detrimental to the Islamic movement. In Yasin's view, the crucial element was the interests of the Palestinian people and the uninterrupted development of the Islamic movement. From this point of view, participation in the PA's institutions would seem to serve Hamas's interests. At the same time, however, other spokesmen of the movement expressed an unequivocal, even ambivalent, position, ostensibly leaving open the question of Hamas's participation in the elections: 'Everything is subject to consideration, including the possibility of participating in the elections.'[24]

The statement of Yasin and other Hamas leaders reflected a position with broad support within Hamas's constituency. It held that participation was the lesser evil and could serve as a guarantee against an attempt to eliminate Hamas under circumstances of strong domestic and international support for the PA. Yet, they set strict conditions for the movement's participation in the elections: that they include the whole Palestinian people, and that the aim be the establishment of a sovereign and legislative council, not a powerless representative body under Israeli domination. In addition, they maintained that Hamas's participation in the elections was dependent on the extent of agreement to their procedures and democratic nature. An opposite viewpoint maintained that such participation would cost Hamas its credibility and be tantamount to political suicide, by blurring the dividing lines between Hamas and the PA. Worse, it might imply acceptance of the Oslo process by Hamas.

By and large, the pros and cons were divided along regional lines. Due to the PA's tighter control in the Gaza Strip, Hamas leaders there were relatively more inclined to participate in the elections than their colleagues in the West Bank. It is this same Gaza Strip leadership that had pressured the 'outside' leadership to consider the establishment of an Islamic political movement, as in the neighboring Arab states, an issue that became an inseparable part of the debate over Hamas's participation in the elections and its relations with the PA. The Gaza leadership of Hamas also revealed a willingness to enter into negotiations with the PA over this issue, even without the consent of the 'outside' leadership. In addition to the regional division, differences within Hamas apparently derived from socio-economic disparities as well. In the Hamas-PA meeting in Khartoum in November 1995 the Hamas delegates, all from the autonomous Palestinian areas, were not conspicuous political leaders in the movement but members, from a wealthy group of merchants in the movement. They expressed a

positive attitude toward participation in the elections, contrary to the view of many leading Hamas figures, especially outside the autonomy territory, as well as among the rank and file, who maintained a militant approach toward Israel and identified the elections with the Oslo accords. [25]

Hamas's dialogue with the PA did not induce the movement to change its essentially negative position on the elections, though it was somewhat tempered. At the PA's behest, Hamas agreed to do no more than passively boycott the elections and not interfere with the Palestinian public's freedom to decide. Along this line, by the end of October 1995 Hamas spokesmen no longer talked about an intention to boycott the elections and urge the Palestinian public to follow suit, but only of 'refraining' from participation.[26]

Within the framework of a passive boycott of the elections, Hamas encouraged figures identified as Islamists, or even as its members, to run as independents. Informally, Hamas also called on its followers to fulfill their individual right to vote for Islamic candidates who had been associated or maintained good relations with it. This motion represented a realistic approach, recognizing the strong public excitement about fulfilling this unprecedented civil right. Under these circumstances, if it called for a boycott and people voted anyway, it would lose all esteem. Furthermore, the registration lists for the general elections were to be used to determine the eligible electorate for the future municipal elections in which Hamas would be sure to take part officially, as it had no implications on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Like the Palestinian Islamic movement in Israel and in some of the neighboring Arab countries, Hamas was fully aware of the opportunity to have an official representation in the PA Council by committed Islamist independent delegates, thus preserving the ideological image of Hamas intact.

In accordance with the interim agreement, elections for the president of the PA were held simultaneously with those for the members of the Palestinian Council, using separate ballots. Participation was open to all Palestinians, 18 years of age or older, who lived in their electoral district and whose names were on the voters' rolls. Candidacy for membership in the Assembly was open to every Palestinian who was 30 years of age or older on election day.

Election of the Council's members was regional, personal and direct in each voting district. Though the elections were personal, the system permitted movements, parties, and individuals to organize and present joint lists from which the voter could choose the candidates he or she preferred. Every voter had the right to vote for a number of candidates equal to the number of seats allotted to the district, and was allowed to support candidates from different lists. The winning candidates were those who received the largest number of votes in the polls. Of the 725 candidates, 559 were independent candidates, who ran on the basis of their previous activities, personal wealth, or their relationship to one of the larger clans in a specific district. One hundred sixty-six candidates were represented on electoral lists, 36 of them on new lists that had been established as the elections approached, and 130 represented pre-existing movements and parties.[27]

By adopting a strategy of participation through unofficial presence in the elections Hamas was able to urge its supporters to take part in the elections and to help them arriving to the ballots. Hamas effectively led its followers to vote for the seven candidates whom the movement was eager to support as close adherents and of whom five (according to another version, six) were elected. Also, Hamas supported several independents, and even a number of Fatah candidates known for their good relations with the Islamic opposition. A survey by the Palestinian Research Center in

Nablus at the exits from the ballots, encompassing 3200 voters, found that 60%-70% of

Hamas supporters participated in the elections, while the general level of participation

ranged between 88% in Gaza Strip and 70% in the West Bank.[28]

Three major methods have been discerned by which a regime can manipulate

elections so as to favor itself: by setting the timing of the elections; by establishing

electoral systems highly favorable to itself, harassing and intimidating the opposition,

and employing government resources in the campaign; and by outright fraud and

theft.[29] In the January 1996 Palestinian elections, Arafat engaged in at least the first

two, if not all three of these techniques.[30] To begin with, Arafat appointed his long-

time confidant and Fatah member Sa'ib 'Ariqat to head the Central Election

Commission that was to pass the electoral law and oversee the elections. The

commission set the election date for January 20, a day before the start of the Muslim

holy month of Ramadan. Had the elections been held after Ramadan, Hamas would

have had a chance to reach the masses through the daily prayers and Friday sermons,

though principally through its charity and welfare committees, which tend to be

especially active during this month among the poor. The Palestinian vote, then,

demonstrates one method by which elections can be strategically set to benefit one

specific party.[31]

In addition, the Legislative Council of eighty-eight members was elected

through majoritarian first-past-the-post elections in sixteen districts. The division into

regions was unbalanced in terms of the ratio of representatives of population in each

district. Thus, for example, in the region of the Gaza Strip, the number of seats

allotted was based on 8,730 voters per seat, while in the region of Salfit, in the West

Bank, 18,996 voters vied for the sole seat allotted.[32] Three districts were single-

member, while 13 were multi-member. Six seats were reserved for Christian

candidates and one for a Samaritan candidate. Candidates could run as individuals or as members of a party, though voters could split their tickets across parties. Voters were allotted an equal number of votes as slots from their district. For example, a voter in Gaza City had 12 votes, each of which he was to designate for one candidate, and he could choose to divide his vote among candidates from different parties. With polls a month before the election showing Fatah running at 40-45% and Hamas at 15%,[33] Arafat must have known that a majoritarian system would greatly favor his party. If the polls were correct, a proportional system would have required Arafat to share power with 13 or so Islamic Council members. Moreover, employing multi-member districts further favored Arafat's party since, as Lijphart writes:

All majoritarian systems tend to systematically favor the larger parties, to produce disproportional election outcomes, and to discourage multipartism. District magnitudes larger than 1 tend to reinforce these tendencies.[34]

Not only did the electoral system itself benefit Arafat, but so did the conduct of the campaign. The Central Election Commission was appointed only a few weeks before the vote, and it announced new arrangements up to the last few days. Even the district boundaries were in flux up to the last moments. Furthermore, the official campaign period was reduced to just over two weeks from the planned 22 days, a measly amount of time for an election in which 725 candidates ran for office. One of the only well-known campaign rules was that political speeches were forbidden in mosques, a clear attempt to hinder Hamas's chances of success if it decided to participate.[35] There were also reports that Palestinian police patrolled the streets at night tearing down posters for any non-Fatah candidates. Some observers noted that if all these advantages were not enough, the presence of at least three PA policemen at every polling station would probably help persuade Palestinians to vote for Arafat and Fatah.[36]

Incorporation without Identification: Hamas and the PA Institutions

The strategy of participation through unofficial presence also dictated Hamas's behavior on incorporation of its members in the PA's executive apparatuses. Similarly to its attitude toward participation in the elections, Hamas encouraged its adherents to join personally the PA's administrative units. Hamas justified this motion by discerning between two perceptions of the PA namely, as a sovereign political power, and as an administrative apparatus designated to provide services to the populace. While the former represented political principles and national symbols, the latter was perceived as instrumental, linked to daily life.

It is here one should look in order to understand why and how Hamas's position toward the PA's institutions was marked by an attempt to differentiate between the political and the executive spheres. While Hamas's line of propaganda elaborated on ways of discreditation and delegitimization of the PA's leadership, it was careful not to alienate the Palestinian public and especially the rank and file within the PA administration. Already in October 1993 Hamas instructed its adherents to refrain from creating a hostile atmosphere against the Palestinian police officers. Indeed, these police officers were to be encouraged to collaborate with Hamas's armed activities against Israel and even to 'initiate suicide actions...exploiting their possibilities of [available] weapons, and freedom of maneuver to support the resistance.'[37]

In the same vein, Hamas asserted its intention to take an active part in municipal elections and repeatedly urged Arafat to hold them. Unlike the elections to the PA's representative institutions, which were perceived as part of the Oslo process, municipal elections were considered directly related to the service of society. Arafat,

however, preferred to appoint municipal councils in Gaza, Nablus, Hebron and other cities, rather than hold elections, which Hamas believed would enable it to demonstrate its popularity and record of achievements at the local and communal level.[38]

Hamas's differentiation between the political and the executive spheres and the PA's policy of preferring coexistence over confrontation with Hamas, brought the latter to encourage its followers to fill official positions in the religious establishment in the West Bank, explaining that these positions had been administrative, providing services to the community, without representative significance. Thus, by reducing the significance of participation in the PA's administration to the individual level and executive aspects, Hamas could benignly portray such participation as unofficial, with no political or symbolic meaning.

Presence by Proxy: Establishing a Political Party

As the Hamas paper of alternative strategies cited above showed, already in summer 1992 the movement had considered establishing a political party as an option for indirect participation in the elections to the PA Council. Hamas manifested a renewed interest in this option in early 1993 following the deportation by Israel of 415 leading members of the Islamic movements. It was, however, the signing of the Oslo accord later in the year that triggered an intensive public debate over this issue in Hamas circles. According to one of the figures who advocated the idea, Fakhri 'Abd al-Latif, the Oslo agreement obliged Hamas to consider a new political strategy in which a legal party could better serve the Islamic movement's interests and preserve its achievements.[39]

The proponents of an Islamic party argued for the need to maintain an official political presence by a legal instrument that would serve as a security net for the Islamic movement in case of an attempt by the PA to repress Hamas. The envisaged party was to offer Islamic followers a legitimate framework for participation in elections and political life in general, including participation on the Legislative Council. The party was not supposed to replace Hamas but to 'serve as its instrument, just like the Islamic University in education and charity associations in the welfare sphere.'[40] The opponents of the idea claimed that establishing an Islamic party might cause Hamas to lose its combatant (*jihadi*) character and also identify it with mere politics, perhaps pushing militant followers out of the movement. Thus, under circumstances of self-government, and as long as the struggle for Palestinian national liberation and statehood continued, Hamas was obliged to remain a clandestine movement with no organizational link to a political party.[41]

Support for establishing an Islamic political party came mainly from senior figures of the Islamic movement in the Gaza Strip, who in the summer and fall of 1994, formulated a series of preliminary draft papers on various aspects of the question. The papers explained the necessity for such party and the optimal timing for its founding, defined its interrelations with Hamas and other elements of the Islamic movement, and set forth its basic guidelines. One of the documents urged quick action, before the PA had consolidated its position.[42] According to the Hamas spokesman, in the summer of 1995 the consultative bodies of Hamas—possibly the Consultative Council (*majlis shura*)— adopted a resolution in principle to establish an Islamic political party, though the timing was left open.[43] The decision was clearly made with a view to the elections to the PA Council, which were then thought to be

imminent. The party was envisaged as a political arm of the Islamic movement, hence the issue of armed struggle against Israel was unaffected.

According to these documents, the party would have four main tasks:[44]

(a)   Providing a countrywide political umbrella for all those Palestinians who identify themselves with the Islamic vision and not only for Hamas members. The party would operate legally and democratically in support of Hamas's political opposition to the PA. The party would seek to play a role in decisionmaking, protect the social and political rights of the Palestinian people, and Hamas's right to continue the armed struggle against Israel, especially in view of the PA's anticipated persecution and repressive efforts against Hamas. The party would secure separation between apparatuses of political, social and military activities.

(b)   To promote general Islamist values and goals, particularly the establishment of an Islamic society and state in Palestine. The Islamic party would play a pivotal role in the relations between the public and the PA, and work in coexistence with the latter in order to erode the 'negative effects' of the accords with Israel; build a civic society, based on the Islamic law (*shari'a*), and provide social and economic services to the public. The party would organize public activities among the youth, trade unions, and students' associations in order to recruit them to the movement.

(c)   Political mobilization for support of Hamas, thus ridding the latter of the dilemma which it had been confronted by the elections. Hamas, as explained above, could neither participate in the elections nor boycott them without paying a political price. While participation meant an indirect legitimization of the Oslo process and harm to the movement's ideological reputation, boycott

of the elections meant political isolation, and loss of influence on future relations between the PA and Israel. The party could legitimize the Oslo process without 'staining' Hamas or directly committing it to the party's platform and policies.

(d) Serving as a major political framework for participation in elections to public organizations, such as municipal government, trade unions, and professional associations. Given its reputable record in providing communal services Hamas leaders expected to gain wide public support especially in the elections to local government. Taking over the sphere of local government was particularly attractive as it has been perceived as involving no essential significance such as shaping the basic ideas and values of the Palestinian state to be and its future relations with Israel.

In its platform the envisaged Islamic party undertook to struggle for the liberation of the Palestinian people from the yoke of the 'Zionist occupation' and implement the 'right of return' of the 1948 and 1967 Palestinian refugees. Although endeavoring not to contradict the Hamas Charter, the framers of the documents did not define its territorial aims in line with the Charter, which strove for the visionary liberation of all of Palestine through armed struggle. Rather, the party emulated the pragmatic goal set by Hamas bringing about a full Israeli withdrawal from the Palestinian territories occupied in 1967, including the removal of all the Jewish settlements in those territories. That aim coincided with Hamas's statements about its willingness to accept a 'temporary truce' (hudna) with Israel, though not peace. The proposed Islamic party would work to block all normalization with the 'Zionist entity' and put a halt to the PA's policy of political concessions in negotiations with it. The party would also respect human rights, freedom of political organization and

association, political pluralism, and accept the majority decision in selecting the Palestinian people's leaders and its representatives in 'inside' and 'outside' institutions. Another point called for an effort to defuse the PA's hostility toward Islam and the Islamic movement and to minimize the chances of an armed clash between the sides. The platform committed the Islamic party to refrain from employing violence and force to reach its goals. At the same time, the platform made it clear that the party supported all the national and Islamic bodies striving to realize the Palestinian people's full rights in a strategy of armed resistance to the Israeli occupation.[45]

In mid-November 1995, shortly after Hamas's spokesman announced the decision in principle to establish such party, Arafat announced the foundation of The National Islamic Salvation Party (*hizb al-khalas al-watani al-islami*). Arafat had an obvious interest in publicizing the new party, to demonstrate his success in convincing the Islamic opposition to take part in the elections, thus legitimizing the Oslo process. In a meeting with Arafat, the party's founders, all of them well-known Islamist figures in Gaza Strip, stated that they were not connected with any existing political body. The new party's spokesman, Fakhri 'Abd al-Latif, conceded that his party and Hamas were based on the same principles, though they were structurally independent. He also revealed that the new party's Political Bureau was composed of members of Hamas, though not all the founders were originally from Hamas.[46]

Despite its practical foundation, a month before the elections the new party still had not officially announced its participation, apparently because of the delay in the political talks between Hamas and the PA. Meanwhile, reservations within Hamas from taking part in the elections gathered momentum. Other reasons underpinning the reluctance to participate in the elections, apart from the rejection of the Oslo accord,

were the party's incomplete preparations for the elections and insufficient time for preparations, and the limited power allotted to the Council. At a massive rally in Gaza on its eighth anniversary, in mid-December 1995, Hamas's leaders officially announced that the movement would not take part in the elections on grounds that the 'Oslo elections' would not guarantee the Palestinian rights for sovereignty and a state for the Palestinian people. Yet they repeated their commitment to avoid infighting and contribute their share to the building of a civic and secured society, through dialogue with the PA.

The absence of a Hamas-based Islamic party in the elections might indicate the main considerations determining Hamas's political behavior in the context of political participation in the PA institutions. The fear lest a rejection of any cooperation with the PA would cause the movement an irreversible damage and that participation might be interpreted as an act of legitimization of the Oslo process, obliged Hamas to opt for unofficial participation.

Hamas in Comparative Perspectives: A Concluding Note

Hamas is not exceptional in comparison to political and social movements, secular or religious, suffering from an acute predicament that arises once fundamental principles and ultimate goals are translated into practical decisions and workable objectives. While political parties and movements tend to demonstrate adherence to their world-view when in opposition, often they are reluctant to push for their principles when in power, recognizing the responsibility of governing as well as of economic constraints, legal limitations, or international rules. Furthermore, opposition parties and movements, even in non-democratic regimes, may lean toward strategies of coexistence with the ruling power, avoiding a head-on confrontation that could spill over to social

upheaval and mass uprising. Such inclination and ability to acquiesce in contradictions are characteristic of groups aware of the vulnerability of their vital interests and high potential loss if they adopt strategies of head-on confrontation. As a result, the ideological discrepancies and competing beliefs between the national camp and the Islamic strand within the Palestinian society might appear, to an outsider, as a key element that both shapes Palestinian relations internally and dictates Palestinian behavior externally. Yet a careful examination may reveal that close-to-home issues—such as family ties, personal acquaintance, inter-personal affiliations, and intra-group rules of conduct, as well as deeply rooted norms, communal customs, and local traditions—are no less significant than normative perceptions and ideological preferences.

A fruitful and constructive course of investigation, therefore, should not search so much for sites of ideological disputes and normative disagreements, but channel its effort towards identifying strategies that enable individuals, organizations, and movements to successfully handle potential splits and internal contradictions. Indeed, a comparative overview of religious movements affiliated with political Islam in Arab countries reveals the extent to which these movements have been reluctant to adhere to their religious dogma at any price, and tended to adapt political strategies that incorporate the danger entailed in rigid adherence to principle, doctrine, or ideology. And as in Hamas's case, they moved away from dogmatic positions in a quest for innovative and pliable modes of conduct, the opposite of doctrinaire rigidity, ready to respond or adjust to fluid conditions without losing sight of their ultimate objectives.[47]

True, Islamic movements were reluctant to compromise publicly their ultimate objectives, modify officially their positions, make reciprocal concessions, avoid anti-regime statements, admit to understanding the viewpoint of others, or accept mutually rewarding solutions to joint problems. Yet, they hesitated to pursue their dogma at the

price of all-out confrontation. While the goals and activities of these movements are justified in Islamic terms, the religious drive does not always guide the political conduct of these movements. More than that, it is this Islamic value system that allows these movements to interpret unorthodox political moves in normative terms, thus enabling them to adjust to the rapid changes in social and political life and to redefine their strategic goals so as to fit them to the exigencies of time and place.[48]

The very willingness of Islamic movements to take part in varying levels of state-controlled, limited democratic rule demonstrates concretely the Islamists' conviction that they can attain influence and promote their objectives by operating within the existing political order. In this respect, Hamas and other Islamic movements in the Arab world escaped a binary perception regarding their relations with their ideological rivals and political opponents. They took care not to depict their social and political reality as a cluster of mutually exclusive, diametrically opposed categories, characterized by 'either-or' relations. And they refrained from portraying themselves in terms of fixed identities, distinct boundaries, and stable, well-established preferences. In short, they recognized the limits beyond which they could not go on pursuing an 'all or nothing' policy to advance ultimate political goals. Given the deteriorating social and economic conditions in the Arab states in the 1980s and 1990s, and the political constraints in which Hamas and other Islamic movements operated, the price to be paid for attempting to remove the other side from the political stage was seen intolerable. Underlying this pattern of relations was the sober perception of the Islamic movements that the achievement of a clear decision in their ideological and political conflict with the Arab regimes would always remain mere wishful thinking; and, crucially, that a straightforward conflict and a mode of action based on a zero-sum game could threaten their very existence.

Notes

1.   Yusuf al-Qirdawi, <u>Al-Hall al-Islami: Farida wa-Darura</u> [The Islamic
     Solution: Duty and Necessity] (Cairo: Maktabat Wahaba, 1993, Fifth
     edition), pp. 155-192; Fathi Yaken, <u>Nahwa Haraka Islamiyya 'Alamiyya
     Wahida</u> [Toward One World Islamic Movement] (Beirut: Mu'assassat al-
     Risala, 1977, Third edition), pp. 8-21.

2.   Sana Abed-Kotob, 'The Accommodationist Speak: Goals and Strategies
     of the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt,' <u>International Journal of Middle
     East Studies</u>, Vol. 27 (1995), pp. 321-339.

3.   See for example, interview with Ibrahim Kharisat, Spokesmen of the
     Islamic movement in the Jordanian Parliament, explaining the
     irrationality of employing force under circumstances of parliamentary
     action, <u>Filastin al-Muslima</u> (November 1992), p. 29;   'Abdallah al-
     'Akailah, 'Tajribat al-haraka al-Islamiyya fi al-Urdun,' in 'Azzam al-
     Tamimi, <u>Musharakat al-Islamiyyin fi al-Sulta</u> [Participation of Islam in
     Power] (London: Liberty for the Muslim World, 1994), pp. 101-112; <u>al-
     Hayat</u>, September 12, 1994, p. 1, 6.

4.   Tim Niblock, 'Islamic Movements and Sudan's Political Coherence,'
     in H.L. Beuchot, C. Delmet, D. Hopewood (eds.), <u>Sudan: History,
     Identity, Ideology</u> (Reading: Ithaca Press, 1991); Hasan al-Turabi, <u>al-
     Haraka al-Islamiyya fil al-Sudan</u> [The Islamic Movement in Sudan]
     (no date and publisher), pp. 34-35. The book was published by
     Muhammad Hashimi, an activist member of the Islamic Renaissance
     (*al-nahda*) Movement in Tunisia.

5. Tah Nasr Mustafa, 'al-Haraka al-Islamiyya al-Yamaniyya: 'Ishruna 'Aaman min al-Musharaka al-Siyasiyya' [The Islamic Movement in Yemen: Twenty Years of Political Participation], in: 'Azzam al-Tamimi, Musharakat al-Islamiyyin fil al-Sulta, pp. 140-171.

6. Gideon Gera, 'Hatnu'a Ha'islamit Be'algeria' [The Islamic Movement in Algeria], in: Meir Litvak (ed.), Islam Vedemokratiya Ba'olam Ha'arvi [Islam and Democracy in the Arab World], (Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hame'uhad, 1998), pp. 224-230.

7. For a positive summary of Hizballah's parliamentary experience, see an interview with the Deputy Secretary-General, Na'im al-Qasim, Filastin al-Muslima (October 1944): 25.

8. See for example Turabi's interview in Qira'at Siyasiyya (Florida), no. 3, (Summer 1992): 20; Interview to Filastin al-Muslima, (November 1992): 34; Roy, The Failure of Political Islam, pp. 47, 56-57; Rivka Yadlin, 'Hayelkhu Shnayim Yahdav Bilti 'Im No'adu?' [Would Two Go Together Unless they Had Agreed?], in: Me'ir Litvak (ed.), Islam Vedemocratya Ba'olam Ha'arvi, pp. 76-79.

9. Hasan al-Turabi, Islam, Democracy the State and the West, p. 18; Rashed al-Ghanouchi, Mahawir Islamiyya [Islamic Pivots] (Cairo: Bait al-Ma'rifa, 1992), pp. 142-144; Qirdawi, Awlawiyyat al-Haraka al-Islamiyya, pp. 16-17.

10. Amir Weissbrod, Haislam Haradicali Besudan: Hagut 'Uma'ase—Mishnato Hadatit Vehappolitit shel Hasan al-Turbi [Radical Islam in Sudan: Thought and Practice—The Religious and Political Doctrine of Hasan al-Turabi] (Jerusalem: Unpublished M.A. The Hebrew

University of Jerusalem, January 1997), p. 154 ; al-Wasat, November 7, 1994; Filastin al-Muslima (November 1992): 34.

11. Emmanuel Sivan, 'Evesdropping on Radical Islam,' Middle East Quarterly, Vol. 2, 1(1995), p. 21.

12. On the debate in this respect by the Islamic movements in Egypt, see 'Isam al-'Iryan, 'Awa'iq al-Musharaka al-Siyasiyya fi Misr,' in: Tamimi, Musharakat al-Islamiyyun fil-Sulta, pp. 217-219; Meijer, From al-Da'wa to al-Hizbiyya, p. 6; in Jordan, see A. Ghara'ibah, Jama'at al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin fil-Urdun, 1946-1996 (Amman: Markaz al-Urdun al-Jadid lil-Dirasat, 1997), pp. 137-138;.

13. 'Abdallah al-'Akailah, 'Aina Nahnu Wamatha Nurid', Al-'Amal al-Islami (Jordan), (September-November 1996): 19-23; al-Hayat, September 12, 1996, p. 1, 6; al-Ra'i, November 25, 1996, p. 39. For the conservative attitude, see al-Ra'i, November 6, p. 32, November 4, 1996, p. 32.

14. On the process of Palestinization and radicalization the movement had undergone in the 1990s, see Shmuel Bar, The Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan (Tel Aviv: The Moshe Dayan Center, Tel Aviv University, 1998), pp. 44-49; On the MB's decision to boycott the elections and differences with the Islamic Action Front, see al-Hayat, July 10, 1997; al-Dustur, July 13, 1997.

15. Taha Nasr Mustafa, 'Al-Haraka al-Islamiyya al-Yamaniyya,' pp. 140-171.

16. On the considerations and vacillations concerning this decision, see Filastin al-Muslima (August 1991): 21-23; (June 1992): 15-17.

17. Hamas, <u>al-Rasid</u> (a non-circular internal bulletin), no. 2 (April 15, 1992): 1.

18. Hamas, An Internal document, faxed on July 27, 1992.

19. Possibly referring to the Political Bureau (*lajna siyasiyya*).

20. State of Israel, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, <u>Israeli-Palestinian Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip</u> (Jerusalem, 1995).

21. On Arafat's efforts to convince Hamas and other movements to take part in the elections or join the Fatah lists, see Lamis Andoni, 'The Palestinian Elections: Moving toward Democracy or One-Party Rule?', <u>*J*ournal of Palestine Studies</u>*,* Vol. 25, 3 (Spring 1996): 6-9; <u>al-Nas Wal-Intikhabat</u> (a special weekly on the elections, financed by the German Fridrich Ebert Foundation, distributed as a supplement to <u>al-Quds</u> Daily of East Jerusalem. It was issued on six consecutive Sundays before the election and on the election day itself), December 12, 1995.

22. Interview of Ibrahim Ghawsha, <u>Filastin al-Muslima</u> (October 1992), 10-11; his announcement, <u>al-Ra'i</u>*,* 11 November, 1993.

23. Deputy Chairman of 'The [Islamic] Scholars Association in Palestine,' Sheikh Taysir al-Tamimi, <u>Filastin al-Muslima</u> (October 1994): 40; Ahmad Yasin's interview, *ibid. (*November 1993): 5; Ibrahim Ghawsha to *Voice of Palestine* from Jericho, 25 September 1995, FBIS, <u>Daily Report</u>, 26 September 1995.

24. <u>Al-Quds</u>, 1 November, 1993, p. 11. <u>Filastin al-Muslima</u> (November 1993): 7. See also Muhammad Nazzal's statement in <u>Shihan</u> (Amman), 22 April, 1994, FBIS, <u>Daily Report</u>, 14 April, 1994.

25. <u>Biladi – The Jerusalem Times</u>, October 27, 1995, pp. 17-19; <u>News from Within </u>(Jerusalem) (November 1995): 10.

26. Interviews of Ibrahim Ghawsha to: *Monte Carlo Radio* (Arabic), October 12, 1995, FBIS-NESA, <u>Daily Report</u>, October 13, 1995; <u>al-Ra'i </u>(Jordan), October 25,1995. Mahmud al-Zahar affirmed Hamas's response to the PA's request, <u>al-Dustur</u> (Jordan), February 19, 1996, p. 25.

27. As'ad Ghanem, 'Founding Elections in Transitional Period: The First Palestinian General Elections,' <u>Middle East Journal</u>, Vol. 50, 4 (1996): 4-8.

28. <u>Biladi – Jerusalem Times</u>, January 26, 1996. Arafat argued that five of Hamas's members had been elected, interview to <u>al-Hayat</u> (London), February 6, 1996, p. 1, 6; Khalil Shikaki, 'The Palesinian Elections: An Assessment,' <u>Journal of Palestine Studies</u>*,* Vol. 25, 3 (Spring 1996): 18; Andoni, 'The Palestinian Elections,' p. 5. For a slightly different data, see As'ad Ghanem, <u>Habhirot Hafalastiniot Haklaliyot Harishonot January 1996 - Mivhan Hademokratia</u> (Giv'at Haviva: Hamakhon Leheker Hashalom, 1996), pp. 16, 18 (general level of voting was 75.86%; 73.5% in the West Bank and 86.77 in the Gaza Strip).

29. Samuel P. Huntington, <u>The Third Wave</u> (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), pp. 182-186.

30. Identifying Arafat's manipulative strategies on the elections is partly based on Adir Waldman, <u>Democratic Opposition in Palestine</u> (Seminar Paper, Department of Political Science, Yale University, 1996).

31.   'Peace Monitor,' <u>Journal of Palestine Studies</u>, Vol. 25, 1 (Autumn, 1995): 106.

32.   <u>Al-Nas Wal-Intikhabat</u>, January 20, 1996, p. 5;   Andoni, 'The Palestinian Elections,' pp. 9-10.

33.   Graham Usher, 'Arafat's Opening,' <u>New Statesman and Society</u>, Vol. 8, 82 (December 1, 1995): 25.

34.   Arend Lijphart, <u>Election Systems and Party Systems</u> (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 20.

35.   Martin Peretz, 'Global Vision,' <u>The New Republic</u>, January 22, 1996, p. 12; Ethan Eisenberg, 'Democracy in Gaza: An Election Diary,' <u>Congress Monthly</u>, Vol. 63, 2 (March-April 1996): 9.

36.   Shyam Bhatia, 'Vote Arafat for Dictator,' <u>The Observer</u>, January 14, 1996, p. 21.

37.   Hamas (internal circular), 'Siyasat wa-Madamin al-Khitab al-I'lami lil-Marhala al-Qadima Ithra Ittifaq Ghazza-Ariha' [Policies and Contents of the Propaganda Speech in the Next Stage, following the Gazza-Jericho agreement], October 28, 1993.

38.   Mahmud al-Zahar, 'al-Qiwa al-Filastiniyya…wa-Intikhabat al-Hukm al-Dhati' [The Palestinian Forces…and the Self-Governing Elections], <u>Filastin al-Muslima</u> (October 1994): 30; Ibrahim Ghawsha to Monte Carlo Radio (Arabic), October 12, 1995, <u>FBIS</u>, <u>NESA</u>, <u>Daily Report</u>, October 13, 1995.

39.   Interview with Fakhri 'Abd al-Latif, <u>Ha'aretz,</u> December 17, 1995.

40.   Mahmud al-Zahar, interview to <u>Filastin al-Muslima</u> (June 1995): 14-15.

41. Isma'il Haniyya, <u>Filastin</u> (Gaza), September 30, 1994, FBIS, NESA, Daily Report, October 21, 1994; Muhammad H. Hamid, 'al-Islamiyyun wal-Hizb al-Siyasi' [The Islamists and the Political Party], <u>al-Quds</u>, June 11, 1994.

42. The documents include five parts, each discussing separate aspect of the party's foundation. The most important draft was entitled: 'Mashru' Ta'sis Hizb Siyasi Islami' [Plan for Establishing an Islamic Party], no date, concluding the essence of the other documents. See also 'Imad Faluji's proposal for a party similar to the 'Islamic Action Front' in Jordan, <u>al-Quds</u>, June 22, 1994.

43. Ibrahim Ghawsha's interview to <u>al-Mujtama'</u> (Kuwait), October 31, 1995, FBIS, NESA, <u>Daily Report</u>, December 7, 1995.

44. Hamas (internal document), 'al-Nizam al-Asasi lil-Hizb' [The Party's Basic Law], no date.

45. Hamas, 'al-Nizam al-Asasi lil-Hizb.'

46. <u>Al-Nahar</u> (East Jerusalem), November 24, 1995; December 17, 1995.

47. On features of flexible conduct and strategies, see Daniel Druckman and Christopher Mitchell, 'Flexibility in Negotiation and Mediation,' <u>Annals</u> 542 (November 1995): 11.

48. David Waldner, 'Civic Exclusion and its Discontents' (New York: The American Political Science Annual Meeting, September 1994), p. 1.