

A History of Palestinian Islamic Jihad

Faith, Awareness, and Revolution
in the Middle East



Erik Skare

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Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) is one of the most important yet least understood Palestinian armed factions, both in terms of its history and ideology. Labelled a terrorist organization by the US and the EU, it has grown to become the second largest armed movement in the Gaza Strip and the third largest in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Using a wealth of primary sources, this book traces the history of PIJ from its origins in the early 1980s to today. By looking at how the group was established, how it has developed in theory and practice, and how it understands religion and politics, Skare seeks to answer the key question of why PIJ still exists despite the presence of its more powerful sister movement Hamas. In doing so, he fills an important empirical gap in the literature on Palestinian Islamism.

Erik Skare is Postdoctoral Researcher at the Center for International Studies, Sciences Po (Paris). He is the author of *Digital Jihad: Palestinian Resistance in the Digital Era* (2016) and *Palestinian Islamic Jihad: Islamist Writings on Resistance and Religion* (forthcoming).

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For Mathilde

In the Beginning Was the Act!

—Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *Faust*

Contents

<i>List of Figures and Tables</i>	<i>page xi</i>
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	<i>xii</i>
<i>Note on Transliteration</i>	<i>xiv</i>
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	<i>xv</i>
Introduction	1
Part I The Beginning of PIJ (1967–1988)	
1 The Roots of PIJ	13
2 Awareness: The Anti-colonial Front	38
3 Organizing the Movement: PIJ's Recruitment of New Militants	58
4 From Students to Militants: Commencing the Armed Struggle	84
Part II From the First Intifada to the Oslo Agreement (1988–2000)	
5 Deportation, Patronage, and Organizational Reform	103
6 Faith: The Conciliatory Movement	129
7 The Collapse of PIJ	144
Part III From the Second Intifada to the Arab Spring (2000–2017)	
8 The Comeback of PIJ	165
9 From Strife to the Arab Spring	181

x	Contents	
10	Revolution: PIJ, the State, and Civil Society	198
11	Conclusion: Why PIJ?	213
	<i>Notes</i>	230
	<i>Bibliography</i>	287
	<i>Index</i>	322

Figures and Tables

Figures

2.1 Conflict outline as drawn by Anwar Abu Taha	<i>page</i> 47
3.1 PIJ education level in Hebron, Jenin, and Tulkarem	80
5.1 Organizational structure of PIJ's political wing (1992–present)	113
5.2 Organizational structure of PIJ's military wing (1992–2000)	115
5.3 PIJ attacks 1986–2000 with moving average	117
5.4 PIJ attacks by region (1986–2000)	124
8.1 Key militants of PIJ's Jenin and Tulkarem network (1990–2005)	169

Tables

3.1 Ten most common types of employment for PIJ martyrs (1992–2012)	68
3.2 PIJ martyrs in the West Bank (1992–2012)	82
11.1 The educational level of PIJ and al-Qassam Brigades (1992–2012)	223
11.2 Martyrs' type of employment, al-Qassam Brigades (1992–2012)	224
11.3 Regional distribution of PIJ and al-Qassam Brigades (1992–2012)	225
11.4 West Bank distribution of PIJ and al-Qassam Brigades (1992–2012)	226

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Needless to say, any error or weakness in this study remains my responsibility alone.

Note on Transliteration

The following study employs the transliteration guide of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (IJMES).

ء – ‘	ذ – dh	ظ – ḏ	ن – n
ب – b	ر – r	ع – ‘	ه – h
ت – t	ز – z	غ – gh	و – w
ث – th	س – s	ف – f	ي – y
ج – j	ش – sh	ق – q	ة – a; in construction – at
ح – ḥ	ص – ṣ	ك – k	ال – al-
خ – kh	ض – ḍ	ل – l	
د – d	ط – ṭ	م – m	

The long vowels are transliterated as follows:

ي – ā	ي – ī	و – ū
Doubled:	Diphthongs:	Short vowels:
ي – iyy, with final form ī	ي – ay	a, u, i
و – uww, with final form ū	و – aw	

- Full transliteration is primarily employed for technical terms, names, and non-cognate words whose meaning English readers cannot easily discern. These are fully italicized, except for proper names, which appear in roman.
- Transliteration has not been employed for personal names, place names, and organizations following accepted English spelling. *‘Ayn* and *hamza*, however, are preserved; except for initial *hamza*.
- I have to the fullest extent possible avoided anglicized plurals of fully transliterated words (such as *fuqahā’*, and not *faqīhs*).

Abbreviations

ALF	Arab Liberation Front
DFLP	The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine
EIJ	Egyptian Islamic Jihad
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FLN	National Liberation Front
Hamas	The Islamic Resistance Movement
ICP	Islamic Concern Project
PA	Palestinian National Authority
PFLP	The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PFLP-GC	The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine- General Command
PIJ	Palestinian Islamic Jihad
PLA	Palestine Liberation Army
PLF	Palestinian Liberation Front
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
PPSF	Palestinian Popular Struggle Front
Qassam	The Islamic Mujahid Forces
UN	United Nations
UNLU	National Leadership of the Uprising
WISE	World and Islamic Studies Enterprise

Introduction

In 1981, the young Palestinian preacher ‘Abd al-‘Aziz ‘Awda gave a sermon in the White Mosque of Beach camp, Gaza. There, he spoke about the necessity of violently fighting the Israeli occupation, of liberating the entirety of Palestine, and about the duty of the Islamic movement to lead the armed struggle. The slogan he proposed to his followers was “Islam, jihad, and Palestine”: Islam as the starting point, jihad as the means, and the liberation of Palestine as the goal.

As ‘Awda left the mosque and approached his car with a small entourage of followers, he noticed that all the tires had been punctured. While his followers set out to find the perpetrator, ‘Awda suspected it was someone from the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood. Ever since he had returned to the Gaza Strip that year, where he joined forces with a young pediatrician named Fathi al-Shiqaqi, conflict and dispute between them and the Brotherhood had persisted. While ‘Awda and al-Shiqaqi declared that the Palestinian Islamic movement had to join the armed struggle, the Brotherhood and its spiritual guide, Ahmad Yassin, refused. Instead, Yassin insisted, the Palestinian Islamic movement had to rebuild the values and institutions in Palestinian society first through social work and proselytization.

Flat tires were certainly a nuisance, and it was far from the only type of harassment from the Brotherhood. The caretakers of the mosques in Gaza had more than once attempted to prevent ‘Awda and al-Shiqaqi from speaking there about armed struggle. When that failed, they cut the electricity, so the sermons were delivered in darkness. The tensions had also erupted into fistfights, during which ‘Awda’s followers were physically attacked with sticks and chains by supporters of Yassin. Two years later, ‘Awda was hospitalized after a member of the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood assaulted him. Armed struggle was undoubtedly controversial for the Palestinian Islamists in the early 1980s.

Today, we may take for granted that Islamist groups take part in the Palestinian armed struggle for the liberation of their homeland. Hamas, the Islamic Resistance Movement, is perhaps the foremost representative of this trend. It was, however, not always so. On the contrary, Palestinian Islamists were initially reluctant to take up arms. When a group of Palestinian students returned from Egypt in 1981 and proposed that Hamas's precursor, the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood, should engage violently against the Israeli occupation, the latter refused, sparking bitter disputes and, indeed, violence. Unable to convince the leaders and followers of the Brotherhood, these students set out to form their own project, to create an Islamic militant organization to liberate Palestine through the barrel of a gun. We now know this project by the name Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ).

While PIJ spent its first years building its base in Gaza, the movement undertook its first military operations in 1984 – five years before Hamas. It is safe to suggest that during those five years, violence was what distinguished PIJ from the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood.¹ Yet, this difference disappeared when Hamas later took up arms. From 1989, the two movements were, in principle, almost identical, and Hroub notes that there were no “political or ideological differences” between the two in the 1990s.² This raises the question of why PIJ survived as a separate organization with a justification for its existence. In short, why PIJ?

The question matters because PIJ is the second-largest armed movement in the Gaza Strip. While smaller than Hamas, it is no marginal phenomenon; and popular support for PIJ was polled at over 30 percent at its peak, in September 2014.³ The movement is also intriguing because it is an extra-political force in the Palestinian resistance, with its refusal to participate in political processes and elections under occupation. PIJ's existence thus complicates Palestinian politics – between the adherents of the Oslo process and its opponents, for example, while also dividing the Palestinian Islamist community.

This study provides a history of PIJ from its inception until today because so much about the movement remains unknown. In conducting this study, I have explored three main lines of inquiry. The first is about the basic facts of PIJ and its historical development. How did PIJ emerge, and how did it subsequently develop? What makes PIJ thrive, and under what conditions does it suffer? What does PIJ believe is the main source of the Palestinian problem and how is it to be solved? The second is of an analytical nature and concerns the role of PIJ within the Palestinian armed struggle in general and in Palestinian Islamism in particular. Why do we have two armed Palestinian Islamic movements, and why is PIJ decisively smaller than Hamas? Why did so many

militants in the secular-nationalist Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) join PIJ in the mid-1980s? Why does PIJ refuse to participate in elections and political processes? The third is theoretical-conceptual and concerns what PIJ means for our understanding of the Palestinian resistance in general.

As I delved into the material in search for answers, I followed four hypotheses. While the first was that PIJ came into being, and exists, because the movement adopted a distinctive form of Islamist ideology, the second hypothesis proposed a distinct form of activism and action as the cause, which a considerable segment of Palestinian society requests while simultaneously rejecting or being skeptical of the practices of Hamas. The third hypothesis was that PIJ exists largely due to foreign financial and logistical support. The support the movement receives from Iran is such that it has been kept alive artificially and has grown greater than what the social base in the Occupied Palestinian Territories would otherwise have allowed it to do. The last hypothesis was that PIJ recruits members from the Palestinian working class in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, and from specific Palestinian neighborhoods and villages. Hamas, on the other hand, recruits from the Palestinian middle class and from neighborhoods and villages where PIJ does not have a considerable presence.

While these lines of inquiry juxtapose PIJ's development to that of Hamas, it is important to note that this is not a comparative case study. Hamas constitutes instead a "background case" as I integrate the movement informally into the analysis of PIJ.⁴ That is, while Hamas has a presence in the majority of chapters, it is only to accentuate and highlight historical aspects of PIJ, and my own analytical points pertaining to them. Second, although the research questions are sociopolitical by nature, I consider this study a contribution to the field of modern Middle Eastern history in general and Palestinian history in particular, which has guided both its structure and aims.

Existing Literature and the Sources Employed

Despite the importance of PIJ, we know surprisingly little about the movement. Insofar as there is an interest in Palestinian Islamism in both the media and academia, research has predominantly focused on Hamas.⁵ PIJ, on the other hand, has received less attention, and the history of PIJ even less so. Already in 2001, Hatina stated, "The limited research on the Palestinian [Islamic] Jihad has not provided a clear picture of the movement and its various factions."⁶ More than fifteen years later, this remains the case.

The studies we have are typically focused on specific and limited topics. Most prominent is the research carried out on PIJ's military activities in

general and their suicide bombings in particular. These studies grew extensively in scope and number after the outbreak of the Second Intifada in 2000.⁷ Moreover, none of them are limited to PIJ, but also includes other movements such as Hamas, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), and the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades of Fatah. Other studies on PIJ have focused on specific topics instead of the overall movement, such as the alleged Shiite credentials and influences from Iran in its symbolism and practices;⁸ the role of martyrdom;⁹ or the movement's electronic unit and the politics of its hacking operations.¹⁰ In addition, there are bits and pieces about PIJ in studies of Hamas, primarily serving as points of comparison and contextualization.¹¹

Two of the first studies on PIJ were *Islamic Fundamentalism in the West Bank and Gaza* by Abu-Amr (1994), and *Islamic Politics in Palestine* by Milton-Edwards (1999).¹² Both were important starting points for the research on Palestinian Islamism in general with their focus on Hamas, PIJ, and Hizb al-Tahrir (The Islamic Liberation Party). Of monographs approaching PIJ as the sole object of analysis, only a few exist, the main ones being Hatina's *Islam and Salvation in Palestine* and Alhaj et al.'s *De la théologie à la libération? Histoire du Jihad islamique palestinien*.¹³ In Arabic, I have only found the master's thesis of Nazim 'Abd al-Mutallab Mahmud 'Umar, titled "The Political Thought of PIJ and Its Reflection on Political Development."¹⁴ I am certain important works on PIJ exist in Hebrew and Persian as well, but linguistic limitations have unfortunately prevented me from analyzing these.

All works provide an analysis of why PIJ was established, and how it differed from the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood before the foundation of Hamas. Milton-Edwards, for example, states that PIJ was established due to conflicts with the Muslim Brotherhood pertaining to armed resistance against occupation, and the stance of the Palestinian Islamic movement toward the Iranian Revolution of 1979 and its relations with foreign actors. By seceding from the Brotherhood, PIJ emerged as its antithesis as it was revolutionary, small, and antiestablishment, and it was attempting to resurrect "a revolutionary Islamic intelligentsia that had largely been absent from the Palestinian arena."¹⁵

Abu-Amr, on the other hand, focuses on external developments. He states that the Six-Day War of 1967 was a pivotal point in the development, which "did not put only nationalist and secularist ideological orientations into a self-questioning posture," but also the traditional Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood. Searching for answers to the Arab defeat for more than a decade, the Iranian Revolution became an Islamic model for emulation. Consequently, "the Islamic Jihad movement in the West Bank and Gaza was the product of these [two] factors."¹⁶ Further, PIJ differed from

the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood insofar as the latter chose the “path of belief” while the former forged a “dialectical relationship between the path of *jihad* and the path of belief.”¹⁷ Thus armed struggle distinguished the two in the 1980s, before the foundation of Hamas.

Hatina finds a combination of external and internal (Palestinian) factors leading to the foundation of PIJ. Of external factors, Hatina points to the failure of initiatives to end the Israeli occupation, and the religious resurgence in the Middle East by the late 1970s. These external factors came in addition to the schisms in the Middle East in general and within the PLO in particular. Hatina further points to two internal Palestinian factors facilitating the emergence of PIJ. First was the passivity of the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood on the issue of armed struggle against occupation. Second was the expansion of secondary and higher education in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, alongside “depressed economic conditions, especially in the Gaza Strip . . . which fueled a climate of religious fervor among the educated youth.”¹⁸ Last, Hatina states that PIJ was distinct from the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood in its call for immediate armed struggle against Israel, and by portraying the latter as a Western bridgehead in the Arab world. PIJ additionally positioned itself between the Muslim Brotherhood, which devoted itself to nonviolent proselytization and activism, and Hizb al-Tahrir, “which adopted a strategy of change from the top down by violent means, with no active intervention in local affairs, until the establishment of the caliphate state that would liberate Palestine.”¹⁹

All three works focus more on the differences between PIJ and the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood than between the former and Hamas, however. Abu-Amr, for example, describes the difference between PIJ and Hamas as determined by the degree of militancy and PIJ’s categorical rejection of Israel.²⁰ Milton-Edwards notes that PIJ differs from Hamas by virtue of the former’s revolutionary vanguardism through which it has no desire to become a broad populist mass movement.²¹ Hatina, on the other hand, notes that “with the protraction of the Intifada, the ideological gap between the Islamic Jihad and Hamas effectively narrowed,” but he does not engage in an elaborate discussion on what separated the two beyond PIJ’s sole focus on armed struggle.²² Last, Alhaj et al. do not devote any space to the issue of why PIJ after the establishment of Hamas.

These analyses are supported by similar assessments in research on Hamas. Mishal and Sela, for example, state that PIJ adopted an unequivocal Palestinian identity while the forerunner of Hamas, the Islamic Center (al-Mujamma‘ al-Islāmī), blurred the boundaries between a narrow territorial state and a broad Islamic nation (*umma*).²³ Milton-Edwards and

Farrell state that PIJ, contrary to Hamas, has no interest in being a social movement and differs in its approach to governance and political participation.²⁴ Dunning shares this analysis and states that “Hamas combines social and political agendas with armed struggle and Islam. Islamic Jihad, conversely, does not have a current social or political agenda beyond armed resistance.”²⁵ Thus, all of these claims share an analysis of a categorical movement bereft of pragmatism. PIJ is simply more militant; it rejects political participation and diplomatic dialogue; and it has adopted an unequivocal Palestinian identity. Yet, if we accept the accuracy of these claims, are they in fact the main points of distinction between PIJ and Hamas?

Despite their importance, the studies of Abu-Amr and Milton-Edwards were published in 1994 and 1999, respectively. Important changes have occurred on the ground since then, and the research on Islamism in general and its Palestinian varieties has developed correspondingly. New information has surfaced, unavailable in the 1990s, in particular with the Internet and the digitization of historical sources. Moreover, neither of these two studies focuses solely on PIJ, but instead approaches Palestinian Islamism as a phenomenon in general, through the study of Hamas, PIJ, and Hizb al-Tahrir. The focus on the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas is also greater than that on PIJ. In Milton-Edward’s *Islamic Politics in Palestine*, for example, PIJ is given only 13 out of 221 pages. Hatina’s *Islam and Salvation in Palestine* is a well-researched introduction to PIJ, but is nonetheless relatively short. In addition, it has been almost twenty years since its publication (2001). Despite the title of the French study, *De la théologie à la libération? Histoire du Jihad islamique palestinien*, it does not elaborate on the historical details of the movement and its developments. There is thus a gap in the literature, and the history of PIJ in the traditional sense remains to be written.

Sources Employed

One source for this study was the publications of PIJ such as the books and memoirs of its leading members, journals such as *al-Jihad* and *al-Mujahid*, articles and historical accounts, and media interviews. A rich secondary literature was also compiled through digitized archives such as that of the newspaper *al-Hayat*. One of the most crucial sources was the collected works of PIJ’s founding father, Fathi al-Shiqaqi, which includes his booklets, articles, studies, and interviews ranging from 1979 until Mossad assassinated him on October 26, 1995.

A second crucial source was the martyr biographies of those who have fallen in the lines of PIJ. Due to their richness in biographical data, the

martyr biographies helped me develop a bottom-up analysis of PIJ in which the regular members of the movement have a more prominent place in its history. I have also looked into the quantitative aspects of the martyr biographies by creating a socioeconomic dataset consisting of 908 martyrs in the period 1992–2012. The creation of the dataset was mainly to see whether the average PIJ member had a particular level of education and belonged to a distinct economic class, and whether he belonged to a particular district, city/village, or neighborhood.

Certainly, I do not suggest that the tasks and relations of regular members are the only approach through which a political movement may be analyzed. Nor do I suggest that the leaders and ideologues of PIJ are not featured prominently in this study. For example, despite the greater focus on the ordinary members of PIJ, their leader, al-Shiqaqi, has a more prominent place than that of any other. Yet, as this is a study of a particular social current surfacing within a specific historical stage, al-Shiqaqi's prominence is merely ascertained as one of this current's principal representatives.

A third key source was interviews with those in PIJ. I notably went to Lebanon and interviewed member of PIJ's political bureau, Anwar Abu Taha, in Beirut. I went to southern Lebanon and the refugee camp Rashidieh to interview Abu Samir Musa, leader and founder of PIJ in the Lebanese Tyre region. While asking for de-identification, I also interviewed "Bilal," who was part of the PIJ nucleus in Egypt when the founding fathers studied there in the 1970s. An earlier interview from 2014 with a PIJ representative in the West Bank was also employed in this study. Some discussions that are referenced in this study happened by accident. One example is that with the son-in-law of 'Abdallah 'Azzam, 'Abdallah Anas, who met al-Shiqaqi in Sudan, 1994.

Other interviews were planned but abandoned. For example, I sent requests to interview Khalil al-Shiqaqi, the brother of late Fathi al-Shiqaqi, and Sami al-Arian, former secretary of PIJ's shura council. Both politely declined, however. More importantly, I initially wished to carry out fieldwork in the Gaza Strip and in the West Bank for this study. This unfortunately proved impossible for two reasons. First, in order to get an access permit for the Gaza Strip, I contacted the Norwegian embassy in Tel Aviv, the Norwegian consulate in al-Ram, and a number of NGOs and research institutions. Yet, these efforts proved futile as Norwegian authorities were unable to help, and the NGOs and research institutions had few means at their disposal. Further, while Egyptian authorities equally enforce the blockade on Gaza, the security situation in Sinai has worsened considerably. The Rafah crossing was thus not a favorable option although it was my way of entry into Gaza in 2013.

I do not personally know any PIJ members in the West Bank, and I thus depend on intermediaries to contact the movement. Though I conducted interviews with PIJ there for an earlier project in 2014, it proved unfeasible for this particular study. As the intermediaries stated that they could not ensure the safety of those I wished to interview this time – fearing physical or psychological harm if the Israeli occupation authorities were led to them – the ethical concerns and obligations prohibited fieldwork there. This is unfortunate as I have no doubt that fieldwork in Gaza or the West Bank would greatly enrich this analysis. Last, I did not get to meet the former secretary-general of PIJ, Ramadan ‘Abdallah Shallah. I was allowed, however, to send him my written questions through intermediaries. Unfortunately, he suffered a stroke and went into a coma one week later.

Argument and General Outline

The central argument of this study is that PIJ was established and subsequently evolved due to Palestinian historical processes and because of dynamics specific to PIJ. As the majority of PIJ’s founding fathers were affiliated with the secular-nationalist currents, they were swayed by the belief in religion’s transformative potential in the 1960s and 1970s. More importantly, when doing so, they preserved their secular, activist political ethos and logic, although it was now framed through religious symbolism. The establishment of PIJ thus did not entail the formation of a characteristically new ideology, but rather the rearticulation of already-existing ones. There are consequently direct lines from the Palestinian secular-nationalist currents of the late 1960s to contemporary PIJ. Because this was an ethos distinctively different from that of the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood in the 1980s, the latter was unable to absorb these activists into its ranks. PIJ and Hamas thus derive their practices from two different political traditions with consequences for the movements’ contemporary practices. In effect, PIJ and Hamas developed into two specific and divergent Palestinian currents in the debate on how, and how much of, Palestine is to be liberated.

This argument has two consequences. The first is that PIJ has a justification for existence alongside Hamas beyond its alleged militarism, its alleged lack of pragmatism, and its alleged unequivocal Palestinian identity. If we accept this being the case, then the second consequence is that we may question to what degree the dividing line in the Palestinian resistance – historically as well as contemporarily – is one between secular nationalism and Islamism.

The analysis of this study proceeds in three basic steps, and each part denotes a particular period in the history of PIJ. Based on PIJ’s slogan

“Faith, Awareness, Revolution,” I have also added one ideology chapter to each of the three parts to highlight a particular aspect of the movement’s historical development. I initially planned to divide this study into two parts in which the first part provided the history of PIJ and the second its ideology. However, because the reader would not have any information on the actual thoughts or ideas of the movement as (s)he learned of its historical development, I abandoned this approach. The intention is thus for a three-part structure to combine narrative progression with analytical rigor.

Part I (1967–1988) analyzes the beginning of PIJ, how and when it was established, who and how it recruited its first members, and when and how it commenced armed struggle. **Chapter 1** focuses on the transformation of Fathi al-Shiqaqi, the founder and first leader of PIJ, from Nasserist to Islamist; and how he founded the first PIJ nucleus after meeting the other founding fathers in Egypt as students. **Chapter 2** analyzes the overall ideological framework that the students developed in Egypt and subsequently evolved, diagnosing the problem of the Palestinians and its source. **Chapter 3** discusses the recruitment efforts of PIJ once they returned to Gaza in late 1981, analyzing how it was able to establish itself as a part of the Gazan political fabric. Last, **Chapter 4** analyzes the development of PIJ into an armed movement.

Part II (1988–2000) proceeds to the downfall of PIJ. This part commences with **Chapter 5** and the deportation of al-Shiqaqi and the other PIJ leaders to Lebanon, emphasizing the alliances that began between PIJ and Iran, and the organizational restructuring PIJ underwent. In light of the new alliance with Iran, **Chapter 6** investigates PIJ’s view on the Shiites and the Iranian Revolution. **Chapter 7** concludes this part by analyzing the disintegrating leadership of PIJ in the 1990s and the irrelevance of the movement until 2000.

Part III (2000–2017) investigates the comeback of PIJ with the eruption of the Second Intifada, described and analyzed in **Chapter 8**. I then proceed to discuss, in **Chapter 9**, PIJ’s role throughout the Palestinian strife between Hamas and Fatah after the former won the Palestinian legislative elections in 2006. It also studies how PIJ navigated during the Arab Spring. While PIJ does not engage in governance under occupation, **Chapter 10** investigates what the movement deems as a fair, future Palestinian society after liberation.

The study ends with a conclusion (**Chapter 11**) discussing what distinguishes PIJ from Hamas.

Part I

The Beginning of PIJ (1967–1988)

1 The Roots of PIJ

In March 1979, sitting in front of an anxious Ramadan ‘Abdallah Shallah, Fathi al-Shiqaqi drew a rectangle cut through by a circle. The drawing represented their new political project, containing three distinct spaces. One space represented the brothers who were members of the Muslim Brotherhood only. Then there were the brothers who were members in both the Brotherhood and their new project. Last were those who had joined this project without being Muslim Brethren. This organization was the Islamic Vanguard, the nucleus of PIJ.

Although scholars studying PIJ agree on its chronology in the earliest phase of the movement, and who its founding fathers were, they differ when analyzing the factors facilitating its emergence. Hatina, for example, stresses the radicalizing influence of militant Egyptian groups in the 1970s as one vital factor.¹ However, Abu-Amr states that PIJ was the product of the Six-Day War of 1967 and the Iranian Revolution of 1979 – the latter offering an alternative to the Arab defeat.² Milton-Edwards, on the other hand, emphasizes the conflict with the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood in the early 1980s.³ Questions thus remain. If the influence from Egyptian groups had such an effect on the PIJ founding fathers, why does one of them refute this allegation as “nonsense”?⁴ If PIJ was a product of the Iranian Revolution, had domestic Palestinian Islamic politics any role? Does Egypt matter for the analysis of PIJ if the conflict with the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood in the 1980s was decisive? Consequently, what are the roots of PIJ?

This chapter consists of five sections. The first assesses al-Shiqaqi’s teenage years and his turn from Nasserism to Islamism. I then proceed to show how the PIJ founders met in the Egyptian university system, how they organized study circles, and their interaction with, and growing animosity toward, the Muslim Brotherhood. Third, I analyze the importance of the study circles for the emergence of PIJ. I then discuss the Palestinians’ contact with the Egyptian radical groups and the latter’s potential influence on the Palestinian students. Last, I analyze the

importance of the Palestinian political landscape and whether changes in its structure (or the lack thereof) contributed to PIJ emerging as it did.

1.1 From Nasser to the Muslim Brotherhood

When the British Cabinet made its decision to withdraw from Mandatory Palestine in February 1947, it left the United Nations (UN) to settle the issue. After nine months, the UN decided to partition Palestine. Accepted by the Zionist leadership, who championed partition, the plan was rejected by the Palestinian leadership and the Arab world, who sought to establish a unitary state and to solve the situation through further negotiations.⁵ As the UN General Assembly adopted the United Nations Partition Plan for Palestine as Resolution 181 (II) on November 29, 1947, civil war erupted the day after, developing into a conventional war on May 15, 1948.⁶

The grandfather of Fathi Ibrahim ‘Abd al-‘Aziz al-Shiqaqi was before and throughout this period the imam of the small village of Zarnuqa in the Ramla district. The father of al-Shiqaqi, Ibrahim, would come to the mosque as a little boy to read, pray, and listen to his stories and sermons.⁷ In a situation of war, leading to the expulsion of 750,000 Palestinians, Zarnuqa was nonetheless considered “friendly” by Jewish armed forces, probably due to its economic dependence on wages from cultivating Jewish-owned orange groves.⁸ In May 1948, for example, its *mukhtār* (mayor) went to the Qatra police station, announcing that Zarnuqa, in addition to the Palestinian villages of Mughar, Bash-Shit, and Qubayba, wanted to surrender. Moreover, Zarnuqa’s most powerful clan, Shurbaji, proposed that the village should hand over its weapons to the Jewish paramilitary organization Haganah for protection.⁹

Its population was expelled on May 27, 1948, however, and the houses of Zarnuqa were demolished in June.¹⁰ Initially camping near Majdal, Zarnuqa’s population did attempt to return to reap their agricultural fields, “with hunger rampant” among them, but they were expelled by Jewish troops once more.¹¹ Their flight only ended in Gazan Rafah, settling as refugees with an uncertain future. It was there, under Egyptian administration, that al-Shiqaqi was born a refugee in 1951.

Although there are few details about the early life of al-Shiqaqi, some accounts imply a family that endured, living at a subsistence level and in close quarters. Fathiyya, for example, who married al-Shiqaqi in 1985, initially rejected his marriage proposal after visiting their home in Rafah in the early 1970s because,

[t]heir home in Rafah did not provide an adequate marital home, as there were no independent rooms. His brothers were married and stayed at home, in addition to

his sisters. When a friend visited [al-Shiqaqi], for example, his brother's wife would leave her room because he did not have a private room in his house.¹²

Despite the difficult circumstances the family faced in exile, al-Shiqaqi excelled in the schools of the Gaza Strip, and his mother, although illiterate, encouraged him to study.¹³ As a teenager, al-Shiqaqi also became involved politically, participating in the morning speeches of the school and the political wall newspapers, and he did so as an ardent Nasserist. As al-Shiqaqi recalled:

There is no doubt that the Nasserist tide, which was at its most powerful, cast a shadow over us, so I was very fond of Abdel Nasser as a person and as an Arab leader. It was to his credit that I did not become a Communist. Because of my early political interests, I was struck by the idea of equality between men, which made me look to the Communist school in the "We Chose You" series, which was issued by the Egyptian Ministry of National Guidance. I read the preface of the book written by Abdel Nasser, which attacked Communism, and it made me dismiss the Communist thought and limited my political activity and orientation to that of Nasserism. In 1966, I organized a political organization with two of my friends who were one year older than I was. The organization was under Abdel Nasser's umbrella, and our idea was simple.¹⁴

Nothing indicates that his family was politically involved, so his focus on political organization was most likely a combination of his social environment, as he became politically aware in school, and perhaps his own personality (which he himself emphasized).¹⁵

Al-Shiqaqi did not remain a Nasserist for long, however, as the Arab defeat in the Six-Day War of June 1967 left him in shock. In a situation that he described as one of "anxiety," "agony," and "imbalance," al-Shiqaqi was not able to find the answers to the defeat in Nasserist thought and ideology.¹⁶ Instead, he found his answers in religion:

The actual explanations [of Nasserism] did not provide the reasons for the defeat, while the Islamic idea, on the other hand, became much more convincing with its deep questions such as: "Who are we? Why were we defeated? And why now? Why have we triumphed before and why do we lose now?"¹⁷

Looking for answers to the predicament, al-Shiqaqi first submerged himself in Islamic literature such as the books of Sayyid Qutb and Muhammad al-Ghazali; with the latter's *How Do We Understand Islam* (*Kayfa Nafhamu al-Islām*) being significant for his intellectual development.¹⁸ Al-Shiqaqi also began to transform the ideological fabric of the old Nasserist group he had organized by introducing Islamic books to their study circles in the first half of 1968. Although the debate on the link between nationalism and Islam "lasted for a long time and was not solved overnight," the members of al-Shiqaqi's study circles became

increasingly critical of secularism through their studies and discussions. That same year, al-Shiqaqi proposed a new political program for the group in the name of Islam. Everyone except one, a Fatah member by the name of Sa'd Abu Hashish, accepted.¹⁹

It is not a given that al-Shiqaqi would turn to Islam to find his answers at this point, however. Islamism – both as ideology and as organizational vehicle – was at that point still weak in the Gaza Strip after being repressed by the Egyptian state. It was instead the Palestinian secular-nationalist current, represented by the PLO, that was strengthened by the Nasserist defeat. As we will see later in this study, its military wing, the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA), had an armed monopoly in Gaza until its defeat at the end of 1971 and early 1972. Al-Shiqaqi himself explained the turn to religion with reference to his conservative family and the influence of his father, who despite the prevailing secularism of the 1960s kept to his prayers and practiced his religion actively:

It was kind of a traditional religiosity without any fundamental understanding at that time. I assumed before the 1960s that Islamic thought was merely a ritual of worship, so when I found the book of al-Ghazali, *How Do We Understand Islam*, I began to understand that Islam is a great world that encompasses all aspects of life.²⁰

Keeping that in mind, al-Shiqaqi was nevertheless the only person in his family who turned to Islamism. His brother Khalil, for example, became an ardent critic of Palestinian Islamism, and noted, “I always thought Fathi’s way was wrong.”²¹

What is clear with the transformation of al-Shiqaqi’s study group is that he in 1968 had already developed intellectually, combining a mixture of his old Nasserist nationalism and the newly appropriated Islamic framework. For example, because of his desire to organize the new Islamists politically, al-Shiqaqi met and became acquainted with Ahmad Yassin in 1968, the de facto leader of the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood and the future spiritual leader of Hamas. Yet,

I had from the beginning no doubt about the negativity of the Muslim Brotherhood on Palestinian nationalist and political work. [The Muslim Brotherhood] was against the guerrilla organizations [*al-tanzīmāt al-fidā'iyya*] and I opposed this negative position. My complete belief in Islam, however, made me stay with them, leaving the lines open with the nationalists. The second theme was the issue of method [*qadīyat al-manhaj*] as I felt there was none, and there was a chaos of concepts in the movement’s framework. There were no organizational positions on the national issues. I thus had a clear reaction to the rigidity of methods in Hizb al-Tahrir [the Islamic Liberation Party] and the chaos in the Muslim Brotherhood, which turned these things around. That chaos

raised an important question on how to obtain change followed by other questions about the approach and the Palestinian cause, creating a dispute with the Brotherhood.²²

The desire and ambition of al-Shiqaqi to organize himself and his friends politically posed a conundrum. On the one hand, he realized that they did not have the experience, the depth of ideas, to create a new group. On the other, the Muslim Brotherhood was the only viable alternative, but it had little interest in resistance or political work. For months, al-Shiqaqi pondered joining the Brotherhood before he gave in, reluctantly becoming a Muslim Brother in the second half of 1968.²³ Then, after studying at Birzeit University in the West Bank, and working as a teacher in Jerusalem, al-Shiqaqi moved to Egypt in 1974 in order to pursue his medical studies.

1.2 From Gaza to al-Zagazig

The relationship between Egyptian authorities and the student movement was tense from the onset once Gamal Abdel Nasser ascended to power in 1952. Introducing a number of reforms in the Egyptian educational system to increase the number of university students, Nasser was nonetheless suspicious of the Egyptian national student movement, which he saw as a potential source of political disturbance. The new regime consequently attempted to consolidate its power by winning over a politically active student body. Yet, the students had become accustomed to a liberal climate of political activism following the revolution, unwilling to accept the rule of the armed forces, and conflict soon erupted between the “liberal intelligentsia and the autocratic tendencies of military rulers.”²⁴

As Egyptian authorities obtained the upper hand through a mixture of suppression and co-optation, the confrontation between state and student marked the beginning of a period of “hibernation” for the Egyptian student movement from 1954. As Abdalla describes this period:

[The student movement] became relatively “tame” and the characteristic activities of the pre-Revolution student movement became simply historical memories. Those students who supported the new regime’s reformist social policy channeled their support through its official political organizations; those who could not accommodate themselves to the new orientation resorted, in the face of authoritarian power, to the politics of withdrawal.²⁵

The Six-Day War of 1967 did not influence al-Shiqaqi alone, however, but also marked the return of the Egyptian student movement as

a political force for the first time in fourteen years. As Kepel describes, Egyptian military courts began to hand down sentences for those they believed were to blame for the defeat. Those at the top were “either acquitted or sentenced to short prison terms,” while the low-ranking officers and state employees were given “far more severe sentences,” sometimes as much as life in prison.²⁶ As a response, workers from Helwan, south of Cairo, went out in the streets to protest. More importantly, the student movement joined the workers, reflecting the failure of Egyptian official political organizations to contain the student movement.²⁷ While the uprising of 1968 was marked by the students’ initial reactions to the defeat, it was intensified by more than a decade of constraints on self-expression among students and intellectuals.²⁸

The frustrations of the student movement were certainly coupled with the persisting structural problems in Egyptian academia – problems the openness reforms (*al-infītāh*) of Anwar Sadat were far from alleviating once he took power in 1970 following the death of Nasser. As Kepel describes the Egyptian universities in the early 1970s, students were still struggling with overcrowded classrooms on the campuses and on the buses to and from the universities, often with the intermingling of sexes; and only the few seated up front had the privilege to follow a demonstration on a blackboard. This came in addition to power cuts, and an examination system asking the students to reiterate the lectures word for word, thus making it necessary to buy the often-expensive manual from the lecturer.²⁹

The Islamist students were nonetheless a minority at Egyptian university campuses as late as 1972. Yet, as the Egyptian regime saw the Islamists as a counterweight to the Marxists and the Nasserists in the politically revitalized student movement, who constituted the overall majority, it engaged in discreet and tactical collaboration with the Islamist student bodies to break the left’s dominance on campus.³⁰ More importantly, the Islamist students proposed colorful solutions to the inherent and structural problems on Egyptian campuses. These factors were decisive for the transformation of al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya into the dominant force in Egyptian universities by the time of the Student Union’s March 1976 Congress.³¹

Although Ashour describes al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya as a multi-ideological, decentralized, inter university group in the 1970s (and not as a formal organization), my point is to stress that Egyptian campuses not only had become re-politicized but also were increasingly dominated by Islamic politics once al-Shiqaqi moved to Egypt.³² It was there al-Shiqaqi and his friends threw themselves into the student debates in Egypt, published articles, hung up wall newspapers, and arranged study circles in al-Shiqaqi’s apartment in al-Zagazig. In consequence, it was in an

energetic political student environment turning increasingly religious that al-Shiqaqi met and became acquainted with the other founding fathers of PIJ. More importantly, it was there they gradually formulated the initial tenets of PIJ's ideology.

Al-Shiqaqi's apartment, located close to the university between the city hall and Zagazig road, became the main meeting place for the Palestinian students at al-Zagazig and for a group of Egyptians.³³ Of these Egyptians, we only know two: Muhammad Muru, who became closely acquainted with al-Shiqaqi during his studies, and the otherwise unknown Usama Hamid.³⁴ Some of the Palestinian students who frequented the apartment of al-Shiqaqi are also unknown, such as "Basil" and "Yunus" from al-Zagazig's Department of Agriculture.³⁵ We also know little about the role of one Ibrahim Mu'ammār.³⁶ However, his martyr biography informs us that he became acquainted with al-Shiqaqi and the rest of the PIJ nucleus in Egypt when he studied at the University of Alexandria before graduating in 1978.³⁷ This is conceivable as "Bilal," a cofounding father of PIJ after meeting al-Shiqaqi as a student in Egypt, noted that the group was not limited to the students at al-Zagazig.³⁸ Instead, there was a Palestinian student community in Egypt, approximately 100 in total, which ranged from Cairo to Alexandria via al-Zagazig, and many of them knew about each other.³⁹

Although we do not have information about everyone in al-Shiqaqi's apartment, it is nevertheless clear that it was in al-Shiqaqi's circle that the future leaders of PIJ met. One "Nafidh" was, for example, present, most likely Nafidh 'Azzam as both Rif'at Sayyid Ahmad and Azzam Tamimi refer to him as one of the students at al-Zagazig at that time.⁴⁰ 'Azzam later became a member of PIJ's political bureau, and he states that he met al-Shiqaqi for the first time during a wedding party in Egypt in 1978, and that "I was honored to live together with [al-Shiqaqi] in an apartment when we were students together at the Faculty of Medicine at al-Zagazig University in Egypt."⁴¹

Ramadan 'Abdallah Shallah, who became secretary-general of PIJ after the assassination of al-Shiqaqi in 1995, states that he met al-Shiqaqi at al-Zagazig for the first time in 1977,⁴² and he moved into al-Shiqaqi's apartment shortly thereafter.⁴³ In addition, 'Abdallah al-Shami, also a future member of PIJ's political bureau, began his studies at al-Zagazig University in 1976 and he states that it was there he got to know the rest of the PIJ nucleus.⁴⁴ Muhammad al-Hindi, another future member of PIJ's political bureau, frequented al-Shiqaqi's apartment as well.⁴⁵ These future leaders of PIJ came in addition to Bashir Nafi', Jamil 'Ulyan, Taysir al-Ghuti, and the brothers Muhammad and Ahmad Shakir.⁴⁶ While Nafi' was a member of PIJ's shura council in the 1980s

and early 1990s, Jamil ‘Ulyan and Taysir al-Ghuti became PIJ leaders in the Gaza Strip after their return.

Lastly, ‘Abd al-‘Aziz ‘Awda, described as the spiritual guide of PIJ once it was founded, met al-Shiqaqi in Egypt; yet their affiliation there cannot have lasted long. While al-Shiqaqi arrived in Egypt in 1974, Egyptian authorities expelled ‘Awda from Egypt in 1975 due to his Islamic activism. He then moved to the United Arab Emirates with his Egyptian wife to work as a teacher, and did not return to the Gaza Strip before 1981.⁴⁷ The spiritual guide of PIJ was thus almost entirely absent from the ideological formation process of the movement. Instead, if there was a leader in the group, it was al-Shiqaqi. Six or seven years older than the other students, he used his authority to lead the study circles, during which al-Shami recalls, “He was more aware and committed, and we learned from him.”⁴⁸ Shallah equally emphasizes the importance of al-Shiqaqi who “opened up new horizons” for the other Palestinian students.⁴⁹

Although al-Shiqaqi arrived in Egypt as a convinced Islamist, this was not the case for all of the Palestinian students who gathered in his apartment. Shallah, for example, was not politically involved in any Palestinian organization when he came to Egypt. As Shallah came from a religious and conservative family in the Gaza Strip, his father had prevented him from getting involved with any of the Palestinian secular-nationalist factions, although the leftist currents appealed to Shallah, while the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood was unwelcome due to Egyptian repression.⁵⁰ Hitherto, the fusion of Arab anti-colonial history and figures with Islamist ideology in the study circles proved decisive for his political transformation. As Shallah recalls:

[We read] about the resistance against colonialism in Algeria, Abdelhamid Ben Badis, Omar Mukhtar in Libya, Senussi in Tunisia, ‘Izz al-Din al-Qassam in Palestine, al-Mahdi in Sudan, al-Kawakibi and al-Afghani. [We did so] all the way up to the contemporary Islamic movement with the emergence of an independent state in the Arab and Islamic homeland [*watan*] based on secular grounds, and then the position of the Islamic movement. It was here I got acquainted with the writings of Mawdudi, Sayyid Qutb, Sheikh al-Ghazali, Sheikh al-Qaradawi, and others, and I began to realize that there was another view of the world than what we learned in our schools and homes.⁵¹

This is independently confirmed by al-Shiqaqi, who recalls the intellectual period as follows:

There, in Egypt, we met as a group of believing and intellectual Palestinian youths, with the roots of rich cultural and political experiences. We discovered each other at evening gatherings as most of us read Shakespeare, Dostoyevsky, Chekhov, Sartre, T. S. Eliot, and others, and also Naguib Mahfouz, Badr Shakir al-Sayyab, and Salah Abdel Sabour, just as we read Jamal al-Din al-Afghani,

Hassan al-Banna, Baqir al-Sadr, and Sayyid Qutb, in addition to sporadic Islamic sciences, humanities, and history. I recall writing critical reviews of Sartre when I was seventeen years old and articles on Lenin on the centennial anniversary of his birth when I was nineteen years old.

I also remember that I at that time read *Oedipus the King* by Sophocles, half in English, more than ten times and I would cry bitterly every time, and I would not sleep those nights without finishing the play. I also read *The Tragedy of al-Hallaj* by Salah Abdel Sabour more than fifty times, and I learned the “rain nashid” of al-Sayyab by heart. The trilogy of Naguib Mahfouz left a lasting impact on me. When I read *Ahmad al-Za'tar* by Mahmoud Darwish, I learned it by heart and thought it was the greatest poem written in Arabic since the language learned its letters. . . .

In this period, we also read Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, whom we were very impressed by at the expense of Sheikh Muhammad 'Abduh, who was a subject of criticism for us before discovering in later years that the man should have received more attention, although our difference in politics remains. From the beginning, we read the letters of Imam al-Banna, and I am today even more interested in them than at that time. As for Sayyid Qutb, his influence on our generation was unquestionable. . . . In addition, I do not forget books such as *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age* by Albert Hourani and *Arab Intellectuals and the West* by Hisham Sharabi, and others like them were subjects of study. . . .

In this atmosphere, the dialogue that took place from the mid-1970s arose on methodological issues on religion, Islamic sciences, Islamic history and modern European history, the world, reality, and methods of change, before focusing on the Palestinian question. It was when we lived with a deepness, pain, and real contractions of a problem: “Nationalists without Islam and Islamists without Palestine.” The Palestinian national movement in the 1960s and 1970s treated the subject of Islam with disavowal and exclusion, or indifference. Simultaneously, the Islamic current toward Palestine was minor (for objective and subjective reasons).⁵²

Through the immersion in history, Islamic sciences, and the focus on the Palestinian cause, the Palestinian students began to crystallize a distinct activist approach focusing on action to obtain qualitative change. According to Anwar Abu Taha, a member of PIJ's political bureau, these study circles focused on “mobilization, recruitment, and commitment to special religious and intellectual training [*bi-tarbiyya imāniyya wa-fikriyya khāṣṣa*] distinct from the situation in the Muslim Brotherhood.”⁵³

This is not to suggest that the Palestinian students isolated themselves in al-Shiqaqi's apartment in al-Zagazig. To the contrary, on the Egyptian campuses they engaged with youthful audacity in fierce discussions and polemics with the Nasserist and Marxist students. When the Communist student bloc announced its wall newspaper *The Steeds (al-ḥiyād)*, for example, al-Shiqaqi and his friends simply began issuing the competing wall newspaper, *The Horsemen (al-Fursān)*. As “Bilal,” who participated in the study circles of al-Shiqaqi, noted:

At that time in Egypt, it was all kinds of discussions and lively debate. [The debates were] not only between those of an Islamic orientation, but also between nationalists, Arab nationalists, leftists, and Communists. [After all,] young [Palestinian] students came to a very sophisticated country, economically and culturally speaking. There was a huge gap between the Occupied [Palestinian] Territories and Egypt, so we tried to understand the world, the Arab world, to find a way, and [this gap] generated debate. Cairo and Beirut were the two major cultural centers at the time, so you [necessarily] became part of a huge debate about the future.⁵⁴

Al-Shiqaqi also became involved in the underground Islamic journal *al-Mukhtār al-Islāmī* (*The Islamic Digest*) – according to himself as its secret editor in chief.⁵⁵ Mistakenly identified with the Muslim Brotherhood, the magazine was according to Abdullah al-Arian founded by one Husayn ‘Ashur in Egypt in 1979, and it appealed to a narrower segment of the educated public with its long scholarly articles.⁵⁶ As *al-Mukhtār al-Islāmī* enjoyed an improved freedom of expression with the openness reforms of Sadat,⁵⁷ al-Shiqaqi published his articles there under the pseudonym ‘Izz al-Din al-Faris (a reference and homage to ‘Izz al-Din al-Qassam). His first publication in *al-Mukhtār al-Islāmī* was a small piece titled “The Muslim Woman,” and al-Shiqaqi contributed eleven articles altogether from April 1980 to July 1981, three of them coauthored with Bashir Nafi‘ (who wrote under his pseudonym Ahmad Sadiq).⁵⁸ It was there the Palestinian students partly developed the future ideology of PIJ, and it was there al-Shiqaqi published one of its defining ideological texts, “The Palestinian Cause Is the Central Cause for the Islamic Movement.”⁵⁹ As Abu Taha suggests, *al-Mukhtār al-Islāmī* was “the medium for the dissemination of ideas and theses of the Islamic Jihad project in all issues on thought, politics, and jihad. It also presented the basic education material for the members of the organization.”⁶⁰

Corresponding to the development and refinement of their theories for direct action, the Palestinians also began to criticize the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood for what they perceived to be the movement’s lack of grit, integrity, and activism:

We had realized at the time that the Muslim Brotherhood did not have an intellectual study of the [current] development, and that there were intellectual and dynamic flaws in the movement that would lead the Muslim Brotherhood – and perhaps the whole Islamic movement – to a standstill. . . . Rather, maintaining the organization was more important than taking the right position, which isolated them from the masses. . . . [We believed] that the Islamic movement must be the locomotive for this change – to move the body of the *umma* as a whole.⁶¹

This criticism by the Palestinian students was not limited to a matter of direct activism versus quietism, however, but pertained to the Palestinian

cause as well. Paralleling al-Shiqaqi's ideological development that commenced in Gaza, the other Palestinian students also began to merge nationalist fervor with Islamic signifiers and symbolism through the study circles. Milton-Edwards notes that by doing so they "challenged nationalist sentiments about Palestine, appropriated them and used them to support its call for liberation."⁶² At a time when the Palestinian secular-nationalist currents had monopolized the armed struggle against the Israeli occupation, the Palestinian students thus criticized the Muslim Brotherhood heavily for ignoring the Palestinian cause – one that the students believed was the main cause of the Islamic community (*umma*):

We also took on the Muslim Brotherhood's lack of awareness that the Palestinian cause was the central cause of the Islamic movement. We got into sharp ideological clashes with the followers of the Muslim Brotherhood because of their exaggerated interest in the Afghan cause at the expense of the Palestinian. Thus, we saw a clear flaw in the ideological structure of the Muslim Brotherhood, which was not just merely a tactical error.⁶³

This activism proved troublesome for al-Shiqaqi as he came into the spotlight of the Egyptian authorities – who arrested him in February 1979 after his analysis and praise of the Iranian Revolution in the booklet *Khomeini: The Islamic Solution and the Alternative (al-Khumaynī: al-hall al-islāmī wa-l-badīl)*.⁶⁴ Stuck in jail for an unspecified number of days before Egyptian authorities released him, al-Shiqaqi was then rearrested and incarcerated for four additional months when the booklet was reprinted after the first copies had sold out.

The publication of *Khomeini* demarcated the definite rupture between al-Shiqaqi and the Muslim Brotherhood. The exact reasons for this rupture are uncertain, but we may point to two conceivable causes. One is the sense of personal betrayal in al-Shiqaqi's recollection of the rupture, as the young Palestinian student suddenly found himself alone and abandoned in al-Qal'a Prison:

It seems that the Egyptian security services based my arrest on information about the publication of my book about the Islamic revolution in Iran. ... I was arrested after the first issue [of *al-Mukhtār al-Islāmī*, July 1979], and at that time, the relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood was severed as I found out that they did not care about me getting out of there, but instead thought that I would be deported [to Gaza]. It was then I understood that the idea of influence and compatibility [with the Brotherhood] did no longer exist.⁶⁵

Another is Tamimi's speculation that al-Shiqaqi was expelled by the Muslim Brotherhood, not because of his praise for the Iranian

Revolution, but because of his critique of the movement. More importantly, al-Shiqaqi had set up a new organization within the Brotherhood with which al-Shiqaqi recruited members.⁶⁶ This is credible as the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood was initially enthusiastic about the Iranian Revolution, and it is thus unlikely that the organization would expel grassroots members sharing that enthusiasm.⁶⁷

It is uncertain, however, whether the Muslim Brotherhood expelled al-Shiqaqi or if he in fact left the movement voluntarily. Although he does not mention the circumstances under which al-Shiqaqi left, Shallah nevertheless confirms that al-Shiqaqi had set up a new organization within the Brotherhood. According to Shallah, he argued after al-Shiqaqi's release that it was necessary to establish a formal organization due to the weak links that existed among the Palestinian students, and because fear for their studies and futures could jeopardize their political project. It was then that al-Shiqaqi revealed the already-existing plan for establishing a new organization:

I remember that [al-Shiqaqi] drew a rectangular shape cut through by a circle, in which the rectangle represented the Muslim Brotherhood and the circle represented the new organization. There were three spaces: an area in which the brothers were still in the Muslim Brotherhood only, and who had not joined the new organization ... and then there were the brothers in the Muslim Brotherhood and those in the new organization. ... I told him about my happiness and joy, and I pledged allegiance to his "pledge of jihad." That was in March 1979.⁶⁸

Consequently, it seems to be an anachronism in al-Shiqaqi's and Shallah's recollections as the former dates his arrest to July, while the latter dates their subsequent meeting to March. The explanation is presumably that they do not refer to the same arrests. As Shallah says they met in March, al-Shiqaqi's confession of a new organization must have transpired between the two prison terms. As al-Shiqaqi says the rupture with the Muslim Brotherhood occurred following the publication of *al-Mukhtār al-Islāmī* in July, he is in all likelihood referring to the second arrest. This makes sense as he spent only a couple of days behind bars the first time. The anachronism is thus explained by the fact that al-Shiqaqi and Shallah refer to two different events, and thus to two different periods in Egyptian prison.

The organization that Shallah refers to is the nucleus of PIJ, the Islamic Vanguard (al-Ṭalā'ī al-Islāmiyya), founded in late 1980, which I will return to later in this chapter.⁶⁹ For now, however, we will turn our attention to the study circles in al-Shiqaqi's apartment, and analyze how they contributed to the formation of PIJ.

1.3 Understanding the Study Circles

Although the secondary literature on PIJ does mention the Egyptian universities as a meeting place for the founding fathers of the movement, the study circles in al-Shiqaqi's apartment have received little analytical attention in explaining the emergence of the movement. Still, we should not underestimate their importance. As Morris and Staggenborg note, "The early stages of the movement are typically an 'orgy of participation and of talk' in which participants share stories, socially construct meaning, and explore new ideas."⁷⁰ Hunt and Benford add to this analysis, stating that ideological consciousness is constructed through a variety of mechanisms such as talking, constructing narratives, framing processes, and emotion work: "Fundamentally, collective identities are *talked* into existence."⁷¹

Indeed, as we saw, Shallah was molded, shaped, and influenced through his active participation in the study circles in al-Shiqaqi's apartment. It was there he was exposed to the fusion of Islamism, Palestinian nationalism, and anti-colonialism. It was there Shallah apprehended another view of the world, where religion obtained a position beyond private ritualism. Religion became instead an analytical tool to understand and improve existing reality. Thus, it is quite clear that it was in the study circles that the Palestinian students developed and elaborated a distinct theory of action where Palestinian nationalism and Islamic signifiers merged.

The Egyptian universities, of course, enabled this ideological and theoretical development. First, the university campuses constituted what Diani terms a "social relay," where membership does not necessarily generate collective action, but creates opportunities for people with similar presuppositions to meet and potentially develop joint action.⁷² Second, as they all were students, we may recall that al-Shiqaqi emphasized that they met as young, believing Palestinian youth, implying the acknowledgment of shared, yet unarticulated identities. As Wiktorowicz states, one of the most consistent findings in research on social movements is that *personal* relationships are the social pathways for joining new movements as they facilitate both trust and commitment, and transform interest and availability into actual activism.⁷³ The study circles emanating from the encounters on the university campuses thus laid the groundwork for the construction of a common action-oriented identity that with time developed into the ideology of PIJ.

This development of a distinct action-oriented approach brought the students into conflict with the Muslim Brotherhood. This is not surprising as another central dynamic of organizational formation through the

“orgy of participation and talk” is “boundary framing,” when the group in question creates a sense not only of who they are, but also of who they are *not* – thus establishing differences between the challenging group and the dominant group.⁷⁴ The concept of boundary framing is consequently helpful in understanding the developing tensions that emerged between the PIJ nucleus and the Muslim Brotherhood. That is, as the nucleus became increasingly conscious and organized, it became correspondingly critical of the Muslim Brotherhood. This was not merely an issue of ideology and methods, but also a process of group cohesion. As we will see in the next part of this chapter, this boundary framing was primarily enforced by al-Shiqaqi through the conceptual construction of three distinct generations in the Muslim Brotherhood. In fact, Abu Taha notes that the study circles in al-Shiqaqi’s apartment led to “the creation of new mechanisms of communication and interaction [which] formed a special collective dynamic that set the boundaries of a ‘group’ that had begun to crystallize.”⁷⁵

The exploration of new ideas and the framing of boundaries in the study circles are then closely connected to the steps of symbolic production. As defined by Snow and Benford, these steps are diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational.⁷⁶ Drawing on these three steps, della Porta and Diani state that the first entails recognizing the problem and its source, in addition to those responsible for it. This corresponds clearly to the early stages of the study circles when the students began to put Palestine first while lamenting the Muslim Brotherhood’s passivity and lack of grit. The prognostic element, to seek solutions, must have begun approximately when al-Shiqaqi proceeded from the study circles to work on the formation of the PIJ nucleus, the Islamic Vanguard. The second step corresponds, then, to the assessment of Sayyid Ahmad, who delineates a clear point in 1978 when the thought and philosophy of al-Shiqaqi crystallized in favor of “jihad.”⁷⁷ Last, regarding the motivational step, della Porta and Diani write:

On another level, symbolic elaboration is essential in order to produce the motivation and the incentives needed for action. The unknowable outcomes and the costs associated with collective action can be overcome if the actors are convinced (intuitively even before rationally) of the opportunity for mobilizing and of the practicability and the legitimacy of action.⁷⁸

As we recall, Shallah presented his concerns once al-Shiqaqi was released from prison in 1979. These concerns mainly pertained to the Palestinian students’ fear that their Islamic activism could jeopardize their university studies (cf. “the costs associated with collective action”). Although al-Shiqaqi allegedly had been preparing it for some time, his arrest by

Egyptian authorities presumably accelerated the organization of the PIJ nucleus in order to strengthen the weak links among the students by convincing the students of the practicability and opportunity for mobilization.

It is through the analysis of the diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational steps as distinct phases in Egypt that we discern the stages through which the ideology and formation of the PIJ nucleus developed. The diagnostic step (recognizing the problem) lasted approximately from 1974 until 1978. The prognostic stage (finding the solution to the problem) lasted from 1978 until 1979. The motivational element (convincing the Palestinian students to organize despite their fears for their university studies) accelerated with the arrest of al-Shiqaqi in 1979 and finalized with the formation of the PIJ nucleus, the Islamic Vanguard, in 1980.

Although the Palestinian students engaged in discussions and studies through which they explored new ideas and forms of consciousness, it was nevertheless not a given that collective behavior or identity would develop, or that PIJ should have emerged. Instead, leaders have proven to be decisive in organizational formation processes as they play a role in recognizing and interpreting opportunities through the construction of new meanings: "To mobilize movements out of these early interactions, leaders offer frames, tactics, and organizational vehicles that allow participants to construct a collective identity and participate in collective actions at various levels."⁷⁹ Leaders of emerging movements thus make a difference by converting the potential conditions for mobilization into actual social movements.⁸⁰ Clearly, although the participation of the other students was required, this key role in the formational process of PIJ cannot be attributed to anyone but al-Shiqaqi. After all, it was al-Shiqaqi who "opened up new horizons," and was more aware and conscious; and it was he who by virtue of his seniority taught the other Palestinian students and provided them with literature and interpretations.

It is clear that the study circles were essential for the formation of PIJ as an organization. Through the reading of history, inspired by the resistance against colonialism and guided by Islamist theory, a distinct collective identity was created that united the Palestinian students. The construction of collective identity corresponds to the growing animosity toward the Muslim Brotherhood as boundaries were created in order to establish who they were and who they were not. In order for the collective identity to develop into a cohesive political organization, it nevertheless required the facilitation and guidance of al-Shiqaqi, who by virtue of his seniority took a leadership position from the onset.

1.4 Engaging with EIJ and al-Takfir wa-l-Hijra

Corresponding to the changes in the rest of Egyptian society was the introduction of groups such as al-Takfir wa-l-Hijra, al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, and Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ).⁸¹ There seems to have been contact between al-Shiqaqi's group and these Egyptian radical movements. For example, Muru writes that after the Sadat government arrested a number of Islamists in September 1980, there were discussions in al-Shiqaqi's group about countermeasures. They contacted the Muslim Brotherhood ("who refused as usual"), al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, and EIJ with the aforementioned Usama Hamid as the communication link: "[EIJ] told [Hamid] that they were planning the largest operation so far, and little did we know that they meant the assassination of Sadat and the events in Asyut in October 1981."⁸² Furthermore, al-Shiqaqi's brother 'Abd al-'Aziz stressed in an interview with the Arabic newspaper *al-Hayat*, after Fathi's assassination in 1995, that the latter had contact with the members of EIJ and al-Takfir wa-l-Hijra during his time in Egypt. He noted that "it seems the Egyptian authorities detected a frequency of al-Takfir wa-l-Hijra leaders in [al-Shiqaqi's] home in al-Zagazig."⁸³ Moreover, al-Hajj Muhammad writes:

It was revealed that the organization had a relationship with the Egyptian groups and their leaders – including 'Abd al-Latif al-Ramz, Muhammad 'Abd al-Salam Faraj, Usama Hamid, and others, and this communication was the direct reason for the hunt for Fathi al-Shiqaqi by the Egyptian security agencies.⁸⁴

According to Robert Fisk, al-Shiqaqi also met Salah Sariya, a Palestinian who was executed for the attempt to overthrow Sadat in 1976, and al-Shiqaqi allegedly listened to the sermons of 'Umar 'Abd al-Rahman, the spiritual leader of al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya.⁸⁵ Lastly, more than twenty years later, in 2003, when Shallah was asked about the relationship between the Palestinian students and the Egyptian radical currents, he stated that there was, indeed, an intellectual relationship, but he refused to acknowledge any organizational ties:

The Islamic Vanguard [the PIJ nucleus] was Palestinian, active among Palestinian students studying in Egypt. However, Dr. Fathi al-Shiqaqi, may God have mercy on him, established some relationships and friendships with students in the Islamic groups in Egypt, starting with the Faculty of Medicine at the University of al-Zagazig. This relationship expanded to other colleges and universities, where al-Shiqaqi started a discussion with other Egyptian students and activists, especially with the rise of the Islamic trend . . . but the ties between al-Shiqaqi and the Egyptian students were not an organizational but an intellectual relationship. In 1980, approximately, the competition between the Brotherhood and the Salafi movement of al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya was at its peak. According to my knowledge, al-Shiqaqi

participated in numerous meetings with the leaders of al-Jamā'a concerning their options, their relationship to the Muslim Brotherhood, or their independence. . . . The same applies to EIJ, which was led by Muhammad 'Abd al-Salam Faraj.⁸⁶

In short, the Palestinian students in general and al-Shiqaqi in particular had a relationship with the radical Egyptian currents during their studies in al-Zagazig throughout the 1970s, although the contact was informal and intellectual by nature. The academic literature on PIJ does describe an influence on the Palestinian students resulting from this relationship. For example, al-Shiqaqi and his followers were, according to Hatina, influenced by the activity of the militant Egyptian groups such as EIJ, Shabāb Muḥammad, and al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya.⁸⁷ Milton-Edwards confirms this claim.⁸⁸ Although Abu-Amr does not state so explicitly, he nevertheless mentions that the Palestinians were "exposed" to these groups in Egypt, implying a possible influence.⁸⁹

Because none of these scholars elaborate on the relationship and its nature, while the primary sources do not provide further evidence, it is difficult to engage in a discussion with the former on PIJ and the alleged Egyptian influence on its founding fathers. On the one hand, some developments suggest that influence occurred. For example, the Palestinian students were also attracted to activist and outcome-oriented political action, and when they later founded PIJ, the movement developed a militant and secret cell structure, instead of a popular mass movement. It is possible that these PIJ features derived from the Egyptian groups.

On the other hand, it is also possible that the influence from the Egyptian groups is exaggerated. According to those belonging to the PIJ nucleus in the 1970s, the Palestinians were far from convinced by the Salafi credentials of the Egyptians. Muru, for example, describes what the Palestinian students deemed the Salafists' "serious methodological shortcomings" despite "all the manliness, toughness, and radicalism that characterized these two movements."⁹⁰ Even al-Shiqaqi was critical of al-Takfir wa-l-Hijra. As he wrote in 1983:

While we note the seriousness and greatness of [Qutb's attempt], we stand firm in our critical position toward those who called themselves Qutbists and those who followed in their footsteps in the arbitrary interpretation of Sayyid Qutb's ideas. This arbitrariness eventually led to the emergence of the Group of Muslims [Jamā'at al-Muslimīn], the so-called al-Takfir wa-l-Hijra.⁹¹

To illustrate, when asked about the Palestinian students' contact with, and their influence from, the Egyptian radical currents, "Bilal" stated, "This is absolute nonsense as there was not much contact between the Palestinians and the Egyptian political environment There was not

even that much contact with the [Egyptian] Muslim Brotherhood.”⁹² He noted that in general, “most people, even those in PIJ, they exaggerate what happened in Egypt at that time. There was nothing [in Egypt] that could tell that these guys would establish a Palestinian Islamic organization in the near future.”⁹³ Instead, “Bilal” asserted that the formation of PIJ was not so much the product of an Egyptian influence but rather of an internal political dynamic specific to the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood that only occurred years later after the PIJ founding fathers had returned to Gaza:

The Muslim Brotherhood [in Egypt] was an all-embracing organization with all kinds of branches. It is not as if it was an ideologically monolithic organization, not even today. There were all kinds of people, and somehow – perhaps because of the occupation and the isolation of Gaza – the [Palestinian] Muslim Brotherhood was unable to embrace those differences. This is what eventually made al-Shiqaqi move out of the movement. He did not plan PIJ; it was accidental.⁹⁴

The Palestinian students did in fact create the PIJ nucleus in Egypt, so to say that “nothing” in Egypt indicated the formation of PIJ is perchance an exaggeration. However, as “Bilal” noted, the Muslim Brotherhood had several branches with all types of people and currents, so is it possible that al-Shiqaqi wanted to play a role as a member of the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood instead of seceding from the movement? Certainly, to provide a decisive answer is impossible; yet, as we will see in [Chapter 2](#), when the Palestinian students returned to Gaza, they did in fact engage in several meetings with Sheikh Yassin and the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood in an attempt to create a shared political project against the occupation. Consequently, it was only when the issue of armed struggle could not be resolved that the nucleus finally terminated its political work within the Brotherhood and developed into an independent organization. As a PIJ representative in the West Bank noted when he was asked about the emergence of the movement:

Dr. Fathi al-Shiqaqi and another group of brothers . . . belonged to the Muslim Brotherhood in the beginning. However, the situation in the Brotherhood in Gaza, and their view on the Palestinian national movement, pushed the doctor and his followers to seriously work to merge the Islamic idea with the nationalist one This led Dr. Fathi al-Shiqaqi and his group to leave the Muslim Brotherhood with the intention of forming PIJ.⁹⁵

Although I do not suggest that the Egyptian influence is inconceivable, we should nevertheless note that the existing claims in the secondary literature do not go beyond conceptual speculation. Little indicates that ideological affinity united the Palestinians and the Egyptians. Instead, their

relationship may be described as a process of negative identification with the Muslim Brotherhood and a shared distaste for its passivity. This negative identification was certainly part of a generational conflict within the Muslim Brotherhood, between the passive old guard and the activist young guard. Accordingly, al-Shiqaqi described three distinct generations in the history of the Muslim Brotherhood. While Hassan al-Banna and his companions, whom al-Shiqaqi admired, constituted the “generation of revival” (*jīl al-ba‘th*), the second generation, which took over after his assassination, constituted the “generation of hesitation and distress” (*jīl al-taraddud wa-l-mahna*). It was the latter generation, which only lived on its own merits, with which al-Shiqaqi and his companions were in conflict.⁹⁶ Instead, as al-Shiqaqi perceived it, the third generation in the Islamic movement, which the Palestinian students were part of, was “the generation of awareness and revolution” (*jīl al-wa‘y wa-l-thawra*).⁹⁷ “We were the first generation of young people who joined after 1967,” al-Shiqaqi wrote, “who injected new blood into the Muslim Brotherhood, bringing a number of questions.”⁹⁸

As Lybarger argues, destabilizing historical experiences undermine intergenerational connectedness, although socialization preserves continuity by institutionalizing traditions, thoughts, and desires. As inherited orientations suddenly appear irrelevant or problematic, destabilizing events (crises) create new generations, in which new forms of meaning and association are created through the opening of spaces where marginalized discourses and practices are revived or invented.⁹⁹ Precisely such a destabilizing event – the Six-Day War – proved so decisive for al-Shiqaqi when he turned from Nasserism to Islamism. This paradigmatic shift likely applied as well to the Egyptians, among whom a new generation emerged from the ashes of the Nasserite defeat with distaste for the passivity of the Muslim Brotherhood. As Nelly Lahoud describes, groups such as EIJ were in fact formed “in competition – and indeed as a reaction against – what they considered as the subservient position the Muslim Brotherhood was adopting with respect to the Egyptian authorities.”¹⁰⁰ Consequently, it is reasonable to assume that it was the “generation of hesitation and distress” that made the Palestinian students connect with the Egyptian groups.

The following explanation by Shallah illustrates this claim, as he analyzed the formation of PIJ as a reaction to the Muslim Brotherhood:

[It was a *fait accompli*] because our analysis of the Palestinian arena as a Muslim case differed from that of the Muslim Brotherhood, and it coincided with the emergence of EIJ in Egypt. The people saw this new line [standing] opposite to the Brotherhood, which was very popular in the region against the backdrop of the assassination of Sadat, October 6, 1981.¹⁰¹

The influence from the Egyptian groups is, then, too ambiguous a matter to be analyzed precisely and confidently. As shown, on the one hand, there were similarities between PIJ and EIJ in their action-oriented approach. On the other, the Palestinians were highly critical of the Egyptian groups' Salafism and conservatism, and the relationship with them was primarily informal.¹⁰² As Shallah stated above, the Palestinian students' analysis "coincided" with the emergence of EIJ in Egypt, which is quite different than "resulting from."

PIJ was not established in Egypt, however. Al-Shiqaqi himself states that the founding meeting in Egypt was merely that of a "nucleus,"¹⁰³ and Shallah recalls that "the student organization did not have the name Islamic Jihad from the first day, but began to crystallize in that direction in the mid-1980s."¹⁰⁴ Regarding the founding meeting, Sayyid Ahmad mentions no names of those present, but he notes that there were approximately sixty Palestinian cadres present from al-Zagazig and other Egyptian universities.¹⁰⁵ This is nuanced by al-Hajj Muhammad, who states that, indeed, there were sixty cadres present, but half of them were Egyptians.¹⁰⁶ According to Muru, who attended the founding meeting, several Palestinian and Egyptian students were present, although he mentions only one specific person: Ramadan 'Abdallah Shallah.¹⁰⁷ Shallah himself states that Khadr Habib, Nafidh 'Azzam and 'Abdallah al-Shami attended the founding meeting for the nucleus.¹⁰⁸ Al-Shami adds Tahir Lulu and Jihad Abu al-'Ata to the list.¹⁰⁹

We do not know whether the nucleus was meant to develop into the PIJ we know today, or whether it was merely the formalization of the study circles in the apartment of al-Shiqaqi. What we do know is that it did not get the chance to develop further in Egypt. After the assassination of Egyptian President Sadat by Khalid Islambouli and EIJ in 1981, a series of arrests took place to disrupt the Islamist and jihadist Egyptian environment, with several hundred persons being indicted – including several Palestinians. Al-Shiqaqi and the Palestinian students managed to return to the Gaza Strip, however, shortly before Egyptian authorities ordered al-Shiqaqi's arrest. There, al-Shiqaqi's group began recruiting members for their new political project. They based this project on one belief containing all of its founding principles: to engage in armed struggle against the Israeli occupation now, and not later.

1.5 The Islamic Vanguard in a Palestinian Context

I have so far only analyzed the formation process of PIJ in an external Egyptian context. Yet, the ideas the Palestinian students developed were

also a product of a Palestinian political opportunity structure enabling an organization such as PIJ to justify its existence. I will here discuss al-Shiqaqi and the Palestinian students' view on the Palestinian Islamic currents, before proceeding to discuss their view on the secular-nationalist currents in general and the PLO in particular.

The Palestinian students were highly critical of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, its lack of focus on the Palestinian cause, and its political passivity. The criticism that al-Shiqaqi presented against the Palestinian Islamic currents – the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood and Hizb al-Tahrir – in the 1970s until the late-1980s was quite similar. Al-Shiqaqi's critique of the Islamic Center (al-Mujamma' al-Islāmī), for example, was due to the unwillingness of the latter to play a political role in general and to launch armed operations against Israel in particular. The Islamic Center focused instead on proselytization and social work. As al-Shami recalls, "the Islamists at that stage proclaimed education, ignored jihad in the path of God, and denounced the illegality of our project."¹¹⁰ Further, al-Hajj Muhammad states that one of the most important reasons for the foundation of PIJ was "the negative attitude that the Islamic movements and groups on the Palestinian scene took to armed jihad against the occupation."¹¹¹

The same criticism was leveled against Hizb al-Tahrir. While the party proselytized and aimed to raise Islamic awareness in Palestinian society, its founder, Taqi al-Din al-Nabhani, believed that the decline of the Muslim world was a result of the abolishment of the caliphate. Although he and Hizb al-Tahrir supported jihad, al-Nabhani nevertheless emphasized that one should not engage in armed struggle in the absence of a caliph, and the party thus limited itself to nonviolent activism in order to prepare the caliphate that would liberate the Palestinians under occupation.

Shallah noted that the passivity of Hizb al-Tahrir, alongside the Islamic Center, was one of the reasons for the establishment of PIJ. Although he spoke highly about both Hizb al-Tahrir and al-Nabhani as "we respect and appreciate the views of our brothers in Hizb al-Tahrir, and we value them for their eagerness and zeal on Islam," he rejected their strategy of liberation:

This deduction [waiting for the caliphate] is unfortunately based on a misguided understanding and diagnosis of the nature of the aggression, which the *umma* is exposed to in Palestine, and the nature of the jihad required to protect it. Thus, for the majority of the *umma* today, jihad is defensive and not offensive. The defensive jihad against the invading enemy into the lands of the Muslims is thus an individual duty [*farḍ 'ayn*] for the people of the country [*balad*] subjected to aggression – groups and individuals, men and women.¹¹²

The postponement of Palestinian liberation made Shallah ask:

Considering the theoretical, educational, and moral preparations [of the Islamic Center and Hizb al-Tahrir], no one denies its importance, but the question is, until when?! How many years do we have to wait preparing, while the enemy stretches, expands, and grows its power, perils, and ambitions every day?¹¹³

The bitterness about, and influence of, the passivity of the Palestinian Islamic currents cannot be underestimated. As al-Shami recalled this period:

[Forming PIJ] was the idea of martyr Dr. Fathi al-Shiqaqi, may God have mercy upon him, when he looked at the Islamist sphere, and he saw that those who struggled (and I mean the fighting role and not the jihadist role) were only the sons and members of the PLO, secularists, and Marxists who adopted this [fighting] project.¹¹⁴

This disappointment was additionally coupled with the perceived weakening of the PLO. Culminating in 1982 when it was exiled to Tunisia, the PLO was suddenly “very distant from internal turmoil and disputes in Gaza.”¹¹⁵ A new political trend consequently emerged as the Palestinian resistance moved its geographical center from the Arab countries neighboring Israel to the Occupied Palestinian Territories for the first time since 1948. This entailed a new generation of Palestinians and with it new leaders in the Palestinian territories.¹¹⁶ Abufarha concurs, and argues that the defeat of the PLO as a secular-nationalist movement gave rise to political Islam in Palestine as an alternative form of nationalism, and “[p]olitical Islamist groups . . . used the political and cultural vacuum created by the defeat of the PLO and pointed to its failures.”¹¹⁷ The exile of the PLO combined with the passivity of the Islamic currents thus provided al-Shiqaqi’s group with the required political opportunity structure.

The demise of secular nationalism in general and the PLO in particular seems to have been perceived by the PIJ founding fathers as a long-running process, however. First came the Six-Day War of 1967 as an aforementioned disruptive event. In addition, al-Hajj Muhammad dates the final blow to the Palestinian secular-nationalists to June 1974 when the PLO revised its goal of liberating Palestine with its Ten-Point Program.¹¹⁸ This was, he argues, the point of no return, when those who founded PIJ began to ask the Leninesque question: “In these depressing circumstances a number of youth with an Islamic orientation came forth with a question that had to be asked: What is to be done?”¹¹⁹

The rejection of the PLO was, of course, not simply due to the perceived weakening of the movement, but also to the nucleus’s rejection of

its secularism. Al-Shiqaqi, for example, recalls secularism as a factor that opened up the necessary space for PIJ to emerge at the time that it did:

The nationalist Palestinian movement excluded Islam as an ideology The traditional Islamic movement, on the other hand, did for objective and subjective reasons postpone the Palestinian issue and jihad in Palestine. So Palestinian Islamic Jihad came to Palestine in order to provide an answer to the Palestinian Islamic issue and raised the slogans: Islam, jihad, and Palestine; Islam as the starting point, jihad as the means, and Palestine as the goal to be liberated.¹²⁰

While we will analyze al-Shiqaqi's diagnosis for the Palestinian problem in [Chapter 2](#), it suffices to note that the ideology of PIJ was of a distinct Palestinian Islamic nationalist variety. It was so by virtue of its emphasis on Palestine first, its use of Islamic signifiers, and the call to action now and not later, in addition to the anti-colonial theory explaining the Israeli occupation and its source. The ideology of PIJ was thus multilayered, and appropriated several sets of politico-ideological traditions. To illustrate this point: the PIJ nucleus never dismissed any of the aforementioned parties in their entirety – whether that was the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood, Hizb al-Tahrir, or the PLO.

Al-Shiqaqi and Sheikh Yassin did agree on some core tenets; for example: that all of the land in Palestine was land belonging to the *waqf* (a religious endowment in Islamic jurisprudence); and that Fatah and the PLO factions should be rejected because of their secularism.¹²¹ In addition, they both believed Islam to be the superstructure of liberation. As Ramadan 'Abdallah Shallah noted when looking back at this period, “the real issue underlying the confrontation with the [Palestinian Muslim] Brothers was armed struggle.”¹²² The same applied to Hizb al-Tahrir of Taqi al-Din al-Nabhani, which Shallah praised for its creed (*'aqīda*), but criticized for its methodology (*ṭarīq*).¹²³ Thus, while they supported and even admired the creed of the Brotherhood and Hizb al-Tahrir, they rejected their passivity. Put differently, whereas both PIJ and the Islamic Center coalesced in their diagnostic framings (the occupation is the problem), they differed in their prognostic framing processes (what is to be done).

Further, while they supported the armed action of the PLO, they rejected its lack of religious awareness, which was only strengthened by the Ten-Point Program of 1974. Indeed, PIJ recognized that the PLO had been important for the Palestinian cause before its concessions in the mid-1970s. As an editorial in the PIJ magazine *al-Mujahid* noted retrospectively in 1991:

We recognize that the PLO at that time [in the 1960s] represented a qualitative development in the Palestinian question when it to a certain extent managed to

pull the Palestinian cause out of the [Arab] regimes' grip to stress the unity of the Palestinian people and its existence, and the continuation of its struggle until the liberation of its homeland.¹²⁴

The ideological formation process of PIJ was thus not to invent the wheel anew, but instead to extend the worldview of the Palestinian Islamic currents through the incorporation of armed struggle, and, in extenso, to function as an antidote to the secular-nationalist current, which throughout the 1970s exercised a complete monopoly on the Palestinian armed resistance. This process of “frame transformation” in PIJ was thus essentially to incorporate already-existing political and ideological traditions, change their old understandings and meanings, and to create new ones.¹²⁵ As Abu Taha describes it, the establishment of PIJ was an attempt to restore a form of unity between the religious, political, and nationalist in Palestine; thus making it the first organization since 1948 that placed resistance against the occupation at the top of its priorities outside the framework of Palestinian secular nationalism.¹²⁶

1.6 Conclusion

We have seen that the Egyptian university campuses and the study circles in the apartment of al-Shiqaqi were decisive for the organizational development of PIJ. As the disruptive event of the Six-Day War of 1967 opened the required space to reinterpret the past and form new ideas for the future, the Palestinian students in al-Zagazig engaged in elaborate discussions and reading of history, anti-colonial struggle, and Islamist theory. It was through this process of identity formation that the distinct action-oriented approach of PIJ emanated.

Yet, while identities were formed and ideology was developed, no organization or movement existed that could provide the suitable platform to fulfill the desires of the nucleus. While the PIJ founding fathers perceived the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, the Islamic Center, and Hizb al-Tahrir as having fulfilled their creed, they nevertheless lacked the confrontational approach that the Palestinian students desired. While the PLO engaged in armed action, the PIJ founding fathers nevertheless perceived the movement as dismissive toward the Islamic symbols and signifiers that provided the students at al-Zagazig with tools to interpret and understand the past, the present, and what had to be done in the future. The fact that the PIJ nucleus approached all of these currents – finding both positive and negative traits in them all – may to a greater extent provide an answer to the ideological development of PIJ.

This could, as argued, not have happened without the interpretational frameworks that al-Shiqaqi offered in the study circles and his reading of history and the past experiences against colonialism.

It is this particular rearticulation and elaboration of already-existing ideological traditions that I will analyze in [Chapter 2](#).

2 Awareness

The Anti-colonial Front

What in the view of PIJ is the root cause of the Palestinian problem? In what context did this problem emerge and how is it sustained? As we will see in this chapter on PIJ's ideology, the centrality of Palestine and the struggle for its liberation has a historical, de facto (*wāqīʿ*), and Qur'anic dimension in the theories of al-Shiqaqi. While the historical dimension describes the development between Islam and the West and between the superpowers and the oppressed, the Qur'anic dimension denotes the religious aspect of the cause. The de facto dimension, on the other hand, denotes the contemporary situation for the Palestinians and their cause as it exists today; it is thus intertwined with the historical one. These three dimensions make up what we may term the ideological foundation for PIJ's armed struggle against the Israeli occupation. This entails the causes not only for the Palestinians' predicament, but also for the underdevelopment of the Global South in its entirety.

While there are other ideological thinkers in PIJ, such as Anwar Abu Taha, no one has written as prolifically as al-Shiqaqi. Consequently, as al-Shiqaqi is the ideological reference point of the movement, it is fruitful to analyze his collected works (comprising booklets, opinion editorials, interviews, and communiqués from 1979 to 1995) when delving into the ideology of PIJ, although I refer to other movement thinkers. While the booklets and more theoretical work dominated his earliest publications before he began focusing increasingly on opinion editorials and communiqués, al-Shiqaqi's general thoughts nonetheless remained noticeably constant.

This chapter consists of four sections. In the first, I analyze al-Shiqaqi's view of history and the cause of the Palestinians' problem, the historical dimension. In the second, I explore al-Shiqaqi's religious argument for the centrality of the Palestinian cause, its Qur'anic dimension. By looking at the totality of dimensions pertaining to the Palestinian cause, I discuss "deeper awareness" (*waʿy*) in the [third section](#) as a concept in al-Shiqaqi's thinking. Lastly, I conclude with a discussion of potential theoretical influences on al-Shiqaqi.

2.1 The Historical Dimension and the Centrality of Palestine

The starting point for al-Shiqaqi, when addressing the Palestinians' current predicament, is history. Indeed, when one reads his collected works, al-Shiqaqi's focus, interest, and passion for history is remarkable; he is always looking back to discern the longer lines and the root causes for conflicts, their contradictions, and possible solutions. It is only through a profound attentiveness to and understanding of history that one can understand *why* and *how* the Arabs and Muslims in general and the Palestinians in particular are in the situation that they are in, under the control and domination of the West. "History will not have mercy," al-Shiqaqi wrote, "and it will disdain anyone who attempts to pursue a tactic or strategy separated from the ideology of his *umma*."¹ Accordingly, the questions that haunted al-Shiqaqi throughout his life were those he posed in 1967 after the Six-Day War: Who are we? Why were we defeated? Why now? Why have we triumphed before and why do we lose now?

According to al-Shiqaqi, the problems of the Palestinians did not commence with the establishment of Israel in 1948. Instead, they began almost 200 years earlier with the advent of Western colonialism, beginning with Napoleon in Egypt at the end of the eighteenth century.² Yet, for al-Shiqaqi, the colonial problem was not merely one of violence imposed on the local population, but more importantly one of deculturalization.³ Through European preachers, missionaries, schools, and newspapers, in addition to Arab expeditions traveling to Paris and London to emulate the European systems, the unity of the *umma* eroded through fragmentation and Westernization.⁴ In the end, the symbol of Islamic unity, the caliphate, fell, and the ploy of the colonial powers was to divide, fragment, and rule the remains – the new postcolonial Arab states, respectively. By doing so, new loyalties to each state appeared, which impeded the greater Islamic and Arab unity across borders necessary to stop Western domination.⁵ According to al-Shiqaqi, Arab nationalism and socialism consequently materialized as the first alternatives to Islam. Both, he believed, failed miserably in their attempt to expel the colonial domination of the West.⁶

Al-Shiqaqi never analyzed the historical dimension as a conflict between the Christian-Judaic West and Islam, however. Instead, the conflict was between what he perceived as the colonial West and the oppressed (*al-sha'b al-mustaq'af*) in the Global South: "The freedom of man is in the end the freedom of Western man."⁷ Consequently, al-Shiqaqi never claimed that Islam was in a particularly unique position in regards to the oppression and exploitation by colonialism, but instead he saw the Islamic homeland as one of several civilizations in the Third

World being targeted for their wealth and resources.⁸ As al-Shiqaqi placed the economic impetus and the struggle for domination between the great powers as the driving force of colonialism (and not colonialism as the embodiment of a metaphysical Evil), one is almost deceived into thinking his analysis of the causes of the Afghan–Soviet War was produced by a leftist:

The West must maintain its growth rates, and economic and social prosperity, which means to keep the North rich and the South poor. The goods of this earth are sufficient for all humankind to live in real prosperity, but with a slight difference between nations, and not with this dreadful disparity between the lives of the person in the North and the hunger of the person in the South.⁹

Furthermore,

The superpowers act on the basis that they have the right to deplete the world. The white man has since the beginning of the [European] Renaissance had a strange sense ... that his own well-being and social prosperity are the most important things in this world, and that the reality of man and his future in the oppressed nations [*al-umam al-mustad'afa*] outside of the West is of no importance.¹⁰

Although al-Shiqaqi stated that the most important of the First Intifada's features was that it had fused all classes in Palestinian society, there was, then, no doubt of where his sympathies were.¹¹ For example, when assessing the establishment of Israel in 1948, al-Shiqaqi goes a long way toward blaming the Palestinian notables for the calamity by negotiating and compromising with the British ("they were part of an integral attack").¹² Instead, the Palestinian masses – the peasants and the workers – showed the true creed of Islam by resisting from the first moment.¹³

Until his last days, al-Shiqaqi maintained the role of colonialism as the main force behind the sluggish development and suffering in the Third World. Yet, with the end of the Cold War and the fall of the Soviet Union, we see a development in al-Shiqaqi where he focuses less on the "oppressed nations" in the Global South, and more on the West escalating its attacks on Islam. Beginning in 1990, for example, al-Shiqaqi commented on the fall of the Soviet Union, pointing to the dissimilar developments in Lithuania and in Azerbaijan. While Lithuania declared its secession and independence from the Soviet Union "under the supervision and care of the West and America," Azerbaijan, on the other hand, "a Muslim republic, had hardly even declared autonomy from Moscow before tanks were deployed in the streets, and bloody repression was the appropriate democratic means."¹⁴ Al-Shiqaqi concluded: "It has become clear that what is permissible for the people of the world does not necessarily apply to the Muslim people."¹⁵

Five years later, on Solidarity Day with the Muslims in Bosnia, al-Shiqaqi noted in his speech that “[a]lthough the Bosnian Muslims are European, through their homeland and ethnicity, this does not help them. As long as they are Muslims, let [the Serbs] slay their people, let them rape and usurp their women, destroy their villages and cities, leveling their mosques in a new crusader campaign.”¹⁶ As with Azerbaijan, al-Shiqaqi concluded, “The greatest significance of what is happening in Bosnia is the extent of the ugly hatred against Islam – not only from the Serbs, but from the entire West.”¹⁷

There are qualifications, however. First, as early as 1983, four years after the Iranian Revolution, al-Shiqaqi described the isolation of Iran as the “war against Islam.”¹⁸ Yet, this was a war against Islam because of its anti-colonial strength, meaning that it was a war to preserve the interests of colonialism, and not a war against Islam grounded in religious and creedal tenets.

Second, although he focused more on what he perceived as the unique position of Islam being targeted by modern colonialism following the end of the Cold War, it was still a conflict with colonialism and not with metaphysical forces. Thus, when al-Shiqaqi discusses the crimes of colonialism post-1989, the forces that he analyzes never exceed those of general moral concepts – moral by virtue of what benefits or harms all of humanity, whether Muslim or not. When al-Shiqaqi discusses good and evil, then, he never does so as an apocalyptic battle between Good and Evil – between the forces of God himself and the believers against the forces of Satan and the disbelievers. Instead, throughout his entire literary oeuvre, al-Shiqaqi preserved the notion that “[t]his is the history of the superpowers’ relationship with the oppressed peoples.”¹⁹

Third, al-Shiqaqi emphasized that with the fall of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, the hatred against Islam in the West grew. Yet, this hatred only did so as Islam was “a suitable threat to replace the Communists.”²⁰ It was thus not a given that the West would increasingly attack Islam. Accordingly, al-Shiqaqi persistently emphasized the economic driving forces of Western domination when he as late as in 1994 wrote that

[t]he Western force, in its modern history, began from the freedom of capital, the encroachment by the market, and the transformation of man into a commodity item subjected to the standards of the market. What now governs the world is financial capital that goes to sanctify the patterns of consumption in salary and thought to the extreme. It is not right for the forces, directed at the movement of capital to control and dominate the world.²¹

In extenso, with the transformation of humans into market units, al-Shiqaqi noted that the revolution of the oppressed did not allow for “the replacement of the martyrs’ blood with American Pepsi Cola.”²²

It is consequently not by virtue of the Israeli occupation, but rather through al-Shiqaqi's analysis of Western colonialism, that we can understand why PIJ has emphasized the particularity and centrality of the Palestinian cause since its inception. To begin with, al-Shiqaqi maintained that one of the most important achievements of colonialism, and the very condition for its dominance, was the fragmentation of the Ottoman Empire. While rejecting the Arab nationalist movement (*al-ḥaraka al-qawmiyya al-ʿarabiyya*) as a realistic vehicle to obtain independence, al-Shiqaqi nevertheless acknowledged that it was born as a direct result of this fragmentation. Arab nationalism was thus the offspring of colonialism. The Zionist movement, on the other hand, largely resembled a midwife as it sharpened its features as an ally of "imperialist colonialism against the wealth of the peoples, and the Western attack on Islam and its homeland."²³ Alternatively, as proposed by al-Shiqaqi: "The Jewish project was the central part of this project and of every Western attack."²⁴

Israel was then only established in line with the interests of colonialism as the Israeli state ensured the hegemony of the West through which the subordination and dependency of the oppressed was established and sustained.²⁵ As late as 1989, for example, al-Shiqaqi emphasized that by virtue of its colonial nature and its very existence, Israel was not only a threat to the neighboring Arabs and Muslims, but also a threat to

all the oppressed [*mustaḍʿafīn*] in the world, so Israel's close relationship with the forces of international arrogance [*al-istikkbār al-duwwalī*] and its assistance to the racist governments and dictatorial regimes in Africa and elsewhere affirms the danger it constitutes against the future of the oppressed in the world as well as Muslims.²⁶

It is, perhaps, in this analysis of Israel's relationship with the regimes in Africa that al-Shiqaqi's sympathy, and even identification, with Nelson Mandela lay, as he stated that Mandela was a humane and revolutionary model, worthy of admiration and reflection, and that "[t]he man has become an idea and a symbol of the great men who make history."²⁷

Because of Israel's nature as a colonial entity in the region, and not merely as an occupying power, al-Shiqaqi concluded that all Arabs and Muslims would persist in their state of dependence on the West on the intellectual, political, economic, and military levels as long as Israel exists.²⁸ Israel is then the very precondition and source for continued instability and wars in the region.²⁹ It is consequently through al-Shiqaqi's analysis of Israel as a colonial entity, and as an extended part of colonialism in its entirety, that we understand why PIJ asserts that recognizing any part of it, or giving up any inch of Palestine, is unlawful. For al-Shiqaqi, to have two states, where one is a precondition for

continued Western domination, is an oxymoron. Because of the very existence of Israel, the Global South in general and the Islamic community in particular will never be able to revive.

There is then, for al-Shiqaqi, no distinguishing between the colonial campaigns of Napoleon and Israel. Instead, the latter is a direct (modern) continuation of the former. By ending the State of Israel, the first step toward ending colonial domination in the region, and weakening its presence in the world, is taken. This gives the Palestinian cause its particularity and makes it the central cause for the contemporary Islamic movement:³⁰

The debate about what comes first, confronting dependency, Westernization, and fragmentation, or confronting the Zionist entity, is a theoretical debate governed by calculations of immediate gains and loss instead of a serious endeavor to build an integrated and coherent strategy for the contemporary Islamic renaissance's project [*mashrū' al-nahḍa al-islāmiyya al-mu'āṣira*].³¹

We will analyze PIJ as a part of the renaissance project later in this chapter. For now, it will suffice to note that the underlying notion and aspiration in the entire work of al-Shiqaqi is that of obtaining true and actual independence and autonomy for all the oppressed countries finding themselves under the shade of Western colonialism – Palestine and the Islamic *umma* included.

2.2 The Qur'anic Dimension and the Centrality of Palestine

The absence of religious signifiers was conspicuous in the preceding analysis. Yet, one of the general principles of PIJ is that it is a movement adhering to Islam as creed (*'aqīda*), code (*sharī'a*), and system of life in order to analyze and understand the nature of the conflict.³² In this section, we will analyze the religious aspect of the Palestinian cause and how al-Shiqaqi believed it had a Qur'anic dimension. As we will see, al-Shiqaqi's analysis of the Qur'anic dimension has a number of implications for PIJ's ideology.

According to the Qur'anic *sūrat al-isrā'*, as well as several hadiths, the Prophet Muhammad journeyed from Mecca to Jerusalem on the winged steed *al-burāq* in a single night. There, where the future al-Aqsa Mosque was built, the Prophet prayed before he ascended to heaven with Archangel Gabriel to meet God. For al-Shiqaqi, it was this account that affirmed Palestine's Qur'anic dimension and centrality. Namely, he stated:

In the blessed Qur'an and in the Prophet's hadith, in the Islamic heritage and history, Palestine and Jerusalem represent a prominent place of special

importance, which is not concealed to any reader of these sources. It raises an interest, and perhaps even surprise, when we see the Qur'anic devotion to this sacred land, even many years before the feet of the Muslim mujahidin marched on it . . . which confirms the universality of this religion through this unique exodus [of the Prophet] and through the miraculous link between Mecca and Jerusalem, between the Great Mosque of Mecca (which had not yet become a mosque) and the al-Aqsa Mosque, which was also yet to be built.³³

As “[t]here is no land that is connected to so many blessed verses [in the Qur’an] as the land of Palestine,”³⁴ al-Shiqaqi concluded that it was blessed by God himself.

The Qur’an did not merely signify the religious prominence of Palestine and the centrality of the Palestinian cause, however; it provided sources for analyzing the contemporary conflict with the Israeli occupation. Al-Shiqaqi affirmed this postulation by pointing to *sūrat al-isrā*:

And We conveyed to the Children of Israel in the Scripture that, “You will surely cause corruption on the earth twice, and you will surely reach [a degree of] great haughtiness.” So when the [time of] promise came for the first of them, We sent against you servants of Ours – those of great military might, and they probed [even] into the homes, and it was a promise fulfilled. Then We gave back to you a return victory over them. And We reinforced you with wealth and sons and made you more numerous in manpower [And said], “If you do good, you do good for yourselves; and if you do evil, [you do it] to yourselves.” Then when the final promise came, [We sent your enemies] to sadden your faces and to enter the temple in Jerusalem, as they entered it the first time, and to destroy what they had taken over with [total] destruction [*sūrat al-isrā*: verses 4–7].³⁵

For al-Shiqaqi, these four verses proved that God had predestined the Israeli occupation. As the Israelites in the Arabian Peninsula had grown superior in wealth and power in the time of the Prophet, the rise of Islam put an end to their corruption. The defeat of the Israelites would then commence, “fourteen centuries of Islam’s dominion in alternating and successive centers from Damascus to Baghdad, and from Cairo to Istanbul.”³⁶

However, as God predestined that the Israelites would rise and grow superior yet again, and once more spread their corruption in the Islamic land, this Islamic golden age could not last. Consequently, the State of Israel was for al-Shiqaqi the manifestation of this second rise of the Israelites, “as has been evident since the downfall of Jerusalem, the establishment of their state, and the continuation of their rise and corruption.”³⁷ In addition, although al-Shiqaqi attributed the demise of the caliphate to economic driving forces and the advanced technology of Western colonialism, it encapsulated a spiritual dimension as well:

God Almighty restored their [the Israelis'] return upon us after fourteen centuries, however, erupting from Jerusalem to temporarily bestow superiority and corruption upon them until we wake up from our sleep and return to the approach leading to that which is most suitable and gives good tidings to the believers.³⁸

While al-Shiqaqi stated that the Qur'an placed the Israelites as an evident and certain historical force, "it also affirms the existence of another party repeating itself twice, just as the Israelites [do]."³⁹ This force of confrontation that once manifested itself to defy the Israelites in the time of the Prophet, and which would do so again to destroy the State of Israel, were the Muslims of true faith. Necessarily, "[for the Israelites] this rise and corruption will bring forth conflict, destruction, and ruin,"⁴⁰ and "[a]fter we have crushed the weak man-made alternatives, and we irrevocably dispose of them, God will grant us a solid victory by defeating [the Israelis], saddening their faces, and entering the al-Aqsa Mosque as we entered it the first time."⁴¹ Thus, as the Israelites once ascended, they would necessarily do so again through the establishment of the State of Israel. As the Israelites had once been defeated, so would they be again with the liberation of Palestine. Or, as Ramadan Shallah summarized the Qur'anic dimension:

This [Qur'anic] dimension also shows the inevitability of the confrontation between us and the Jews, and this is what is confirmed by the texts of the Qur'an and the Sunna in particular by *sūrat al-isrā'* and its glad tidings to the Muslims about the entry into the al-Aqsa Mosque.⁴²

It is important to note that neither al-Shiqaqi nor PIJ developed the theory on the Qur'anic dimension at length. In fact, al-Shiqaqi did not devote much time or space to it at all, and what we have are bits and pieces in his collected works. What matters is that it is in this dialectic unity between the earthly realm and religion we see the initial contradiction between the *homo faber* (the creating man) and the *homo adorans* (the worshipping man) negated and neutralized in the ideology of PIJ. While God predestines the liberation of Palestine through heavenly revelation, this predestination nevertheless depends on the worshipper willingly turning to God for its fulfillment. While the divinely passive depends on the earthly active for its materialization, the latter loses all meaning and purpose without the former.

Although al-Shiqaqi spent much more time developing other theoretical concepts, we see that his deduction of the Qur'anic dimension has a number of important implications for the ideology of PIJ. First, because the Palestinian cause is the central cause for the Arab and Islamic *umma*, which "cannot be compared to any other Islamic problem," it necessarily follows that "linking the future of Palestine to the

future of the Islamic movement means linking the future of Palestine to the future of Islam as a whole.”⁴³ The armed struggle against the Israeli occupation thus becomes a divinely ordained individual duty (*fard ‘ayn*) for every able Muslim. This corresponds to similar conclusions of al-Shiqaqi, as he perceived armed struggle against the Israeli occupation as the realization of “the neglected duty” (*al-farīda al-ghā’iba*) – and sometimes as the “neglected purpose” (*al-gharaḍ al-ghā’ib*) or “a sacred, national, and religious duty” (*wājib muqaddas wa-waṭanī wa-dīnī*).⁴⁴

While al-Shiqaqi’s analysis of the de facto and historical dimensions provides a linear (and modernist) understanding of history through the assessment of growth rates, market transformations, and the rise and fall of superpowers, the Qur’anic dimension does not. Although it would be delusive to say that PIJ employs a cyclical understanding of history, it does certainly contain cyclical elements through which history necessarily repeats itself through prophetic and divine predestination. Through the cyclical elements in the religious understanding of history, we see that utopian elements emerge from its ideological premises. This is accentuated in the thinking of Anwar Abu Taha, member of PIJ’s political bureau, who writes that the liberation of Palestine will have future global repercussions:

The introduction of *sūrat al-isrā’* was of great importance in interpreting this dimension of the Qur’an, which emphasized the inevitability of the disappearance of the Israelites’ superiority and corruption with the victory for the Islamic *umma* for the second time. The people of Islam will commence their Islamic universality, which cannot be fully empowered except by eliminating the Israeli phenomenon of corruption in the land, and all of the land. The liberation of Jerusalem and Palestine is the beginning of the emergence of Islam and its victory over all religions with its spread throughout the earth.⁴⁵

Abu Taha underscored this utopian element as well in an interview with this author, during which he elaborated on the tensions between Israel, the Arab regimes, and Western colonialism:

The West created Israel, and Israel protects the Arab regimes, while the Arab regimes deal with the West. What is the solution with Israel? Fighting. Here is the West, what is the solution? Conversion [to Islam]. Not Marxism [to end colonialism], but conversion. Do you know the word *taghrīb* [Westernization]? What is anti-Westernization? The Islamization of the entire world.⁴⁶

While speaking, he drew a triangle of confrontation as depicted by Figure 2.1.⁴⁷ Unity must be sought regionally to stand up against Western colonialism, only militant means can destroy Israel, and the end of Western colonialism is through the Islamization of the world.

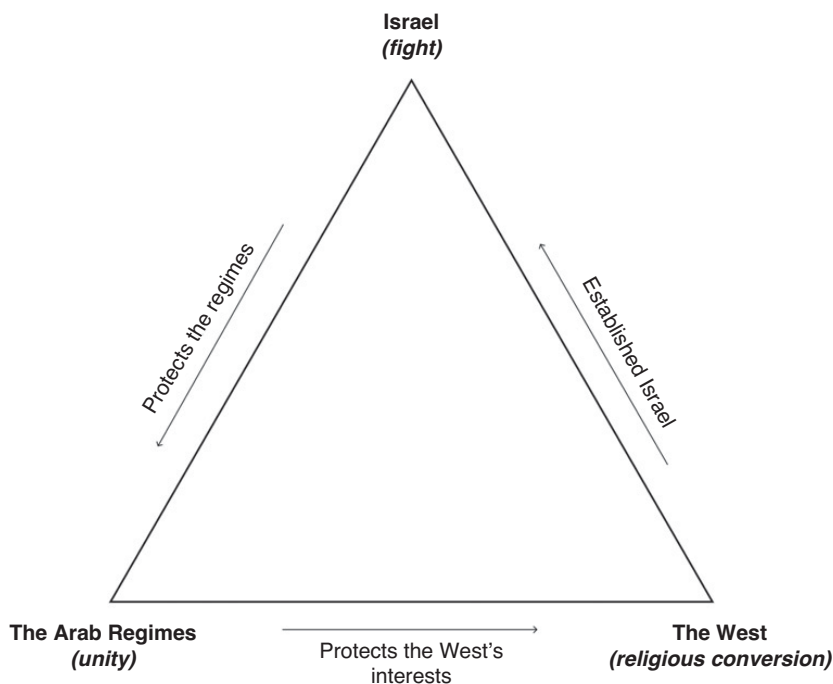


Figure 2.1 Conflict outline as drawn by Anwar Abu Taha

To summarize, while the Palestinian cause derives its centrality from its de facto and historical dimensions, it does so through a Qur'anic dimension, as well. This centrality is derived through the importance given to Palestine in the Qur'an and the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad. This Qur'anic dimension of Palestine has implications for the ideology of PIJ. First, by linking Palestine to the future of Islam as a whole, armed struggle against the Israeli occupation becomes an individual duty for all Muslims. Second, PIJ appropriates certain prophetic and utopian elements in its ideology as Palestine is to be liberated through divine predestination. Correspondingly, while the de facto and historical dimensions are based on a modernist, materialist, and linear understanding of history, the Qur'anic dimension, on the other hand, contains cyclical elements as history necessarily must repeat itself in the future.

This particular reading of the Qur'an and hadith to deduce the centrality of Palestine cannot be read outside the historical context in which it arose. As we will see in [Chapter 3](#), the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood and Hizb al-Tahrir refused to engage in armed struggle against the Israeli

occupation when al-Shiqaqi and the PIJ nucleus returned to Gaza in late 1981. While the former focused on Islamizing Palestinian society from below in order to prepare it for resistance, the latter focused on liberation from above through the creation of the caliphate. Although these strategies were undoubtedly political, PIJ's emphasis on the Qur'anic dimension provided an important religious injunction for the Palestinian Islamic movement to engage in armed struggle immediately, and not later. By elevating the debate on the necessity of armed struggle from the political to the theological level, PIJ asserted not only that armed struggle was an individual duty for every Muslim ordained by God himself, but that divine revelation assured that the Islamic movement would come out triumphant as well. In effect, the Qur'anic dimension functioned as an iron gauntlet flung at the traditional Islamic movement.

2.3 The Concept of Deeper Awareness in PIJ

In the two preceding sections of this chapter, we have established that the Palestinian cause and its centrality have historical, de facto, and Qur'anic dimensions. While the historical dimension of Palestine pertains to colonial history, economic driving forces, and the relationship between the superpowers and the oppressed, the Qur'anic dimension pertains to the heavenly prophetic aspects of the cause. The de facto dimension is the contemporary occupation and the dynamic between the State of Israel as an occupying force and the Palestinians.

In this section, we will see that these three dimensions constitute two decisive concepts in the thinking of al-Shiqaqi. While the historical and de facto dimensions of Palestine constitute the secular concept "vision" (*ru'ya*), the Qur'anic dimension constitutes the spiritual concept "creed" (*'aqida*).⁴⁸ If vision, in the preceding analysis, denotes the earthly realm and the history of colonial forces versus the oppressed, then creed refers to the sanctity of Palestine, the divinely ordained duty to fight, and the prophetic predestination of Islamic victory over the State of Israel and its occupation.

Each of these two concepts plays a distinct role in the analytical thought process of al-Shiqaqi. As we recall, al-Shiqaqi asserted that the demise of the caliphate was partly caused by Muslims turning away from the true Islamic faith. To overcome the modern Western challenge, and to solve the problems faced by the Muslims, the solution had to be consistent with the creed of Islam.⁴⁹ Creed is thus the very principles to which the Islamic movement adheres. When al-Shiqaqi approached the issue of returning to the true creed, however, he transcended Islam as a private issue and as the practice and reproduction of rituals. Instead, creed signified Islam as ideology and as a weapon against Western colonialism.⁵⁰ Al-Shiqaqi

correspondingly concluded that “Islam is the religion of struggle, rigor, justice, and equality,”⁵¹ and “[w]e believe that the creed [*‘aqīda*], the faith in God Almighty [*īmān bi-llāh*], and treating Islam as an ideology are our most important weapons in the resistance against colonialism and in achieving independence and the renaissance [*al-nahḍa*].”⁵²

Al-Shiqaqi evidenced this by pointing to the Islamic anti-colonial struggle led by Abdel Qadir al-Jaza’iri in Algeria, Abdel Karim al-Khatibi in Morocco, the Mahdist struggle in Sudan, Omar Mukhtar in Libya, the Wahhabis in Saudi Arabia, ‘Izz al-Din al-Qassam in Palestine, and, in the end, the Iranian Revolution in 1979.⁵³ Al-Shiqaqi similarly noted that “[t]he Islamic movement emerged as a natural reaction to this invasion and to the collapse of the caliphate,” and that “[t]he Islamic ideology as a divine, realistic, ethical, positive, and universal method includes solutions to all problems of contemporary society.”⁵⁴

As we recall, by weakening the Islamic current in the Ottoman Empire (the “Islamic wall”), Western colonialism succeeded in fragmenting the caliphate.⁵⁵ Consequently, by weakening the Islamic creed through a colonial process of deculturalization, the very precondition for resistance against colonialism was severely weakened. Thus, in the analysis of al-Shiqaqi, creed was necessary to restore the confidence of the Muslim individual, the Muslim intellectual, and the Muslim community, and to revive Islam as a revolutionary alternative to the secular currents.⁵⁶ This was to fulfill the inherent purpose and meaning of the Islamic creed.

Vision, on the other hand, was the analytical (secular) vision of history as it had unfolded, and the ability to analyze how it would unfold in the future:

The Islamic movement must be aware of what happens in the next epoch through an *analytical vision* [*ru’ya taḥlīliyya*] of the centers of influential powers and the parties of the conflict. It will then look for all this *in history*, which will remain studied, and absorb it as a sanctuary in order to read the future.⁵⁷

That is, when al-Shiqaqi employed the concept of vision, it constituted an analytical and secular approach to history. While creed was the understanding of the role of the Islamic movement and Islam as the main force against colonialism and the religious dimension of the Palestinian cause, vision was the secular vision of history as it has unfolded, and as it would unfold in the future.

Because al-Shiqaqi relied on prophetic predestination of the future victory over the Israeli occupation, while at the same time relying on history to read the future, the concepts of vision and creed may initially seem dichotomous (or contradictory at best). Yet, the historical analysis of the colonial forces and the oppressed; the predestined establishment of

the State of Israel and the expulsion of the Palestinians; and the subsequent struggle for actually existing independence in the Global South were for al-Shiqaqi mutually and dialectically consistent:

History affirms to us that we have been living in a violent conflict with the colonial project for two centuries, which is devoted to the Westernization of the region. The project established Sykes-Picot and partitioned the Arab and Islamic homeland. This project is through the establishment of Israel in the heart of the Arab-Islamic homeland. It is right here this historical reality encountered the absolute conclusion of the Qur'an, which makes Palestine a verse of the Book when it numerous refers to the sanctity of Palestine. . . . As if history extends from the Qur'an to the Qur'an, and, as we have pointed out, our understanding of history meets that of the Absolute in the Qur'an – the two encountered each other on the land of Palestine. It was here our distinct awareness was shaped [*tashakkal wa 'ynā al-mumayyaz*]; a distinct awareness of Palestine's particularity in the Qur'an, in our Arab and Islamic history, and in our struggle with the colonial phenomenon embodied in the vilest, that is, the Zionist entity.⁵⁸

Vision and creed thus constitute the most essential concept in the thinking of al-Shiqaqi, “deeper awareness” (*wa'y*), through their dialectical unity. It is only through deeper awareness as the embodiment of understanding the historical (secular) driving forces, combined with the sanctity of the Palestinian cause and prophetic predestination, that the Islamic movement could succeed:

Awareness [*wa'y*] is the first condition for victory. The Islamic movement must define its awareness through what Islam is and what develops from it. To distinguish between Islam as a creed of revolution, thought, and civilization [*'aqīdat thawra wa-fikr wa-ḥaḍāra*] and the prevailing image of Islam as a historical legacy with [illegible]. The movement must be aware of the political circumstances surrounding it, in the reality in which it moves, including the reality of alliances. [It is] thus to identify hostile and friendly forces in society, in addition to those who are neutral, and to define the international political situation, and to know the priorities of action and the style of confrontation.⁵⁹

Al-Shiqaqi correspondingly asserted that it was through deeper awareness that the Islamic movement could derive its correct practice in order to transcend impotence and uncertainty as,

It is here that we – the true sons – realize the importance of an awareness of history [*wa'y al-tārīkh*], that this awareness is the key in our hands to understand the consciousness of our past [*wa'y māḍīnā*], and to learn from its lessons and experiences. We accordingly influence our present, and we are not satisfied sitting in the spectator seat.⁶⁰

Put differently, it was through the revolutionary essence inherent in Islam, coupled with the analysis of history and its driving forces, that “[t]he generation of awareness [*wa'y*] and revolution [*thawra*] will

transcend the stage of distress and hesitation, advancing the revivalist project [*ʿamaliyyat al-baʿth*] to its logical ends.”⁶¹ Thus, as al-Shiqaqi concluded, “it is difficult to understand the concepts of revolution and awareness, except through a dialectical relationship between the two.”⁶² It is through this analysis that the slogan of PIJ – faith, awareness, and revolution – obtains its meaning. To summarize awareness as the dialectical unity of the historical, de facto, and Qur’anic dimension in the words of Abu Taha:

PIJ presents these manifestations of the Israeli threat within various dimensions, including the religious, political, social, and economical. The movement thus does not tend to give the fight with Israel a purely religious character as some Islamic movements do, by focusing [solely] on the history of the Jews as represented in the holy Qur’an.⁶³

Abu Taha is thus not satisfied limiting the conflict with Israel to a “conflict of creeds,”⁶⁴ and Palestinian Islamism in general becomes distinct by virtue of its nationalist credentials; credentials, he postulates, other Arab-Islamic movements downplay.⁶⁵

2.4 Ideological Influences

As we have discerned awareness as a key concept in the thinking of al-Shiqaqi, we will in this section attempt to analyze the ideological influences on al-Shiqaqi and PIJ. The effort is certainly risky as there is an inherent danger of ascribing the origin of ideas to dynamics that never existed. Yet, by looking for whom al-Shiqaqi references in his works, in addition to ideological resemblances to other thinkers, we may attain a greater understanding of PIJ’s ideology.

As we recall, the PIJ nucleus at al-Zagazig consisted of avid readers of Sayyid Qutb, and Hatina states that al-Shiqaqi considered Qutb’s *Milestones* one of the most important works in modern Islamic literature.⁶⁶ In fact, al-Shiqaqi stated that the influence of Qutb was “unquestionable.”⁶⁷ However, when one reads the collected works of al-Shiqaqi, Qutb is surprisingly absent from the ideological fabric. The same can be said about Qutbist concepts such as ignorance (*jāhiliyya*), God’s sovereignty (*hākimiyya*), or the oneness of God (*tawḥīd*). Consequently, although Qutb denounced Muslim rulers as heretics, we see that terms such as *kufr*, *takfīr*, or *al-walāʾ wa-l-barāʾ* (loyalty and disavowal) are absent from al-Shiqaqi’s thought process.

There are certainly cases when al-Shiqaqi writes about the “British infidel regime” (*al-ḥukūma al-briṭāniyya al-kāfira*), the ignorant *umma* (*al-umma al-jāhila*), or a unified Islamic position with Hamas despised

by the idolaters (*mushrikīn*) and infidels (*kuffār*).⁶⁸ Yet, the use of these terms does not have practical consequences or ideological significance for the practical thinking of al-Shīqaqī; contrary to that of Qutb, who primarily laid blame on the spiritual weakness of Muslims (although we should recall that al-Shīqaqī did not neglect this aspect either).⁶⁹

We will see later in this study that PIJ was ideologically resistant to the Arab regimes, although it dealt with them on the practical level. Still, this resistance to the Arab regimes did not stem from their perceived lack of religiosity, but instead from their democratic deficiency and link with colonialism. Namely, PIJ opposed the regimes not because it perceived them as apostates, but because they were despotic and subservient to Western interests. Al-Shīqaqī thus showed few inclinations to bother with the Arab states concerning *kufīr*. While jihadist groups such as EIJ and al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya interpreted Qutb's concepts of ignorance and God's sovereignty to attack the Egyptian state violently by declaring its rulers apostates, PIJ has proven to be far more cautious. Instead, it rejects the use of excommunication (*takfīr*), and Shallah correspondingly notes that "the weapon of excommunication [*silāh al-takfīr*] is in our view the most dangerous weapon that kills the *umma* from the inside today, and our faith in it."⁷⁰

The lack of Qutbist influence is, moreover, evident in PIJ's aspiration for an Islamic Palestine with democratic structures. As we will return to the topic of PIJ's future state and society later in this study, for now it is worth noting that al-Shīqaqī never rejected the rotation of power or a multiparty parliamentary system after the establishment of the Islamic State. Qutb, on the other hand, rejected the notion of democratic plurality, as he believed it created divisiveness and conflict and thus violated the concept of *tawhīd* in Islamic society.⁷¹ As Toth notes, "Qutb was not a democrat, nor did he see democracy as a goal."⁷²

While Qutbist concepts are absent from the thinking of al-Shīqaqī and PIJ, so is the Salafist rigidity that the Palestinian students despised, and the attempts to emulate the lives and practices of the pious predecessors (*al-salaf al-ṣāliḥ*) in detail. In fact, the strict and not least the *literal* interpretation of the Qur'an and the Sunna is equally absent from the thinking of al-Shīqaqī, who, as shown, sought to understand history and its driving forces through the secular concept of vision (instead of only through the Qur'an and the Sunna) to obtain greater awareness. It is thus difficult to see al-Shīqaqī's habit of historicizing as something prevalent in Salafist circles. Al-Shīqaqī stated, for example, that the Islamic political system was not static, and that the experiences of Caliph 'Umar, one of the *al-rāshidūn* (the four first caliphs in Islam), had to be placed within their historical and factual context.⁷³

A qualification is, however, necessary as the matter of Egyptian influence on PIJ is far more ambiguous than we have described it so far in this section. For example, in April 1983, one year after the execution of Khalid al-Islambouli, who participated in the assassination of Anwar Sadat, al-Shiqaqi published a commemoration of al-Islambouli:

Where were you before 6 October [the day of Sadat's assassination]? And was it you who shared my room with me, and I did not see it? He drank half of the milk and half of the coffee, I shared a secret with him, and I did not see it. Was it you who one day dressed up in my shirt while I took on yours, and I did not see it? Were you the duty which was freed from the captivity of possibilities . . . I wait for you in my window while you flow in my bloodstream.⁷⁴

In this commemoration, al-Shiqaqi seems hardly indifferent to al-Islambouli and the assassination of Sadat. Moreover, al-Islambouli and Qutb are persistent reference points in PIJ. When Khalid al-Ju'aydi, who had carried out several stabbing operations against Israeli settlers and soldiers in the 1980s, met al-Shiqaqi in prison, the latter allegedly referred to him as Khalid al-Islambouli.⁷⁵ Further, Abu Jalala, who became one of the central PIJ leaders in Israeli prisons in the 1990s, stated that al-Islambouli was one of the most admired figures of the *umma*.⁷⁶ Last, Riyadh Budayr, a PIJ militant killed in the Battle of Jenin in 2002, named three of his sons Sayyid Qutb, al-Islambouli, and al-Qassam, the latter presumably referring to 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam.⁷⁷ This is not limited to individuals in the movement as the martyr biography of the PIJ militant Hassan Brahma draws a historical line from al-Islambouli to the PIJ cell of Misbah al-Suri and the Battle of al-Shuja'iyya in 1987.⁷⁸

There may be several reasons for the high standing of al-Islambouli in the mythology of PIJ. First, the veneration of al-Islambouli is consistent with the statements of Abu Taha that PIJ was against the Arab dictatorial regimes.⁷⁹ Thus, although it was up to the people of each country to decide their own fate, PIJ would hardly shed any tears for the slain autocrat although it adheres to noninterference and rejects excommunication. It is also unlikely that Sadat could evoke anything but hostility from the Palestinians after the Camp David Accords of 1978. Second, the veneration of al-Islambouli may be something transcending the politico-ideological and cognitive, and there may be a cultural-emotional dimension in the deeds of al-Islambouli as he was able to do what no one before him had done: kill a pharaoh. For al-Shiqaqi and the other members of PIJ, who also aspired to do what no one before them had done, to liberate Palestine, it must necessarily have affected and inspired them. That is, as the Iranian masses had succeeded in toppling the shah through their revolution, and al-Islambouli was able

to assassinate an Arab autocrat, the Palestinian students at al-Zagazig must surely have appropriated the sense that they were living in a time when qualitative change was possible. As Hegghammer notes, “emotion may matter more than cognition.”⁸⁰

The same cultural-emotional dimension may, then, also explain the veneration of Qutb through which the symbol of Qutb is far more important than his theoretical and ideological concepts. It is not improbable that the revolutionary Qutb, who was hanged on the gallows for his convictions, rose to become an important symbol in PIJ by virtue of his martyrdom. For example, although describing groups such as al-Qaida, Nelly Lahoud notes that “[Qutb’s] principled death proved to be more of an inspiration for would-be-jihadis than the writings he left behind.”⁸¹ As we recall the generational conflict that occurred within the Muslim Brotherhood in the 1970s, who Qutb was is one thing; who he was not is something else. That is, while al-Shiqaqi and the Palestinian students were in conflict with the leadership of the Brotherhood because of the latter’s perceived hesitations, Qutb became its antithesis. Qutb was the man who had sacrificed his life for the principle of action and truth as opposed to a leadership that was more interested in preserving an impotent organization.

To summarize, it is difficult to find any traces of Qutbist influence in al-Shiqaqi’s theoretical writings and ideology although al-Shiqaqi venerated Qutb. While Qutb laid blame on spiritual weakening alone with concepts such as ignorance, God’s sovereignty, and the oneness of God, al-Shiqaqi focused equally on colonial history and economic driving forces. While Qutb was against democracy and democratic plurality because it violated the oneness of God, al-Shiqaqi emphasized, as we will see, the necessity of democratic structures. While Qutb deemed Arab leaders to be apostates, al-Shiqaqi criticized them for being authoritarian stooges of the West. Further, this lack of Qutbian influence is not limited to al-Shiqaqi as ‘Abd al-‘Aziz ‘Awda, for example, stated that the most important influence in his life was the Egyptian Islamic scholar and cleric Muhammad al-Ghazali, not Qutb.⁸²

As there are few Qutbist traces in the thought of al-Shiqaqi and few references to Qutb in his works, we may look to Jamal al-Din al-Afghani instead. This influence is first indicated by the numerous references to al-Afghani in al-Shiqaqi’s works, and we will see that al-Shiqaqi and al-Afghani share common conceptual-ideological models and reference points, which are central for the diagnosis of both.

The very framework of al-Afghani’s thought was the attack of Western colonialism on the Islamic homeland, and how to overcome it. Moreover, the center of al-Afghani’s thought was not merely Islam as a religion, but

rather Islam as a civilization.⁸³ This alludes to al-Shiqaqi, who does not talk about colonialism as an attack on Islam alone, but instead as an attack on Islam as one of several civilizations, taking the form of a “civilizational conflict” (*ṣirāʿ ḥaḍārī*).⁸⁴ As al-Afghani focused on the renaissance (*al-nahḍa*), it is conspicuous how often al-Shiqaqi describes the struggle of PIJ in a similar vein. For example, if there is a theme permeating the literary work of al-Shiqaqi it is that of the renaissance. As early as in 1979 al-Shiqaqi emphasized the renaissance as the goal to be achieved, and he stated that Palestine was the nucleus of “our renaissance project” (*mashrūʿ nā al-nahḍawī*) as late as 1995.⁸⁵

It may surprise us that al-Afghani possibly influenced al-Shiqaqi to a greater degree than the revolutionary Qutb. However, al-Afghani never belonged to the quietist majority of Muslim thinkers who believed one should submit to injustice. Instead, al-Afghani maintained that one had to revolt.⁸⁶ Al-Shiqaqi thus concluded that al-Afghani was “a great revolutionary,” and wrote:

One of the most important causes that he raised was the necessity of the Islamic renaissance and that the Muslims understood their religion correctly and applied its teaching. He was at the same time interested in making the Islamic homeland a successful political force. He kept shouting in all places, calling on Muslims to the renaissance [*al-nahḍa*], to reject the occupation, and to fight it. He also rejected educational reform, later an approach adopted by his student Muhammad ‘Abduh, as a decisive means for change and restoring the glory of Islam, instead believing in political revolution as the best means to restore Islam.⁸⁷

A comparable veneration of the ideological legacy of Qutb is yet to be found in the works of al-Shiqaqi, and the analysis of colonialism and the renaissance project espoused by al-Afghani and al-Shiqaqi are almost indistinguishable – rubbing off on PIJ as a whole when the movement states that its goal is to liberate Palestine and to “launch the renaissance.”⁸⁸ By virtue of the number of al-Shiqaqi’s references to al-Afghani and their ideological similarity, we may assume that al-Afghani was of greater importance than Qutb to the ideological framework of al-Shiqaqi.

Another who is referenced frequently by both al-Shiqaqi and PIJ is ‘Izz al-Din al-Qassam. While al-Afghani provided the ideological sustenance to the thought of al-Shiqaqi, al-Qassam was the example of true practice. Al-Shiqaqi simply called him the “symbol of awareness” (*ramz li-l-waʿy*).⁸⁹ Indeed, al-Shiqaqi venerated al-Qassam:

Throughout his struggle, al-Qassam was not only a hard and stubborn fighter, but also an aware thinker [*mufakkiran wāʿiyan*] who enjoyed a mature and clear vision [*ruʿya*] at the social and political levels. He fought a continuous battle before going

out to fight. Al-Qassam realized that the ignorant *umma* [*al-umma al-jāhila*] would never be able to resist an octopus harnessing science to serve all of its purposes. He was thus a scholar who taught at the Islamic school in Haifa and in its mosques – in the Istiqlal Mosque in particular – and he spread his ideas among the workers, peasants, and merchants. His experience of establishing a night school to teach illiterates was a pioneering experience on the social level.⁹⁰

As a poorly veiled criticism of the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood, al-Shiqaqi noted that “al-Qassam was strongly against the spending of *waqf* funds on hotels and decorating mosques in a time of conflict with the enemy.”⁹¹ More importantly, what emerges from the ideological corpus of al-Shiqaqi is in essence al-Qassam as the logical practical consequence of the conceptual framework prepared by al-Afghani. Conversely, we should not forget that al-Shiqaqi’s pseudonym in Egypt was ‘Izz al-Din al-Faris, and not Sayyid (Qutb) al-Faris.

To summarize, by virtue of its anti-colonial features expressed through religious symbolism, PIJ seeks to establish a renaissance for the Arab-Islamic world by militant means. This renaissance will not only be the launch for actually existing autonomy and independence, but also for the triumph of Islam globally. While describing this endeavor as their “renaissance project,” little indicates a decisive *ideological* influence from Qutb, although al-Shiqaqi revered him as a martyr. Instead, what we see is numerous references and ideological and theoretical similarities with al-Afghani combined with the reverence of al-Qassam’s practice. These two were essentially the embodiment of the true awareness – theory and practice – required to liberate the oppressed.

2.5 Conclusion

Through the analysis of al-Shiqaqi’s collected works, I have demonstrated that there are strong anti-colonial sentiments in the ideology of PIJ. As the source of the Palestinian problem is a colonial one, Israel does not constitute an entity of occupation but rather a colonial entity – functioning as a direct extension of Western colonialism. Because Israel is the very precondition for dependence and instability – not just for Palestine but also for the Global South in its entirety – al-Shiqaqi deems a two-state solution an oxymoron, and the goal must be to erase Israel as the first step to end colonial domination. The Palestinian cause additionally entails a Qur’anic dimension, and as God has blessed Palestine, victory is divinely predestined. By linking Palestine to the future of Islam as a whole, armed struggle against the Israeli occupation becomes an individual duty. There are consequently evident utopian and prophetic elements in its ideology.

Further, as I discerned the ideological components of PIJ, I ended this chapter by attempting to analyze the ideological influences on al-Shiqaqi's oeuvre. While al-Shiqaqi venerated Qutb, this veneration was presumably that of a symbol and martyr, and not of a theoretician. In fact, when one reads the collected works of al-Shiqaqi, it becomes clear that he and Qutb employ qualitatively different theoretical concepts. Instead, I concluded that al-Afghani and al-Qassam were of greater importance to the theoretical development of al-Shiqaqi.

As shown, through the immersion in Islamic literature and anti-colonial theory, al-Shiqaqi and the other founding fathers concluded that armed struggle had to be carried out now, and not later. This view on strategy and priorities for the Islamic movement was to become a cause of conflict with the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood, however, once the founding fathers returned from Egypt to the Gaza Strip. This is where we turn to in [Chapter 3](#).

3 Organizing the Movement

PIJ's Recruitment of New Militants

As Fathi al-Shiqaqi, 'Abd al-'Aziz 'Awda, Ramadan 'Abdallah Shallah, and the other founding fathers of PIJ returned to the Gaza Strip in late 1981, they found a Gazan society that had undergone great changes. While the Islamic currents in Gaza were weakened when al-Shiqaqi traveled to Egypt in 1974, the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood had now constructed an elaborate network of social services and proselytization. While doing so, it adhered to a specific vision of nonconfrontation with the Israeli occupation, which led to fierce disputes and fistfights between its followers and those of al-Shiqaqi. Because of the Brotherhood's reluctance to engage in armed struggle, the PIJ nucleus quickly seceded to continue its own project. How did the PIJ nucleus, then, proceed to recruit new members in an environment marked by verbal and physical attacks by the Brotherhood? Whom did the nucleus recruit, and what does their entry into PIJ mean for our understanding of this period? In essence, why was PIJ able to establish itself so rapidly in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, while other politically similar groups failed?

This chapter consists of four sections. First, I assess the disputes of the PIJ nucleus and the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood once the former returned to the Gaza Strip. I proceed to analyze how the PIJ nucleus recruited new members from the mosques and universities of Gaza after seceding from the Brotherhood, and how it established itself firmly in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. As the PIJ nucleus recruited a number of secular-nationalist militants in Israeli prisons, I go on to analyze how it did so and what this transition from the PLO to PIJ signified. Last, I assess how PIJ managed to spread from the Gaza Strip to the West Bank.

3.1 Seceding from the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood

We will see in this section that the PIJ nucleus's call for armed insurrection alienated the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood in general and its Islamic Center (al-Mujamma' al-Islāmī) in particular. In fact, the latter verbally and physically assaulted the young activists in the PIJ nucleus, which affected its recruitment strategies the first year after the nucleus's return.

When Israel occupied the Gaza Strip after the Six-Day War in 1967, Gaza became a hotbed for armed Palestinian resistance, with its most intense period between 1969 and 1971.¹ Although the Arab defeat in 1967 made al-Shiqaqi dismiss Nasserism, Milton-Edwards states that the subsequent de-secularization of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict cannot be dated from this Arab defeat.² Instead, the PLO was strengthened, and its military wing, the PLA, became the main actor of this Gazan resistance. From the refugee camps of Gaza, the PLA employed bombs, grenades, and sabotage against Israeli targets and Palestinian collaborators. As Roy notes, the overcrowded refugee camps of Gaza provided fertile ground for the armed resistance in general and for the PLA in particular, and, unlike the West Bank where various political forces attempted to control territory, the only contenders in the Gaza Strip were the Israelis and the Palestinian fedayeen (commandos).³

The Israelis, however, managed to regain control over the Gaza Strip by early 1972 and enfeebled the resistance by killing a large number of Palestinian militants or by systematically arresting them.⁴ According to Israeli estimates, Israeli prisons held at least 2,800 Palestinian guerrillas and supporters by 1969, and 1,828 others had been killed by 1970.⁵ Between March 1971 and January 1972, 100 more Palestinian guerrillas were killed and 1,000 others imprisoned.⁶ In addition, more than 2,500 Palestinian houses were demolished in the Jabalya, Beach, and Rafah camps as part of the Israeli campaign, and 38,000 Palestinians were expelled either to Sinai, to other parts of Gaza, or to Dheisheh refugee camp in the West Bank.⁷

The Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood, on the other hand, was “virtually inactive” in the late 1960s due to the repression by Gamal Abdel Nasser.⁸ Yet, the defeat of the secular-nationalist forces in 1972 proved to be the shift in Gaza’s internal political landscape. The Muslim Brotherhood – which at the time refused to engage in armed struggle and focused on surviving as an organization instead – was spared the very same repression by the occupation authorities.⁹ Consequently, at the same time as al-Shiqaqi moved to Egypt in 1974 in order to pursue his medical studies, the Islamic movement in Gaza slowly began to strengthen itself. “As the nationalist forces were being bled dry,” Filiu writes, “Shaykh [Ahmad] Yassin was patiently constructing, piece by piece, a whole network of interlocking activities subsumed under the name *Al-Mujamma’ al-Islami*.”¹⁰ While the Islamic Center was founded in 1973 (and legalized in 1978), al-Jam’iyya al-Islāmiyya (the Islamic Association)¹¹ emerged in 1976, and the Islamic University of Gaza in 1978.¹²

Other scholars have elaborately analyzed the historical trajectory of Hamas and its forerunners.¹³ My point is instead to emphasize that the

political fabric of the Gaza Strip had been transformed once the PIJ nucleus returned in 1981. While the Islamic currents in Gaza were weak when al-Shiqaqi left in 1974, by his return there existed solid networks of organizations and institutions engaging in proselytization and social work. In addition, as we recall, the Brotherhood promoted a specific vision for the Islamization and liberation of Palestine, which was markedly different from that of the PIJ nucleus.

Returning to the Gaza Strip as future militants, the PIJ nucleus of al-Shiqaqi immediately engaged in fierce discussions and polemics with the Islamic Center on the necessity for the Islamic movement to make Palestine the central cause, and to engage in armed struggle against the Israeli occupation. According to Milton-Edwards, “the debate within the Islamic movement in Gaza raged between those who supported and drew value from the [revolutionary] Iranian model and those who did not. . . . By 1983 the conflict with the Mujama [the Islamic Center] over Iran had worsened.”¹⁴ Yet, the Iranian Revolution seems to have been a minor point of dispute, and as shown earlier in this study, Shallah noted that the real issue was armed struggle. Abu Taha emphasizes the same: “[The members of the PIJ nucleus] were accused of loyalty to Iran in an attempt to cover the main issue of the dispute: the position on armed struggle against Israel.”¹⁵

For a group of inexperienced students who advocated armed resistance for the Palestinian Islamic movement, this dispute could be described as troublesome at best. In 1983, for example, the conflict between the PIJ nucleus and the followers of the Islamic Center culminated when the latter physically assaulted ‘Abd al-‘Aziz ‘Awda, the spiritual guide of PIJ, which hospitalized him.¹⁶ ‘Abdallah al-Shami confirms this account, and states that al-Shiqaqi and the rest of the nucleus faced several obstacles and challenges when they attempted to recruit new members from the mosques: “They began to chase us in the mosques and closed the doors to us, raised charges and rumors, and attacked our symbols such as Dr. Fathi al-Shiqaqi.”¹⁷ Once, al-Shiqaqi attempted to give a speech in one of Gaza’s mosques, but the mosque’s caretakers attempted to prevent him from entering, and then cut the electricity to the mosque to stop him from speaking. Additionally, al-Shiqaqi, like ‘Awda, was assaulted by the followers of the Islamic Center. Al-Shami recalls that someone from the “traditional Islamic movement” once attempted to throw an object at al-Shiqaqi from close range, but missed.¹⁸

The same applied to the regular members of PIJ. One of the followers of Mahmud al-Khawaja, the future leader of PIJ’s militant wing, said:

The martyr Sheikh Mahmud had accustomed us to sit in the mosque in sessions of *dhikr* and reading the Qur'an between the *maghrib* and *'isha* prayer, and we sat waiting for the arrival of Sheikh Mahmud one day in 1982. However, the youths in the mosque, followers of the Islamic Center, came to fight us. . . . They were armed with sticks and chains, and a dispute occurred so they hit us and overran us.¹⁹

As these disputes turned bitter, they turned old friends into enemies as well. Yahya al-Nahal, for example, the childhood friend of al-Khawaja, stated:

[While al-Khawaja joined PIJ] I remained with my commitment to the youth of the Islamic Center, and I was one of his strongest opponents. There was a strong disagreement between us after [the split], and with Mahmud in particular. We were like enemies in the mosques and it even came to fistfights inside of them.²⁰

The key reason for the deteriorating relationship is presumably that the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood felt threatened by the PIJ nucleus. According to al-Shiqaqi, "[the Brothers] thought that the coming movement was meant to be an alternative to them and wanted to pull the rug from under their feet."²¹ Indeed, this fear was not groundless as several from the Muslim Brotherhood joined PIJ in the early 1980s. Al-Khawaja, for example, was initially an active member of the Islamic Association and the Islamic Center before joining PIJ,²² and a fistfight nearly ensued between him and Muhammad Sham'a, one of the Hamas founders, during a heated discussion in the mosque.²³

Additionally, al-Shiqaqi was not known to moderate himself in polemics, and he had already severed his ties to the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood due to his uncompromising stances. The founding fathers of PIJ and its members thus presumably alienated those in the Islamic Center. One member of the Islamic Center, for example, stated that al-Khawaja had attempted to recruit him to PIJ. However,

Mahmud was severely narrow-minded pertaining to the jihadist idea, which came forth through a terrifying zeal in observing it. This narrow-mindedness repulsed me and made me stay away from him, fearing that I would get into trouble with people and the other Islamic movements.²⁴

Lastly, the conflict may also have been the result of the dismissive arrogance and strict hierarchy of the Islamic Center. As Milton-Edwards describes, voices of dissent were not welcomed there with its "authoritarian nature of decision making," and Baconi postulates that the strict hierarchical structure created significant frustration within its own member base, "particularly among the younger generation."²⁵ We may similarly recall that "Bilal" referred to this particular organizational culture as

a cause for the PIJ members' secession.²⁶ Al-Shiqaqi's recollection of his attempt to calm the situation is thus illustrative:

On the background of the problems that began spreading among us, I remember that some brothers and I visited Sheikh Yassin in the mosque of the Islamic Center, which was an association engaged in religious, educational, social, and health services. I met the teacher [Sheikh Ahmad Yassin] in an attempt to defuse the conflict, tension, and disagreement, if you wish, and gave him a sensitive and important presentation through which I showed my readiness to solve our principles on the condition that we could express our views freely. That was our only condition. Some of the Brothers following Sheikh Yassin were enthusiastic about the idea, but he asked for an opportunity to study the proposal and the response was, of course, negative. He told us that if we had an opinion we could tell him or the leadership, but not the bases of the movement or in the streets. However, that "conditional consent" cancelled the intention of our offer. Our goal was to spread our revolutionary idea, whether that was on how to understand Islam or about renewing the Islamic movement.²⁷

Although the relationship between PIJ and the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood would become more cordial once Hamas was founded, it is for now worth noting that the attacks by the latter affected the recruitment efforts and strategies of al-Shiqaqi and his followers. In addition, the social base of the nucleus largely determined whom and from where it was able to recruit in this period. We will analyze this effort in the following section.

3.2 Recruitment from Mosques and University

The difficulties of the PIJ nucleus forced it to meet in the homes of those who sympathized with the nucleus. Yasir Salih, a PIJ military commander in the 1980s and 1990s, states that he met al-Shiqaqi for the first time in the home of "one of the brothers" in 1982:

At that time, we were attacked by many organizations and currents, pertaining to Palestine as the central cause. We thus studied and discussed how we could convey these ideas to the Palestinian people – whether we should do it through the mosques that were attended by preachers belonging to Islamic Jihad, through seminars, or meetings.²⁸

The most important home seems to have been that of al-Khawaja. According to al-Khawaja's mother, Umm Yusuf, he used to receive al-Shiqaqi, 'Awda, and Hani 'Abid there – calling al-Khawaja's home *dār al-arqam*.²⁹ Ramadan Shallah and 'Abdallah al-Shami were additionally present.³⁰ Indeed, the reference "*dār al-arqam*" is illustrative for the framework in which the nucleus operated the first year as it alludes to the house of Arqam bin Abi al-Arqam, which the Prophet Muhammad

employed as a secret center for praying, preaching, education, and training when persecution in Mecca increased. As 'Umar Fawra recalls:

At the beginning of the return from Egypt in 1980–1981, we began to move throughout the Gaza Strip to spread the revolutionary jihadi ideology advocated by the martyr Dr. Fathi al-Shiqaqi. We moved from one region to another . . . I sat in [al-Khawaja's] home more than once when attending the sessions of Dr. Fathi al-Shiqaqi, where [al-Khawaja's] father was sympathetic to the movement although he belonged to Fatah. His house was a stronghold of the movement at the beginning of its inception and it was the first base of the movement.³¹

The PIJ nucleus managed gradually to develop an organizational structure and recruit new members outside of sympathizers' homes, however. Rif'at Sayyid Ahmad claims in his biographical chapter on al-Shiqaqi that PIJ was highly successful in recruiting in all spheres of Palestinian society.³² Milton-Edwards, on the other hand, notes that some members were recruited from the university campuses while others were primarily recruited from the Beit Lahiya Mosque and the al-Salam Mosque where al-Shiqaqi and 'Awda preached.³³ Hatina emphasizes the role of the al-Qassam Mosque and 'Awda, where the latter spoke of Islam, jihad, and Palestine.³⁴ According to Nasr Huwaydi, one of al-Shiqaqi's companions in Gaza, they began organizing seminars, meetings, and religious lessons in a number of mosques after their return from Egypt; these were under the regulation and direct supervision of al-Shiqaqi.³⁵ Last, Yusuf 'Arif al-Hajj Muhammad writes that the mosques were of great importance for the recruitment to PIJ:³⁶

The mosques had the greatest role in the education of the new call, and it was circulated at Friday sermons, and different religious ceremonies. The most important mosques were al-Salam Mosque in Rafah, Hassan al-Banna Mosque in Beach camp of Gaza City (known as the 'Anan Mosque), al-Rahman Mosque in al-Shuja'iyya, and the martyr 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam Mosque in the compounds of Beit Lahiya.³⁷

Although the following account of PIJ is somewhat exaggerated, it does nevertheless seem illustrative for the first period of the nucleus:

Seminars, science lessons, and cultivation continued in this period in the mosques, homes, universities, and associations. The 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam Mosque, located in the north of Gaza, and one of the Strip's largest mosques, was a jihadist center where the movement did not stop. The Friday sermon and prayer, delivered by the mujahid scholar Sheikh 'Abd al-'Aziz 'Awda, was a weekly happening for the congregation of a large number of Palestinian Muslims . . . If the 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam Mosque was the weekly rendezvous for the masses with the mujahid sheikh, then one witnessed ['Awda's] movement throughout Palestine the rest of the week calling, preaching, and instigating jihad in the path of God and resisting the occupation.³⁸

In addition to the efforts in the mosques of Gaza, the PIJ nucleus began around 1981–2 to arrange religious festivals and demonstrations on Islamic holidays, such as on *laylat al-qadr* (the night when the Qur'an was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad).³⁹ Yet, what concerns us here is the fact that these Palestinian remembrances and rituals had traditionally been quietist, apolitical, and extensively private up until this point, but were now transformed into a sanctified call for resistance against the Israeli occupation:

On *laylat al-qadr*, PIJ saluted this great night with an Islamic festival and celebration on the square of the al-Aqsa Mosque attended by thousands of people. There, the verses of the Qur'an were read; preachers and advocates addressed the causes of the *umma* through explanation and analysis; and all sang *anāshīd* of jihad and revolution. On all occasions, the movement stood in the ranks of the masses, pushing it forward.⁴⁰

Al-Shiqaqi and his followers focused equally (perhaps even more) on the Islamic University of Gaza as a potential sphere of recruitment in this period. For example, the PIJ nucleus formed its first student election list, the Independent Islamists (al-Islāmiyyūn al-Mustaqillūn), shortly after its arrival in the Gaza Strip in 1981. Then, the nucleus formed the student bodies the Islamic Student Movement (al-Ḥaraka al-Ṭullābiyya al-Islāmiyya) and the Revolutionary Islamic Current (al-Tayār al-Islāmī al-Thawrī).⁴¹ In 1985, the nucleus was able to establish its first proper student party in a number of Palestinian universities under the name the Islamic Group (al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya).⁴² Two of those who became prominent leaders in PIJ in the 1980s, the aforementioned 'Abid and al-Khawaja, were recruited from the Islamic University of Gaza. 'Abid led the Islamic Student Movement in the early 1980s, while al-Khawaja headed the election list of Independent Islamists.⁴³

The student bodies of PIJ proved important in a period when the nucleus began publishing a number of bulletins, magazines, and books to spread its call to the Palestinian population. The Islamic Student Movement, for example, began to publish the magazines *Truth* (al-Ḥaqīqa) – later replaced by the magazine *The Declaration* (al-Bayān) – and *The Voice of the Oppressed* (Ṣawt al-Mustaḍ'afīn). In the period 1984–5, the Islamic Group at the Islamic University of Gaza began to publish *The Voice of the Islamic Group* (Ṣawt al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya), a one-page weekly publication.⁴⁴ These magazines came in addition to *The Light* (al-Nūr), the first official mouthpiece of PIJ from early 1982, which was replaced by *The Islamic Vanguard* (al-Ṭalī'a al-Islāmiyya) in December 1982.⁴⁵ The nucleus also published a number of book series such as the *Islamic Notebooks* series (*Dafātīr Islāmiyya*) and the *Toward*

Conscious Vanguard series (*Nahw Talā'i Wā'iyya*),⁴⁶ in addition to reprinting Islamic classics.⁴⁷

While the publication efforts of the PIJ nucleus thus seem energetic and vociferous, the quantity is most likely explained by the fact that changing names of publications was a known Palestinian method of circumventing the need to receive a permit from Israeli military rule.⁴⁸ The same presumably applies to the many guises and names for its aforementioned student bodies. The fact that Yasir Salih refers to two other PIJ magazines in this period, *The Divine Light* (*al-Nūr al-Ilāhī*) and *The Light of God* (*al-Nūr al-Rabbānī*), whose titles were only slight adjustments to the name of *The Light* magazine, strengthens this assumption.⁴⁹

We do not know the details of how the nucleus financed these publications in this period. Reuven Paz notes that the PIJ magazines and leaflets were produced locally, published irregularly, sometimes handwritten, and they were “dull” in comparison with those of the Muslim Brotherhood.⁵⁰ The costs were thus probably minuscule, and perhaps funded by the donations of its members. The magazine *The Islamic Vanguard* was an exception, however, as it was not published in the Gaza Strip. Instead, it was first published in London before it was reprinted in, and distributed from, Jerusalem.⁵¹ It is not clear how PIJ financed this endeavor, or how it was able to distribute it.

In all likelihood, the PIJ nucleus “piggybacked” on already-established, ideologically sympathetic organizations. The magazine *The Light*, for example, was initially affiliated with the Muslim Youth Association (*Jam'iyyat al-Shabāb al-Muslimīn*) in Jerusalem before it ceased publication. After one year of inactivity, however, the PIJ nucleus agreed with the association to reestablish the magazine as the ideological and political reflection of the movement.⁵² Much evidence indicates that a similar agreement made *The Islamic Vanguard* possible as the Islamic Center for Studies and Publishing (*al-Markaz al-Islāmī li-l-Dirāsāt wa-l-Nashr*) issued it. Whether the nucleus controlled this center directly, or whether the connection was indirect, is nonetheless uncertain.⁵³

Last, 'Abdallah al-Shami notes that the PIJ nucleus also formed a number of institutions in this period such as the Palestinian Islamic Youth Institution (*al-Mu'assasa al-Islāmiyya li-l-Shabāb al-Filasṭīnī*), which was founded in al-Shuja'iyya and led by al-Shiqaqi. Another was the Building and Infrastructure Institution (*Mu'assasat Bunyān wa-'Ammār*), which was supervised by al-Shami.⁵⁴ Although their exact role is unclear, these institutions were nonetheless to play a minor role for the movement. Presumably, the nucleus's engagement in the civil sector through institutions; student elections; and summer camps for youth was caused by the same motivation as those in Hamas. That is,

having a “basic manifestation of [its] political existence,” in addition to providing PIJ with a momentum and an added basis for political legitimacy.⁵⁵ We may also note that participation in student politics was a valuable arena for recruitment.

The PIJ nucleus’s call for insurrection seems to have struck a nerve in a certain segment of the student masses. Although it claims to have received 16.5 percent of the vote in the student elections of 1981/1982,⁵⁶ this is ostensibly exaggerated as Hatina notes that PIJ received 4–7 percent of the vote between 1982 and 1986.⁵⁷ Moreover, PIJ attained 7.7 percent of the votes on November 5–6, 1994, at the Islamic University of Gaza, and 6 percent of the votes at the Gazan al-Azhar University two weeks later, so the movement apparently stabilized at this level.⁵⁸

We may consequently make some observations at this point about the recruitment efforts of PIJ in the Gaza Strip from 1981 through 1983. First, the earliest phase necessarily entailed reaching out to a Palestinian population by spreading its call and recruiting new members. While doing so, it seems clear that the PIJ nucleus had not decided on the organizational vehicle and its name. In 1982, for example, the nucleus signed its statements with “Sons of the Islamic Uprising in Palestine” (*Abnā’ al-Intifāda al-Islāmiyya fī Filasṭīn*), “Sons of the Qur’an Movement” (*Ḥarakat Abnā’ al-Qur’ān*), or “Sons of al-Aqsa” (*Abnā’ al-Aqṣā*).⁵⁹ The name Palestinian Islamic Jihad (*Ḥarakat al-Jihād al-Islāmī fī Filasṭīn*) was thus yet to be adopted.

Second, insurgent groups depend on their ability to mobilize prewar social networks as these provide information, trust, and shared political meanings that can be employed to create new, armed groups. As “ideology, resource endowments, and state policy do not straightforwardly create insurgent groups,” we see that the ability to draw upon and tap into these preexisting social networks largely determines what type of organization emerges, and “the social bases in which insurgent organizers are embedded shape initial organization.”⁶⁰ What type of social networks are available varies, but for an insurgent organization to emerge strongly and resiliently (as an “integrated organization”) it will depend on strong vertical and horizontal ties.⁶¹ While the vertical ties are the ones between the leadership of an organization and the local communities, horizontal ties are those within the organization (between leaders and organizers). Correspondingly, organizations that are able to create and sustain both strong vertical and strong horizontal ties will necessarily stand stronger and be more resilient.

This conception helps us understand how the PIJ nucleus was able to recruit so heavily from the student masses in the preparatory stages when building the movement. Since all of its founders were, or had recently

been, university students, they surely knew the pressing concerns and desires of Palestinian students. This is reflected in the publications of the PIJ nucleus in this period. The main purpose of the magazine *Truth*, for example, was to discuss “student issues and to cover the problems in the universities as well as general Islamic issues.”⁶² Further, *The Declaration* and *The Voice of the Islamic Group* focused extensively on issues pertaining to the Palestinian student masses in general and the problems at the Islamic University of Gaza in particular.⁶³

The nucleus managed to tap into the student base for two additional reasons. One was that several of its founders worked, and were directly involved, at the Islamic University of Gaza. ‘Awda, for example, worked there as a lecturer and teacher in sharia, and Shallah was a lecturer in economics.⁶⁴ Others in the PIJ leadership, such as ‘Abdallah al-Shami, worked as teachers in the high schools of Gaza.⁶⁵ This created direct lines of communication and close relations between the founders and the Palestinian students in Gaza on a personal level – a factor contributing to the strengthening of vertical ties.

Further, as Paz notes, the Occupied Palestinian Territories saw a significant rise in the level of education by the 1980s, and a large percentage of the students in Gaza came from the refugee camps, small villages, and low-income families where religion already had a relatively strong presence.⁶⁶ Besides, in this period, the Occupied Palestinian Territories experienced an “Egyptification” of Palestinian labor through which higher education did not equal subsequent employment: “While university enrolment reached 13,500 in 1984–85 . . . only 20 per cent of the 1,000 graduates and 10,500 school-leavers entering the local job market each year could find employment.”⁶⁷ Certainly, this particular combination of class and religion must have made PIJ’s call for the oppressed to revolt against their oppressors resonate among the students.

Though it is an exaggeration to state that PIJ developed into an academic movement, its members were nevertheless relatively well educated. Analyzing all PIJ martyrs in the period 1992–2012 (908 in total), we see that 71.2 percent either were students in or had finished the equivalent level of secondary education or university studies.⁶⁸ However, when assessing their employment, the trend of occupation is manual, low-skill labor, as illustrated by [Table 3.1](#). Of 908 martyrs, only 6 were hired in specialized labor.⁶⁹ In general, the picture is thus that of a relatively well-educated, working-class movement.

This is not to suggest that PIJ developed evenly in the Gaza Strip, although the movement was not negligent in any of its districts. As we recall that the most important PIJ mosques were the al-Salam Mosque in Rafah, the Hassan al-Banna Mosque in Beach camp, the al-Rahman

Table 3.1 *Ten most common types of employment for PIJ martyrs (1992–2012)*

Student	216
Laborer	190
Unemployed	85
Governmental employee	66
Tailor	30
Construction worker	30
Salesman	27
Farmer	22
Driver	18
Electrician	14

Mosque in al-Shuja'iyya, and the 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam Mosque in Beit Lahiya, it was namely in these areas the movement had the strongest presence for the next thirty years. In Gaza City, for example, PIJ was in terms of martyrs far stronger in the neighborhood al-Shuja'iyya and its center of gravity was decisively in the east. Conversely, PIJ had far fewer martyrs in the western neighborhoods of Gaza City. Beach camp was the exception to the rule as a western neighborhood with a relatively strong standing.⁷⁰ Similarly, Beit Lahiya constituted the center of gravity in the North Gaza district, and Rafah City, including Rafah camp, had the same role in the south.⁷¹

The work in the universities and mosques came only in addition to the fact that all of the founders of the PIJ nucleus had been born, raised, and lived in the Gaza Strip, where they knew its population and institutions. We see that the nucleus was able to create strong vertical ties through the linkage of its leaders with the local communities in the Gaza Strip with access to the neighborhoods of the cities and refugee camps, and through networks such as the local mosques. The fact that the majority of the PIJ founders lived and worked in the Gaza Strip made it possible to share the developing ideology on the local level; to facilitate political education; and to reproduce the worldview favorable to insurgency. Through its strong horizontal ties, the nucleus was able to create collective social resources that enabled the institutions, publications, and activities of bureaucratic specialization (institutions and publications); standard operating procedures; a reasonably clear leadership structure (al-Shiqaqi, 'Awda, and the other founding fathers); and a coherent ideology that was disseminated consistently.

Two other Palestinian Islamic Jihad groups in the 1980s demonstrate the importance of strong horizontal and vertical ties for the establishment

of resilient armed movements.⁷² The first of these failed projects was that of Sheikh As'ad Bayyud al-Tamimi, who after being deported from Hebron in 1970 led the Islamic Jihad Jerusalem Brigade from Jordan. In the late 1980s, al-Tamimi ordered a series of attacks on Israeli targets from Amman with the assistance of his two sons. The second was Islamic Jihad Palestine led by Jamal/Jabr 'Ammar,⁷³ who after being released from Israeli prisons in 1983, traveled to Egypt. However, Egyptian authorities expelled him for "subversive activity," and he subsequently settled in Sudan.⁷⁴ If, for the sake of argument, the ideology of these three Islamic Jihad groups had been sufficient to create resilient organizations, then we would expect all to have established themselves firmly in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Yet, this did not happen, and two of these factions quickly faded into irrelevance.

What made the projects of al-Tamimi and 'Ammar differ from that of al-Shiqaqi was that they in exile lacked any strong vertical ties to the local Palestinian population in the Occupied Territories. Unlike the PIJ nucleus, the Islamic Jihad Jerusalem Brigade and Islamic Jihad Palestine resembled much more "vanguard organizations," and as Staniland notes, "Without any connections to society, an insurgent group will be isolated in exile abroad, will wither away on the ground, or will become fatally vulnerable to state repression."⁷⁵ Moreover,

vanguard organizations lack reliable local roots that can establish and sustain local processes of control. . . . The failure to build connections with local communities undermines the efforts to mobilize the citizenry through selective incentives or ideological appeals, because a structure must be in place to lay the groundwork for local organizing.⁷⁶

Al-Shiqaqi and the other founding fathers of PIJ thus succeeded because of their presence on the ground and being part of the Gazan social and political fabric – necessary to create vertical ties between the leadership and the local population. Combined with strong horizontal ties, this enabled the PIJ nucleus to develop into a locally grounded armed movement. Yet, as we will see in the next section, an additional important factor for this development was the Israeli prisons and the recruitment of former secular-nationalist militants.

3.3 Recruiting the Secular-Nationalist Militants

The exact responsibilities of al-Shiqaqi between 1981 and 1983 are uncertain. We do, however, know that al-Shiqaqi wrote in the PIJ magazine *The Light* under his second pseudonym, 'Izz al-Din Ibrahim (al-Shiqaqi's pseudonym was Abu Ibrahim), and it is likely that he contributed

to the other publications of the nucleus.⁷⁷ As we recall, he also arranged lectures in the homes of sympathizers. Moreover, his wife, Fathiyya, describes him “roaming the Gaza Strip north, south, east, and west for the movement in its beginning,” while never being at home.⁷⁸ While doing so, al-Shiqaqi began attracting the interest of the Israeli occupation authorities. In August 1983, al-Shiqaqi was arrested for the first time along with twenty-five other PIJ members, and he was detained for eleven months due to his Islamic activism and calls for violence.⁷⁹

Unfortunately, we know little about his activities during this imprisonment in the Gaza Central Prison – unlike his subsequent arrest, on March 2, 1986. It seems evident, however, that when he was released eleven months later, in 1984, he understood the recruitment potential in Palestinian prisoners. Abu Husayra, for example, states that he was tasked with visiting the prisons and recruiting from them, and “I visited them in the Ashkelon Prison, and there was communication between the brothers in Ashkelon and the martyr [al-Shiqaqi].”⁸⁰

When the different militants were recruited is uncertain, but we do know that from 1983 to 1986 PIJ was able to recruit a number of secular-nationalists from prison. One group was that of Misbah al-Suri, who had been a member of the Palestine Liberation Front (PLF), Sami al-Shaykh Khalil (Fatah), and Muhammad Sa‘id al-Jamal, who had been a member of the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front (PPSF). Ziyad al-Nakhala, the third secretary-general of PIJ, was arrested on May 29, 1971, and subsequently sentenced to life for his involvement with the Arab Liberation Forces (Quwwāt al-Taḥrīr al-‘Arabiyya).⁸¹ Further, ‘Issam Brahma, who grew up in a Fatah family and had been a member his whole life, joined PIJ in prison in 1986 and founded the first PIJ cell in the West Bank in 1990 once he was released.⁸² Others were Sayyid Baraka and Ahmad Muhanna, a former officer in the PLA, who became an Islamist in the Israeli prisons.⁸³ We see the same in the case of ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Qiq, who came to PIJ from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), while ‘Imad al-Saftawi, who became a mujahid in the ranks of PIJ, was the son of a “staunch Fatah man, Assad Saftawi.”⁸⁴ In analyzing the list of those recruited in the Israeli prison system in this period, it is striking that so many were former secular-nationalists.

Most of our data on al-Shiqaqi’s prison project is from the time of his second imprisonment, from March 1986 until his deportation to Lebanon in August 1988, on charges of his “relationship with an armed group that had carried out eight military operations since 1984 against the occupation forces.”⁸⁵ According to Fu‘ad al-Razim, who spent time with al-Shiqaqi in prison before the latter’s transfer to the Nafha Prison in the Negev desert, they engaged in several meetings behind bars.

There they discussed the ideas and the development of PIJ in and outside Israeli prisons.⁸⁶ Al-Shiqaqi also organized several lessons in education and religion there in order to recruit new members, according to Khalid al-Ju'aydi, who spent time with al-Shiqaqi after his arrest in 1986.⁸⁷

Both al-Razim and al-Ju'aydi state that many of the other factions' members attempted to join PIJ in prison. Yet, according to al-Razim, "[al-Shiqaqi] told them to stay in their factions until the full opportunity to build an organization came so as not to cause problems with these young people and their organizations in the prisons." Al-Ju'aydi also states that al-Shiqaqi did not accept the transfer of prisoners from the other organizations to PIJ.⁸⁸ Notwithstanding, there were, as shown, several members of other Palestinian factions who joined PIJ, so al-Ju'aydi's assertion is perhaps an exaggeration. However, one should also note that al-Shaykh Khalil, in fact, did have "many problems" with Fatah in prison after he turned to PIJ, according to his martyr biography.⁸⁹

In all probability, the answer lies somewhere in between. The Fatah member 'Issam Brahma, for example, was recruited to PIJ while serving time in prison in the 1980s, "but he kept the issue from one organization to another until he was released from prison."⁹⁰ One reason for keeping his transfer to PIJ secret could have been fear of reprimand from Fatah. Another could be an attempt to be included in prison releases. Iyad Sawalha, for example, whom we will return to later in this study, was imprisoned in 1992 as a member of the Fatah-affiliated Black Panthers (al-Fuhūd al-Aswad). He, too, was recruited to PIJ in prison. He chose not to openly declare his PIJ membership in order to be included in the prisoner release during the Oslo process.⁹¹

Several of these secular-nationalist militants had seemingly become open to the message of PIJ before al-Shiqaqi and the other members of the PIJ nucleus were arrested in the 1980s. Abu Husayra, for example, was imprisoned in 1971 as a member of the PLA after throwing a bomb at an Israeli military jeep. After one year in prison, Abu Husayra was moved to the Beersheba Prison in the Negev desert where he began to read Islamic literature in general and the works of Sayyid Qutb in particular, such as the books *In the Shadow of the Quran* and *Milestones*. He states that he was not the only one doing so, and approximately seventy of his fellow inmates became influenced by the writings of Qutb. It was first in 1981, two years after his release from prison, that he was recruited to PIJ in the 'Anan Mosque in Beach camp.⁹²

Also the trajectory of Ahmad Muhanna, the former PLA officer who co-established the military wing of PIJ in 1985, implies that he had

become attracted to the ideology of PIJ. He was arrested in 1969 for his militant activity in the PLA, two years before Abu Husayra, and we do not know what happened during his first years of imprisonment. According to his martyr biography, something must have occurred, because four years later, in 1973–4, he participated in the formation of an Islamist prison group, the Islamic Group (al-Jamā‘a al-Islāmiyya). Further, “in the midst of this activity, the brother [Muhanna] and his brothers raised the slogan of Islamic resistance [*al-islām al-muqāwim*] inside prison, in the absence of the Islamic gun in the arena of militant action against the Israeli occupation.”⁹³

To summarize what we know so far, as a number of PLA commandos and other secular-nationalist militants had been imprisoned in the late 1960s and early 1970s, they had spent their time in the Israeli prisons reading Sayyid Qutb and Islamic literature, and gradually become attracted to PIJ. This attraction, combined with the arrests of PIJ members, would place the Israeli prisons among the most important meeting grounds for them and the secular-nationalist militants. As so many from the PLA were recruited to PIJ from the Israeli prisons in this period, there is a link between the defeat of the PLA in 1971/1972 and the escalating armed action of PIJ in the mid-1980s. What remains is the explanation for this ideological development.

It is important to note that the PLO in general and Fatah in particular never were theoretically driven movements guided by strict ideological tenets. Instead, as Yezid Sayigh notes, they tended to a simple nationalism that lacked ideological depth with violence constituting the main source of political legitimacy and national identity.⁹⁴ With a focus on practice without substantial theoretical underpinnings, what divided the different secular factions in the 1960s and 1970s were questions not so much of what ideology should prevail *after* liberation, but instead of *how* to liberate Palestine, *who* was to liberate Palestine, and *how much* of it.⁹⁵ Thus, as the PLO and its factions became practical fronts to wage armed resistance against the Israeli occupation, we will see that they incorporated a number of members who did not necessarily adhere to its secularist postulations.

The Hamas leader Muhammad Abu Tayr is a case in point. One of the cofounders of the Islamic Group in the Israeli prisons, Abu Tayr was imprisoned in 1974 after allegedly carrying out military operations on behalf of Fatah in the early 1970s. It becomes clear when one reads his memoirs that while a member of Fatah, Abu Tayr was a practicing and believing Muslim, although he notes that “my intellectual knowledge was shallow, and our understanding of religion was minor and unripe.”⁹⁶

Despite his allegedly unripe understanding of religion, Abu Tayr must have been aware of his religious identity when he was arrested because he

vehemently reacted to the secular ideologies espoused by Fatah, PFLP, and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) in prison. "At that stage, Marxist thought was overwhelming . . . English books, Marx, and Lenin, the prison library was full of them, and the revolutionaries read them even before the people of the Soviet Union did."⁹⁷ Moreover, little suggests that the prisoners who belonged to the secular factions were particularly sensitive to their more religious coprisons, and Abu Tayr writes that "in my room were 'Umar al-Qasim, a member of the political bureau of DFLP, and 'Abd al-Latif al-Ghayth, a leader of PFLP in Jerusalem, and they sarcastically mocked anything connected to religion."⁹⁸

As a number of militants such as Abu Husayra and Muhanna began reading Islamic literature in prison, it appears this endeavor was in fact a direct response to the attacks and mocking by the Marxist revolutionaries in PFLP and DFLP. As Abu Tayr notes, "We needed supplies of knowledge . . . and what made us succeed in neutralizing these [secular] ideas was that God opened a number of Islamic books for us."⁹⁹ More importantly:

In this period, I read books and wanted to fill my mind and preserve it. I came across the books of Sayyid Qutb, so I read *In the Shade of the Quran* and *Signposts*. I also read *Prolegomena* [*Muqaddima*] by Ibn Khaldun. I began early on to read Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi such as *Lawful and Impermissible* [*Ḥalāl wa-Ḥarām*], and *The Jurisprudence of Charity* [*Fiqh al-Zakat*]. I read *The Great Universal Certainty* [*Kubrā al-Yaqīniyyat al-Kawmiyya*] by Muhammad Said Ramadan al-Bouti in order to dispel the illusion of historical materialism, and I read Abbas Mahmoud al-Aqad's book, which dispelled the illusions of Communism and refuted their lies.¹⁰⁰

It is illustrative, then, that the first book that Abu Tayr sought out was *Misconceptions about Islam* (*Shubuhāt Ḥawl al-Islām*) by Muhammad Qutb.¹⁰¹

The Islamic Group was, then, not so much a planned political project as it was a result of believing prisoners attempting to practice their faith in peace. As Abu Tayr notes, "It was never my intention to leave Fatah, and I had no desire to form an Islamic group [*jamā'a islāmiyya*]. . . . This is not what I wanted, but all we wanted and desired was to sit down with the Qur'an, learn our religion, and get rid of our problems."¹⁰²

The account of Abu Tayr implies that the prisons exacerbated and strengthened the underlying contradictions that existed within the Palestinian nationalist armed resistance, represented by the PLO, which lacked a coherent and rigidly outlined ideology. As violence was the source of national identity for these movements outside of prison, this source seemingly deteriorated once its possibility disappeared. While

secularists, Marxists, and practicing Muslims united by the rifle outside of prison, on the inside distinct groups began to crystallize along diverging ideological lines. It is, then, plausible to assume that Muhanna, Abu Husayra, and al-Suri, to mention a few, never were particularly secular to begin with, although operating under the banner of the PLA.

“Bilal,” who became a part of al-Shiqaqi’s close circle in the 1970s, certainly lends credence to this hypothesis. He came to Egypt as a member of Fatah, but gradually became attracted to what he terms an “Islamic orientation” through the student debates and study circles. While the cause for his trajectory was disappointment with the concessions of Fatah in the 1970s, he also emphasized that

it is important to remember that the jump from Fatah to the Islamic orientation was not a very big one because Fatah at that time was very conservative, and many of its founders and later members had been a part of the Muslim Brotherhood. It was not as if we were Marxists.¹⁰³

Yet, this contradiction did in fact exist within the Palestinian leftist currents as well. Abu Samir Musa, for example, leader and founder of PIJ in South Lebanon, was born a refugee in Lebanon in 1962. Abu Samir noted that he in his younger days was like any Palestinian youth who wanted Palestinian revolution. Consequently, when he grew older, he first joined Fatah, and then DFLP, through which he joined the PLA.¹⁰⁴ However, Abu Samir emphasized that he never adopted Marxism or Marxist-Leninism as an idea, despite being a member of the DFLP:

I was in the DFLP, but I did not adopt the Communist thought as an idea, but I was attracted to, and adopted, the revolutionary idea that it practiced through the military work at that time. . . . I believed in the option of resistance in the Palestinian organizations, meaning the line of resistance in order to liberate Palestine.¹⁰⁵

When describing his ideological underpinning (*asās*) in the 1980s, he would refer to religion, although noting that he was uncommitted.¹⁰⁶

Yet, while he described himself as having become ideologically closer to the Lebanese branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, also named al-Jamā‘a al-Islāmiyya, by 1986, Abu Samir lamented that “al-Jamā‘a al-Islāmiyya had no military bases or an armed organization on the ground or at the camp level. . . . I [on the other hand] was devoted to the idea of jihad and resistance.”¹⁰⁷

Abu Samir’s emphasis on armed struggle underlines that the main contradiction between the secular-nationalist movements and the Islamists in the 1980s was the choice between armed resistance and quietist proselytization. While Abu Samir belonged ideologically to the Islamic current, and rejected Marxism despite being a member of DFLP,

he became a member of the latter because he perceived it to be the most suitable platform for waging armed action. Correspondingly, Abu Samir noted that his entry into PIJ occurred because he finally “found an Islamic movement that pursued jihad as a means, and the liberation of Palestine as a goal.”¹⁰⁸

It is also plausible that the emergence of PIJ as a Palestinian Islamic armed movement, with its ability to tap into the religious segments within the PLO, was strengthened by the fact that in the 1980s the latter was severely weakened as a militant alternative. While the PLA had been crushed in the Gaza Strip in 1972 and was practically nonexistent there in the mid-1980s, the PLO had been exiled from Lebanon to Tunisia in 1982. In addition, we may recall that one of the greatest criticisms presented by the PIJ founders against the PLO was the latter’s application of the Ten-Point Program in 1974 and the increasing concessions given to Israel. This, as we recall, was mentioned by “Bilal” as one of the main reasons for his attraction to the Islamic orientation. The PIJ militant Falah Musharaqa, for example, was initially a militant in Fatah. However, in the early 1990s, Musharaqa joined PIJ in protest against the commencement of the Oslo Agreement.¹⁰⁹ As Sing shows, in the 1980s, as Fatah and the PLO turned toward political settlement with Israel instead of continued armed resistance, several Maoist members of Fatah in Lebanon turned to Islamism as an alternative vehicle for continued armed resistance.¹¹⁰ Moreover, as we recall from earlier in this study, this development could only be further strengthened by the religious revival in the Arab world in general following the defeat in the Six-Day War in 1967 and the Iranian Revolution in 1979.

To summarize, as a number of militants joined the PLA because they believed in armed struggle against the occupation, they seemingly did so without being convinced of its secularist postulations. As the account of Abu Tayr implies, several of the militants were practicing and believing Muslims. Further, what made them join the PLA was the lack of any credible Islamic alternative that could provide them with a platform to wage armed resistance against the occupation. In other words, it seems that the transformation of the secular-nationalist militants in the PLA was the result of a number of push-and-pull factors.

As shown, a number of push factors were present. First, the alleged attacks on Islam presented by the revolutionaries in Fatah, PFLP, and DFLP forced the believing prisoners to form a group, the Islamic Group, to preserve their religious practice, and to provide a forum where they could educate themselves. This theoretical immersion, initially organized to provide the believers with enough theory to defend their beliefs, led them to the writings of Sayyid and Muhammad Qutb, al-Qaradawi, and

numerous Islamic theoreticians and scholars. It is plausible that the study circles had the by-product of pushing them to Islamism as they became more ideologically aware. Second, this occurred when the PLO in general and the PLA in particular had been severely weakened by the 1980s as credible alternatives for armed action, and as liberators of Palestine in its entirety.

The increased ideological awareness among the believing Muslims who had joined the PLA for lack of any credible Islamic alternative meant that there was a simple, yet highly effective, pull factor in the 1980s. As the PLO had been weakened as a platform for armed resistance, not only did a new effective armed movement emerge emphasizing the armed liberation of *all* of Palestine. More importantly, while doing so, it employed Islamic symbolism and signifiers, providing an alternative that many members of the PLO longed for. Thus, the ideology of PIJ succeeded because it offered a program that the militants could commit themselves to wholly from the onset. From being fedayeen of the PLA in the 1970s, they transformed into mujahidin of PIJ in the 1980s, during which the conflict in general underwent a process of de-secularization.

3.4 PIJ's Spread to the West Bank

We have so far only concerned ourselves with PIJ in the Gaza Strip. As we will see in this section, although PIJ had a presence in the West Bank from 1990, it was nonetheless far weaker there. In the Second Intifada, for example, only 20 percent of PIJ attacks were from the West Bank.¹¹¹ This asymmetry may be partly attributed to the fact that Gaza is far more conservative – religiously and socially – than the West Bank.¹¹² More importantly, Gaza and the West Bank developed two distinct political cultures and structures between the *nakba* in 1948 and the Six-Day War in 1967. While the Egyptian regime went a long way to suppress political activity in Gaza, this was not the case in the West Bank under Jordanian rule. Consequently, Roy states that “the Gaza Strip never developed a distinct and well-defined political sector,” and Tuastad suggests that this absence of independent political institutions caused armed struggle to become the primary means of political expression instead of dialogue and debate.¹¹³ The West Bank, on the other hand, was exposed to institutionalized politics through which political parties constituted “a forum not a weapon,” and the propensity for violence was consequently lower there.¹¹⁴ Last, the defeat of the PLA in the Gaza Strip in 1972 led to a political quiescence there, resulting in a concentration of Palestinian nationalist politics and organizations in the West Bank for well over

a decade, and PIJ necessarily faced greater political competition there than in Gaza.¹¹⁵

These historical structural constraints were augmented by dynamics specific to PIJ. While PIJ enjoyed strong vertical ties in the Gaza Strip because its leadership resided there, these ties were far weaker in the West Bank. For example, although ‘Abd al-‘Aziz ‘Awda also preached in a number of mosques in the 1948 areas before he was deported to Lebanon in 1987, there are no sources describing a similar effort in the West Bank (with the exception of *laylat al-qadr* at the al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem).¹¹⁶ Furthermore, while al-Shiqaqi traveled extensively in the Occupied Palestinian Territories until his imprisonment in 1986, much evidence implies that the rest of the PIJ leadership was largely immobile, and there are no reports of Nafidh ‘Azzam, Muhammad al-Hindi, or ‘Abdallah al-Shami going to the West Bank. Last, even ‘Abid, who we will see had moved to Nablus for his master’s degree, quickly returned to Gaza to work in the Islamic University of Gaza once he had finished his studies.¹¹⁷ We will see that these constraints, few yet significant, made PIJ rely on the recruitment of kinship and friends to a greater extent than in Gaza. This was particularly the case in the north of the West Bank, in the Jenin and Tulkarem districts.

Until 1983, before his first imprisonment by the Israeli occupation authorities, al-Shiqaqi worked as a pediatrician in the Augusta Victoria Hospital in Jerusalem. In this period, al-Shiqaqi not only traveled between the West Bank and Gaza, but also within the West Bank itself in order to spread the call of PIJ. Al-Hajj Muhammad notes that, allegedly, “[al-Shiqaqi] established wide relations in different areas of the West Bank and attracted many of the youths, and some of them established the leading cells of Islamic Jihad.”¹¹⁸ Additionally, “[t]he mosques were . . . the starting point for the first pioneers of Islamic Jihad for proselytization and finding other cadres just as in the Gaza Strip.”¹¹⁹

From reading the martyr biographies of PIJ militants active in the West Bank throughout the 1990s, it is difficult to verify these claims. First, only one individual is said to have been recruited by al-Shiqaqi, Nu‘man Tahayna. However, he was only twelve years old when this supposedly occurred in 1983, and it is more likely that he became active as a university student.¹²⁰ Second, when al-Hajj Muhammad points to the mosques, he only refers to the activities of PIJ at the al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem during *laylat al-qadr*, which is an annual event.¹²¹ Unlike the Gaza Strip, no particular mosques are mentioned as PIJ centers. I do not suggest that no one was recruited through these structures but rather that their roles are probably exaggerated by PIJ sources.

In contrast, we may recall that PIJ was successful in recruiting a great number of students from the Islamic University of Gaza. The recruitment from the Islamic University of Gaza seemingly assisted the spread of PIJ to the West Bank far more effectively than al-Shiqaqi and the mosques. Mainly, this occurred through the student exchange in Palestinian academia. As al-Hajj Muhammad describes it:

Many of Gaza's children studied at the al-Najah University in Nablus or the Birzeit University in Ramallah, and among them were students who belonged to Islamic Jihad. They spread the ideas of the movement among the students, which led to an organization of cadres consisting of the children of the West Bank from all districts.¹²²

The best example of this exchange, and how it enabled the spread of PIJ to the West Bank, was Hani 'Abid, the editor of the movement's newspaper, *Independence (al-Istiqlāl)*, until he was assassinated in 1994. After 'Abid obtained a bachelor's degree in chemistry at the Islamic University of Gaza, he moved to Nablus in order to obtain his master's at al-Najah University in 1988.¹²³ We do not know whom 'Abid recruited, but we do know that he took control of PIJ's student group, the Islamic Group, on campus.¹²⁴

One of the most prominent PIJ cadres in the West Bank was the aforementioned Nu'man Tahayna, who became the emir of the Islamic Group at al-Najah University in Nablus during his studies there in the Press and Media Department.¹²⁵ In addition to al-Najah University, we also know that members were recruited to PIJ from other universities in the West Bank. As'ad Daqqa, for example, one of the most prominent military commanders in Tulkarem during the Second Intifada, was recruited to PIJ through the Islamic Group at Birzeit University.¹²⁶ Muhammad Basharat was active in the Islamic Group at the University of Hebron.¹²⁷ Although all of these individuals were recruited in the 1990s through their university studies, none of them were prominent militants before the Second Intifada erupted. Instead, as in Gaza, the military presence of PIJ in the West Bank was in this period determined by the secular-nationalist militants who transformed into mujahidin in prison.

The most prominent of these was 'Issam Brahma. Born on May 5, 1963, in the small village of Anza in the Jenin district, Brahma joined Fatah and commenced armed struggle against the occupation after finishing high school. Brahma's political and military activity gave him several periods in the Israeli prisons – in 1982, in 1984, and in 1986.¹²⁸ It was there, like so many others in this period, that he met other PIJ members, such as the otherwise unknown Sheikh Majid Sharim, and it

was there that he became convinced of the movement's ideology, thought, and methods.¹²⁹ Thus, when Brahma left prison on May 17, 1990, to the surprise of Anza, he returned as a member and vocal supporter of PIJ, and began to organize a military cell under its umbrella, *'ushshāq al-shahāda* (the lovers of martyrdom).¹³⁰

The first man that 'Issam recruited to his PIJ cell was his cousin from Anza, Hassan Brahma.¹³¹ Further, although the other cofounders of *'ushshāq al-shahāda* were not related to 'Issam, they were born and raised in the vicinity of his village. Salih Tahayna was from al-Sila al-Harithiyya; Iyad Hardan was from Arraba; and Muhammad Abu Rubb was from Qabatiya. The founding fathers of *'ushshāq al-shahāda* would subsequently use the ties of kin and friendship in their own villages to recruit new members, and Nu'man Tahayna (al-Sila al-Harithiyya) and Anwar Hamran (Arraba) joined the cell shortly after its establishment.¹³²

Brahma's recruitment of new members was symptomatic of the other cell formations in the West Bank. That is, we see that certain villages and clans were strongly represented in the PIJ cells there from 1990 until 2005, implying that few militants were recruited to the movement from outside of already-existing social structures. For example, also the PIJ commander Hussam Jaradat and the suicide bombers Samir 'Umar Shawahna and Raghib Jaradat came from al-Sila al-Harithiyya.¹³³ So did Nu'man, Salih, 'Abd al-Karim, Sharif, and Sulayman Tahayna.¹³⁴ Hardan and Hamran came from Arraba, as did Thabit Mardawi and Wa'il 'Assaf.¹³⁵ PIJ was also sustained in the West Bank through the creation of new kinship ties, although this was unusual, as Nu'man married the sister of the PIJ commander Thabit Mardawi – thus creating a bridge between the two Jenin cells through intermarriage.¹³⁶

In the Tulkarem district, kin dependency was stronger. While Tulkarem had fifty-eight PIJ martyrs from 1992 to 2012, half of them came from the two villages of Attil and Sayda. Further, in Sayda, we see that the al-Ashqar and 'Abd al-Ghani clans played the same role as the Tahayna clan in Jenin with Majid, Zahir, Ilyas, Muhammad, Rami, and Sa'id al-Ashqar, in addition to Shafiq, Mustafa, Muhammad, and Anwar 'Abd al-Ghani, as PIJ members and militants in this period.¹³⁷ In Attil, under the leadership of Lu'ay al-Sa'di, half of the village was made up of the Khalil, 'Ajmi, and al-Ghawi clans.

This is not to imply that kinship did not play a role in the recruitment to PIJ in the Gaza Strip. The al-Dahduh clan, to which we will return in [Chapter 4](#), had a similar presence in Gaza as that of the Tahayna, al-Ashqar, and 'Abd al-Ghani clans in the West Bank. Rather, my point is that while PIJ in the Gaza Strip was able to transcend kinship-based

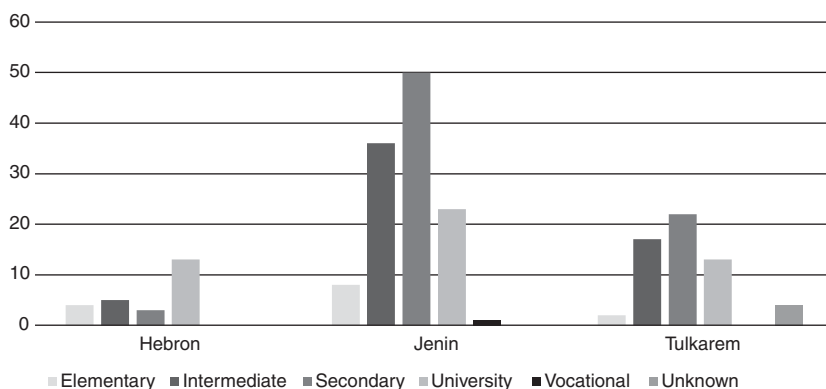


Figure 3.1 PIJ education level in Hebron, Jenin, and Tulkarem

recruitment, it was far less successful doing so in the West Bank. Nor do I suggest that there was no recruitment through institutions in the West Bank. After all, as we asserted, the institutions were simply weaker in the West Bank, not absent.

The hypothesis that PIJ depended on kinship in the absence of strong institutions is supported when comparing the northern West Bank with the southern Hebron district, which constitutes an exception. While certain clans are strongly represented in Tulkarem and Jenin, the level of education is correspondingly low. In fact, none from the al-Ashqar clan, for example, were educated beyond the secondary level. Second, those with only intermediate-level education (eighth through tenth grade) outnumber those with an academic background in both the Jenin and Tulkarem districts. In Hebron, on the other hand, the opposite applies as the majority of the PIJ martyrs were from, or lived in, the city and had an academic background (see [Figure 3.1](#)). Correspondingly, no kinship pattern among the PIJ martyrs emerges with the exception of two martyrs from the Shwayki clan and two from the Talahma clan. There is simply no powerful Hebron clan in PIJ such as the Qawasma clan in Hamas. The explanation is presumably that the PIJ martyrs in Hebron were young students who met on campus and organized the movement at the Palestine Polytechnic University there. Thus, they did not have to rely on kinship structures and preexisting social network for recruitment.

One could perhaps argue that the dependency on kinship in the West Bank was not an issue of education and strong institutions, but rather of the contradiction between urban centers and peripheries. After all, while PIJ in the Tulkarem district was dominated by village clans, a similar clan

predomination was absent in PIJ in the urban center of Hebron. This potential urban/periphery contradiction is, however, absent in the Tubas district, where the Daraghma and Basharat clans dominated the PIJ structure with 75 percent of its martyrs. While the former clan is from the city of Tubas, the latter is from the village of Tamun.

Because the leadership of PIJ proved to be so important for the organization of PIJ in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank would necessarily suffer in the absence of a similarly resourceful local leadership. 'Issam Brahma was, for example, not a political organizer or a prolific orator, but a military field commander. The same was true of those he recruited. In other words, while Gaza benefitted from the presence of human politico-organizational capital, the West Bank did not. Moreover, while the vertical ties in the West Bank were weaker than in Gaza, so were the horizontal ties between PIJ cells within the West Bank. We may attribute the weaker horizontal ties in the West Bank partly to the greater distances between Palestinian population centers there. The West Bank is, after all, fifteen times larger than Gaza.¹³⁸ While the distance between Rafah and Beit Lahiya is 45 kilometers, which presumably facilitated interaction and cooperation between cells in Gaza, the distance between Jenin and Hebron is 105 kilometers, making elaborate contact and cooperation across districts more difficult.¹³⁹

The weak horizontal ties between PIJ West Bank leaders had two consequences. First, the PIJ cells seem to have been insulated within one district. While Hebron had one set of cell commanders who led their own cells there, Jenin had another, and little indicates any widespread cooperation between PIJ cells in the northern and southern West Bank. Consequently, because the different cells and cadres were seemingly insulated within districts, PIJ in its entirety does not seem to have benefitted from the pool of human resources in the West Bank. That is, if there was a recruiter such as Brahma, his recruitment in Jenin did not create ripple effects in other districts such as Nablus or Bethlehem. The presence of PIJ in the West Bank thus developed unevenly with its center of gravity to the north. The total division of PIJ martyrs in the West Bank from 1992 until 2012 reflects this uneven development (see [Table 3.2](#)).

3.5 Conclusion

Facing initial difficulties, the PIJ nucleus was able to cement its position in Gaza because it had one distinct advantage over the other Islamic Jihad groups. Because its founding fathers were a part of the Gazan political and social fabric, PIJ was able to create strong vertical and horizontal ties

Table 3.2 *PIJ martyrs in the West Bank (1992–2012)*

West Bank district	Number of martyrs
Jenin	119
Tulkarem	58
Hebron	24
Nablus	22
Bethlehem	21
Tubas	12
Jerusalem	3
Ramallah	1
Jericho	1

facilitating its emergence as an integrated organization. It did so by first recruiting from the mosques and universities of Gaza. As the PIJ founding fathers and activists found themselves behind bars for the first time in 1983, they also began to recruit from Israeli prisons.

The PIJ nucleus had greater difficulties recruiting from the West Bank, however, although it maintained a military presence there from 1990. Mainly, these difficulties can be explained by political, historical, and cultural discontinuities between the West Bank and Gaza, resulting from the distinct political cultures that emerged there between 1948 and 1967. In addition, as the founding fathers seem to have been largely immobile, limiting themselves to recruitment and activism in the Gaza Strip, few PIJ political organizers came forth in the West Bank. Consequently, PIJ relied far more on the recruitment of kin and friends in the West Bank than it did in the Gaza Strip – thus developing unevenly and with its center of gravity to the north.

We cannot appreciate the recruitment efforts of PIJ in this period without considering the transformation the Occupied Palestinian Territories underwent in the 1970s and the 1980s. The recruitment of the secular-nationalist militants in Israeli prisons illustrates this point. Though they were imprisoned because of their affiliation with, and armed activity for, the secular-nationalist Palestinian factions, I have shown that we should question just how secular they were before their religious revival in prison. Whether they belonged to the secular factions (such as Fatah) or the leftist ones (such as the DFLP), it is clear that they were people of faith, who presumably joined these factions *despite* their ideology. Namely, they joined the PLO factions because they were the only appropriate organizational vehicles to carry out Palestinian armed resistance against the Israeli

occupation at a time when the Islamic currents limited themselves to proselytization and social services. Once an Islamic armed movement came forth, the threshold for joining was small.

As we will see in [Chapter 4](#), the introduction of these elements into PIJ accelerated the movement's development into an armed movement.

4 From Students to Militants

Commencing the Armed Struggle

In the early 1980s, the PIJ nucleus consisted of intellectuals and university students, most of whom had no prior experience with arms or violence. How was PIJ able to develop from an activist political organization into an organized armed movement? We will see in this chapter that the rapidity with which PIJ transformed into an armed movement was largely due to the secular-nationalist militants it recruited in prison. Not only did they quickly engage in armed operations once released, but they also trained other PIJ cadres in the use of weapons.

PIJ was not the only armed Palestinian Islamist movement for long, however. With the eruption of the First Intifada in 1987, the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, declared its existence and similarly commenced armed operations. As we recall that the demarcation line between the PIJ nucleus and the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood was armed struggle, how did their relationship develop once Hamas was established?

This chapter consists of three sections. I begin by analyzing the importance of the former secular-nationalist militants for PIJ's transformation into an armed movement. I then proceed by assessing the type of violence the movement carried out in this period, and what this means for our understanding of PIJ's organizational structure. Finally, I conclude this chapter by analyzing the relationship between PIJ and the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood after the latter transformed into Hamas.

4.1 The Role of the Secular-Nationalist Militants

There is no agreement among scholars when PIJ carried out its first military attack. According to Milton-Edwards, the first attacks attributed to, and claimed by, PIJ were in September and October 1986, while the first attack that Abu-Amr and Tamimi mention is October 1986.¹ Knudsen states that PIJ began its military activity by killing two Israeli taxi drivers in 1986.² Hatina, on the other hand, refers to the PIJ attack in Hebron on August 1983, when three PIJ members stabbed the yeshiva student Aron Gross to death.³ Of nonacademic sources worth mentioning, the Council of

Foreign Relations, the Mackenzie Institute, and the BBC list August 1987 as the date of the movement's first attack.⁴

Two issues presumably cause this confusion. One, as we may recall, is the fact that there was more than one Islamic Jihad group operating in the Occupied Palestinian Territories in the 1980s, and it is not always clear how to distinguish these clandestine groups from each other. Second, as 'Abdallah al-Shami stresses, PIJ carried out its military action in complete secrecy until the First Intifada (1987), when the movement published its first communiqué and declared its name as we know it today.⁵

Underscoring the ambiguity of PIJ's final turn to armed action, Muhammad al-Hasani and Ahmad Abu Husayra are a case in point. Two of the first to join PIJ in 1981 after the PIJ nucleus returned from Egypt, al-Hasani met al-Shiqaqi in one of Gaza's mosques, while Abu Husayra was a former PLA soldier turned Islamist in prison. According to al-Hasani, he and Abu Husayra established PIJ military cells already in late 1981/early 1982 in order to resist the Israeli occupation: first in Rafah and Khan Younis, and then in Beach camp.⁶ Al-Hasani states that his first attack, and implicitly the first attack of PIJ, was carried out in 1982 when

I got into a car with the freed prisoner Ahmad Abu Husayra, and we went to the Abu Khadra Compound. We drove our car next to the building nearby, and threw a grenade at a number of soldiers who were sitting at the gate of Abu Khadra. The Zionist enemy admitted at the time that three soldiers were killed.⁷

The cell of al-Hasani and Abu Husayra then carried out five military operations, primarily with hand grenades against soldiers and military jeeps. The cell also placed a bomb next to Bank Leumi in Gaza, before the occupation authorities arrested the two in 1986.⁸

It is difficult to verify these claims. Yet, al-Shiqaqi did state that the nucleus organized the first armed cell of PIJ in the summer of 1981, possibly referring to the cell of al-Hasani and Abu Husayra although that is uncertain.⁹ Yasir Salih, moreover, referred to Abu Husayra and al-Hasani when talking about the first armed cells and military actions of the movement.¹⁰ In addition, a *New York Times* article dated March 26, 1982, describes a hand grenade attack in the Gaza Strip against four Israeli soldiers, which, although varying on some of the details, implies the possibility of a PIJ cell in this early period.¹¹

That said, little indicates that the nucleus engaged systematically in violence at this point as both written sources of PIJ and interviews with this author state that the movement's transition to armed struggle began in 1984; thus suggesting that this early, armed activity was an exception to the rule.¹² As we will see in this chapter, this transition to armed struggle was connected to the recruitment of the former secular-nationalist

militants in prison who engaged in continued armed struggle under the banner of PIJ once they were released. These militants offered much-needed knowledge and expertise to a nucleus that mostly consisted of intellectuals and university students who had never touched a rifle. Consequently, PIJ's militancy in the mid-1980s seems intrinsically tied to one particular cell of former secular-nationalist militants: the cell of Misbah al-Suri.

Misbah Hassan al-Suri was a militant in the Palestinian Liberation Front (PLF) who had participated in several armed operations against Israeli targets in the 1960s. He was imprisoned after a failed operation in 1969 during which he was shot in his left hand, which became partly paralyzed. After organizing and participating in a prisoners' strike against the poor facilities, al-Suri was transferred to a prison in Beersheba, where he was introduced to PIJ through the Islamic study circles that the movement organized there. It was during his imprisonment that al-Suri began to read and memorize the Qur'an. Despite several failed attempts to flee during his imprisonment, al-Suri was released in the prisoner exchange deal between Israel and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine - General Command (PFLP-GC) in 1985.

It seems al-Suri had joined PIJ in prison, because he resumed armed action under its banner immediately after his release. For example, al-Suri was rearrested shortly after, on May 19, 1986, and charged with belonging to PIJ; organizing others into the movement; possessing weapons and training others in using them; providing weapons to others; and carrying out armed attacks on Israeli targets.¹³ According to 'Abd al-Salam Abu al-Sarhad from PIJ, who got acquainted with al-Suri in Gaza Central Prison in 1986, it was there that al-Suri met al-Shaykh Khalil (Fatah) and al-Jamal (PPSF), who together would constitute one of PIJ's most active militant cells in the mid-1980s.¹⁴ Khalil had been imprisoned on June 18, 1986, for belonging to PIJ; attempting to kill a collaborator; organizing others into PIJ; carrying out organizational tasks for PIJ; possessing weapons; and planning military operations. Al-Jamal, on the other hand, had been arrested in 1983, and was released two years later in 1985, possibly in the same prisoner exchange deal as al-Suri. He was then rearrested on June 28, 1986, on the same charges as al-Suri and Khalil, in addition to a charge of issuing orders to liquidate collaborators.¹⁵

Although difficult to verify, al-Sarhad states that the prisoners managed to smuggle an iron saw into the prison, hidden in a French loaf, which they used to cut the window bars in the bathroom.

We began to work with [al-Suri] for three consecutive days in accordance with the plan he had prepared. We had to work from ten to thirty minutes every hour. So

we managed to cut the window bars on a Sunday night without anyone knowing what we did. . . . The work was hard and difficult, even impossible, as we worked inside a bathroom used by twenty-five mujahidin for ablution [purification before prayer] five times a day, additionally going to the bathroom to relieve “the need.” Moreover, there was a military watchtower not more than 10 meters away from the window, and the soldiers in the tower monitored the windows with searchlights every half hour. There was an additional military watchtower 30 meters in front of the [bath]room overlooking the military police and the clinic, and the intelligence department was below the room where we were detained.¹⁶

As the Israelis began to celebrate their feast at midnight with alcohol and dancing, al-Sarhad states that everything was quiet by 1:30 a.m. when the soldiers had fallen asleep. The first to go out through the window was Salih Ashtaywi, then al-Suri, al-Shaykh Khalil, al-Jamal, al-Saftawi, and Khalid Salih. The six men climbed down to the roof of the kitchen before going through the courtyard in the direction of the intelligence service of the prison and the military police.¹⁷ Then, in the eastern part of the prison complex, the men climbed over the wall where several gum trees had been planted, descending to the ground on the other side. Abu al-Sarhad and ‘Imad Shahada, who stayed behind in prison since their sentences were near completion, then proceeded to conceal and cover up the place where the six escapees used to sleep in order not to raise suspicion. At six in the morning, four hours after they had escaped, the prison authorities discovered the plot.¹⁸

As al-Sarhad remained in prison, we have to approach other sources in order to understand what occurred after their escape. According to the martyr biography of al-Jamal, featuring the unknown Abu Misbah who harbored the group after their escape, the six men spent their first night in one of Gaza’s orange fields:

Muhammad [Sa‘id al-Jamal] made contact with me the morning after, so I drove to the place where they hid. In the evening that day they asked me to help them to get to the house of the martyr commander ‘Abdallah [Muhammad Mahmud] al-Saba’. So I brought another car, a Fiat, and I asked the brother who accompanied us to drive in front of us and signal if he saw any danger or military checkpoints by blinking the back lights of the car. If that happened, I would drive into a side street until he returned. We did so until we arrived at the house of the martyr al-Saba’, where the mujahidin stayed for a couple of days.¹⁹

There are reasons to believe that “the brother” who accompanied them and drove in front was Ahmad ‘Umar Halis, as his martyr biography states that he participated in harboring the group after their escape; worked to provide them with weapons; and contributed “to secure the roads and places of movement” of the group.²⁰ After hiding in the house of al-Saba’

for a couple of days, they managed to establish their base in an apartment on the third floor of the al-Dahduh building in Gaza City.²¹

According to McDowall, one of the armed campaigns that PIJ carried out was the assassination in September 1986 of a captain in the Israeli army, Ron Tal, whom a PIJ member shot in his car in the main street of Gaza.²² The martyr biographies of al-Suri, al-Jamal, and al-Shaykh Khalil (all published after 2010) show that al-Suri's group was indeed responsible. It seems, however, that the attack was improvised. According to the martyr biography of al-Jamal, he and al-Shaykh Khalil walked through the streets of Gaza, in Jabalya, when they by accident noticed the car that Tal was sitting in. As they had only brought with them a pistol and six bullets, they made a coin toss to decide who would carry out the attack, which fell to Khalil, who then carefully approached the captain.²³ Khalil was unable to fire at first, however, because the safety catch was on, and a brawl ensued between him and Tal during which four shots accidentally went off and hit Tal in the leg before Khalil shot him once in the head, killing him instantly.²⁴ Khalil and al-Jamal then returned by foot to the al-Dahduh building, where the cell inspected and cleaned their weapons.

In addition to the aforementioned ambush, the cell also attacked an Israeli military jeep and attempted to kidnap an Israeli soldier in order to carry out a prisoner exchange deal. Al-Suri executed the soldier when the latter attempted to escape, however.²⁵ In addition, according to Abu Misbah, al-Suri and his companions trained approximately fifty PIJ cadres in this period in various types of light weapons in the area of al-Sarsuriyya, east of al-Shuja'iyya.²⁶

That said, PIJ did not limit their attacks to Israeli targets in this period, and the movement writes that simultaneously with the operations of al-Suri's cell, "another group of PIJ worked on liquidating the collaborators and traitors."²⁷ Khalid al-Ju'aydi, for example, stabbed the alleged collaborator Ahmad Ibrahim 'Abd al-Salam Ibrahim (forty-four years old) to death on May 3, 1986, at the Firas Market close to the al-'Umari Mosque in Gaza, according to the movement's attack statistics.²⁸ In addition, the PIJ militant Isma'il al-Sandawi opened fire on an alleged collaborator in Gaza, November 29, 1986, who was injured but managed to escape.²⁹

Al-Suri and his companions would run out of luck at some point as they soon had the Israeli occupation authorities at their heels. On October 2, 1987, Israeli soldiers killed al-Suri. Four days later, on October 6, the remaining members of al-Suri's cell met the same fate. As the PIJ militants left their apartment heavily armed, they drove off in two Peugeot 404s. When they realized that the Israeli police's counterterror unit, YAMAM, was following them, they opened fire. Four of the militants

were killed in the first exchange of fire while the fifth was shot shortly after when he escaped from the car.³⁰

This clash would later be referred to as the “Battle of al-Shuja‘iyya” by PIJ, or as the “peak of jihadi practice [*dhurwat al-‘amal al-jihādī*],”³¹ and it figures prominently in the movement’s mythology. Abu Taha writes that “the operations of this group were a direct cause and introduction that inflamed the Palestinian street and led to the outbreak of the Intifada in December 1987.”³² Abu ‘Imad al-Rifa‘i, former representative of PIJ in Lebanon, puts equal emphasis on this battle as “the *umma* awakened [after the clash] to approach its sons who had been martyred while standing up in order to breathe life into it, and to let their blood enter the revolutionary intifada. . . . Thus, October 6, 1987, was the ignition of the Intifada.”³³

It is certainly an exaggeration to say that the Battle of al-Shuja‘iyya marked the beginning of the Intifada. The popular reaction that followed, however, indicates that a decisive change had occurred in the Occupied Palestinian Territories since al-Shiqaqi and the PIJ nucleus had returned in 1981. As Kimmerling and Migdal describe, young Palestinians felt they had little to lose when they in the 1980s realized the occupation was not to be short-lived; when unemployment hit the Occupied Territories hard; combined with the routine harassment, occasional beatings, and arrests without formal charges.³⁴ Consequently, only a small spark was required to ignite what was to become the First Intifada.

Although this part has been largely descriptive, the preceding events must be analyzed in light of the former secular-nationalist militants joining PIJ. I do not suggest that the recruitment of these militants necessarily conditioned the transformation of PIJ into a militant movement, though presumably it accelerated this development for a movement envisioning itself to be the Islamic forefront for the armed liberation of Palestine. After all, if there was one thing the founders of PIJ had in mind when they returned to the Gaza Strip in 1981, it was to launch an insurgency. According to PIJ, “these arrests [in 1983] were a new turning point in the course of the movement The year that followed [1984] was the year of the actual transition to the stage of armed jihad, which culminated in 1986–1987.”³⁵

The contribution of these militants to the rapid developments of PIJ should not be underestimated. The founding fathers of PIJ were after all young university graduates without any prior experience in executing violence. This, as we recall, reflected their initial recruitment efforts through which many of their first recruits were university students. Thus, when PIJ noted that the arrests of 1983 were a turning point for the movement, we should similarly mind the associated

assessment of the movement: “the mujahidin organized a wide range of detained militants inside the prison, which supplied the movement with cadres with extensive experience.”³⁶ As shown, this “extensive experience” was employed directly not only to engage in armed conflict, but also to train fifty other cadres in the use of arms in al-Sarsuriyya.

The same applies to the first steps to create an active PIJ military apparatus. Ziyad al-Nakhala, for example, the former ALF militant released in the prisoner exchange deal of 1985, was according to his biography tasked by al-Shiqaqi to establish the first military wing of PIJ.³⁷ If so, then he was probably assisted by Muhanna, the former PLA officer turned Islamist in prison, as the martyr biography of the latter describes:

[Muhanna] was released in the prisoner exchange deal in 1985. As soon as he was released, he joined the brothers in completing the establishment and construction of the military wing of PIJ where the martyr was one of the most important leaders in the movement.³⁸

Whether PIJ was successful in formalizing these structures in 1985 is another question. This is where we turn to in the [next section](#) of this chapter.

4.2 The Nature of PIJ’s Violence

Although the secondary literature describes PIJ as a small but cohesive structure consisting of no more than a hundred militants in the mid-1980s, there is not much information on its exact configuration in this period.³⁹ No organogram of its departments exists before PIJ obtained formal organizational structures for both its political and military wings in 1992, as we will see later in this study. In the mid-1980s, PIJ was thus primarily a loose cell network operating without an efficient leadership and streamlined organizational structures, and we will see below that the PIJ militants largely depended on themselves in the absence of an effective leadership.

After the prison escape of al-Suri and his cell, for example, the militants communicated with al-Shiqaqi, who was in the Nafha Prison in the Negev at the time, “who worked to support them with necessary weapons and equipment.”⁴⁰ This seems credible as Hatina notes that al-Shiqaqi was arrested in 1986, “convicted of smuggling arms into the Gaza Strip.”⁴¹ Al-Shami corroborates the communication between al-Shiqaqi and the outside as “[the imprisonment] did not prevent him from communicating with the mass base [*al-qā’ida al-jamāhīriyya*]. So he wrote the statements

and the articles and smuggled them out from the prison to be published and distributed to the people.”⁴²

Despite this communication between the PIJ militants and al-Shiqaqi, little indicates that the PIJ leadership was capable of providing its militants with weapons. As al-Shami states, “in the beginning, the [military] possibilities were limited and nonexistent.”⁴³ Instead, if the members wanted to carry out military operations, they had to acquire the means themselves. For the PIJ militants al-Suri, Bashir al-Dabash, and Ra’id Abu Fanuna, one source for obtaining such means was to sell their wives’ jewelry. Al-Suri did so to afford a Kalashnikov, and al-Dabash to “spend on the movement’s activities, which was in financial straits at the time.”⁴⁴ Abu Fanuna also sold his own belongings, in addition to his wife’s jewelry, in order to purchase weapons and equipment for “the mujahidin.”⁴⁵ In addition, Abu Jalala states:

There were some weapons, and some caches in the stores, so I attempted to collect money when I worked in the eye hospital and succeeded. Thus, I brought 8,000 dinars with me. I searched for weapons and grenades with my own money, and by God’s will, the group that I wanted to buy weapons from had been arrested.⁴⁶

Another source for acquiring weapons, at least explosives, was to manufacture them, which could prove fatal as in the case of Hassan Brahma, the engineer of the West Bank cell *‘ushshāq al-shahāda* (lovers of martyrdom). Without any indication that Brahma had education in the field, he was assigned the task of manufacturing improvised explosive devices (IEDs) for the cell. Although he succeeded in producing some of them, he was killed in his village of Anza in 1992 when the explosives detonated prematurely.⁴⁷

Further, military operations also seem to have played a role as the PIJ cadres stole weapons from the Israeli army.⁴⁸ The martyr biography of Iyad Hardan corroborates this. A member of the *‘ushshāq al-shahada* cell in the West Bank, as well, Hardan “decided to carry out his first operation in the settlement of Mevo Dotan in the winter of 1991. He managed to infiltrate [the settlement] despite the strict security measures and he managed to seize eleven Uzis. He went happily to the village of Anza in order to give a piece to ‘Issam.”⁴⁹ Indeed, in several pictures of ‘Issam Brahma – while he was on the run from Israeli occupation forces in the early 1990s – he poses with an Uzi.⁵⁰

Finally, sources do describe PIJ being helped by “some mujahidin” with money and weapons.⁵¹ It is not quite clear who these “mujahidin” were, and it could be a reference to several independent groups, families, and clans. It seems, however, that the Gazan al-Dahduh clan played a role

in the financial and logistical backing of PIJ in the beginning. Being one of the prominent and rich clans in the Gaza Strip – working in various professions, the most important of which are trade and agriculture – a substantial number of the clan had joined PIJ since its inception in 1981. The most important of them was Khalid al-Dahduh (Abu al-Walid), who joined PIJ after meeting al-Shiqaqi. He became one of the leaders of the al-Quds Brigades (Sarāyā al-Quds) and the head of its weapons manufacturing unit and technical unit.⁵² Additionally, Fakhri, Ayman, Muhammad, Hamdan, Mahdi, Kamil, Karim, Sha‘ban, and Sulayman al-Dahduh all died in the service of PIJ over the years.⁵³ According to Majid Abu Salama, an activist from Rafah, the al-Dahduh clan is perceived as synonymous with PIJ in the Gaza Strip.⁵⁴

According to the martyr biography of Khalid al-Dahduh: “The family of al-Dahduh has distinguished itself over the past years in its qualitative role in confronting the Zionist occupation. Its economic condition and its work in commerce and agriculture helped to shelter many of the mujahidin and provide them with military equipment.”⁵⁵ This may explain how al-Suri, who sold his wife’s jewelry to afford a Kalashnikov, could suddenly travel to Sinai in order to buy weapons for the soldiers in PIJ – although it is not possible to verify whether the money came from the al-Dahduh clan. Another possibility is that the money came from ‘Abdallah al-Saba’, who harbored the cell of al-Suri the first days after its escape from prison, as his martyr biography states that the Israeli occupation authorities arrested him in 1987 on charges of providing al-Suri’s group with aid and weapons.⁵⁶

Al-Hasani states that most weapons were “available proper and well” in the 1980s, and that “we had hand grenades (Israeli and Russian), some light weapons and pistols, and we brought this combat equipment from the Sinai and from inside the entity [Israel].”⁵⁷ Yet, based on the preceding accounts, he is presumably describing the situation in the Gaza Strip in general, and not that in PIJ. The combat equipment from Sinai, for example, was in all likelihood financed either by the militants themselves or through the financial assistance of private Gazan benefactors such as the al-Dahduh clan. The weapons from “inside the entity” may have equally been bought by their own financial means, or have been stolen through military operations as indicated by Hardan’s account.⁵⁸

I do not suggest that there was no organizational hierarchy in PIJ. The fact that the militants approached al-Shiqaqi in prison in the mid-1980s for logistical assistance implies a chain of command, although it appears to have been highly informal and lacking any effective organizational structures. Abu Amir also notes, for example, that the slogans of PIJ in this period appeared to be the product of local and individual initiatives

without any central planning and coordination on a leadership level.⁵⁹ PIJ in the mid-1980s thus appears as a loosely connected, non-statist cell structure as its militants and activists had to rely on themselves; acquire means of violence with their own money and savings; and with a leadership largely incapable of providing the former with financial funding, logistical backing, training, or safe houses.

This is exemplified by the PIJ member Khalid al-Ju'aydi, who stabbed four Israelis before he was arrested in 1986. As he recalled the situation in PIJ in this period: "We did not have it easy in that period, and we did not have money. Indeed, we put aside our own personal savings and spent them on those operations."⁶⁰ Al-Ju'aydi thus bragged that his stabbing operations had only cost three Israeli shekels – one and a half for the knife, and one and a half for the bus ticket from Rafah to Gaza City.⁶¹ Indeed, it was only when he failed to procure weapons with the 8,000 dinars that the aforementioned Abu Jalala carried out a stabbing operation in 1991 – thus illustrating how many PIJ members had to rely on themselves if they wanted to participate in the armed struggle.

The types of attacks PIJ carried out in the mid-1980s reflect the non-statist nature of PIJ and the lack of clear organizational structures to assist the armed practices of its members. In fact, there was no clear pattern in the violence of the movement from 1986 to 1993, and PIJ did not adhere to one specific means or tactic in its struggle against the Israeli occupation. While shootings were carried out in one specific year, for example, they could be absent in the next. The same applies to hand grenades, which were most prevalent in 1986, while absent in 1987. The same applies to the West Bank cell *'ushshāq al-shahāda*, established by 'Issam Brahma in Jenin in 1990, which mainly focused on ambushes on Israeli settlers, settlements, and soldiers, in addition to planting IEDs. In their initial phase, PIJ thus seems to have been in the same situation as Hamas was in the late 1980s, as the latter exercised an opportunistic violence determined by what was available to the movement.⁶² Mishal and Sela's description of Hamas in this period is thus conspicuously similar to that of PIJ: "At this stage, Hamas still lacked a solid operational infrastructure and gave priority to acquiring arms, mobilizing cadres, and training its forces in the use of arms and explosives."⁶³

As we will return to the organizational structures of PIJ in [Chapter 5](#), and how they developed, it suffices for now to note that although opportunistic, PIJ's violence nonetheless attracted the attention and admiration of the younger generations in the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood. This internal pressure within the Muslim Brotherhood, mainly exercised by the younger generation of Brethren, would drastically alter the dynamic

between it and PIJ for the foreseeable future as the former transformed into Hamas with the eruption of the First Intifada.

4.3 **PIJ and Hamas: From Enmity to Sibling Rivalry**

The initial relationship between PIJ and the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood was far from cordial. In fact, both al-Shiqaqi and ‘Awda were verbally and physically assaulted, and mosques affiliated with the Brotherhood were closed to them when they proposed that the Palestinian Islamic movement should engage in armed struggle against the Israeli occupation. Yet, Sheikh Yassin and the rest of the Muslim Brotherhood were caught in a difficult position once other Palestinian Islamic groups began attacking Israeli targets. As Tamimi states, the younger Brotherhood members were electrified by the operations of other Palestinian Islamists, voicing the persistent question of why they were not doing the same, and Khaled Hroub suggests that PIJ became “a catalyst” in the Brotherhood’s internal transformation into Hamas in 1987.⁶⁴

When Hamas entered the armed struggle by the end of the 1980s, we should assume that its relationship with PIJ would improve rapidly if the main contradiction between them in the early 1980s was an issue of violence against occupation. While I argue that this was the case, we will nevertheless see that rivalry persisted between the two Palestinian Islamic movements. While both movements entertained the idea of a united Palestinian Islamic movement in the 1990s, this never happened. It is thus worth assessing the actual meaning of the unity being sought, and we will see that it is unlikely the two movements ever envisioned the integration of ranks and organizational structures.

As the leadership of the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood decided to transform its organization into a resistance movement, officially declaring itself Hamas in its first communiqué on December 14, 1987, al-Shiqaqi was asked numerous times if there would be a future merger between the two Palestinian Islamic movements. Similarly, in an interview in 1989, al-Shiqaqi was asked about the differences between PIJ and Hamas, to which he noted that they had become smaller and smaller with the eruption of the First Intifada.⁶⁵ When Hamas also began employing violence in 1989, we see not only the end of the dispute about armed resistance, but also the commencement of more cordial relations. One example is the first joint statement of PIJ and Hamas, which was issued as early as in December 1989, calling for a general strike in commemoration of UN Resolution 181 and the partitioning of Palestine.⁶⁶

The PLO's proposals for peaceful negotiations with Israel in this period, and the prospects for a two-state solution, undoubtedly contributed to the improving relations and coordination between the two Islamic movements. The PIJ magazine *al-Mujahid*, for example, noted that al-Shiqaqi had met a number of Hamas leaders in exile already in September 1989 to discuss the political developments.⁶⁷ Further contacts were established between Hamas representatives and PIJ leaders one year later, in 1990, discussing the possibilities for a joint program in order to strengthen the Islamic camp in their confrontation with the PLO.⁶⁸ Illustrating the trend, when PIJ called on Hamas on May 18, 1990, to establish a unified Islamic leadership in order to continue the Intifada, its focus was indeed the commencement of negotiations:

We must read our history and the history of the world consciously [*bi-wa'y*], and know how to read the international policy and trends in order to see the danger that threatens us all, our efforts, and not just our culture. . . . Therefore, we reiterate the call for unity, the call for the Islamic leadership and the Islamic front, and we must confirm our refusal to sit on the pulpit of compromise [*minbar al-musāwama*], whatever the justifications, and to confirm our choice: The battle trench that gathers all the mujahidin and all of those who march on the path of the thorn until the liberation of all the homeland's soil.⁶⁹

Besides, PIJ employed the opportunity to refer to previous (unsuccessful) efforts to unite with Hamas:

In its last statement distributed in the occupied homeland on May 3, 1990, PIJ called for "the formation of a unified Islamic leadership capable of the continuous leadership of our masses in accordance with the divine and historical demand." In fact, this call for unity and for the formation of an Islamic leadership was not the first. Since the first moment of the establishment of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) and its entry into the activities of the Intifada, the Islamic Jihad movement – which was then occupying the headlines, alleys, and streets – went to the brothers in Hamas calling for a unified Islamic leadership and for a broad Islamic front including all believers in the continuation of jihad and struggle [*niḍāl*] until the liberation of the entire homeland.

Despite the failure of this attempt for reasons beyond our control, our invitation to meet, cooperate, and [reach] unity has continued unabatedly. The question of unity has always been a very important strategic issue for us since our movement saw the light in the early 1980s. In unity, we saw a sacred duty that added to our realization that the Islamic movement will achieve victory only through Islamic unity, which should not remain just a slogan.⁷⁰

These calls were rapidly translated into action. On July 1, 1991, PIJ and Hamas carried out a joint military operation against the Israeli occupation.⁷¹ Then, on July 19, 1991, PIJ and Hamas presented a coalition list for "the largest Palestinian association in the Gaza Strip," in which they allegedly

won seven out of nine seats (I have not succeeded in finding the name of this particular association or confirming the claim).⁷² As PIJ self-assuredly noted at the time, “This picture clearly reflects the influence of the Islamic tide on the Palestinian street and the influence of both PIJ and Hamas, particularly if the effort is united against the diminishing influence of the PLO.”⁷³ Last, in 1992, PIJ and Hamas signed the “Charter of Brotherhood and Cooperation,” which according to Anwar Abu Taha ended the long-lasting dispute between the two Palestinian Islamic movements:

Hamas’s involvement in the intifada and its entry into the national struggle narrowed the scope of the dispute, but the relationship on the ground remained tense and passed through moments of bitter conflict until the signing of the “Charter of Brotherhood and Cooperation” in 1992. It stipulated their unity and adherence to the Islamic principles toward Palestine, the illegality of violence or murder in resolving disputes or ending disputes, and the establishment of coordination committees between the two movements.⁷⁴

The years following 1992 can, then, be described as cordial, and we see a tendency of increased support and cooperation between the two in this period as “both groups shared technical knowledge and provided mutual assistance [to each other].”⁷⁵ PIJ even publicly praised a Hamas operation while referring to the fighters of the latter as “the heroes of ‘Izz al-Din al-Qassam.”⁷⁶ Similarly, al-Shiqaqi noted in 1990:

We will always reach out our hands to our brothers in Hamas for cooperation, coordination, and unity. Indeed, I have seen the Intifada, a revolution that truly merges our two positions, and we hope that it will be reflected in one unified Islamic position that will heal the chests of the faithful and infuriate the enemies of idolaters and infidels.⁷⁷

Despite the establishment of a *modus vivendi* between Hamas and PIJ, when it came to executing the decisive steps to reach formal unity, nothing happened. In 1993, for example, al-Shiqaqi stated that the Intifada had brought Hamas and PIJ closer toward unity, and that they were developing a joint work program.⁷⁸ Yet, he underscored the need for patience, saying, “We and Hamas have been allies for more than a year, but this alliance has gone laxly and slowly for both objective and subjective reasons, in addition to the difficult conditions which are experienced by everyone.”⁷⁹ Or, as Anwar Abu Taha wrote:

Despite some statements made by [PIJ and Hamas] about their good relations, their readiness for unity, rapprochement, and joint action, and despite the increase of coordination between them on the level of union elections in universities and some professional unions, the relations will remain limited to partisan or national interests, but not in ideological conviction.⁸⁰

We do not know with certainty why unity between Hamas and PIJ failed in the early 1990s. Yet, we may point to some conceivable causes. First, despite Hamas's transformation into a resistance movement, its strategy on the ground was still distinct from that of PIJ, and the two movements derived their policies from two qualitatively different ideological and political traditions. Hamas, as Kristianasen notes, inherited the "policy of stages" from the Muslim Brotherhood, which offered a greater degree of pragmatism than PIJ.⁸¹ Mishal and Sela equally emphasize this pragmatic maneuverability as something inherent in Hamas.⁸² As Milton-Edwards remarks, Hamas has had an ideological resistance to particular frameworks of governance, but this never stopped Hamas from developing a *modus operandi* for participation in such systems when necessary.⁸³ Consequently, although formally boycotting the general elections of 1996, Hamas only did so indirectly while encouraging Islamists to run as independents. Meanwhile, it called on its own followers to vote for Islamic candidates, and even to vote for Fatah candidates who were known for their good relations with the Islamic opposition.⁸⁴ As Mishal and Sela write, Hamas chose "participation through unofficial presence" in the 1990s.⁸⁵

Anwar Abu Taha thus aptly described the differences between PIJ and Hamas in an interview with this author: "I am being brief, but the answer is that Hamas is a political movement that deals with the military field, while PIJ is a military movement that deals with the political field."⁸⁶ Similarly, in a discussion with a PIJ member in Burj al-Barajneh, Beirut, he noted that he could never join Hamas as long as Hamas participated in elections under occupation.⁸⁷ Another PIJ member noted that he did not join Hamas because they accepted a two-state solution and negotiations with Israel.⁸⁸ Further, he adamantly rejected Hamas's electoral participation and its attempts to control the state ("*tasayţar al-dawla*"), not simply because it legitimized a corrupt system, but because it endangered the peace in the Palestinian arena as well.⁸⁹ The only difference between Hamas and Fatah was according to the PIJ member that the former was Islamic while the latter was secular, and he deemed Hamas to constitute a divisive force in Palestinian politics, potentially leading the Palestinian arena to strife (*fitna*).⁹⁰

Presumably, competition did not end, although relations improved. Pearlman notes that the violence of both Hamas and PIJ in the 1990s was the result of a Palestinian internal contestation through which the two Islamic groups perceived the Oslo Agreement to be a threat to their existence.⁹¹ Yet, as noted, it is not unlikely that Hamas commenced using violence partly because it feared being ousted by PIJ in the mid-1980s, whose attacks attracted admiration from the younger generation

of Brotherhood activists.⁹² There are few reasons to believe that the competition between the two Islamic movements was concluded once Hamas materialized, but instead carried a new semantic layer by violently targeting the PLO and Oslo as proxy in what constituted an Islamic internal contestation. As Roy hypothesized in 1991:

[W]hile Hamas's strength and importance in Gaza has consistently been studied in relation to its secular-nationalist counterparts, this common analytic dichotomy might not be as relevant in the future as the relationship between Hamas and the Islamic Jihad. Indeed, the recent spate of retaliatory violence against Israeli civilians by Hamas supporters – if in fact Hamas is responsible – may represent not only an attempt to increase popular support for the organization in its leadership struggle with the nationalist factions, but a response to the growing influence of the more militant and violent [Islamic] Jihad.⁹³

The sincerity of the calls for unity may thus be questioned, those proposed both by Hamas and by PIJ. We may recall that the PIJ cadres returning from Egypt were alienated by the arrogance of the Palestinian Brotherhood, which at best treated the nucleus as a “little brother.” As Hatina describes it, this arrogance did not end with the transformation into Hamas. Instead, Hamas continued to emphasize “its distinctiveness as a deep-rooted Islamic movement in Palestinian society” in the 1990s, claiming that only it could bring about the complete liberation of Palestine.⁹⁴ Consequently, Hatina concludes that this elitist perception of Hamas lay at the center of its refusal to move beyond limited local cooperation and coordination with PIJ.⁹⁵ Thus, while PIJ considered Hamas a latecomer who was harvesting the fruit of PIJ's military action in the Intifada and before, Hamas approached PIJ as a splinter group that should be reunited with its mother organization.⁹⁶

The same could, then, be said about PIJ, and Hatina argues that the call for unity did not necessarily preclude the merging of organizational structures, or discarding a particular ideological line.⁹⁷ Instead, unity was the mutual understanding that it was necessary to join arms together against the Israeli occupation side by side. This is reflected in PIJ sources as al-Hajj Muhammad noted that PIJ and Hamas were “two branches on the same tree,” which had to exist side by side in order to “double the efforts, correct the deviations from the track, and to observe aberrations and failures.”⁹⁸ Shallah confirmed the perceived importance of two competing, yet cordial Islamic armed movements in the Palestinian struggle as well, because “unity is good, but plurality and diversity is sometimes required in order to fight and confuse the enemy. Multiple incarnations, in spite of all its disadvantages, are useful to expand and absorb the energy of our people.”⁹⁹

Last, how Palestinian Islamic unity was to be implemented in practice was a cause for dispute. As Hroub notes, for Hamas, unity meant the complete absorption of PIJ into the ranks of the former with PIJ presumably ceasing to exist. PIJ, on the other hand, called for increased coordination leading to a shared Islamic front against occupation.¹⁰⁰ As we will see later in this study, opportunistic elements may cause dissent when they perceive promotions to be blocked, and it is unlikely that al-Shiqaqi and the rest of the PIJ leadership identified any opportunity for rising to the top of a unified Palestinian Islamist movement. It is thus possible that the unification efforts broke down because there were few incentives for PIJ leaders returning to trivial roles in an organization that essentially would end up as an armed Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood with slight adjustments.

To summarize, once Hamas was established in 1987 and engaged in armed struggle from 1989, more cordial relations between it and PIJ commenced. Although Hamas and PIJ did not reach formal unity of organizational structures, we see that the two movements rapidly engaged in joint military operations, presented coalition lists in union and association elections, shared technical knowledge and mutual assistance, and publicly praised each other. This relationship did face difficulties, however, and Hroub states that “in practice aloofness characterized the political relationship between the two movements,” which soon deteriorated into clashes and fistfights anew.¹⁰¹ As we will see later in this study, Hamas’s perception of itself as the main Islamic representative in the Palestinian arena made it wary of PIJ overstepping its role, or infringing on what Hamas perceived to be its territory. Tensions would necessarily surface.

4.4 Conclusion

It is an exaggeration to state that the secular-nationalist militants who joined PIJ in the mid-1980s were a precondition for transforming the movement into an armed one. Yet, it seems clear that they nonetheless accelerated this development. Once released from prison, they had the experience to quickly return to the armed arena and commence new operations against the occupation under the banner of PIJ. They additionally trained a number of PIJ cadres in the use of arms. As we recall, PIJ had mostly recruited students in the early 1980s, and little indicates any of them had any experience in the execution of violence. The secular-nationalist militants were thus essential for PIJ in the mid-1980s.

Little indicates that PIJ was able to create formalized organizational structures, however, and PIJ was throughout the 1980s a loose network of

military cells consisting of a few hundred members. To illustrate, the accounts and martyr biographies of militants active in this period suggest that if one wanted to be a militant in PIJ, one had to procure the weapons oneself. This is reflected in the types of PIJ operations, which were mostly opportunistic violence determined by what was available to the militants of the movement.

I suggested earlier in this study that armed struggle was the demarcation line between the PIJ nucleus and the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood. This is substantiated by the fact that once Hamas was founded and engaged in violence against the occupation, the relationship between it and PIJ rapidly improved. Yet, the contradictions persisted, and from enmity grew sibling rivalry as Hamas still perceived itself to be the main Islamic actor in the Palestinian arena.

Notwithstanding, the armed operations posed a considerable headache for the occupation authorities, one added by the growing Palestinian protests that culminated with the eruption of the First Intifada in 1987. As PIJ recruited new militants from the very institutions supposed to contain them, the prisons, Israeli authorities decided to deport the PIJ leadership to Lebanon. This is where we turn to next.

Part II

From the First Intifada to the Oslo
Agreement (1988–2000)

5 Deportation, Patronage, and Organizational Reform

After twenty years of Israeli occupation and deprivation, the First Intifada erupted in 1987, first flaring up in Jabalya in northern Gaza before spreading to the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territories. While the PLO became increasingly irrelevant as a new Palestinian leadership in the Occupied Territories added to its impotence, Israel struggled to cope with the escalating demonstrations, which spread like wildfire from camp to camp, village to village, and city to city. Both Israel and the PLO witnessed anxiously as they lost control of the situation. Not only was it a prelude to Hamas; the uprising also prompted the Oslo Agreement in response.

Fathi al-Shiqaqi did not experience the uprising firsthand. He was still in prison. To make matters worse, Israeli authorities deported al-Shiqaqi to Lebanon in August 1988. By 1992, a number of PIJ members and leaders had been deported in the same manner. As deportations have been described as an Israeli strategy to “systematically wipe out” the indigenous Palestinian Arab leadership in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, and to physically eliminate leaders able to rally resistance,¹ how did the deportations and exile affect PIJ? How did the movement react and subsequently adapt to the new situation?

This chapter consists of three sections. First, I analyze how the deportation of al-Shiqaqi and the other PIJ leaders enabled the organization to travel more freely and, most notably, to broker an alliance with Iran. I then proceed to analyze how the deportation restrained PIJ, and how PIJ reformed its organizational structures as a response. Last, I discuss the causes of PIJ’s commencing decline in the early 1990s.

5.1 New Possibilities of Exile: Alliance Building and Training Camps

Fathi al-Shiqaqi had been held in the Israeli Nafha Prison for a year when the First Intifada broke out in 1987. A high-security prison for Palestinian political and community leaders, Nafha has been described as the equivalent of South Africa’s Robben Island.² Being incarcerated “in the middle

of nowhere” and surrounded only by the Negev desert, he was not fully isolated, however.³ As we recall, the militants in PIJ were able to communicate with him about operations and logistics, and al-Shiqaqi also received visits in prison by his wife, Fathiyya, whom he had finally married on January 26, 1985, after a four-year engagement. Through the visits in Nafha, Fathiyya helped her husband with food, clothing, expenses, and, perhaps most importantly, books.⁴

On August 17, 1988, the Israeli authorities decided to deport al-Shiqaqi to Lebanon. He was not the first in PIJ to suffer that fate. ‘Abd al-‘Aziz ‘Awda, for example, had been deported to Lebanon almost one year prior, on November 17, 1987, which should be seen in the context of the erupting Intifada.⁵ That is, while al-Shiqaqi led a small, armed group that the Israeli authorities presumably believed they could control at this point, ‘Awda stood in the pulpit of the mosques and mobilized Palestinians to go out in demonstrations and protests that grew larger by the day. While the following PIJ account from 1989 is hagiographic, it is nevertheless illustrative for this period:

Before and after the al-Shuja‘iyya operation [of al-Suri’s cell in 1987], this sheikh [‘Abd al-‘Aziz ‘Awda] called on the masses to advance, revolt, and carry out a revolution against the occupier. The occupation authorities [thus] considered the Islamic armed action and popular rebellion a consequence of his teachings and his calls for jihad. As soon as the news of the sheikh’s deportation spread to the masses, they announced their rejection of the decision, and the clash spread to the West Bank. In the al-Qassam Mosque on the pulpit of the sheikh, a masked mujahid stood, holding a sermon of historical jihad to the crowd who came in large numbers from everywhere to the al-Qassam Mosque.⁶

Although we know little about the immediate days and weeks following al-Shiqaqi’s deportation, he spent the first year with ‘Awda in Beirut, where they soon were joined by other deported PIJ cadres and leaders such as Ziyad al-Nakhala, Ahmad Muhanna, and Sayyid Hussein Baraka. We may recall that al-Nakhala – the future secretary-general of PIJ – joined the movement in Israeli prison, while Muhanna was the former PLA officer who presumably assisted al-Nakhala in cofounding the military wing of PIJ in 1985. Baraka, on the other hand, born in 1956 in Khan Yunis, had studied in Egypt in the 1970s where he met the other Palestinian students who founded the PIJ nucleus. Author of PIJ’s first communiqué in 1987 and referred to by ‘Awda as one of the most important leaders of PIJ in the 1980s, Baraka was imprisoned several times during the First Intifada before he was deported to Lebanon in 1989.⁷

It is clear that al-Shiqaqi’s deportation affected him personally and was a great source of pain. The day after the deportation, on August 18, 1988,

al-Shiqaqi sent a heartfelt letter through the Red Cross to Muhammad al-Hasani, who at the time was still in Israeli prison:

Dear brother, I arrived yesterday. I miss you all. I miss the homeland. I miss your shouting [*surākhkum*]. The sadness of separation captures the heart. But hidden under my skin and distributed in my veins is this dear, rare, and strange homeland. . . . Send my best wishes to everyone.⁸

Al-Shiqaqi did not resign from political work and the responsibilities of PIJ, however, and he was determined to make the best of it although exile was not favorable. Yet, while PIJ was a natural part of the social and political fabric in the Gaza Strip, with access to its mosques, universities, and associations, the PIJ deportees hardly knew anyone in Lebanon. The necessity of reaching out to a new Palestinian population, with which the PIJ leaders had no prior experience, reflected the activities in which they engaged. While the PIJ leadership had focused on mass mobilization and armed struggle in Gaza, essentially ignoring social welfare, the deported leaders began to establish social, humanitarian, and media institutions in the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, in addition to sports clubs and medical clinics.⁹ From the onset, the structure of PIJ thus developed a highly statist character in the diaspora, contrary to that in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, which we recall was a loosely structured cell network caused by PIJ's focus on immediate armed action.

While al-Shiqaqi and 'Awda established themselves in southern Beirut in their first year of exile, the rest – such as Baraka, Muhanna, and al-Nakhala – found residence in the largest Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon, Ain al-Hilweh, southeast of Sidon. There they began to issue the magazine *al-Mujahid*.¹⁰ In addition, the diaspora leadership traveled extensively within Lebanon, visiting the different Palestinian refugee camps to spread the call of PIJ. A case in point is Abu Samir Musa, who met al-Shiqaqi, al-Nakhala, and Muhanna when they visited his refugee camp, Rashidieh, south of Tyre, in late 1988. Describing one of his meetings with the PIJ leadership in Rashidieh, Abu Samir recalls,

Ahmad Muhanna and Abu Tariq, Ziyad al-Nakhala, visited here. This was in the end of 1988, and they visited us in the Iman Mosque. They visited us and they were here for a period and we got acquainted with them. After prayer, both of them held a speech and talked about and explained the project of PIJ, and tried to induce the idea and project of PIJ [in the camp]. . . . So Ahmad Muhanna and the brother Abu Tariq, Ziyad al-Nakhala, came and introduced the idea in Rashidieh, and we took this idea. We sat together with them and we agreed between us on establishing a collaborative phase, and this visit was the starting point of Abu Samir's transformation.¹¹

This was not merely the beginning of Abu Samir's transformation, but also the first step of establishing PIJ in southern Lebanon, a branch of which Abu Samir became leader, and a position he holds at the time of this writing.

Al-Shiqaqi thus exploited the opportunities that the diaspora provided, most importantly the ability to travel freely. Traveling frequently between Damascus and Tehran between late 1988 and 1995, al-Shiqaqi also went to Libya and to Sudan, among other places, to participate in several conferences and meetings.¹² In Libya, during an Islamic conference in 1990, he met the Sudanese Islamic political leader Hassan al-Turabi and the Tunisian Islamic intellectual Rachid Ghannouchi.¹³ He also met 'Abdallah Anas, the son-in-law of 'Abdallah 'Azzam, during an Islamic conference in Sudan in 1994, and became acquainted with the Egyptian Islamic political analyst Fahmi Huwaydi in Lebanon.¹⁴ The same was the case for 'Awda, who once in exile traveled to the United Arab Emirates, Iran, and even Chicago, Illinois, in the United States.¹⁵ Furthermore, if al-Shiqaqi was unable to meet his brethren-in-faith in person at meetings or conferences, then he would receive them in his office in al-Yarmouk after PIJ established its headquarters in Damascus, Syria – with political offices in Tehran, Beirut, Amman, and Khartoum.¹⁶ On December 12, 1991, for example, al-Shiqaqi received a delegation from the Islamic Consultative Assembly (the Iranian parliament).¹⁷

Al-Shiqaqi also communicated by mail or by phone with sympathizers, benefactors, and those simply interested in PIJ. Illustrating his elaborate network, he even communicated with the Mujahidin in Afghanistan in the early 1990s (and perhaps before that), as an interview with him was featured in the magazine *al-Mujahidun* – published in Afghanistan from the mid-1980s until the mid-1990s by the political party of Burhanuddin Rabbani, Jamiat-e-Islami.¹⁸ In the interview, al-Shiqaqi spoke about the latest developments of the First Intifada and the "relationship between the jihadist intifada in Palestine and the Islamic jihad in Afghanistan."¹⁹

As has only been implied so far, the portrait in development of al-Shiqaqi is that of a man who seldom rested, and who devoted his life to political work. Life in exile must then have been lonely for Fathiyya, who described life in al-Yarmouk:

The work of the doctor [al-Shiqaqi] with his brothers was continuous day and night, and, in times of little rest, he received papers and special letters, and answered the phone. After approximately one year, we moved our home from the office [where we lived], and our new home consisted of two apartments, one for guests and the other one private. The doctor was sometimes using the guest-house for times of rest and sleep so that no one would bother him, and in order to work far from crying and disturbing children. I used to buy the necessities for the

home and go to the market because the doctor had no time and because of his numerous travels. He was even abroad when two of his children were born. We were in a strange place, without family or relatives, although all of the brothers and friends were serving as family for us.²⁰

Al-Shiqaqi and 'Awda also attended several meetings at the Iranian embassy and with the leaders of Hezbollah.²¹ These meetings were among al-Shiqaqi's most important endeavors as they provided new options for PIJ, options perhaps only made possible by exile. As Hatina writes:

With the move to Lebanon and Syria, the ideological link of the Islamic Jihad to Iran as a revolutionary model was translated into a close political and organizational tie as well. This was manifested by logistic support received through the Iranian Embassy in Beirut and through Hizballah for the purpose of renewing armed anti-Israel activity, including attacks launched from the Lebanese border.²²

In addition to the logistical support, the exile and subsequent alliances provided the possibility for PIJ militants to participate in the training camps of Hezbollah in Lebanon. For example, according to the Israeli Security Agency (Shin Bet), Hassan al-Khawaja, the brother of Qassam's leader Mahmud al-Khawaja, was sent to Lebanon in 1991 by the PIJ leadership in Damascus during his studies in Algeria. He trained there in a Hezbollah camp in the use of automatic guns (M16s and Kalashnikovs), pistols, rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs), and Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs). It implies that the coordination with Hezbollah and the use of its training camps began no later than three years after the deportation.²³

Two martyr biographies underscore this aspect of exile with new allies, logistical aid, and training camps. The first is that of Mahmud Saqr al-Zatma, the main engineer and bomb maker in PIJ's military wing in the 1990s, the Islamic Mujahid Forces (Qassam). The second is Nahid Katkat, one of PIJ's military commanders in the Gaza Strip throughout the 1990s and in the Second Intifada. According to several martyr biographies of al-Zatma, he was born in the Gaza Strip in 1956. Having met al-Shiqaqi in the very beginning of PIJ's history and joining the PIJ nucleus in 1980,²⁴ al-Zatma then traveled to Ayn Shams University in Egypt to study electrical engineering. Al-Shiqaqi "had the role of choosing university and specialization" for al-Zatma. He later moved on to work in Algeria, where he met his wife who moved back to the Gaza Strip with him.²⁵ His degree in electrical engineering qualified al-Zatma to specialize in the production of explosive devices, and he received training in Algeria, Syria, and Lebanon.²⁶

After he moved back to the Gaza Strip, al-Zatma became the “chief engineer” of Qassam, where he prepared IEDs and explosive belts for the suicide bombers and provided them with advice and training before they executed their operations. Additionally, he trained several cadres in Qassam in the art of manufacturing explosives, although only Ayman al-Razayna and ‘Ammar al-A‘raj are explicitly mentioned. This is confirmed by the martyr biography of al-A‘raj, which states that he attained the role of engineer in Qassam and subsequently prepared all of the IEDs for the military operations that were carried out from Beit Lid and Kfar Darom to the Netzarim junction until his death in 1996.²⁷

Although we know far less about Katkat, his martyr biography nevertheless states that he worked in Libya for a longer period as a teacher in the 1980s. More importantly, he then “returned to his homeland [Palestine] after receiving sufficient training” and soon joined Qassam.²⁸ According to the same martyr biography, “Abu Muhammad [Katkat] was known for his vast experience and skill in firing RPGs after receiving several courses in the field abroad, and his prominent jihadist role in mortars and RPGs.”²⁹

There is no information in the martyr biographies on who or what organization trained al-Zatma and Katkat in North Africa. However, according to Anwar Abu Taha, the PIJ militants received training in the PLO bases in Algeria and Libya in the 1980s, and he notes that several others in PIJ received training in Yemen as well in this period: “There was some training in PLO camps, which were present in Algeria, Libya, and Yemen after the PLO left Lebanon. There were military leaders everywhere, so we invested in anyone who could train anywhere.”³⁰ Yasir Salih corroborates this statement and noted that “[Algeria] was an influential arena for PIJ [in the early 1980s],” as many of its members worked or studied there at the time.³¹ Gaza, North Africa, and Yemen thus seem to have played a greater role for the training of PIJ cadres in the field of explosives and arms during the 1980s. The location of the training camps then shifted as the exile of al-Shiqaqi and the PIJ leadership made the alliances with Hezbollah and Iran possible, and these camps were subsequently organized more professionally and consistently.

Precisely when this shift took place is unclear, but, as noted, the training of Hassan al-Khawaja occurred no later than 1991. By 1993, al-Shiqaqi stated in an interview with *Newsday* that “Iran gives us money and supports us, then we supply the money and arms to the occupied territories and support the families of our people. Just about all of it goes there because that’s where most of our organization is.”³² That the training of PIJ militants in Lebanon began no later than 1991 is corroborated by other sources. For example, Israeli authorities imprisoned the PIJ

member Fadi Muhammad al-Jazar (“Abu Hussein”) after an attack on Israeli soldiers in the South Lebanon Security Belt, October 30, 1991. Born in Lebanon, he had become acquainted with PIJ members in the local mosque and soon joined the movement to engage in armed struggle against the occupation. Soon thereafter, he was sent to the Beqaa Valley where Hezbollah trained him in the use of M16s, Kalashnikovs, and RPG launchers.³³ The training program of the camp lasted for three weeks, according to al-Jazar.³⁴

In this period of increasing foreign assistance, it seems that the PIJ cadre Mahmud al-Hila played an important role as the coordinator of financial aid. Born in the Gaza Strip in 1948, al-Hila joined the Arab nationalists and their armed struggle in the 1960s. As the Israeli authorities began to pursue him, al-Hila chose to flee from Gaza and stayed a short while in Jordan before ending up in Syria and Lebanon, where he joined Fatah in 1968. Staying in Lebanon until the expulsion of the PLO in 1982, al-Hila settled in Sudan, where he met al-Shiqaqi in the mid-1980s. It was there al-Hila became acquainted with the thought and ideology of PIJ.³⁵ Because al-Hila had been exiled for almost twenty years when he met al-Shiqaqi, and he had been with the PLO fighters in Beirut for fourteen, his martyr biography notes that he had acquired experience valuable to PIJ:

[Al-Hila] was in charge for all the various types of weapons and rockets that entered the Gaza Strip, and his military experience and the relations that he had acquired over the years in jihad – by moving through several Arab states, notably Syria, Lebanon and Sudan – gave him a significant role in this regard.³⁶

To summarize so far, although the imposed exile affected al-Shiqaqi personally, it is clear that it provided PIJ with a new and essential opportunity structure to engage in meetings and discussions with new contacts, which were far harder to reach and to coordinate with from the Gaza Strip under military occupation. Most importantly, this new opportunity and the corresponding coordination of al-Shiqaqi manifested itself in close-knit alliances resulting in economic aid and weapons from Iran, sanctuary in Syria, and training camps provided by Hezbollah. In other words, in terms of alliance building and aid, PIJ managed to exploit the exile.

The question is whether these new alliances influenced PIJ with the influx of weapons and aid. Although Clifford Bob describes the relationship between international NGOs and insurgent groups in his book *The Marketing of Rebellion*, he notes that there is an inherent imbalance of power between the patron and the beneficiary, depending on the *value* of each party to the other, reduced by the *need* of each party for the other. That is, the patron is valuable for the beneficiary as the former provides

the resources and connections to bolster the latter's campaign of insurgency, while an insurgent group is valuable to the patron if the latter's support will advance its agenda.³⁷ Correspondingly, "[t]his disparity in need [between benefactor and beneficiary] creates an unequal power relationship. As a result, movements must often alter key characteristics to meet the expectations of patrons."³⁸

In addition, Devore notes that state support for militant movements has a powerful, yet indirect effect by shaping the options available to the leaders of the group. First, the aid may shape the opportunity cost of the strategies an organization is able to adopt; and, second, it secures finances that enable long-term planning and strategies relying on a higher degree of professionalism. More directly, states can also intervene in the planning and execution of the movement they support through their aid, and advance concrete foreign policy interests.³⁹

Regarding the *indirect* influences, then, it seems that the exile and the alliance with Hezbollah greatly influenced PIJ's (and Hamas's) methods against Israeli targets. As Tamimi notes:

It is very likely that Hamas was persuaded to use suicide bombers when it became clear that the tactic was delivering results in Lebanon. It could not have been a coincidence that the first martyrdom operation was carried out in Palestine in the year after the return of Hamas and Islamic Jihad deportees from South Lebanon, where they had ample time to listen and learn from their Lebanese hosts.⁴⁰

Ramadan 'Abdallah Shallah similarly answered, when asked whether PIJ had been influenced by Hezbollah, "Certainly, the resistance in Lebanon was the first to conduct a martyrdom operation [*'amaliyya istishhādiyya*], when it carried out the bombing operations against the headquarters of the Marines in 1983, in addition to other operations."⁴¹

Although we will see in [Chapter 6](#) that Iran did attempt to put pressure on PIJ, it is difficult to trace any direct influences, however, whether ideological or methodological. For example, although PIJ began to carry out attacks across the Lebanese border between 1991 and 1999 (with one attack allegedly ordered by the Syrian regime),⁴² the number of these attacks was small (eight in total) and sporadic, and thus never constituted a shift in the movement's tactics.

One reason for the lack of pressure is probably that Iranian foreign policy had undergone a considerable transformation in the mid-1980s before establishing a partnership with PIJ. That is, since its founding, the Islamic Republic of Iran had developed a "security-centered, two-layered foreign policy" in order to both expand and protect its interests – in addition to neutralizing perceived threats. By creating spheres of

influence, it projected its interests, supported Islamic movements, and positioned allies beyond its borders against those it felt threatened the republic's survival.⁴³ This included supporting Shiite groups in Afghanistan during the Soviet occupation and ensuing civil war; attempting to revive its claims to Bahraini territory by, reportedly, providing groups with training and weapons; and supporting another Palestinian Islamist movement, Hamas.⁴⁴

Although the new Iranian constitution affirmed its duty to provide "unsparing support for the dispossessed of the world," to export its revolution,⁴⁵ several scholars have noted that the rationale of this exportation shifted during the war with Iraq in the mid-1980s. Hunter argues that this resulted from the inevitable learning and adjustment process that revolutionary Iran underwent, accelerated by its inability to win against Iraq. The pursuit of "national interest," instead of vague ideological aspirations, thus became more pronounced in the 1990s.⁴⁶ Accordingly, Sick notes regarding the case of Bahrain that while Iran was still prepared to encourage regional opposition movements in the 1990s, "the motivation appears to be far less ideological and much more closely related to traditional interests."⁴⁷ Similarly, in 1991, Iran chose not to support the Shiite uprising in southern Iraq, describing it instead as an "internal [Iraqi] issue"; and Menashri notes that when dealing with the former Soviet republics, "the main focus lay in expanding Iranian interests rather than advancing an ideological creed."⁴⁸ Although Iran approached the Palestinian cause as a form of ideological dogma, and PIJ found great inspiration in its revolution, we may assume that shared interests on the ground proved to be decisive in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

A second reason for the lack of direct influence may be that PIJ was, and is, an innately Sunni movement. The Twelver Shiite (*imāmiyya*) movement, Hezbollah, in contrast, expressed loyalty to the Supreme Leader Khomeini and to his successor, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and adopted the tenet of Vilayat e-Faqih before its process of "Lebanonization" in the 1990s. Moreover, Hezbollah had in 1986 "one or two" Iranian representatives from the Iranian embassies in Beirut or Damascus on its shura council, while its charter stated that matters that could not be decided by its governing council should be decided by the Iranian Supreme Leader.⁴⁹ There was thus presumably greater ideological Iranian pressure on Hezbollah because it is a Shiite movement. Indeed, the preserved autonomy of PIJ may be one of the causes for the viability of the alliance with Iran, which, as we will see in this study, did not face any acute obstacles before 2015 during the Syrian civil war.

5.2 Constraining Effects: Organizational Reform and Coordination

Though I have analyzed the PIJ leadership's efforts in exile, al-Shiqaqi and the other leaders were still not only a part of, but also leading a movement whose base was still primarily in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. This section of the chapter analyzes the interior factor: that is, how the exile led to an organizational reform and restructuring of PIJ, and how it affected the coordination between al-Shiqaqi and the exile leadership with its militant and political base inside Palestine. I will first analyze the organizational restructuring, and then the military performance of PIJ between 1988 and 1995.

According to al-Hajj Muhammad, the deportation forced PIJ to carry out a number of internal organizational changes due to the exile of its leaders. Mainly, he explains, as the source of (higher) decision-making in the movement moved from the Occupied Palestinian Territories to the diaspora, PIJ saw an initial delay and gradual regression of its military performance. Thus, "the leadership that had been placed outside of the homeland found it necessary to rearrange and organize the division and its base."⁵⁰ Abu Taha asserted the same when I asked him about the matter: "Of course, it hurt the movement, and it was weakened a bit inside of the Palestinian territories."⁵¹

How the reorganization was carried out in practice or how long it took to implement the changes effectively is uncertain, but the exile nevertheless allowed PIJ to implement a coherent organizational structure, "which was not fully implemented [before] on the ground due to the ongoing arrests inside of the Occupied Territories."⁵² As we recall, PIJ was in the 1980s a loosely organized cell network without formalized structures to assist its militants. For example, it was only in 1991 that al-Shiqaqi was referred to as the secretary-general of PIJ in the movement's *al-Mujahid* magazine. Before that, in the absence of clear organizational structures, he was only referred to as official spokesperson.⁵³ A general assembly was also established, as "the supreme legislative authority in the movement" to draft the general strategy and policies in all fields, with members elected from all Palestinian areas. According to Abu Taha, it was convened for the first time in 1992.⁵⁴ In addition was the establishment of a national shura council, which worked as the executive authority in the movement, with its decisions binding all of PIJ's institutions. It consisted of fifteen members from the Occupied Territories and abroad, with local shura councils in the different regions.

In an interview in the newspaper *al-Hayat*, Shallah confirmed this leadership structure of PIJ, as he stated:

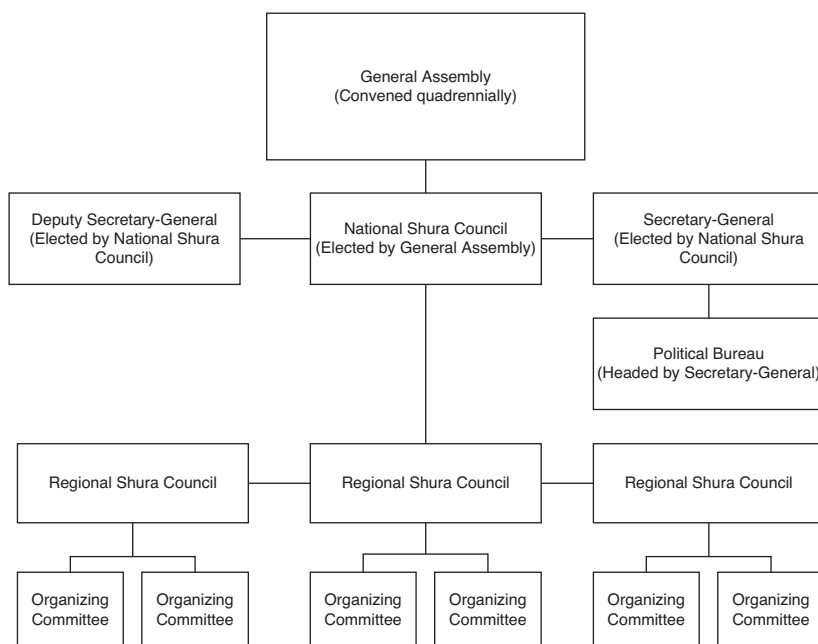


Figure 5.1 Organizational structure of PIJ's political wing (1992–present)

According to the rules of procedure, there is a general assembly, a [national] shura council and a secretary-general. There are also local shura councils and organizing committees that emerge from these. Our organizational structure allows us flexibility and the ability to adapt to extraordinary security circumstances which the movement lives under, and which allows continuous work in an atmosphere of cohesion and effectiveness.⁵⁵

If so, PIJ did not develop the organizational structure of its political wing before 1992, a structure that remains in place to this day (see [Figure 5.1](#)).⁵⁶ It is quite similar to that of Hamas, the exception being PIJ's secretary-general and deputy secretary-general.⁵⁷

These departments in PIJ have differing roles and responsibilities. The general assembly elects the national shura council, which in turn elects the secretary-general and deputy secretary-general of the movement. The secretary-general can be elected to consecutive terms, each lasting four years, and there are no limits in the PIJ statutes regarding the number of times one can be reelected.⁵⁸ The general assembly approves the statutes, protocols, and regulations of the movement. That is, the general assembly approves PIJ's political line of action. The national shura council implements and carries

out these protocols and policies. The local committees and the regional shura councils in turn cooperate with the national shura council and the political bureau.⁵⁹ In addition, according to al-Shiqaqi, “there are executive bodies in different areas of work such as military, political, foreign relations, mobilization, organization and finance.”⁶⁰ Last, the political bureau is headed by the secretary-general and deals with the administrative tasks and daily proceedings of the organization.

The task of the political bureau was, in addition, to represent the movement and its political line as a whole by managing public relations and giving interviews, taking responsibility for PIJ’s publication efforts, and establishing political relations with other actors in general and patrons in particular.⁶¹ As we will see later in this study, another task was to obtain funds for its armed action and to regulate the finances of PIJ. Yet, the exact division between PIJ’s political bureau and its military wing was, and is, ambiguous, and the same applies to the hierarchy between the two departments. Yet, we do know that the PIJ leadership advised its militants of Jenin to leave the camp during Operation Defensive Shield in 2002, which the PIJ fighters in the end refused to do.⁶²

On geographical and institutional distribution, PIJ’s political wing is divided by three regions (the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and prisons) while the diaspora is divided into four (Syria, Lebanon, Yemen, and Sudan). Thus, with two from the Gaza Strip, the thirteen other seats in the national shura council are reserved for the representatives from the West Bank, the prisons, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen, and Sudan although the exact division is unknown. If each of these regions has two representatives each, it constitutes fourteen representatives in total. With the secretary-general being the fifteenth in the national shura council, this constitutes, as noted, the total number of representatives.

That said, there may be a second cause for the restructuring of PIJ in addition to streamlining the organization: the preservation of power. This has proven to be the case for other factions. The diaspora leadership of Hamas, for example, used the opportunity of exile to reorganize the activities of the movement into a hierarchical order, and Mishal and Sela state that “this initiative was designed to give the ‘outside’ leadership control over the ‘inside’ and secure the subordination of the latter’s operational ranks.”⁶³ Similarly, as al-Shiqaqi was deported from the Occupied Palestinian Territories, he presumably feared being marginalized. While he was stranded in the diaspora, there was always the possibility of someone in the Occupied Palestinian Territories sidelining him. To introduce a new organizational structure, then, with himself as the new secretary-general, could possibly have been a move to maintain and

secure his own power and authority in the movement because it meant it would take four years for someone else to contest his position through elections in the general assembly. As we will see in [Chapter 6](#), disputes soon erupted in the leadership.

The military wing of PIJ was restructured in 1992 as well, and we may assume that the military reorganization was equally connected to PIJ's "regression in performance." While PIJ executed its military activities in the 1980s through a loose network of cells in which each member had to buy weapons with their own money, al-Shiqaqi now sought to implement vertical power structures in order to streamline the effort. While al-Shiqaqi designed the organizational structure, he tasked Mahmud al-Khawaja with implementing it on the ground in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.⁶⁴ The name al-Khawaja chose for the military wing was the Islamic Mujahid Forces (al-Qiwā al-Islāmiyya al-Mujāhida), abbreviated to Qassam.

While there never existed a formal leadership for the military wing of PIJ in the 1980s, new organizational structures thus emerged in the Gaza Strip. Most important was the so-called small military council, the highest leadership of Qassam, as shown in [Figure 5.2](#). Consisting of al-Khawaja (leader), al-Zatma (engineer and supplier of explosives), 'Amar al-A'raj (political and military specialist), and Ayman al-Razayna (field and

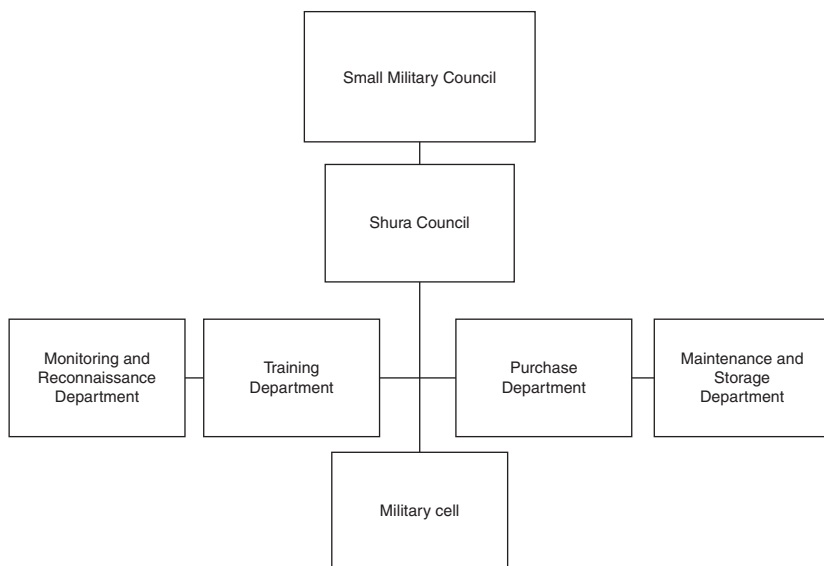


Figure 5.2 Organizational structure of PIJ's military wing (1992–2000)

military commander), the small military council had the main task of planning and supervising the military operations of PIJ and their implementation.⁶⁵ The next organ of command was the shura council of Qassam, which consisted of the field commanders, executive members, and specialists of PIJ, who worked to assist the small military council with information on developments on the ground, and to lead military operations against Israeli targets. At the bottom were the cells.⁶⁶

In order to streamline the military work of PIJ, four departments were created to assist the PIJ soldiers. The first was the monitoring and reconnaissance department, which gathered information and prepared operation plans. Consequently, its tasks included preparing and assessing maps, identifying strategic enemy positions, surveilling Israeli military bases, sites, command centers and communication networks, and identifying possible Israeli access routes.⁶⁷ The task of the training department was, as the name implies, to train the new militants in PIJ, and to introduce new soldiers to their weapon and its parts.⁶⁸ The purchase department, on the other hand, had the task of acquiring weapons.⁶⁹ Finally, the maintenance and storage department was tasked with ensuring that the weapons were functional, clean, and safely stored after use.

What we see with the restructuring of PIJ's military wing is the compartmentalization of its military work. While the soldiers of PIJ in the 1980s had to buy their own weapons, store them in their apartments, and carry out reconnaissance themselves before an operation, these tasks were now delegated to specialized departments that did much of the work for them. Similarly, PIJ divided the Gaza Strip into district areas of action (though the exact division is not described by the sources).⁷⁰ More importantly, the decision-making in the military wing was subjected to a process of verticalization through which the leadership now decided even the smallest detail. For example, al-Khawaja *personally* evaluated new recruits and decided who was allowed to join the military wing. Consequently, "he only accepted members after examining, selecting, and testing them" and "he supervised their training and divided them into groups."⁷¹

Lastly, several new security measures were put in place. Each militant was, for example, given an alias and a cover story.⁷² In addition, when Mahmud al-Khawaja became the leader of Qassam, he withdrew from PIJ's public activities to such a degree that "his comrades thought that he did not have anything to do with the movement anymore."⁷³ According to PIJ, the militants in Qassam did not know the identity of al-Khawaja, and he wore a mask when engaging with other militants in the movement.⁷⁴ The same applied to the main engineer in Qassam, al-Zatma, who did participate in public gatherings, "but silently and away

from the limelight in order for his image not to be known to the people of the movement since he engaged in the military field.”⁷⁵

While the reorganization of PIJ’s military wing was intended to streamline and secure its viability as an armed movement, it made PIJ immediately vulnerable to counterinsurgency instead. Combined with the introduction of the new Palestinian National Authority (PA) of Yasser Arafat, this would mark the beginning of PIJ’s irrelevance from the mid-1990s onward. This is where we turn to in the [next section](#) of this chapter.

5.3 The Commencing Decline of PIJ

Did the deportation of the PIJ leadership negatively affect PIJ and its military performance in the Occupied Palestinian Territories? When answering this question, I apply the ability to carry out military operations against Israeli targets as the relevant metric. This metric can be further divided in two: quantity and quality. Whereas the former is the number of attacks, the latter designates PIJ’s ability to carry out attacks that are not limited to the Gaza Strip, the amount of damage imposed, and the means employed in this period.

Regarding the quantity of armed attacks against Israeli targets, [Figure 5.3](#) shows that the armed operations of PIJ did not decline with the deportation, but instead increased rapidly from five attacks in 1988 until the movement reached its peak for this period with fifty-two attacks in 1993.⁷⁶ In other words, PIJ does not seem to have been militarily weakened by the deportation in 1988 in terms of the quantity of armed attacks against Israeli targets. Moreover, as [Figure 5.3](#) shows, it is clear

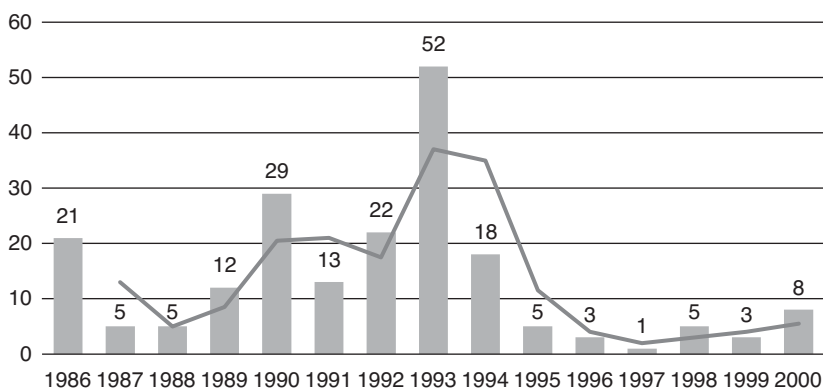


Figure 5.3 PIJ attacks 1986-2000 with moving average

that the number of attacks decreased dramatically in the 1990s (with a sharp decline from 1993 to 1994), remaining low until 2000.

The quality of operations also improved. Not only did the stabbing operations continue with Yasir al-Khawaja in 1988, Nidal Zalum in 1989, Muhammad Abu Jalala in 1991, Ra'id Muhammad al-Rifi in 1992, and Fakhri al-Dahduh in 1993, but 'Ali al-'Imawi, Mu'ayyan al-Bur'i, and Khalid Shahada also carried out shooting operations in the early 1990s. In addition, an increasing number of attacks were carried out against Israeli targets inside Israel. Last, as noted, from December 13, 1993, PIJ was also able to carry out suicide bomb operations. In other words, the division between the leadership in Damascus and its bases in the Occupied Palestinian Territories does not seem to have posed any severe logistical or performative difficulties for PIJ.

Certainly, the increase in attacks carried out by PIJ could have been *despite* the deportation of its leadership, and the number would presumably have been even higher if the leadership had remained in the Occupied Territories. Much indicates, for example, that the First Intifada caused the growth of PIJ in this period. As we will see later in this study, PIJ benefits when active resistance in general and violence in particular become increasingly seen as legitimate in the Palestinian population. Moreover, as Roy notes, while the Gaza Strip experienced political and economic collapse during the Intifada, Hamas caused increasing annoyance due to its political stand against Saddam Hussein, its continued struggle against moral and behavioral impropriety, "primarily directed at women," and its activists patrolling the streets of Gaza. This stood in stark contrast to PIJ, which did not concern itself with such issues, as the movement combined its ideology with an "activist, confrontational and outcome-oriented tactical style."⁷⁷ Consequently, as PIJ did not care too much about what clothes one wore, or whether sexes intermingled, fewer tensions developed between the movement and the local population of Gaza.

The military strengthening of PIJ can also be explained by the fact that PIJ's recruitment base expanded with the eruption of the First Intifada. While in the early and mid-1980s, PIJ had primarily recruited from the mosques, universities, and Israeli prisons, we see recruits from other backgrounds joining the movement with the beginning of the Intifada. For a start, the new members were recruited from the new popular Intifada committees. In addition, these new recruits were part of a new Palestinian generation that was politicized during the Intifada, and they primarily reached adolescence in the 1980s. As a number of these youths were imprisoned for throwing stones or participating in demonstrations, several were already politicized before PIJ recruited them behind bars.

Al-Bur'i, al-Dahduh, Ayman al-Razayna, Miqlid Hamid, and Nabil Abu Jabr are all examples of new cadres introduced to PIJ through the Intifada.⁷⁸ While the martyr biography of Hamid notes that "he joined the Islamic Jihad movement in Palestine in 1989 with the beginning of the blessed uprising [First Intifada]," it is similarly written in the martyr biography of Abu Jabr: "With the eruption of the First Intifada, our martyr found his way into the movement of Islamic Jihad."⁷⁹ For al-Razayna: "The blessed Intifada was the beginning for our martyr's work in the organization against the Zionist occupation forces."⁸⁰

There are countless martyr biographies of young Palestinians who joined PIJ during the First Intifada. The martyr biographies of al-Bur'i, al-Dahduh, al-Razayna, Hamid, and Abu Jabr illustrate how the new wave of recruits in the late 1980s trickled into and contributed to every part of the movement. While al-Bur'i carried out a shooting operation and al-Dahduh a stabbing operation, al-Razayna became a field commander in Qassam. Hamid and Abu Jabr became two of the highest-standing military leaders in the history of PIJ and were later cofounders of the al-Quds Brigades in 2000, the new military wing of PIJ after the eruption of the Second Intifada.

With a membership between 2,000 and 4,000 in the Gaza Strip in late 1987,⁸¹ the new wave of recruits came in addition to those cadres who had already joined the movement in the mid-1980s and who still resided in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, such as Hani 'Abid, Mahmud al-Khawaja, al-Zatma, Katkat, and Bashir al-Dabash. Thus, a new local leadership emerged within the Occupied Palestinian Territories in general and the Gaza Strip in particular. Whereas 'Abid, under the direct supervision of al-Shiqaqi, dealt with the media and the movement's political work through the publication of *Independence*, al-Khawaja took responsibility for the military operations through the leadership of Qassam.⁸² Al-Khawaja was in turn assisted by al-Zatma, who manufactured IEDs and suicide belts and trained other cadres in the art of explosives. Katkat and al-Dabash were active on the ground as military field commanders in Qassam. Not only did these new local cadres and leaders of PIJ do their jobs, they did them well.

The local leaders and commanders of PIJ were, in other words, able to fill the shoes of its leadership in exile. Instead of a movement collapsing, we see that PIJ adapted to the changing situation in order to survive with a new de facto leadership emerging on the ground in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. While the deportation had weakened the vertical ties of PIJ as its leadership now was far from its bases, the movement nevertheless enjoyed strong horizontal ties as it had established a resilient social base and belonging in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. PIJ was

thus less dependent on a small circle of intellectuals and leaders in order to continue its operations. If the Israelis had wanted to weaken PIJ with deportations, it was simply too late – with cells and new local leaders willing (and capable) of continuing the work of the movement.

Yet, as illustrated by Figure 5.3, while PIJ resembled an integrated organization in the late 1980s and early 1990s, its ability to carry out armed operations declined sharply after 1993 and remained low for the rest of the 1990s. This had little to do with the deportations themselves, but was rather connected with the commencement of the Oslo Agreement and the introduction of the Palestinian National Authority (PA), which proved to be a significant challenge for PIJ. As we will see below, these difficulties were only exacerbated by the unforeseen consequences of PIJ's reorganization of its military wing. While al-Shiqaqi's intention was to make PIJ more effective, it also made Qassam more vulnerable to counterinsurgency as the military wing relied on a few key individuals with extensive responsibility. Once these were arrested or killed, PIJ soon collapsed.

Both PIJ and Hamas reacted vehemently once they learned that there were possibilities of the PLO and Israel commencing negotiations, and we recall that al-Shiqaqi had already met a number of Hamas leaders in exile to discuss these political developments in September 1989.⁸³ They did so for several reasons. One was the fact that the armed Islamic movements did not believe that the Oslo Agreement favored Palestinian independence. In their view, the PLO had instead sold out the Palestinians, and, according to Milton-Edwards and Farrell, “particularly those who had made huge sacrifices during the Intifada.”⁸⁴ Al-Shiqaqi, for example, stated that the Oslo Agreement “chained the Palestinians to dangerous handcuffs” and that the agreement was only a solution for “the Zionist entity and its security and economic burdens” which freed Israel from the political and ethical obligations of occupation.⁸⁵ Hamas, on the other hand, stated in 1992 that “the only way and the only method that the occupying enemy understands is the method of force, through the escalation of the blessed Intifada, and by raising the banner of jihad and resistance.”⁸⁶ As Burgat notes, in the view of the Palestinian Islamic movements, the Oslo Agreement was closer to *istislām* (capitulation) than *salām* (peace).⁸⁷ Also a factor was the ideological opposition to a two-state solution, analyzed earlier in this study.

The intra-Palestinian factor and prospect of narrowing Islamist opportunities added to the opposition of PIJ and Hamas. As Mishal and Sela state, the Oslo Agreement had effectively cancelled the First Intifada, the platform enabling Hamas to become a viable political alternative to the PLO; and Gunning notes that Hamas was “in a position to defeat Fatah

electorally, repeatedly” by 1992.⁸⁸ This came in addition to PIJ, which we recall had grown rapidly in the same period. As the Oslo Agreement was supposed to give Fatah the upper hand, Gunning states this is another context in which it must be read.⁸⁹ Partly, he notes, the establishment of the PA altered the balance within Fatah as Arafat systematically sidelined local Fatah leaders; it also changed the balance of economic class power as the PA allied itself with members of the traditional elite to bolster its position against Palestinian grassroots. More importantly in this context, it altered the balance between Fatah and Hamas as the former suddenly obtained access to institutions and funding that far outstripped that of Hamas.⁹⁰ Although its opposition was ideologically motivated, Hamas consequently feared that Fatah could sideline the Islamic opposition altogether if the process succeeded.⁹¹ With no perceived alternative political platform to challenge its rival, violence became an attractive option for Hamas to weaken Fatah.⁹²

While the peace process and the establishment of the PA threatened to narrow Islamist opportunities, it also caused Hamas to vacillate in its approach to the changing realities in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Indeed, after its first two years, Hroub notes, “Hamas’ thought and practices transcended the [initial] uncompromising positions,” and it was a clear concern for the movement in this period to avoid political isolation.⁹³ This led Hamas, on the one hand, to collaborate with the rejectionist PLO currents against settlement, while simultaneously discussing the possibilities of participating in elections under the Oslo Agreement, on the other.⁹⁴ As Mishal and Sela note, Hamas did not advocate *one* political line in this period; and while the “outside” leadership of Hamas were inspired by “an avant-garde vision and advocated a revolution from above,” its “inside” leaders focused more on immediate communal interests and reformist processes from within. All of which influenced its internal debate on the issue.⁹⁵

Although Hamas opted for a formal boycott of the 1996 Palestinian general election, PIJ seemingly grew suspicious of its sister movement in this period, and of what its position to elections under Oslo actually was. Illustratively, PIJ issued a statement in 1992 titled “Is Hamas serving the interests of America?” Although the main aim of the statement was to direct a punch against the PLO and the Oslo Agreement in defense of the Intifada, it also presented a clear warning between the lines for Hamas against “the useless battle for representation and legitimacy.”⁹⁶

In essence, uncertainty and trepidation marked the Islamic opposition as the Oslo Agreement potentially altered the practical realities of the Occupied Palestinian Territories with the introduction of the PA. As Milton-Edwards describes it:

The leadership of Hamas, Islamic Jihad and [Hizb al-Tahrir] were faced with a major political dilemma. How could these organisations respond to the rule of the PLO? What future could the Islamic movement expect under the national leadership of a figure like Arafat? What would the conditions for self-rule, such as the formation of a Palestinian police force and security apparatus, imply for the future of the armed wings of Hamas and Islamic Jihad [*sic*]?⁹⁷

This sense of uncertainty was undoubtedly true for PIJ. In an interview with the newspaper *The Populace (al-Jumhur)* on December 13, 1993, al-Shiqaqi answered rather frankly that he did not know what role the PA police was to have when asked how PIJ would deal with its introduction, while stressing that PIJ were uninterested in clashing with any part of the Palestinian people.⁹⁸

PIJ would soon have its answer to what the peace process would mean in practice for the movement. As PIJ's attacks rapidly increased in the early 1990s, and Yasser Arafat and the PLO feared that the violent campaigns could jeopardize the peace process, the PA began to arrest prominent PIJ militants throughout the decade. Notable examples are 'Abdallah al-Saba', al-Khawaja, al-Zatma, Hamid, and Abu Jabr. Leaders in the political wing of PIJ were also arrested in this period. Examples include members of PIJ's political bureau Muhammad al-Hindi, who was arrested in September 1993, Nafidh 'Azzam, who was arrested in May 1994, and 'Abdallah al-Shami, who was arrested September 4, 1994.⁹⁹ Al-Shami was even deported to Marj al-Zuhur in Lebanon in 1992 with 424 other Palestinians, mostly from Hamas, before they returned to the Occupied Palestinian Territories by December 14, 1993, because of the international pressure Israel was facing.¹⁰⁰ The PA also imprisoned Katkat and a group of his colleagues in 1995, while shutting down the PIJ newspaper, *Independence*.¹⁰¹

PIJ members such as al-Zatma and Abu Jabr were also severely tortured in PA prisons, according to their martyr biographies.¹⁰² One of the martyr biographies of al-Zatma, for example, states that the torture was so severe that he fainted during the first hour, and that he was subsequently transferred to the clinic for treatment.¹⁰³ Indeed, these accounts of torture are plausible as Amnesty International wrote in a 1997 report: "Torture of detainees [in PA prisons] was widespread. Methods of torture included burning with electric elements, beatings, suspension from the ceiling, dropping molten plastic on the body, cigarette burns and sleep deprivation. Three detainees died in custody after torture."¹⁰⁴

Others in PIJ were assassinated in this period, some by the PA and some by the Israeli forces. According to PIJ, Ayman al-Razayna and 'Ammar al-A'raj were killed in 1996 by the intelligence services of the PA in one of

their homes in the Gaza Strip.¹⁰⁵ The aforementioned Amnesty report confirms these accounts as it states:

At least 10 people died as a result of possible extrajudicial executions or other unlawful killings by Palestinian Authority security forces during the year. Two Islamic *ḥihad* [sic] activists, Ayman al-Razayna and Amar al-Araj, were killed in their home in Gaza in February when members of the Palestinian Authority's security forces entered the house. There was no evidence to suggest that they had resisted arrest.¹⁰⁶

The mass arrests, torture, and assassinations of PIJ members and cadres in the early 1990s were a serious challenge for PIJ. Al-Hajj Muhammad looked back to this period:

In these seven lean years [1993–2000], the Islamic resistance [PIJ and Hamas] suffered distress, and the PA intensified its intelligence activity through the various security services – each of which operated in isolation from one another, often causing a person to be exposed to more than one security service at the same time, making him vulnerable to investigations after investigations. The possibilities of guerrilla work were no longer limited, but they were weak, and the eyes [of collaborators] were opened in the neighborhoods, in the alleys, and sometimes even inside of the houses.¹⁰⁷

Adding to these “seven lean years,” the popularity of both Hamas and PIJ plummeted to approximately 10 percent combined after they chose to boycott the legislative and presidential elections of 1996, which came at a time when the majority of Palestinians still had hope in the peace process.¹⁰⁸

The fact that the PA limited the opportunities of PIJ through a series of arrests and assassinations is illustrated by [Figure 5.4](#), which displays the regional distribution of PIJ attacks. As we see, the decline of PIJ in the 1990s is inherently connected to the regions where the PA was initially introduced: Gaza and Jericho. For example, PIJ's strongest presence since its inception had been in the Gaza Strip. The only exception was in 1992, when more operations were carried out in the West Bank by the PIJ cell *‘ushshāq al-shahāda*.¹⁰⁹ Yet, while PIJ attacks declined dramatically in the Gaza Strip once the PA was introduced, their number remained relatively constant in the West Bank.

The consequences of PIJ's military restructuring only added to this challenge by the PA, to which we have so far only alluded briefly. As we recall, the restructuring of PIJ's militant wing was meant to rationalize and streamline the military work against the Israeli occupation. However, the degree of secrecy seems to have made it difficult for many of the new Intifada recruits to join Qassam. As the martyr biography of al-Bur'i recalls, he had to insist that the leadership of the military apparatus let

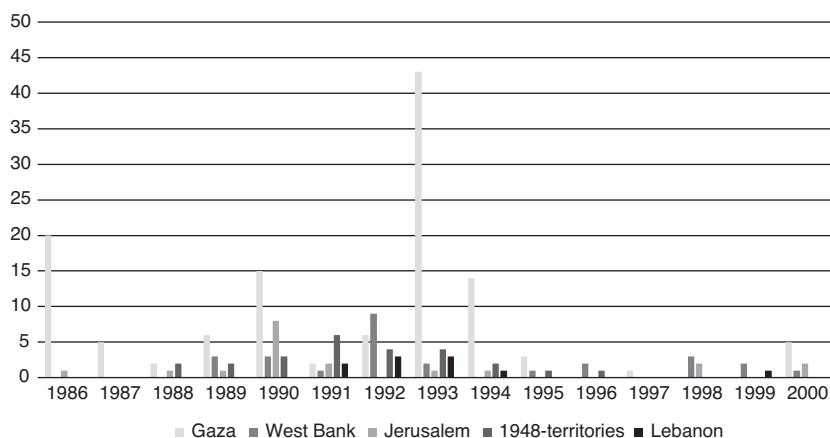


Figure 5.4 PIJ attacks by region (1986–2000)

him join, sending them successive messages, and “[al-Bur‘i] asked the leadership of the military cells to nominate his name to the commanders of the military apparatus.”¹¹⁰ This degree of division is accentuated by the same biography, which states that someone in the political leadership was surprised when he heard about the death of al-Bur‘i after his operation in al-Dimra as he did not know al-Bur‘i was involved in the military wing.¹¹¹ The same applies to the PIJ militant Ala‘ al-Kahlut, who repeatedly, yet unsuccessfully, insisted on joining Qassam, as the leadership of PIJ’s armed wing rejected his requests because his father was ill. Only after a considerable time of persuasion was al-Kahlut allowed by the leadership to join.¹¹² Last, illustrating the secrecy of PIJ’s insurgency, the brother of the PIJ martyr Khalid Shahada described the former’s time in Qassam as follows: “It was very secret because his military work required that. No one knew anything about him inside the house. One time my wife found a bullet in his trousers and told me, and I thought it had to be from the streets.”¹¹³

In addition to its secrecy, the compartmentalization of Qassam’s work meant that the movement as a whole depended on a selected group of key personalities to be effective. The small military council, for example, the highest leadership of its military wing, consisted only of five persons tasked with the supervision and implementation of all military operations, the selection of new militants, and their training. Yet, its leader al-Khawaja was killed in 1995, the two members al-Razayna and al-A‘raj were likewise in 1996, al-Zatma was imprisoned for most of the 1990s,

and the entire leadership of Qassam was quickly incapacitated. It is hardly controversial to suggest that it must have affected the military wing of PIJ in its entirety considering their roles.

Although I stated earlier that PIJ emerged in the 1980s as an integrated movement through its strong horizontal and vertical ties, the preceding analysis shows that there were inherent limits to how deep these ties could develop with the local population. Unlike Hamas, a relatively open mass movement, PIJ was from the onset more vulnerable to violent repression because it relied so extensively on a small number of qualified cadres. Although one wished to join the military apparatus of PIJ, it was not a given that the leadership would allow one to do so; and when the leadership was arrested or assassinated, there were not many others capable of continuing the project. Thus, while secrecy versus a large popular base is a common trade-off for insurgent movements, the leaders of Qassam had presumably greater difficulties than the political leadership of PIJ in exile because the former necessarily resided within reach of the occupation forces' grip.

The rapid weakening of the movement, in addition to the sense of Palestinian betrayal, fed the developing tensions between PIJ and the PA, which became increasingly visible in this period. Although 'Abid did not have a role in the movement's military wing, he was assassinated on November 2, 1994. While the majority attributed his assassination to Israel, the crowds at his funeral directed their wrath against the PA and called Yasser Arafat a traitor.¹¹⁴ Although he apologized to Arafat for the crowd's behavior, 'Abdallah al-Shami had nevertheless vowed earlier that "the guns of [Islamic] Jihad will not be able to distinguish between an Israeli soldier and the Palestinian police."¹¹⁵

We should not exaggerate the effects of this anger and resentment, however, and PIJ never engaged militarily against the PA and its security apparatuses, although the latter imprisoned and tortured several of its members. According to Hatina, this reluctance to attack the PA militarily was the attempt to avoid strife (*fitna*) in Palestinian society, which PIJ justified by referring to religious injunctions.¹¹⁶ PIJ's spokespersons argued that the controversy between the two parties was one of ideology and politics that instead demanded a solution through dialogue – a strategy we will return to later in this study.¹¹⁷

PIJ was initially able to bite back, however, before fading into irrelevance for the next seven years. In 1993, it began carrying out suicide bombings – operations that were all prepared and vetted by al-Zatma. Anwar 'Aziz first rammed his car into the back of an Israeli military jeep in the Gaza Strip and detonated the explosives on December 13, 1993, killing himself and wounding three Israeli soldiers. Hisham Isma'il

Hammad then carried out PIJ's second suicide bomb operation on November 11, 1994, when he with explosives strapped to his body rode his bicycle into an Israeli army checkpoint in Gaza, killing three and wounding six Israeli soldiers and six Palestinians.

The most lethal attack of PIJ was nonetheless yet to come. On Sunday, January 22, 1995, at approximately 9:30 a.m., when the bus stop at Beit Lid was crowded with Israeli soldiers and reservists waiting to head back to their military duties after their weekend leaves, a Palestinian dressed as an Israeli soldier approached the bus stop, walked into the crowd of soldiers, and detonated the explosives hidden on his body. Three minutes later, another detonated his explosive vest on the same spot, killing those who were wounded in the first explosion and targeting those who had rushed to the scene to help. In addition to the two Palestinian suicide bombers, Anwar Sukkar and Salah Shakir from PIJ, twenty-one Israeli soldiers and one Israeli civilian were killed, and sixty-six Israelis, the majority of them soldiers, were injured.¹¹⁸

The following day, Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli prime minister, signed the red paper, the kill order, for al-Shiqaqi, permitting Mossad to assassinate him.¹¹⁹ While Israeli intelligence tracked al-Shiqaqi, the matter became increasingly urgent in their eyes when the PIJ militant Khalid Muhammad Khatib carried out the fourth suicide operation on April 9, 1995, as he rammed his car loaded with explosives into a bus carrying more than sixty Israeli soldiers. Despite the urgency, while surveilling al-Shiqaqi for months and wire-tapping his home and office phones in al-Yarmouk, it proved difficult for Israeli intelligence to reach him in Damascus – a city that was operationally difficult as well as politically risky.¹²⁰

The Israelis' chance came in 1995: The Libyan regime of Gaddafi had declared that it would expel the Palestinian refugees as a protest against the Oslo Agreement between the PLO and Israel (after all, the refugees now had an independent state to go to, the Libyans argued). Thus, in September 1994, Gaddafi refused reentry to hundreds of Palestinians who had spent their summer vacation with their families in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. As Egyptian authorities would not allow the Palestinians to cross without evidence that they could enter Libya, dozens of families were stranded on the Egyptian-Libyan border for weeks.¹²¹ Al-Shiqaqi consequently traveled to Libya with several Palestinian faction leaders in order to persuade Gaddafi to allow the families to return.

Al-Shiqaqi was, according to Shallah, originally scheduled to return to Damascus eight days after his arrival in Libya, on October 19, 1995.¹²² Traveling alone with a Libyan passport under the name Ibrahim 'Ali

‘Abdallah Chaouch, he refused accompaniment by other cadres or bodyguards from PIJ as the Libyans had ensured the procedures of the travel, his arrangements, and his protection. However, as he was returning to Damascus via Malta, agents from Mossad assassinated al-Shiqaqi in Valletta.¹²³ Suddenly, PIJ had in one year not only lost one of its political leaders, Hani ‘Abid, and the leader of Qassam, Mahmud al-Khawaja, but also its founding father and ideologue. The increasing number of members and leaders either imprisoned or assassinated would add to the period that the movement described as its “seven lean years,” a period when PIJ was almost forgotten.

5.4 Conclusion

I introduced this chapter by raising the following question: How did the deportations and exile affect PIJ, and how did the movement react and subsequently adapt to the new situation? If we approach exile as crisis – not as a definitive act, but as a continuous process of adaptation and transformation – then we see that the deportation transformed PIJ into what we know the movement as today. Instead of weakening the movement, the deportation created new possibilities through which PIJ created long-lasting and viable alliances with Iran, Syria, and Hezbollah. The alliance provided the movement with sanctuary and training camps, in addition to economic aid and weapons. It is not certain how many cadres of PIJ were trained in Lebanon, yet it seems clear that it became far more coordinated than in North Africa or in Yemen in the 1980s. Further, because of the inherent constraints of exile, PIJ restructured its political and military wing in order to increase the effectiveness of coordination, communication, and logistical support between diaspora and home base. It was thus in 1992 PIJ developed formal organizational structures, structures that still apply to its political wing today.

Little indicates that the deportations drastically weakened PIJ. Although scholars have argued that it was the mass arrests in the late 1980s and the deportations in 1988 that caused the weakening of PIJ,¹²⁴ its sharp decline of performance in 1994 seems intrinsically connected to the introduction of the PA. Indeed, it was not until the introduction of the PA that PIJ suffered, which led the movement to a state of near irrelevance throughout the 1990s. This is evident in terms of quantity (the number of armed attacks), and in terms of quality (what type of armed attacks). The hypothesis is further strengthened when we see that the greatest decline of PIJ was in the Gaza Strip, its historical stronghold, where the PA was first introduced.

For better or worse, it is nonetheless clear that the deportation did affect PIJ. Yet, as it brokered a new alliance with Iran, it is nonetheless unclear how al-Shiqaqi perceived PIJ's new patron in general and the Iranian Revolution in particular on the ideological level. This is the subject of analysis in [Chapter 6](#).

6 Faith

The Conciliatory Movement

PIJ's persistent support for the Iranian Revolution in 1979 became one of the most characteristic traits of the movement. As Iran subsequently became PIJ's main benefactor and supporter, several also accused the movement of being Shiite in disguise and an Iranian proxy. In fact, scholars such as Elie Rekhess argue that PIJ's views on jihad, martyrdom, and self-sacrifice attest to the strong influence of Shiite (*imāmiyya*) symbolism in the movement.¹

In this chapter, I will analyze the ideological affinity between PIJ and Iran. I will do so by first analyzing al-Shiqaqi's view on the Shiites, and then investigating PIJ's support for the Iranian Revolution. We will see that the Iranian issue cannot be understood without relating the Iranian Revolution to the leitmotif of al-Shiqaqi: anti-colonialism. Consequently, we will see that theological Shiite influence on PIJ is exaggerated. Second, as we assessed the ideological influences on al-Shiqaqi in [Chapter 2](#), we will add to this analysis by comparing the thought of al-Shiqaqi with that of Ali Shariati and Ruhollah Khomeini. In the last section, the analysis is extended to include PIJ's pragmatic stance in internal Palestinian politics. We will see that while the Iranian Revolution embodies the need for regional unity, between Sunnis and Shiites, the resistance against the State of Israel embodies the need for local Palestinian unity.

6.1 PIJ and the Shiite Issue

Before we analyze the potential influences of the Iranian Revolution, we are wise to examine al-Shiqaqi's view on the Shiites first, and whether he believed Shiism to be a legitimate doctrine equaling that of the Sunnis. One of al-Shiqaqi's most important articles in this regard is "The Sunnis and the Shiites: A Fabricated and Regrettable Pandemonium" ("*al-Sunna wa-l-shī'a . . . ǧajja mufta'ala wa-mu'sifa*") from 1982. The article is far from al-Shiqaqi's most original work, with its numerous references to and dependence on Islamic leaders and scholars. Yet, it is a relevant continuation of the discussion that al-Shiqaqi commenced three years earlier in 1979, in his booklet *Khomeini: The Islamic Solution and*

Alternative. Although he did not devote much space to the topic at the time, the booklet nevertheless indicates that al-Shiqaqi perceived the minimization of sectarian exceptionalism to be important for the development and well-being of the Islamic community.²

Twelver Shiism was in the eyes of al-Shiqaqi as legitimate an Islamic doctrine as that of the Sunnis. As the Shiites based their creed on the Qur'an, the sunna, and the five pillars of Islam,³ he argued that the Sunni and Shiite differences were no greater than those which existed between the Hanafi, Hanbali, Maliki, and Shafi'i legal schools of Islamic law. Both sects sought the truth, albeit through different methods.⁴ Shiites were, then, Muslims just as the Sunnis were, and both should view each other as such. Consequently, Twelver Shiism was to be worshipped lawfully.⁵ This is certainly not to suggest that al-Shiqaqi deemed the Shiite doctrine to be synonymous with that of the Sunni, but rather that the persisting sectarianism was needless and a waste of time.

It would be misguided, however, to deem the review of fatwas and theoretical writings simply as a theoretical exercise for al-Shiqaqi, and the article cannot be fully appreciated outside its context. In its introduction, for example, al-Shiqaqi describes an Islamic community weakened by Western colonialism – with the establishment of Israel, occupation, and the moral, intellectual, and spiritual offensive against Muslims and their creed. While we earlier in this study noted that colonialism sought to fragment the Islamic community through nationalism, another method in the eyes of al-Shiqaqi was the creation of strife (*fitna*) between Sunnis and Shiites to “besiege [the Iranian Revolution’s] revolutionary tide and prevent its influence from reaching the Sunni areas.”⁶

The issue of rapprochement was, then, not merely a theological issue, but instead one pertaining to the resistance against Western colonialism. This resistance could only grow successful once the Shiite and the Sunni doctrines were able to unite, and each to stop deeming the other as infidel. As Hatina argues, “In adopting an ecumenical approach toward the Shi’a, and highlighting Khomeini’s pan-Islamic vision, Shiqaqi sought to bring about a dialogue between Iran and the Sunni radicals in order to fend off the western-Jewish threat.”⁷ The message al-Shiqaqi provided, then, was that of victory through creedal unity, and the first step to reach that was to support the Iranian Revolution.

The fact that the article was published in 1982 lends credence to this analysis, as it denotes a period of ideological conflict and bitter disputes between the PIJ nucleus and the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood. Al-Shiqaqi certainly seemed annoyed with those who refused to support the Iranian Revolution, and who deemed it un-Islamic due to its perceived Shiite nature. Although he did not explicitly address anyone in his

argument, it seems beyond doubt that al-Shiqaqi approached the Brethren in the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood in general and the Islamic Center (al-Mujamma‘ al-Islāmī) in particular:

Some of them have launched a suspicious and surprising campaign against the Islamic revolution, which they finally discovered was a “Shiite revolution”; that “the Shiites are a sect astray or infidel”; and that Ayatollah Khomeini, who they say shook the throne while sitting on his rug, has become a “misguided infidel,” too (!). The sight of the young Muslim (!) who carries a Saudi book full of fallacies and fabrications began being repeated in front of us. He carries it from mosque to mosque explaining to people and preaching his delusions . . . I realize that some of these young men are moving in good faith, though delusional, believing that he works for God just as it is understood that the road to hell is paved with such good intentions . . . So when will those young men realize that they in good faith are carrying out colonial plans, and that they must save themselves before it is too late?⁸

Surely, it is not particularly difficult for us to imagine the affiliation of this particular Muslim youth who wanders from mosque to mosque in Gaza to propagate the belief of perceived Shiite infidelity while carrying a Saudi textbook in his hand.

It is, then, in context of the dispute with the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood we may make sense of the references al-Shiqaqi employs. That is, the majority of references are in fact to authorities in the Muslim Brotherhood or those ideologically related to the movement. Al-Shiqaqi commences, for example, by employing the example of Hassan al-Banna, who worked hard for the rapprochement between the Sunnis and the Shiites in his meetings with Ayatollah Kashani. He then proceeds to the example of Navvab Safavi, who allegedly went to the pulpit and stated, “And whoever wants to be a true Ja‘fari [the largest Shiite school of jurisprudence], let him join the ranks of the Muslim Brotherhood.”⁹ Last, al-Shiqaqi postulated that one of the greatest indications of the mutuality of doctrines was the fact that the majority of members in the Iraqi and Yemeni Muslim Brotherhoods had historically been Shiites.

Shiites could, then, not be dismissed politically or ideologically by virtue of their faith. As the Shiites and Sunnis had worked together in the ranks of the Muslim Brotherhood under one banner of unity before, they could certainly do so again. Al-Shiqaqi similarly pointed to the alleged support for the Iranian Revolution in the Sudanese, Tunisian, Lebanese, Jordanian, and Egyptian Islamic movements and Brotherhoods.¹⁰ It is through these references that we may discern the question al-Shiqaqi posed between the lines for the Palestinian Muslim Brethren: “If the other branches of the Muslim Brotherhood support the Iranian Revolution, then why cannot you do the same?” Considering the

framework for al-Shiqaqi supporting the Iranian Revolution, he then seems to be more influenced by the need for creedal conciliation than by Shiism.

Rekhess argues, however, that there are in fact a number of Shiite references in PIJ. First, when PIJ members were tried in Israeli courts in 1986, he notes, they referred to themselves as sons of “the disinherited (mustad‘afun) Islamic nation,” who struggled against arrogance (*istikbār*) in this world. Second, the PIJ militants had according to Rekhess a particular perception of martyrdom and they believed that those killed in struggle would go to paradise. Finally, PIJ adopted jihad as a central tenet of Khomeini, as a symbol of activism contradicting the traditional Shiite concept of dissimulation (*taqiya*) with its corresponding quietist connotation.¹¹

The notion of martyrdom in PIJ is, however, multifaceted. First, it is true as Hatina notes that the shift of suicide bombings from the Shiite to the Sunni milieu “reflected a decisive influence by revolutionary Iran on Islamist thought.”¹² It is an equally valid assertion that PIJ commenced exalting martyrdom as an act of worship, “parallel to a vow or an obligation that must be fulfilled as a part of the belief in God.”¹³ Yet, PIJ also employed “a creative interpretation and a selective reading of classical Sunni traditions and chronicles” when revering martyrdom, and also Hamas adopted similar practices.¹⁴

Second, when looking to the concept of martyrdom in the textual corpus of al-Shiqaqi, it seems quite coherent with traditional Palestinian mythos. As Abufarha argues, when the PLO was the head of Palestinian resistance from the late 1960s, the Fida'i who was killed in battle was considered a martyr. Yet, despite this act of sacrifice, the death of the Fida'i did not necessarily include the same religious dimension as it did subsequently with the martyr (*shahīd*) or the martyrdom-seeker (*istishhādī*).¹⁵ Rather, “in the Palestinian context the perception of fusion between the human sacrifice and [Palestinian] land is more prevalent than fusion with divine life.”¹⁶

This notion of the sacrificial fusion of body and land is found in the writings of al-Shiqaqi as well. For example, when in 1980 he described the death of ‘Izz al-Din al-Qassam, al-Shiqaqi wrote, “The earth drank his pure blood and the trees absorbed his blazing spirit. He entered the funnels of the poor and into the water mugs with a holy fire – a holy fire and an endless joy [thus] entered our blood.”¹⁷ This sacrificial fusion was further repeated by al-Shiqaqi in 1989: “al-Qassam went into the water jars and blended with all the sands of Palestine.”¹⁸

A similar notion is also evident in the memoirs of Thabit Mardawi, the PIJ militant who fought in the Battle of Jenin, 2002. Although he does not

describe the fusion of land and martyr's body, he nevertheless portrays Haifa as the body of a usurped woman when narrating the suicide operation of Raghib Jaradat:

On Wednesday 9 a.m., April 10, 2002, Haifa had a date with a knight from the al-Quds Brigades, and [they] promised to meet secretly in fear of the gaze of those who usurped her. [Jaradat] offered her his blood and his soul for her honor and pride. She saw him approaching her smiling from afar, so she approached him and smiled as well. . . . After he had touched her hair that fell down her neck at the foothills of Mount Carmel, after he had filled his lungs with the smell of her pink flowers, and after she felt like a bouquet of paradise, he rose from his body – giving her joy and pleasure. She accepted him as her groom and martyr.¹⁹

Also here do we find links to earlier and intrinsically Palestinian discourses of resistance. As Rana Issa notes, the Palestinian poet 'Abd al-Rahim Mahmud (1913–48) was the first to conflate the beloved with Palestinian land in his love poem “The hopes dried on my lips” (*jaffat 'alā shafatayya al-amānī*), which later became a defining metaphor in Palestinian poetry.²⁰ Consequently, while PIJ found inspiration from the Iranian Revolution, it is doubtful the movement did so from Twelver Shiism. Moreover, the preceding account of PIJ's multifaceted reading of martyrdom implies that the movement “Sunnified” the concept so as not to alienate the Palestinian populace, thus bringing it into line with Palestinian mythos and literary traditions with a distinctly Palestinian nationalist character.

We may equally question the adoption of jihad as a Khomeinist concept that contradicts dissimulation (*taqiya*) because PIJ is not, and has never been, a Shiite movement. Rekhess's reference to *taqiya* thus seems inept. As we recall from earlier in this study, al-Shiqaqi and the PIJ nucleus engaged in disputes with the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood years before the Iranian Revolution. As al-Shiqaqi recalled, “We fought to clear the political program [of the Muslim Brotherhood] even before the emergence of PIJ.”²¹ The theory of PIJ adopting jihad due to Shiite influence is thus similarly to ignore the emergence of other armed Sunni currents in the same period (such as EIJ), which did not owe their *modus operandi* or ideology to Shiite concepts.

Although it is difficult to verify as few of al-Shiqaqi's pre-1979 texts are available, it seems credible that the adoption of phrases and concepts such as “the oppressed” (*mustaḍ'afīn*) and fighting “arrogance” (*istikbār*) stemmed from the Iranian Revolution.²² Yet, while this may very well be so, these two concepts were nevertheless intrinsically connected to al-Shiqaqi's analysis of Western colonialism and domination – as was his conciliatory approach to the Shiites in general. The support for the

Iranian Revolution seems similarly connected to the need for armed struggle now and not later. As al-Shiqaqi noted:

Imam Khomeini assumed a wonderful Islamic and revolutionary position when he stood up to some of the Shiites who sat down waiting for the Mahdi to establish the rule of Islam and fill the land with justice after having been filled with injustice and oppression.²³

Again, as with al-Shiqaqi's religious conciliation, it would be uncontroversial to note the references in this assessment of Khomeini's challenge to the traditional Islamic movement. The quietist Shiites awaited the Mahdi, the Brotherhood and Hizb al-Tahrir awaited the establishment of the caliphate or for society to return to Islamic values, and all three postponing struggle to an uncertain future. Similarly, Khomeini put equal emphasis on the perceived threat from Western colonialism and gave sufficient credence and importance to the Palestinian cause when doing so. As al-Shiqaqi stated, "Indeed, Imam Khomeini understood the nature and role of colonialism and the modern Western challenge for Islam and the intellectual invasion that followed. He realized at the same time that Israel is the true embodiment of this challenge."²⁴

The question is, then, whether we can approach the Iranian Revolution as something more than a great inspiration to the Palestinians, which it unquestionably was. The fact that a people had managed to topple a regime allied with the West and Israel, while basing their revolution on Islamic values as an ideology, had an impact on the Palestinians. As al-Shiqaqi described it retrospectively in 1993:

The Islamic revolution in Iran changed the face of the region and deeply affected the world, its composition, and future. It launched the Islamic awakening [*al-ṣaḥwa al-islāmiyya*] that the world is still talking about . . .

The victory of the Islamic revolution returned to every Muslim the confidence in his creed and religion . . . That [Islam] is still able to rise up, advance, mobilize the masses, confront the tyrants, and defeat them; achieving victory and building the Islamic state. The Great Victory has liberated the hearts and minds of Muslims from the terror of the superpowers, thus from the sword that has been on their necks for decades. The superpowers can consequently be beaten and overturned if we are freed from the dependence on them and possess a free will – one that is believing, active, and energetic.²⁵

Al-Shiqaqi's belief in the importance of the Iranian Revolution was thus the perceived ability of the latter to strike at colonialism. It was thus not because of some identification or sympathy with any detail in the Shiite doctrine that PIJ supported the Iranian Revolution. It is clear from the quotation above, and the principle it outlines, that PIJ probably would have supported the same revolution if it had taken place in Syria, Saudi

Arabia, or Algeria. As Shallah states, the Palestinian nucleus's support for the revolution in 1979 was never based on ideology "in those days."²⁶ Instead, the revolution was a lesson about "the rise of the people to get rid of evil and recover their lost rights by their own hands – regardless of these people's doctrinal affiliations or creeds."²⁷

There are potential influences in addition to terms such as *mustaḍ'afīn* and *istikbār*, however, although they manifest in an ambiguous manner. Al-Shiqaqi, for example, made a direct line from the martyrdom of Husayn ibn 'Ali at Karbala in AD 680 to that of 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam in 1935, when he wrote:

A forenoon in witnessed history, the people of paradise's young master, Husayn ibn Ali, stood on the square of Karbala to present us with a scene that will forever remain in the memory of history, a unique human symbol of martyrdom for the sake of Truth, justice, and duty [*fī sabīl al-ḥaqq wa-l-'adl wa-l-wājib*]. Thirteen centuries later, in one of the honorable days and on the path of extended continuation – the continuation and persistence of this great religion – came the last Husayni pioneer called 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam. He raised his small hand in the face of the next crusader invasion . . . confronting foul Britain and its Zionist affiliate. Al-Qassam fell as a Husaynian martyr [*shahīdan ḥusayniyyan*] over the mountains of Palestine.²⁸

In fact, much suggests that the martyrdom of Husayn at Karbala struck a chord in the mythology of PIJ and its cadres. This is evident not merely in the writings of al-Shiqaqi, but also on the ground. From May 3, 1993, until July 10, 1993, for example, a PIJ cell in Rafah operated with the name Martyrs of Karbala Unit (*Wiḥdat Shuhadā' Karbalā'*).²⁹ Yet, while it is difficult to elaborate on this particular unit because further information is lacking, and although it constitutes an ideological curiosity, the answer presumably lies in PIJ's identification with Husayn as someone who faced overwhelming odds. As al-Shiqaqi compared Husayn and al-Qassam:

What is impressive about this encounter between al-Qassam and Husayn . . . a few believers confronting large armies, yet with the triumph of the sacred duty in the essential and possible conflict. A responsible and conscious spirit amidst a sea of indifference and inaction.³⁰

To summarize this section, al-Shiqaqi concluded that the Shiites were Muslims just as the Sunnis were, and that the Ja'fari doctrine of Twelver Shiism was legitimate and on par with the Hanbali, Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanafi Islamic schools of law. This was not due to some deeply hidden sympathy for the Shiite doctrine, however, but rather because of al-Shiqaqi's deep conviction that all parts of the Islamic homeland had to be united against colonialism – whether across religious creeds,

ethnicities, or political affiliations. In fact, the sectarianism between Sunnis and Shiites was the very result and desire of colonialism itself. It was precisely because al-Shiqaqi was convinced that the Iranian Revolution dealt a severe blow to colonial interests in the region that he found such inspiration in it. Consequently, religious conciliation is not a theological issue for PIJ, but rather an anti-colonial feature through which the movement sees the necessity of uniting all forces in a struggling front.

6.2 Leftist or Centrist Anti-colonialism? Shariati, Khomeini, and al-Shiqaqi

One of the thinkers that the Palestinian students read at al-Zagazig University in the 1970s, but whom we have not mentioned so far, was Ali Shariati, the Iranian sociologist whom Abrahamian refers to as “the ideologue of the Iranian revolution.”³¹ At the onset, one would quickly assume that Shariati had a profound influence on al-Shiqaqi. For example, as the religious scholars of both the Safavid (1501–1736) and the Qajar dynasties (1789–1925) in Iran emphasized the death of Husayn as an occasion to turn inwards and mourn the murder of the Prophet’s family to attain salvation in the next world, Shariati reformulated the narrative of Karbala as a lesson to rise up and overthrow tyranny.³² Highly influenced by Frantz Fanon and the National Liberation Front’s (FLN’s) struggle against French colonialism, Shariati believed that the quietist interpretation of Karbala neutralized Husayn’s central message of standing up against political oppression even if there was little chance of emerging as the victor.³³ Instead, Shariati transformed Husayn from a symbol of quietism to that of a revolutionary insurgent for the contemporary world in which the only answer to the question was jihad, which he defined as “a military movement in favor of justice and against tyranny.”³⁴

This was to a certain extent the same problem of quietist interpretation that al-Shiqaqi and the PIJ nucleus faced when challenging the Muslim Brotherhood and the Islamic Center. Although the Egyptian and Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood did not await the Twelfth Imam to fill the world with justice, we nevertheless see a very similar perception of the need to postpone the struggle against oppression. In the Palestinian context, this postponement manifested itself through the conception of a future caliphate liberating Palestine (as argued by Hizb al-Tahrir), or for Palestinian society to first return to Islamic values (as argued by the Islamic Center). We may, then, describe al-Shiqaqi and Shariati as ideological brethren – and both as Third World revolutionaries – insofar as

both advocated struggle here and now, and not later. It is precisely through the agitation for revolt in Palestinian and Iranian society, respectively, that they find each other.³⁵ It is certainly difficult to overlook the similarities when Dabashi writes the following: “Shari’ati wished to change, not interpret; lead, not argue; move, not convince; achieve, not rationalize.”³⁶

There are still ideological differences between the two, however, and the worldviews of al-Shiqaqi and Shariati differ so decisively that the two revolutionaries can hardly be described as similar besides the call for revolution. First, according to Dabashi, there is no doubt when closely reading Shariati that his chief frame of reference – “his conception of history, society, class, state apparatus, economy, culture, his program of political action, his strategies of revolutionary propaganda” – is in the tradition of Marxism.³⁷ As we will see later in this study, al-Shiqaqi envisioned an inherently weak state and correspondingly strong civil society with a social market economy; the end result for Shariati, on the other hand, was the *jam’eh-ye bi-tabaqeh-ye towhidi* (“the classless monotheistic society”).³⁸

Precisely because both of these ideologues and thinkers perceived historical analysis to be of such importance, it is worth comparing their thinking on the source of the problem. As Dabashi notes, “[For Shariati a] Marxist glance at the Islamic history would reveal the quintessential problem.”³⁹ Correspondingly, Shariati stated:

Do you know what is the source of misery in Islam? It is the formation of, and the dependency of the religion on, this [petite bourgeoisie] class, establishing [, as they have,] a connection between the seminary and the bazaar. Should Islam be able one day to get rid of this dirty connection, it will, for ever, assume the leadership of humanity; and should this relation continue, Islam has been lost forever. The Islam which is growing nowadays and which has adherents is the Islam with connection between Hajis [he means the merchants who have been to Mecca] and the Mollas. And these two have a [cozy set of] reciprocal relationships with each other. This [the Molla] takes care of the other’s [the Haji’s] religion, and that [the Haji] takes care of the other’s [the Molla’s] worldliness . . . Then in [the process of] such a reciprocal relationship they make a religion for people which is of no use to them.⁴⁰

Although al-Shiqaqi and Shariati come together by virtue of being Third World revolutionaries working against colonialism, it is also here the comparison ends. As we will return to below, al-Shiqaqi was far from sympathizing with Marxism and believed the concept of class struggle to be misguided. It is similarly in that vein that we should note that although al-Shiqaqi was an anti-colonialist, he was never a leftist. By virtue of denouncing the looting of the Third World, it is not enough to become

synonymous with Shariati, who was far more radical in his analysis of society, economics, history, and culture. Al-Shiqaqi is, then, a case of centrist (*wasatiyya*) anti-colonialism.

Instead of Shariati, then, it is in the writings and theories of Ruhollah Khomeini that we find greater similarities – another anti-colonialist whom we can hardly describe as a leftist. Also here do we find an extensive overlap in the focus on the West and Western colonialism. That is, the precarious situation in the Muslim world was a result of Western imperialism in general and American imperialism in particular, and Khomeini postulated that the West had “masterfully employed its propaganda to dominate Muslims and Muslim lands.”⁴¹ Correspondingly, liberation in the Muslim world could only be achieved through an Islamic awakening.

Necessarily, both al-Shiqaqi and Khomeini shared their disdain for Israel; the latter considered Israel as a mere appendage to the West and a stooge of its imperialism to usurp Palestinian land.⁴² In fact, when one assesses Kamrava’s analysis of Khomeini and his theoretical conception of the West, it is difficult to trace any discernible differences between him and al-Shiqaqi. Even the call for Muslim unity and the underplaying of the Sunni-Shiite division is strikingly similar. As Kamrava points out, Khomeini’s conception of the West was not radically different in its articulation from many other “Third World revolutionaries” at that time. It thus strengthens our argument that PIJ has ideological affinities with Iran primarily by virtue of being a Palestinian anti-colonial movement, instead of a movement with Shiite inclinations.⁴³ As al-Shiqaqi answered when he was asked whether it was strange for a Sunni movement to support a revolution following Shiite doctrines:

We see in the Islamic revolution in Iran an ally and a friend of our particular cause in Palestine. The Islamic revolution liberated Iran, and it was carried out from a place hostile to Arabs and Islam, and a place friendly to the West and the Zionist entity. Our duty is to preserve this development, and the dangerous coup d’état transcends the sectarian and national dimension. That we are Sunnis does not prevent us in any case from extending our hands to any loyal Muslims, Sunni or Shiite. . . . Today, we are united by anti-Westernism and anti-Zionism.⁴⁴

The same applies to al-Shiqaqi and Khomeini’s view on disparity between classes. Khomeini, for example, was outraged by the shah’s extravagant celebration of the 2,500th anniversary of the Persian monarchy, as the money could have been “[s]pent on feeding the empty stomachs and providing a living for the miserable.”⁴⁵ Yet, Khomeini was highly suspicious of Shariati’s “Marxist Islamism,” and in 1977 he wrote, “I hate and despise these treacherous groups, whether Communist, or Marxist, or those diverted from the Shi’i religion.”⁴⁶ Similarly, as we noted that al-

Shiqaqi harbored deep sympathies with the poor and oppressed, he nevertheless (and contrary to Shariati) was open to the possibility of economic differences between people. While Shariati sought the classless monotheistic society, what al-Shiqaqi despised was “dreadful disparity,” not economic differences in themselves.⁴⁷ Anwar Abu Taha, for example, outlined a future economic system in a just society in which economic classes persisted:

The economic system will be mixed. There are capitalists, capital, and a shared economy between the state and the companies, and a state economy. It means that the state has companies and economic activity, and it cooperates with capitalist companies. This is called joint and private capital. So it is mixed. The economic system in Islam is mixed, but the most important thing in Islam is not with capital. . . . If you distribute money fairly it will be justice.⁴⁸

Al-Shiqaqi is thus much closer to, for lack of better comparisons, the Qutbist notions of social justice between economic classes,⁴⁹ as Qutb believed that the rich should not be too wealthy, and the poor should not be too wretched. Qutb was as outraged as Khomeini was by the wealth of the elite and the palace in Egypt.⁵⁰ Consequently, although its conception of economic groups comes close, PIJ refuses to talk about class antagonisms. In the words of Abu Taha:

We do not say classes, but groups. The concept of classes is Marxist, so we say groups. These groups called capitalists or bourgeoisie, there are big bourgeoisie and small bourgeoisie, there is a middle class and a poor class. The important thing is to take money from the rich class and to distribute it to the middle class. How do you want to do it? Through taxation, through zakat, through charity, joint ventures, through central development through the state.⁵¹

To summarize, al-Shiqaqi shared ideological traits with Shariati by virtue of the role they played in their respective societies, attempting to propagate revolution now instead of later. As they were both Third World revolutionaries and anti-colonialists, Shariati nevertheless espoused a leftist anti-colonialism while al-Shiqaqi espoused a centrist one. That is, although al-Shiqaqi was a revolutionary, he had more in common with the anti-colonialism of Khomeini, who, as noted, was not radically different from other Third World revolutionaries in his articulation.

6.3 Evading Palestinian Strife: Anti-colonialism on the Local Level

PIJ has since its inception exercised a pragmatic role in Palestinian politics by virtue of avoiding internal strife between factions and movements. This was not only the case when the civil war broke out between Hamas

and Fatah after the former's electoral victory in 2006, which we will tend to later in this study, but also during the dispute between Hamas and Fatah in the early 1990s. This was epitomized by al-Shiqaqi in 1989, during the First Intifada, when he stated:

Since our inception in Palestine we decided that we have one single and fundamental enemy, and that enemy is the Zionist enemy. The conflict is with this enemy only, and what remains are merely intellectual or political differences with the Palestinian forces on the scene. These intellectual and political differences are resolved through an ongoing dialogue and not through any other method. Violence is only directed toward one side, and that is the Israeli enemy. As for the Palestinian parties we disagree with, we can never enter into conflict with it or a clash. If I talk and discuss [these issues] calmly and objectively, it does then not produce any provocation and it does not drag us into any battle.⁵²

Al-Shiqaqi was certainly not known for being silent on political and ideological differences, and he was quite outspoken about them when he felt it was needed. Yet, as he stated, these differences could not and should not affect the intensity of the struggle against the occupation.⁵³ To always strive for unity between the Palestinian forces was described as a sacred and legitimate duty (*wājiban shar'iyyan wa-muqaddasan*) for PIJ.⁵⁴ This issue of unity was not limited to political factions, but also extended to incorporate unity across classes ("workers, peasants, students, intellectuals, and merchants"), localities ("camps, cities, and villages") and religions ("whether Muslim or Christian").⁵⁵ Further, for al-Shiqaqi, this was not limited to the Palestinian arena, and as he in 1992 stated that the strife between Fatah and Hamas hurt the heart, he had already extended this perception to the Lebanese arena in 1990, when he called on Hezbollah and Amal to end their strife and to resort to dialogue instead.⁵⁶

Throughout the history of PIJ, this call for unity was not always evident in the movement's practices. During the First Intifada, for example, the movement refused to join the Unified National Leadership of the Uprising (UNLU). Nor did it show any inclination to join the PLO. Yet, in the case of UNLU, al-Shiqaqi emphasized that PIJ did not refuse because it rejected political cooperation or coordination between Palestinian forces, but because the UNLU communiqué of May 3, 1990, did not reject reconciliation with Israel.⁵⁷ It is thus not unity through Palestinian identity, but unity by methods that guides PIJ's approach to the other movements, as we saw happen through the rapprochement between it and Hamas once the latter commenced armed struggle. Similarly, Hatina implies this focus on unity through methods when he notes that by the start of 1990, PIJ approached the Palestinian

left, which (despite being anti-religious) remained committed to armed resistance.⁵⁸ Again, in the words of al-Shiqaqi, “We do not have any reservations against cooperating and coordinating with any of the anti-imperialist and anti-Zionist forces for the liberation of Palestine whether pan-Arabist, nationalist, or Marxist.”⁵⁹

The same applies to the PLO. As we recall, PIJ was one of its most ardent critics. However, the critique of the PLO was only because it had abandoned armed struggle and now resorted to dialogue and negotiations to reclaim Palestine – with all of the concessions that entailed. Al-Shiqaqi thus never dismissed the original idea of the PLO as an umbrella organization of the Palestinian factions and noted that the PLO had indeed given the Palestinians “[a] strong sense of self and national identity” before its political regression.⁶⁰ He correspondingly emphasized that at no time had PIJ attempted to present itself as an alternative to the PLO.⁶¹ As al-Shiqaqi stated that PIJ deems cooperation necessary regardless of ideology, the movement does, then, not dispute the PLO as an inclusive framework for all Palestinian struggling forces.⁶² The dismissal of the PLO as an issue of armed struggle overriding organizational unity was then stated by al-Shiqaqi:

The unity of the struggling line and its solidity comes before the unity of the framework [PLO]. What is the point of asking all Palestinian political forces to abide by the PLO if its program declares and abandons the right of our people in its homeland, and their right to jihad and armed struggle for its liberation?⁶³

It is this approach to the PLO as an organization – dismissing its perceived willingness to give concessions, yet supporting it as a (potential) framework for all political factions – that underlines the duality of PIJ’s call for unity as the movement balances between principles and pragmatism.

To summarize so far, PIJ is adamant about avoiding strife between all Palestinian movements, factions, and forces as violence should and must only be directed against Israel. For the armed struggle to succeed, all factions must join a united front. This can happen either informally or formally within the framework of the PLO, *if* the umbrella organization returns to its roots. The underlying condition for cooperation is, then, the movements’ participation in armed struggle. We can thus suggest that the focus on coordination, cooperation, and unity between all Palestinian factions and forces in the resistance against Israel cannot be separated from the call for unity between the Sunnis and the Shiites. These calls are two sides of the same coin, one on the regional level, and the other on the local level. The two are in a sense inseparable. Let us,

for example, compare the following two calls for unity, the first one on the regional level, and the second on the local level. Here is al-Shiqaqi's first call for unity on the regional level:

The fragmentation, disintegration, and division [of the *umma*] are a permanent colonial goal that we must confront by overcoming the ethnic and national issue toward a broader horizon of Islam, the most comprehensive of the *umma* – without conflict whenever the national issue collides with the Islamic convictions. Thereby transcending the sectarian issue through meeting, dialogue, rapprochement, and convergence with the emphasis on the constants and the origins of society.⁶⁴

And the second, which focuses on the local level:

Fragmentation and the establishment of the Zionist entity were the most prominent features of the colonial project in our country [Palestine]. In context of our resistance against the Zionist entity, we stress the necessity of unity within the nationalist, Arab, and Islamic circles.⁶⁵

In these two statements, we see that al-Shiqaqi deemed fragmentation and strife of benefit only to the enemy. On both levels, then, unity had to be sought at all costs. In fact, the two statements are so strikingly similar in their implications that it goes to show that the call for unity is one of the core principles of PIJ's ideology. As an anti-colonial movement, PIJ underplays factional and ideological affiliations until liberation, true independence, and freedom are obtained. Ideological and political differences are until then to be resolved peacefully through dialogue and discussions. All forces must stand together against the enemy that is shared by all Palestinians, whether they be Islamist, Marxist, or secular-nationalist; peasant, worker, or merchant; city-dweller, villager, or refugee.

6.4 Conclusion

Al-Shiqaqi never engaged in the Shiite issue as a theoretical exercise or because of religious sentimentality. Instead, I argue that it is by virtue of being an anti-colonial movement that PIJ seeks unity across Islamic doctrines and sects. By comparing the thinking of al-Shiqaqi with Shariati and Khomeini, I have identified the anti-colonialism of PIJ as being of a centrist nature.

By following the approach and analysis of PIJ as an anti-colonial movement, I have argued that its call for unity in the Palestinian arena is qualitatively the same call as when al-Shiqaqi propagandizes for the unity of the *umma*. Whereas the unity of the *umma* is of importance to resist colonialism in its entirety, the unity of the Palestinian factions is of importance to resist the colonial extension in the Islamic homeland,

Israel. This is certainly not to suggest that evidence for Iranian ideological influence is not ambiguous, as shown by the terms employed by PIJ's militants.

Yet, more importantly, the particular ambiguity in PIJ's references to the Iranian Revolution would add to conflicts erupting in the shura council of PIJ in the early 1990s. As these conflicts had the potential to disintegrate PIJ's leadership, this is where we turn to in [Chapter 7](#).

7 The Collapse of PIJ

Following the assassination of Fathi al-Shiqaqi, Ramadan ‘Abdallah Shallah took over as the new secretary-general of PIJ. According to the PIJ mythology, the election of Shallah represented the student who followed and took over for the martyred leader who had sacrificed himself for the homeland. The election of Shallah raises a number of questions, however: Why was Shallah, who had been living in the United Kingdom and the United States since 1986, elected the new secretary-general of PIJ? Why was it not someone else in the shura council, for example from the Gaza Strip, who was elected instead? What does it tell us about PIJ in this period?

I argue in this chapter that one cause contributing to the rise of Shallah was the disintegrating shura council of PIJ. Although Hatina states that these tensions were a result of al-Shiqaqi, who amassed power and shunted other leaders aside, we still do not know with certainty what caused these disputes, and there are several contradictory claims about what happened. The actual causes aside, I will engage with these claims in order to assess the bureaucratization of PIJ and the creation of formal power structures in the movement commencing in the late 1980s.

This chapter consists of three sections. I first turn to the disputes that transpired in the diaspora leadership and the PIJ shura council in the early 1990s. I will engage with the contradictory claims about what happened in order to discuss the bureaucratization of PIJ and its repercussions. I then proceed to the mid-1990s in the second section, where I analyze Shallah’s rise as the new secretary-general. Last, I assess PIJ in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, showing that the movement was nearly absent from the Palestinian armed struggle until the eruption of the Second Intifada.

7.1 A Disintegrating Leadership

It would seem that PIJ had done everything right by 1990. The movement had managed to engage in armed struggle several years before Hamas, it

had created a social base in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, brokered an alliance with Iran and Hezbollah, and even grown considerably with the eruption of the First Intifada in 1987. Although it was far smaller in Lebanon, we recall that the diaspora leadership nonetheless cemented PIJ's presence in the refugee camps through social and medical services, sports clubs, and a widespread dissemination of its call.

Underneath, however, tensions were brewing. Ahmad Muhanna, for example, left PIJ's shura council in 1990 to form the competing organization Hezbollah-Palestine (Hizbullāh-Filasṭīn).¹ Then, on August 15, 1991, Sayyid Baraka also split from the PIJ leadership to become Hezbollah-Palestine's secretary-general.² Two years later, in 1993, when Hezbollah-Palestine ceased to exist, Baraka began to work for the Martyr's Foundation (Mu'assasat al-Shahīd) in Ain al-Hilweh, the Palestinian refugee camp in which he resided. Last, in 1993, Salih 'Abd al-'Al issued a statement in which he heavily criticized the organizational, financial, and administrative leadership of al-Shiqaqi. Additionally, he stated that al-Shiqaqi was responsible for sabotaging PIJ's relationship with Fatah, and demanded his removal from leadership. To make matters worse, the spiritual guide of PIJ himself, 'Abd al-'Aziz 'Awda, supported the statement, as did Muhammad Abu Samra.³ For 'Awda, this statement would mark the beginning of the end for his affiliation with PIJ.

As I noted in the introduction to this chapter, we do not know what actually happened and what caused the disputes, and there are several contradictory claims about who was to blame for the defections. It is more or less word against word. Two of the claimants – Abu Samir⁴ and the newspaper *al-Hayat*⁵ – point to ideological differences within the leadership. Yet, while Abu Samir states that the ideological dispute was on the issue of allowing Christians to enter PIJ, *al-Hayat* points to a Sunni-Shiite conflict and an argument on how far one should emulate the Iranian line in the Palestinian struggle.

The other story – put forth by Anwar Abu Taha,⁶ the defectors,⁷ and a US indictment against the shura council's secretary, Sami al-Arian⁸ – points to the organizational-democratic practices of PIJ. While the defectors claim that they left because they were shunted aside by al-Shiqaqi, Abu Taha describes them as sore losers who lost legitimate and democratic elections, and who were dissatisfied with the electoral outcome. As a result, they left the movement in protest. According to the US indictment against al-Arian, disputes erupted due to the dire financial situation of PIJ in 1994, and the necessity of reorganizing the economic administration of the movement.

According to *al-Hayat*, problems began to appear in 1990–1 because of growing contradictions within PIJ's leadership regarding its support

for the Iranian Revolution. As PIJ's support had been evident since the emergence of the movement, several accused it of being Shiite in disguise. For example, in 1990, a journalist asked al-Shiqaqi: "Is it true that [PIJ] is accused of Shiism?" Al-Shiqaqi, however, dismissed it as a plot against the organization and noted: "Our position on Shiism has not exceeded the position and opinions of the imams, scholars, and Muslim leaders of the Sunnis one iota."⁹ That is, although al-Shiqaqi was unquestionably inspired by the example of the Iranian Revolution, he was nevertheless so "within certain limits, given the difference of circumstances between Iran's Islamic revolution and the situation in the occupied territories."¹⁰

It was this political line that allegedly made a number of PIJ cadres leave the movement as they believed the Iranian revolutionary line had to be fully emulated. Allegedly, al-Shiqaqi was forced in this period to exclude a number of members from PIJ who had "adopted the Iranian line," although it is unclear what this meant in practice.¹¹ *Al-Hayat* is here referring to Muhanna and Baraka, two of the first to leave PIJ. As they became the leaders of Hezbollah-Palestine, the organization was supported financially and logistically by Iran,¹² and was thus targeted with the same accusations as PIJ.

'Awda, however, noted that Baraka did not leave PIJ due to an argument about the Iranian Revolution, but instead:

A dispute broke out specifically between [Baraka] and the brother Dr. Fathi al-Shiqaqi. The dispute continued, and we tried to our best effort to advise both parties at the time, and made our efforts toward the brother Dr. Fathi al-Shiqaqi to end this problem. Unfortunately, our brother [al-Shiqaqi] did not listen to our advice and guidance in this issue.¹³

Indeed, 'Awda's description of the dispute between al-Shiqaqi and Baraka seems emblematic of many of the claims in this period. For example, following al-Shiqaqi's assassination in 1995, his treatment of fellow leaders was described as a cause for dispute. Unwilling to compromise and to consult other leaders, al-Shiqaqi's style of leadership allegedly caused the alienation and departure of figures such as Muhanna, Baraka, and Taysir al-Khatib, the treasurer of PIJ, who refused to work under him.¹⁴ As Hatina describes it:

Shiqaqi's charismatic leadership engendered strong ideological and political cohesion within the movement, leaving a limited field of maneuver for the internal leadership in its contacts with the PA. Other founding fathers in the movement, including 'Abd al-'Aziz 'Awda, Taysir al-Khatib, and Sayyid Baraka, found themselves shunted aside and accused Shiqaqi of imitating 'Arafat's style of one-man leadership, using security reasons as an excuse.¹⁵

Hatina's assessment is seemingly supported by the US indictment of Sami al-Arian. A Kuwaiti-born Palestinian and founder of the research institute World and Islamic Studies Enterprise (WISE) at the University of South Florida, al-Arian was indicted as the alleged leader of PIJ in the US and the secretary of PIJ's shura council in the 1990s. In 2006, al-Arian agreed to plead guilty to providing services, goods, and funds to PIJ.¹⁶

According to the indictment, based partly on the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)'s interception of 472,239 phone calls on eighteen lines, PIJ was in a dismal financial situation in 1994, and al-Arian had communicated with al-Shiqaqi on January 12 describing the dire need for changing the financial regulations of PIJ in order to settle the difficulties.¹⁷ Illustrating the lack of regulations, al-Arian had to search for the whereabouts of nearly \$2 million belonging to PIJ.¹⁸ While Bashir Nafi' stated that PIJ never had a treasury exceeding \$2.5–3 million, al-Arian had never seen that sum on paper.¹⁹ In addition, al-Shiqaqi, 'Awda, and Taysir al-Khatib owned several homes that actually were the property of PIJ.²⁰

Throughout January 1994, al-Arian discussed the economic dispute in PIJ with al-Khatib, and the danger of PIJ splintering over the issue.²¹ Al-Khatib noted that he had convinced 'Awda not to authorize any payments to al-Shiqaqi when the latter requested money.²² In order to remedy the financial ills of the movement, al-Arian on January 23, 1994, proposed a financial reform for PIJ, through which al-Shiqaqi had to disburse the PIJ funds and conduct a general accounting of all assets within months; hold weekly shura council meetings; and hold conference meetings throughout the world to vote when necessary. In addition, PIJ had to hold a new general assembly the summer of 1994, and to hold an open discussion of all aspects concerning the movement's financial business by those attending the conference.²³

Heated discussions erupted in the shura council due to the financial (mis)management, and over whether financial reform was necessary. The leadership was effectively divided in two, between those who supported and those who opposed the reform. To make matters worse, on January 24, 'Awda told al-Arian by phone that the Iranians had begun to intervene because of the lack of financial control.²⁴ How the Iranian issue was settled is uncertain, yet we know that Shallah received a fax from al-Shiqaqi on February 24, 1995, stating that a meeting in Iran had gone well and that financial aid would increase the following month.²⁵

The trust in the shura council thus deteriorated. On February 14, 1995, for example, al-Arian expressed concerns that al-Shiqaqi would sideline the shura council and make his own deal with Iran.²⁶ Later, on May 10, 1995, al-Shiqaqi also discussed at length with al-Arian the

conflicts the former was having with ‘Awda and al-Khatib, in all probability connected to the finances of PIJ.²⁷

However, when Abu Taha was asked about the defections that had occurred in the 1990s, and whether they were caused by al-Shiqaqi shunting other leaders aside, he rejected the claim:

Usually, when one leaves the movement, it is either based on a political, intellectual, or [personal] interest basis. . . . You belong either because of the ideas and rules of the party, or because of personal interests. If you go back to everything which [the defectors] said on why they left, they did not talk about a political reason or an ideological reason, but instead about the administration of the organization. In other words, they wanted organizational centers and this was very clear. None of them said that they disagreed with PIJ, or I am for entering the PLO while al-Shiqaqi refuses; I am for peace with Israel, and al-Shiqaqi refuses; I am against the relationship with Iran, and al-Shiqaqi is for, and so on.

There was an interview with ‘Abd al-‘Aziz ‘Awda and Abu Samra in *al-Hayat*; there is an interview. No one spoke of political or ideological differences. They talked about the issue of management of the organization; they wanted the centers of influence and power within the organization. However, the centers of influence are not decided by al-Shiqaqi, but by the movement. If you want to become a leader in a party, or an executive in a party, is it the leader or the internal elections that make you the leader? Internal elections were held in 1992, and the result of these elections, well, some did not like it or were convinced by it, and they found their share and status weaker than others, so they rebelled against al-Shiqaqi, and the democratic institutions that were elected. Salih ‘Abd al-‘Al, for example, was not elected to the shura council, Sayyid Baraka was not elected to the shura council, Ahmad Muhanna was not elected to the shura council, and Abu Samra was not elected for the shura council, and if they were not elected, then it would be the sin of al-Shiqaqi or the [internal] rules. The general conference that forms the shura council, they were not elected for it. In short, they rebelled and left the movement.

So when you leave a movement, you [either] go to an oppositional row or somewhere with the same founding ideas or ideology; but no, they went to [Yasser] Arafat, and he influenced them. In 1993, Arafat began coming to Gaza and the Jews established relations with him, and then they returned to the Gaza Strip. Sayyid Baraka became director-general of the Oslo ministry, and Salih ‘Abd al-‘Al became deputy to Ali Shahin in the Oslo institutions. All of them were involved in the Oslo institutions. This is an intellectual and political aberrance. This is the reason.²⁸

Also Abu Samir rejected the claim that the disputes were caused by an argument about the Iranian Revolution, because al-Shiqaqi amassed powers in the movement, or because of financial mismanagement:

[The defections] were the result of disagreements, and there were differences on the intellectual and political level with Dr. Fathi al-Shiqaqi. . . . Dr. Fathi al-Shiqaqi, his idea was to integrate everyone. Therefore, in the establishment of

the movement and the basic system of PIJ, we had a system that allowed Christians to join the ranks of Islamic Jihad as long as they were characterized by good morals and attributes. This was the idea of al-Shiqaqi. 'Abd al-'Aziz 'Awda and some in his school came forth and said we do not want this idea. They wanted a strictly Islamic movement, and it was forbidden for Christians. [They stated that] Fathi al-Shiqaqi was willing to deal with everyone and be part of everything: the nationalist level, Arab nationalist level, the Islamic level. It became a fierce dispute and they were suspended [from PIJ], not expelled, throughout the rest of the days of Dr. Fathi al-Shiqaqi. This is what was witnessed.

After the funeral [of Fathi al-Shiqaqi] in 1995, and I was present in the funeral, we, the leadership in Lebanon, went to the headquarters of the new secretary-general, Ramadan 'Abdallah Shallah, to pledge allegiance to [him] and give our blessings after the election. We were sitting there, and 'Abd al-'Aziz 'Awda, Sayyid Baraka, and some others were there to meet the doctor, as well. However, Dr. Ramadan [Shallah] was [intellectually] with Dr. Fathi al-Shiqaqi as they were both the first founders, he and Fathi al-Shiqaqi. He fully reviewed the issue of 'Abd al-'Aziz 'Awda and Sayyid Baraka, and he was in favor of expelling [them]. So the doctor came forth to each and every one of those present, and said "Come in [to my office]." Yet, he chose not to receive ['Abd al-'Aziz 'Awda and Sayyid Baraka].²⁹

As all of these accounts differ on what caused the defections, and it is word against word, we simply do not know what actually happened. They are all more or less credible. For example, although 'Awda rejected the claim that Baraka left PIJ and joined Hezbollah-Palestine because of a dispute on the Iranian Revolution, he does not say anything about Muhanna. Is it possible that while Baraka left because of personal differences with al-Shiqaqi, Muhanna created Hezbollah-Palestine in order to fully emulate the Iranian line?

Second, while the defectors claim that they left because al-Shiqaqi amassed powers and was unwilling to compromise with other leaders, Abu Taha noted that the leadership of PIJ is elected through the internal elections and not by the secretary-general himself. Yet, it is noteworthy that both Muhanna and Baraka left PIJ *before* the internal elections in 1992, and it is thus impossible that they defected due to any electoral outcome.

Third, regarding Abu Samir's recollection, although we do not know of any Palestinian Christians who have joined PIJ, al-Shiqaqi nevertheless noted in 1990 that "we in our movement are ready to accommodate Christians for jihad and fighting in our ranks while remaining free in their faith."³⁰ It is thus conceivable that postulations such as this could have been a cause for internal dispute – particularly if al-Shiqaqi spoke on these issues without prior discussion with the other leaders of PIJ. Moreover, several videos and pictures exist of 'Awda being present in

the funeral of al-Shiqaqi in al-Yarmouk where he sits next to Shallah.³¹ It is accordingly not unlikely that he was suspended in 1993, and only expelled in 1995 after the election of the new secretary-general. On the other hand, Baraka was the secretary-general of Hezbollah-Palestine from 1991 onward, and it seems unlikely that he could have been so without being fully expelled from PIJ.

Fourth, the financial mismanagement of PIJ, and the lack of overview and transparency, may have come in addition to the other disputes. While it is difficult to assert who was to blame, PIJ had grown rapidly, it had brokered an unprecedented financial deal with Iran, and it is not a given that those responsible in PIJ's leadership had the experience to manage a treasury of such magnitude. The financial dispute, if not misrepresented in the indictment, may simply have been the result of sheer incompetence in dealing with a newly formalized movement with new procedures and statutes, and that this subsequently sharpened the tensions within its leadership.

Last, it is unlikely that all of those who defected did so for the same reasons. While it is possible that some left because al-Shiqaqi amassed powers, others may have done so because they simply lost the internal elections and were dissatisfied. While yet others may have left because of a dispute about the Iranian Revolution, others may have left on the issue of Christians being allowed into the movement. None of these accounts are necessarily contradictory. For example, while Abu Taha does not mention 'Awda in regards to losing internal elections, Abu Samir does not mention Muhanna or 'Abd al-'Al. Similarly, none of them mention al-Khatib, the treasurer, who may very well have left due to the financial situation of PIJ. Some personalities may, then, have been included, and others excluded, in order for each respective account to resonate. This does not mean that any of them do not convey the Truth; they just do not convey the whole truth.

To delve into the true causes for the defections, and to decide which of these accounts is correct is, perhaps, a digression. Instead, what all of these claims point to is a movement experiencing the growing pains of a rapidly developing organization, which were intensely debated by its leaders. Hatina, for example, observes that PIJ saw a "routinization of charisma" under al-Shiqaqi, during which his "relative strength of personal charismatic leadership" gave way to "regular functioning within permanent institutions."³² Yet, this "routinization" could also be a natural consequence of the bureaucratization of PIJ with the establishment of formal power structures and institutions; and the rift that occurred in the diaspora leadership due to al-Shiqaqi's (alleged) patrimonialism implies that the movement faced a watershed once its political wing was restructured.

As Tucker argues, to speak of charismatic leaders is to speak of charismatic movements, as the former tend to become the center of the latter. More importantly, as not all political and social movements are charismatic to begin with, an organization may become so through a transformation following the emergence of a charismatic leader-personality. This transformation may not be streamlined and harmonious, but instead create a schism between those in the movement who reject and those who accept the charismatic authority.³³ It is, then, possible to assume that the restructuring of PIJ facilitated the emergence of al-Shiqaqi as a charismatic leader-personality, which was correspondingly rejected by Muhanna, Baraka, and 'Awda, leading to the aforementioned schism.

Tucker's analysis on emerging charismatic movements helps us see the defections in a new light. With the emergence of a general assembly, a national shura council, and internal elections in the late 1980s, PIJ went from being a loosely based cell structure in the Occupied Territories to operating with a *formally* sanctioned leadership. The defectors may thus have disapproved of the bureaucratization of PIJ and their respective roles in the movement once these structures were formalized. Further, although a number of defectors may have lost legitimate internal elections against al-Shiqaqi, it does not exclude the possibility of al-Shiqaqi also amassing excessive authority in the movement. Al-Shiqaqi would necessarily have had to defeat someone to emerge as a charismatic authority in PIJ.

In addition, as we recall from earlier in this study, PIJ emerged in the 1980s as an integrated organization able to create and sustain strong horizontal and vertical ties. Although these ties make integrated organizations resilient, Staniland nevertheless notes that they can fragment if conditions are right. One cause for fragmentation is mismanaged and excessively rapid expansion. Caused from within, mismanaged expansion occurs when insurgency leaders must choose between relying on their original social base and moving beyond it. If the leaders choose to move beyond their social base and rapidly incorporate new leaders, it may undermine the horizontal relationships that hold together the central leadership, unless powerful socializing institutions within are capable of instilling values and norms in new commanders and recruits.³⁴

Staniland's analysis seems particularly apt for understanding the defections, making us connect them with PIJ's rapid growth in the mid-1980s:

The second mechanism toward fragmentation driven by strategic miscalculation occurs when new fighters enter the organization but are not provided with a pathway to move into leadership roles. Blocked promotion causes discontent.

This scenario is most likely to arise when the organization needs more military strength. A desperate need for military power leads to aggressive local recruiting of foot soldiers who previously would not have been trusted or incorporated while the leadership core tries to maintain its dominance.³⁵

As we recall, a number of those who defected from PIJ, such as Muhanna, came from the secular-nationalist currents in general and the PLA in particular in a period when PIJ was expanding rapidly. It is, then, not unlikely that the rapid expansion introduced opportunistic elements into PIJ who were not thoroughly socialized in the values and norms of the movement. If this was the case, the threshold for leaving the movement would then be far smaller when these new elements perceived their promotion in PIJ to be blocked.

Yet 'Awda is hardly perceived as someone who joined PIJ for opportunistic reasons. After all, he was a leading figure in the movement, and he was even referred to as PIJ's spiritual guide (*murshid al-rūhī*) in its magazine, *al-Mujahid*.³⁶ That does not mean that Abu Samir's account does not fit with Staniland's theory, however. The question of whether Christians can be admitted into an Islamic movement, or whether it will harm its credentials, is not only one of ideology, but is necessarily an issue about organizational growth. To allow Christians into PIJ was veritably to pose the question: 'How can PIJ grow larger, and who may we recruit in order to sustain that growth? What are the limitations to our pools of recruitment?' Abu Samir's account thus adds to the analysis of Staniland because the case of PIJ shows that rapid movement expansion does not only lead to fragmentation when opportunistic elements are introduced, but also because it may weaken the shared signifiers in ideologically strict movements. Although we do not know of any Christians who joined PIJ, the debate over whether they were allowed to do so seemingly assisted fragmentation because it demanded an answer to *what* PIJ was, and *for whom*.

To summarize, we cannot state with certainty what caused the defections from PIJ. I have instead employed the accounts in a discussion about the formalization of power structures and procedures in PIJ. As I have argued, while PIJ was based on a loose cell structure in the 1980s, the deportation forced the movement to undergo a process of bureaucratization with the establishment of a formal leadership that took decisions on behalf of the movement in its entirety. Some of the cadres and leaders would necessarily have lost their bids for power in this process.

In consequence, the reorganization had two considerable downsides. First, as we recall, PIJ became far more vulnerable to counterinsurgency. Second, the reorganization also led to fragmentation, as the leaders were

far from unanimous about what direction PIJ should take. While it was not inevitable that the bureaucratization of PIJ should lead to feuds and defections, I have argued that the rapid expansion of the movement in the mid-1980s possibly assisted fragmentation when opportunistic elements subsequently saw their promotions blocked. This is not to suggest that al-Shiqaqi did not amass unprecedented authority in PIJ in this process, nor that PIJ did not emerge as a charismatic movement. Instead, because al-Shiqaqi emerged as victor in this process, it is possible that his credentials as a highly charismatic leader were excessively strengthened, accelerating the centralization of power and leading to a schism within.

7.2 The New Secretary-General

As we recall from the preceding chapters, Ramadan ‘Abdallah Shallah was one of al-Shiqaqi’s closest compatriots after they met in 1977 at al-Zagazig University, Egypt. After both returned to the Gaza Strip in 1981, Shallah worked as a lecturer in economics at the Islamic University in Gaza, while consolidating PIJ as a part of the Palestinian political fabric.

In 1986, however, Shallah left Gaza in order to pursue his doctoral studies in banking and economics at Durham University in England. After finishing his doctorate in 1990, he then moved to Tampa, Florida, to head the administration of the aforementioned World and Islamic Studies Enterprise (WISE) at the University of South Florida, after receiving an invitation from its founder, Sami al-Arian. According to those who worked with Shallah, there was nothing suspicious about him, and Shallah never stated or showed any sympathies or support for militant groups. On the contrary, his lectures were praised by the students (although some noted that he never discussed Israel), and Shallah was described as a soft-spoken scholar who was invited to lunch by the other professors.³⁷

In June 1995, Shallah left the United States, telling his friends that his father had become gravely ill. Neither his friends nor his colleagues heard from him again. Then, four months later, pictures of the adjunct professor emerged from al-Yarmouk in which he stepped forth as the new secretary-general of PIJ.³⁸ The following month, on November 27, 1995, Shallah was listed as a “Specially Designated Terrorist” by the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).³⁹

Shallah, of course, had never left PIJ while he was abroad, and as a member of its shura council he communicated regularly with al-Shiqaqi and the other leaders of the movement. According to the indictment against al-Arian, Shallah assisted him in raising money for PIJ through fundraising conferences and seminars, in addition to sending

out funding requests.⁴⁰ Shallah also functioned as assistant treasurer as he was authorized to sign transactions from the WISE bank account, which was used to wire money between the United States and abroad in the service of PIJ.⁴¹ Shallah and al-Arian also utilized their academic positions to invite and host PIJ leaders at conferences in the United States. According to the indictment, ‘Awda attended an event of the Islamic Concern Project (ICP) on December 17, 1989; the second ICP conference in Chicago, Illinois, on December 22, 1989; and the third annual ICP conference in Chicago, on December 28, 1990. Later, on December 27, 1991, ‘Awda also attended the fourth ICP conference.⁴²

The fact that Shallah had been a part of PIJ, and an active member of its leadership abroad, proved to be important for his rise as the new secretary-general. Indeed, continuity, seniority, and ideological rigor are the factors emphasized in the accounts of PIJ. Rif‘at Sayyid Ahmad, for example, noted that Shallah was elected because “al-Shiqaqi and Shallah had similar qualities, described by their excellent organizational capacities, the depth of the faith, and [Shallah’s] strong confidence in his people and his *umma*, in addition to . . . the radicalism in his political position.”⁴³ Yusuf ‘Arif al-Hajj Muhammad, on the other hand, pointed to Shallah’s seniority: that he had studied with al-Shiqaqi in al-Zagazig, and that he was one of PIJ’s founding fathers.⁴⁴

Also Abu Taha points to seniority and continuity as Shallah was one of the movement’s founding fathers. This did not change when he went to the US, where the work with al-Shiqaqi continued: “It is not region-specific for PIJ, whether for its member or its founder. Even if I went to Moscow I would stay active in PIJ.”⁴⁵ This proved important for Shallah’s election:

All of the names that you mentioned [Nafidh ‘Azzam, ‘Abdallah al-Shami, and Muhammad al-Hindi] are familiar and known, and they could have elected someone else. [Yet, it was important] that he had not interrupted the work in the movement throughout these years and that he had continued in the movement, [in addition to the fact] that he is an intellectual and an ideologue.⁴⁶

Abu Taha thus also referred to the ideological rigor of Shallah. For example, when he was asked whether Shallah was more of a pragmatist than al-Shiqaqi, he rejected it:

This is not true. Shallah, the military action of PIJ was limited while in the presence of the martyr al-Shiqaqi. In the presence of Shallah the movement established the al-Quds Brigades with hundreds of suicide operations. PIJ has fought four wars against Israel, so is this pragmatism with Israel? No. So the position of Shallah remains radical against Israel. Regarding the pragmatism in the Palestinian arena, Fathi al-Shiqaqi did not enter the PLO, and he was against

the Oslo Agreement. Shallah has not entered PLO until this day, and he is against Oslo. Regarding the [Palestinian] Legislative Council, all of the parties entered it, but PIJ did not under Shallah.⁴⁷

Continuity, seniority, and ideological rigidity were not features unique to Shallah, however. As Sayyid Ahmad noted, “These traits actually characterized most members in the movement.”⁴⁸ This brings us back to the question posed in the introduction: Why was it not someone else in the shura council, for example from the Gaza Strip, who was elected instead?

In fact, to reside in the Occupied Palestinian Territories proved to be disadvantageous if one wanted to become leader of PIJ. Like Hamas, with its political bureau and leadership in exile, PIJ understood that as long as its secretary-general resided in Gaza or in the West Bank, he would be an easy target for the occupation. Correspondingly, PIJ decreed that it was not only an advantage that the secretary-general resides abroad, but that it was mandatory. As Abu Taha stated:

First, the first leader must be outside of the Occupied Territories. Why? You cannot be the executive of the resistance under occupation. The leader must be outside of the occupation and the Occupied Territories, this is a factor. Ahmad Sa'adat [secretary-general of PFLP], where is he? He is in prison. How can the secretary-general lead the organization from within prison? It is difficult. We believe that the secretary-general must always be far from the threat of the occupation. He must be abroad combining blood and money for the jihadist and armed action, establishing political relations, and not be under the daily pressure and blockade. So the secretary-general must be abroad, and this is one of the factors that contributed in the election of Shallah.⁴⁹

We may recall that Shallah came across as a soft-spoken and gentle man in Florida. Some asserted that Shallah's way of leadership, only making decisions after thorough consultation and dialogue with his colleagues, differed markedly from the way al-Shiqaqi had dealt with the shura council.⁵⁰ As a result, in 1995, “an Islamic intellectual close to the movement” stated that the election of Shallah was, indeed, a rare opportunity, “to elect a strong shura council able to deal with the next phase.”⁵¹ Abu Taha emphasized the same, although being slightly less explicit:

On the internal level, in the time of al-Shiqaqi, you mentioned the individuals who left the movement. Under Shallah no one has left, so pragmatism inside the house is very good. He is a smart administrator, so he is good with internal relations, but in regards to the occupation, in regards to Oslo, the Oslo administration, he is radical, and did not change.⁵²

Or, as Shallah himself noted, “[After al-Shiqaqi's death] much of [PIJ's] efforts were reoriented toward putting its own house in order for the purpose of sustaining the movement's steadfastness and continuity on

the same course set for it by the martyred founder.”⁵³ Consequently, several sources emphasize the disintegrating shura council as contributing to Shallah’s rise within PIJ.

Although the sources describe Shallah as a continuation and not a rupture, some changes did occur, and one of these was decisively implemented once Shallah took over the leadership. First, al-Shiqaqi was a prolific writer, theoretician, and visionary who produced several works of analysis and history that developed the ideological body of PIJ as we know it today. Although al-Shiqaqi in his later years produced shorter polemics and statements instead of longer articles and booklets about history and politics, he nevertheless contributed far more than anyone else in the movement to its overall ideological development. The opposite was true for Shallah. Although he authored several articles, such as those in the PIJ magazine *al-Jihad*, Shallah was far more limited in his approach, methods, and intellectual ambitions than al-Shiqaqi. Instead, he emerged as an organizer and administrator who focused on the daily management of PIJ instead of on new theoretical projects. This was at least the way a PIJ member in Burj al-Barajneh, Beirut, assessed the two leaders. He noted that al-Shiqaqi had been an intellectual (*mufakkir*), while Shallah was an administrator (*idārī*).⁵⁴

Second, as we recall, al-Shiqaqi had traveled extensively in order to build new alliances and contacts. Al-Shiqaqi was seemingly pragmatic while doing so in regard to whom he could deal, discuss, and have contact with. Shallah, on the other hand, was more cautious. He was particularly so regarding contact with groups such as Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ) and al-Jamā‘a al-Islāmiyya. According to Shallah, the practices of EIJ and al-Jamā‘a al-Islāmiyya, and their violence inside Egypt, were a cause for concern for several PIJ members as “our review was instead on the feasibility of continued communication [with the Egyptian groups]. Even before the death of al-Shiqaqi, there were some who objected to this connection and felt that it was disadvantageous.”⁵⁵ Shallah notes that he was one of those who objected at that time.

In fact, Shallah often complained that PIJ was falsely considered ideologically and methodologically synonymous with groups such as EIJ and al-Jamā‘a al-Islāmiyya, which accordingly had made the movement lose support.⁵⁶ Al-Shiqaqi, on the other hand, did not share these concerns, and in a discussion with the Palestinian leftist ‘Abd al-Qadir Yasin, al-Shiqaqi presented a different view of EIJ:

We have ties of fraternity and affection with some of them by the necessity of Islam’s triumph and the necessity of revolution against injustice and tyranny, and

against imperialism and Zionism. The revolutionary Islamic movement is governed by one philosophy although it has many factions.⁵⁷

This form of “fraternity” seems to have been mutual as EIJ published their condolences after the assassination of al-Shiqaqi. As al-Zawahiri allegedly wrote:

Islamic Jihad in Egypt offers its condolences to our brother the martyr Dr. Fathi al-Shaqāqi. We ask God, glorified be His name, to accept his good deeds and his martyrdom, and we support his brethren in their jihad. We confirm to this and to all *mujāhideen* that jihad is the way of martyrdom and that Fathi al-Shaqāqi deserves this honor. We have known him to be a true *mujāhid*, who combated the Jews, refusing treatises of humiliation and surrender. We ask God to support us on the road of jihad.⁵⁸

Conversely, in 1996, al-Zawahiri wrote to Shallah, not to praise him, but instead to criticize him for stating that the battle was with the Israelis not because they were Jewish, but because they were occupiers. Yet, al-Shiqaqi had stated the same on numerous occasions.⁵⁹

With the election of Shallah as the new secretary-general, PIJ began to terminate its contact with a number of non-state armed Islamist groups, primarily the Egyptian ones.⁶⁰ The discontinued contact between PIJ and the other jihadi groups suggests a movement that became more nationally oriented as its formal connections from now on were with its benefactors, Syria and Iran. While al-Shiqaqi had deemed the contact and relationship with EIJ and al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya as an issue of mutual conviction and goals in the shared struggle for the Islamic *umma*, Shallah saw it as harmful to PIJ and its public image.

To summarize, exile was not a disadvantage for Shallah, but on the contrary it enabled his rise as the new secretary-general of PIJ. The fact that he could take over the leadership of PIJ while being far from the hands of the Israeli occupation was further strengthened by the fact that he was a founding father, had worked in the movement since its inception, and was perceived as following the ideological line of PIJ in general and al-Shiqaqi in particular. More important, Shallah was perceived as a candidate who could bring order to the disintegrating shura council. While some emphasized his ability to listen and coordinate with the other leaders, others emphasized his virtues as an organizer and administrator.

7.3 PIJ in Its Weakest Phase

It was not immediately evident that PIJ was substantially weakened after the assassination of al-Shiqaqi. During the funeral of al-Shiqaqi, Shallah spoke against Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, declaring that the

Israelis would “pay dearly.”⁶¹ Then, on November 2, 1995, Qassam carried out a suicide operation on the Kissufim settler road in the Gaza Strip when Rubhi al-Kahlut and Muhammad Abu Hashim blew themselves up next to a convoy of Israeli settlers. According to Qassam, they did so to avenge al-Shiqaqi.⁶² Four months later, on March 4, 1996, Ramiz ‘Ubayd blew himself up with an explosive belt outside the Dizengoff Center, a shopping mall in Tel Aviv. According to PIJ, the operation was not only directed against the Israelis in order to avenge the death of al-Shiqaqi, but also for the assassination of Ayman al-Razayna and ‘Ammar al-A’raj in Qassam.⁶³

The frequency of PIJ’s operations against Israeli targets decreased, however, after ‘Ubayd’s operation. It was one year before PIJ carried out a new round of suicide operations, targeting the settlements of Kfar Darom and Netzarim in the Gaza Strip on April 1, 1997. Yet, according to al-Hajj Muhammad, “The attempts did not succeed, and the PA attempted to discredit the two martyrs by suggesting that they were collaborators with Israeli intelligence.”⁶⁴ Similarly, on November 5, 1998, PIJ conducted another operation, which was a miserable failure. As the two PIJ members Sulayman Tahayna and Yusuf al-Zughayr drove to the Jewish quarter of Jerusalem, Mahane Yehuda, with a car bomb, the martyr biography of al-Zughayr states:

[Tahayna and al-Zughayr] continued [driving] until they reached the market crowded with evil Zionists, and they drove the car between them just to wait for the right moment to create the greatest losses in the ranks of the enemy. Yusuf found a street that he drove into, but it was closed at the end. When they drove the car back again, the market was crowded with Zionist security personnel who became suspicious of the car, so Yusuf [al-Zughayr] and his brother Sulayman [Tahayna] rushed to blow themselves up.⁶⁵

Al-Hajj Muhammad stated that “the preparations were not accurate so the attempt led to the martyrdom of the two martyrs, with only light injuries to some of those who passed by.”⁶⁶

Several reasons explain the weakening, during which PIJ only carried out eleven operations between March 1996 and 2000 (in 1997, the movement was unable to carry out a single successful attack). First, as we recall from [Chapter 6](#), the majority of PIJ’s militant cadres and leaders had been either imprisoned or killed. Miqlid Hamid had, for example, coordinated the suicide operation of al-Kahlut and Abu Hashim in November 1995, yet his military activity ceased until the suicide operation of Nabil al-‘Ar’il on October 26, 2000.⁶⁷ Similarly, while Hamid’s companion, Nabil Abu Jabr, participated in an armed operation with al-Razayna in 1994, there is no registered armed activity before the eruption

of the Second Intifada.⁶⁸ Last, while Mahmud al-Zatma, the chief bomb maker in Qassam, was responsible for the suicide operations of 'Aziz in December 1993, Hammad in November 1994, the Beit Lid Operation in January 1995, and Khatib in April 1995, he coordinated no operation before 2000. The explanation is simple: they were all in jail.

Second, PIJ was suffering not only from lack of experienced personnel, but also from the financial mismanagement by its leadership. PIJ's economic situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories was described as "bad" in 1993, and several difficulties were addressed in transferring money into the Occupied Territories, or paying the families of martyrs and detainees.⁶⁹ On April 10, 1994, it was noted that PIJ members in the Occupied Territories were without money.⁷⁰ Necessarily, PIJ's financial problems would affect the movement's ability to carry out armed attacks in general and suicide bombings in particular. For example, al-Shiqaqi stated in a fax that a suicide bombing of PIJ in 1994 had cost the movement a staggering \$90,000, with Hamas providing the car and doing the preparations.⁷¹ The suicide bombing in question is in all likelihood that of Hisham Hamad at the Netzarim junction point on November 11, 1994.

To make matters even worse, on January 23, 1995, US President Bill Clinton signed Executive Order 12947, "Prohibiting Transactions with Terrorists Who Threaten to Disrupt the Middle East Peace Process," which included PIJ, Hamas, Hezbollah, DFLP, PFLP, and PFLP-GC.⁷² The executive order effectively froze the assets of PIJ in the US, in addition to blocking the bank accounts of Shallah and WISE. Although al-Shiqaqi stated that the gesture was "meaningless," and that PIJ "never had any assets in the United States or any foreign banks," this was, as has been shown, incorrect.⁷³ As we recall, both Shallah and al-Arian had employed the WISE bank account to transfer PIJ funds between the United States and abroad. Al-Arian had transferred money from his University of South Florida Federal Credit Union account to the bank account of WISE at NCNB. Funds were then transferred to his bank account in Bank Leumi, Israel. The Bank Leumi account was employed on numerous occasions to provide funds to PIJ members and relatives. For example, on June 3, 1993, al-Arian transferred money from the Bank Leumi account to spouses and relatives of recently convicted PIJ detainees in Israeli prisons.⁷⁴

We do not know, of course, how gravely PIJ was affected by having its US assets frozen; according to the American Congressional Research Service, this amounted to \$17,000 by the end of 2000.⁷⁵ On the one hand, Iran may have compensated PIJ in order to keep the movement on its feet, and according to the United States District Court of the District

of Columbia, the former allegedly provided the movement with approximately two million dollars annually in the mid-1990s.⁷⁶ In addition, as Hamas had \$250,000 of their US real estate holdings blocked, we see that the total worth of PIJ's assets in the US was considerably lower. It is thus not a given that the lost PIJ assets were of considerable importance. On the other hand, PIJ was so financially strapped in this period that it is likely that it depended on everything it could get its hands on. Having its assets frozen in January 1995 must thus have contributed to some extent to reducing PIJ to a shadow of its former self for the rest of the 1990s.

Unknown persons connected to the movement consequently expressed regret for not exploiting "the situation which had existed in 1987" to make PIJ the dominant Islamic organization in Palestine.⁷⁷ That there was such a possibility for PIJ is unlikely, however, as Hamas inherited a far more developed and elaborate infrastructure from the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood and became a major player on the Palestinian scene "from the moment" it emerged at the outbreak of the First Intifada.⁷⁸ Yet, as Hamas carried out a total of sixty-six attacks in the first three years after its establishment, PIJ carried out fifty-four attacks in the same period.⁷⁹ Although Hamas was slightly stronger immediately after its establishment, we nonetheless see that the two Palestinian Islamic movements were comparable in strength throughout the First Intifada.

Consequently, it was noted in [Chapter 6](#) that PIJ was particularly vulnerable to violent state repression, partly because it was difficult for several of its members to join its armed wing. This chapter has shown that PIJ was vulnerable to economic repression as well, such as the aforementioned freezing of assets and the blocking of bank accounts. This was certainly the result of not having diversified its income sources. While Hamas benefitted from diverse sources – from fundraising and zakat, to economic aid from its benefactors – PIJ did not. When the finances of PIJ were mismanaged, or its economic sources were blocked, then PIJ suffered.

The financial turmoil also put pressure on the operational independence of PIJ as Iran began to intervene and pressure PIJ in how to disburse and allocate its funds.⁸⁰ To illustrate the matter, Shallah and al-Arian discussed borrowing between \$250,000 and \$500,000 from Hamas out of fear that PIJ members would succumb to Iranian pressure due to the economic difficulties they were facing.⁸¹ This is not to say that PIJ was a puppet in the hands of Iran, and al-Shiqaqi notably stood up against Iranian pressure in this period.⁸² Instead, from the account on how Iran pressured PIJ while the latter stood its ground, it shows that their alliance was subject to constant negotiation and renegotiation on what it actually entailed, and on who had a say in what. While Iran could pressure PIJ

because it knew that the movement was dependent on its aid and would succumb without it, the latter could stand its ground because it knew Iran needed an ally on the ground in the Palestinian arena.

7.4 Conclusion

Although we do not know the true causes for the defections from PIJ in the early 1990s, I have argued that it is reasonable to ascribe them to the bureaucratization of PIJ. While the creation of power structures and a formally sanctioned leadership left segments in the movement dissatisfied as they were shunted aside, the rapid expansion of PIJ in the 1980s exacerbated these tensions. While PIJ had benefitted militarily from the wave of new former secular-nationalist militants, it may also have introduced opportunistic elements that created tensions once they perceived their opportunities for promotion blocked.

The expansion of PIJ and its rapid rise also weakened the shared ideological signifiers in the movement. As the leadership of PIJ sought further organizational expansion, disputes arose when Christians were allegedly allowed to enter. If this was the case, it shows that rapid expansion creates tension not merely because opportunistic elements create havoc in the leadership when horizontal lines are weakened, but also because it strains the identity and creed of ideologically strict movements.

I have used the tensions in the leadership, and the potential splitting of PIJ, to explain why Shallah became the new secretary-general after the assassination of al-Shiqaqi. As he was soft-spoken, listened to others, and consulted with other leaders before making a decision, he was well suited to administer and solve the contradictions potentially leading to the downfall of PIJ. Ideological rigidity, seniority, and continuity played a role too, however. Last, we cannot overlook the fact that PIJ had learned from and adapted to counterinsurgency, as a result of which PIJ decreed that its leader must reside in the diaspora far from the hands of the occupation.

Because PIJ did not engage in social services or widespread fundraising, or benefit from zakat and alms as Hamas did, the movement became increasingly dependent on Iran. Combined with financial mismanagement, PIJ's dismal economic situation contributed to the weakest period in its history as it struggled to finance its operations, and provide welfare to the families and relatives of martyrs and detainees. I do not suggest that PIJ became an Iranian puppet in this period, however. Instead, PIJ stood its ground and refused to let Iran interfere, although the latter decisively attempted to do so. This proves that the relationship between PIJ and Iran was in constant flux and had to be continuously negotiated and

renegotiated. While PIJ knew that Iran depended on it as a representative in the Palestinian armed struggle, Iran knew that PIJ could not survive in its current form without its aid. There was, then, a continuous struggle between them as PIJ was able to preserve its independence.

The 1990s thus proved to be contradictory for PIJ. On the one hand, the power structures and bureaucratization of PIJ were finalized with the ascendancy of Shallah as secretary-general, and PIJ's political wing was thus rationalized and strengthened. On the other, the leadership in exile had few remaining ties to its bases in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, and PIJ consequently devolved from an integrated into a vanguard organization.

Despite its irrelevance throughout the 1990s, PIJ nevertheless had fate on its side. As the Second Intifada erupted in September 2000, PIJ not only returned to the arena of armed struggle, but also developed into the third largest Palestinian armed movement. This is where we turn to next.

Part III

From the Second Intifada to the Arab Spring
(2000–2017)

8 The Comeback of PIJ

PIJ was largely absent the last five years of the 1990s. While its political leadership was attempting to rebuild its unity in exile, most of its militant cadres had either been killed or imprisoned. However, with the eruption of the Second Intifada in September 2000, PIJ forcefully returned and developed into the third-largest armed faction in the Palestinian arena. How did it happen, and what does this tell us about PIJ? Under what circumstances does the movement thrive and under what circumstances does it suffer?

As we have employed Staniland's model of vertical and horizontal ties in order to conceptualize the development of PIJ, we may recall that its recruitment depended more on kinship and friends in the West Bank than in it did in Gaza. The predominance of certain clans and villages in the West Bank structure of PIJ correspondingly created links and networks between every northern West Bank cell, and we will see that they made the movement far more resilient there than in the south of the West Bank. Consequently, we will see that the network of PIJ militants established in 1990 determined the movement's geographical strength during the Second Intifada.

This chapter consists of three sections. I begin with a brief general outline of the eruption of the Second Intifada, and the reestablishment of PIJ's military wing, the al-Quds Brigades. I then proceed to analyze the distribution and longevity of PIJ cells in the West Bank in this period. Last, I end this chapter by discussing why PIJ was able to return with such force once the Second Intifada erupted.

8.1 The Eruption of the "Oslo War"

As the first organized military campaigns of PIJ in the West Bank commenced comparably late to those of Gaza, the situation there was one of incipient decline. 'Issam Brahma, for example, was killed in a clash with Israeli soldiers in 1992 after being on the run for a longer period. The Palestinian National Authority (PA) and the Israeli occupation then arrested the cofounders Salih and Nu'man Tahayna, Anwar Hamran,

and Iyad Hardan. For most of the 1990s, then, the members and commanders of *'ushshāq al-shahāda* sat behind bars, adding to the drought of PIJ in this period.¹ The same applied to the PIJ militants of Gaza, including Mahmud al-Zatma, Miqlid Hamid, and Nabil Abu Jabr.

This drought was not limited to the severe repression executed by the Israeli occupation and the PA; nor was it restricted to the financial mismanagement of its leadership. The decline of the movement was also connected to the hopes the Palestinians had in negotiations and the peace process initiated by the Oslo Agreement. Consequently, while PIJ and Hamas engaged in armed operations in general and suicide bombings in particular, they faced increasing difficulties achieving popular Palestinian acceptance in the 1990s.² To illustrate, when Hamas and PIJ chose to boycott the legislative and presidential elections in 1996, their ratings plummeted to approximately 10 percent combined.³

Yet, the Oslo Agreement had essential flaws. It was most notably silent on “vital issues” such as the right of return for the 1948 refugees, the borders of the Palestinian entity, and the future of the Israeli settlements in the West Bank and in Gaza, in addition to the status of Jerusalem. In fact, as Shlaim claims, these issues were so sensitive that there would not have been an agreement if the PLO and Israel had addressed these points of contention.⁴ Instead, they outlined an agreement according to a strategy of “constructive opacity” by leaving the details hazy.⁵ Moreover, the agreement tilted heavily toward the Israeli position. Despite specific steps to transfer limited powers to the newly established PA, Israel retained the overall responsibility for security, which meant a redeployment of Israeli forces and not withdrawal.⁶ This imbalance certainly did not encourage a constructive development of the negotiations. As “the Palestinians found it very difficult to extract Israeli concessions,” Kimmerling and Migdal write, “it was not lost on Palestinian leaders that the one element that could be meted out to exert continuous pressure . . . – violence – had been relinquished from the onset.”⁷

As the peace process proved itself incapable of displaying tangible changes on the ground, with the Israeli occupation deepening instead of abating,⁸ frustration began to materialize in the Palestinian streets, and the Oslo Agreement gradually lost supporters. By April 2000, popular support for the two Islamic movements, which still emphasized armed struggle and rejected the peace process, had correspondingly risen to 15.5 percent. Six weeks after the collapse of the Camp David talks, the support had further increased to 19 percent by early September 2000.⁹ This support persisted throughout the Second Intifada, and from

January 2001 until January 2006, popular support for PIJ reached an average of 10 percent.¹⁰ In essence, the snowballing support for the two Palestinian Islamic movements reflect Pressman's postulation that "many Palestinians started to believe that the diplomatic process was a dead end and renewed confrontation was the only alternative."¹¹ As in 1987, only one small spark was required to launch another Palestinian uprising in 2000.

The opportunities of an increasingly violent situation were not lost on PIJ, which with the eruption of the Second Intifada changed the name of its military wing from Qassam to the al-Quds Brigades (*sarāyā al-quds*). Initially a Gazan phenomenon, the al-Quds Brigades included Nabil Abu Jabr, Miqlid Hamid, Mahmud al-Zatma, and Bashir al-Dabash among its founding fathers, all based in the Gaza Strip.¹² Shallah states that the transformation of PIJ's armed wing was due to the necessity of differentiating the armed wing from the 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades of Hamas, which was often abbreviated to the Qassām Brigades. As Shallah recalled, "We noticed that confusion sometimes arose between the name of Qassam and al-Qassām in the Hebrew and English press, in addition to the fact that the name [Qassam] is not very distinctive. So it was changed to the al-Quds Brigades."¹³

Yet, as al-Hajj Muhammad adds, the situation for PIJ was so dire in the late 1990s that many did believe that Qassam had in fact been dissolved.¹⁴ The transformation of PIJ's military wing can, then, also be attributed to a wish to start anew through a cosmetic reinvention. Shallah, for example, describes this reinvention as follows:

During the blessed al-Aqsa Intifada there was the rise of the al-Quds Brigades, the new name for the military wing of the movement, *as a new birth for the movement*, where it contributed to jihad and martyrdom [*istishhād*] next to the rest of the factions and military wings.¹⁵

There is little doubt that the al-Quds Brigades were a continuation from Qassam despite Shallah's description of its inception as "as a new birth for the movement." For example, the founding fathers of the al-Quds Brigades, such as al-Zatma, were the same leaders who established Qassam in the early 1990s. Those who had been in command during the seven lean years of PIJ thus continued to be so during the fertile ones as well. Moreover, the commanders in Qassam continued to play their earlier roles in the al-Quds Brigades. Nahid Katkat, for example, took responsibility for its grenadier group in the Gaza Strip, al-RPG.¹⁶ Neither were the practices of the al-Quds Brigades distinct from those of Qassam. Mainly engaging in ambushes on Israeli soldiers and settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, PIJ not only persisted, but also

increased its use of suicide bombers. While the first suicide bombings of PIJ in the early 1990s mostly targeted soldiers and settlers in Gaza, PIJ now began targeting civilians in Israeli nightclubs, restaurants, and cafes.

Descending into a maelstrom of violence, the Second Intifada was from the onset “a confrontation between elites” that marginalized nonviolent grassroots movements, and the militarized uprising largely appropriated a logic of retribution during which one attack required a response from the other side.¹⁷ Cohen postulates:

The [Israeli] army believed that swift and brutal retaliation against the [Palestinian] armed groups would be enough to stop the uprising. Not only was this expectation not met, but such a cursory strategy also led to a spiral of violence and contributed to transforming a conflict limited to the West Bank into a war involving Israeli civilian population within the Green Line.¹⁸

Consequently, while Milton-Edwards and Farrell describe the situation for Hamas in this period, their assessment certainly applied to PIJ too: “For years marginalized during the era of compromise and negotiations, [Hamas] now saw an angry younger generation increasingly in despair at the twenty-four-hour curfews, tank raids and dismantling of the Palestinian Authority.”¹⁹ There is thus no doubt that the uprising facilitated favorable conditions for PIJ. While reborn from war, blood, and twisted metal, we will nonetheless see in the next part that the establishment of PIJ in Jenin in 1990 precipitated its elaborate network of cells in the northern West Bank throughout the Second Intifada. More important, while PIJ was able to sustain its activity in the north because of this network, despite heavy losses, it rapidly collapsed in the south, such as in Hebron, during Israeli counterinsurgency in the absence of anything similar.

8.2 The West Bank Network of the Second Intifada

We have so far only obtained a general outline of the reasons for the Second Intifada and its eruption. In this section, we will go into the details of PIJ’s activity in this period. Because PIJ in the West Bank so clearly illustrates the causes for its decline and resurgence in general, this region will receive most of our attention. We will see that the founders of the al-Quds Brigades in the West Bank in 2000 were the same as those who founded *‘ushshāq al-shahāda* in 1990. Consequently, although PIJ in the West Bank was weakened in the 1990s because a great number of their cadres had been killed or arrested, its remaining cadres tapped into an already-existing network once they were released from prison in 2000 in order to rebuild and expand it. (See [Figure 8.1](#) for an overview of the network’s key militants.)

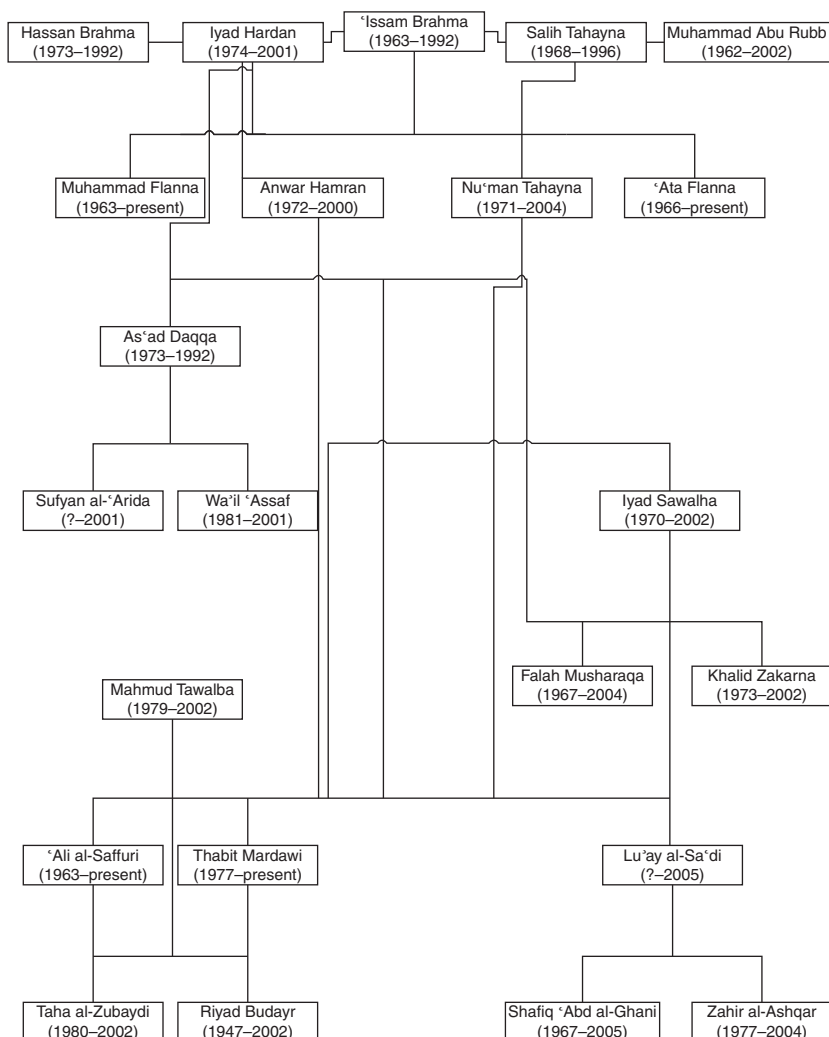


Figure 8.1 Key militants of PIJ's Jenin and Tulkarem network (1990-2005)

As we recall that the first PIJ generation in the West Bank came from Anza, al-Sila al-Harithiyya, Arraba, and Qabatiya from 1990, it was mainly in the Jenin district the greatest number of PIJ cells emerged during the Second Intifada. The interconnected network of PIJ cells in

the northern West Bank suggests then that the outbreak of PIJ activity during the Second Intifada was not merely the result of conflict eruption, but also that it built on preexisting social ties established almost a decade prior.

Prisons constituted an important sphere of recruitment for PIJ in the mid-1980s. However, although the members of *'ushshāq al-shahāda* spent considerable time behind bars throughout the 1990s, we see few new members joining PIJ in the West Bank via this route.²⁰ Instead, two things may be acknowledged. One is that prison provided an important training ground for the PIJ cadres in this period, preparing them for armed struggle once they were released. As the martyr biography of Iyad Hardan describes:

[Hardan] received jihadist training [in prison] by the cadres and leaders of Islamic Jihad in order to refine his personality. He was released in 1995 with a deeper vision of the line and thought of the resistance, and he quickly returned to action as he began his transition in 1996 [in the movement] from element [*'unṣur*] to commander [*qā'id*].²¹

Another example is the PIJ commanders in Tulkarem, Lu'ay al-Sa'di and As'ad Daqqa. According to al-Sa'di's martyr biography, Daqqa became one of his most important teachers and mentors while they served time together in jail between 1997 and 2000. There, Daqqa taught al-Sa'di lessons in armed tactics and the manufacture of explosives.²² One of the most important roles ascribed to Daqqa was that in prison he "trained the brothers in the use of weapons and the preparation of IEDs, booby-trapping cars, and making [explosive] belts."²³ Or, as al-Sa'di's martyr biography notes, "[al-Sa'di] was raised by the great leaders as he was transferred between the prisons of the occupation and the prisons of the PA, such as by As'ad Daqqa, the official commander of the al-Quds Brigades in Tulkarem, and the martyr commander Iyad Abu Shaqara."²⁴

The prison experience in the 1990s also contributed in cementing the links among the PIJ commanders in the northern West Bank. For example, in a picture from an Israeli prison in the 1990s, we see Daqqa (Tulkarem); Muhammad Basharat (originally from Jenin, active in Hebron during Second Intifada); and Hamran, Nu'man Tahayna, Hardan, and Khalid Zakarna (Jenin) together in prison.²⁵ In addition, it was in prison that the PIJ commander in Jenin, Thabit Mardawi, became acquainted with Nu'man, Hamran, Hardan, and 'Abd al-Halim 'Izz al-Din,²⁶ and, as we recall, Nu'man later married Mardawi's sister.

A substantial number of these PIJ cadres were released from prison shortly before and after the eruption of the Second Intifada. The cells of

Hamid and Abu Jabr in Gaza, for example, began to carry out armed attacks against Israeli targets anew – ranging from car bombs against Israeli checkpoints, ambushes on Israeli patrols, launching missiles and mortars against military sites and settlements, and attacks on convoys of Israeli settlers. The same applied to the West Bank as Hardan, Hamran, Nu'man Tahayna, and the rest of the PIJ members were released from jail in the same period. Not only did PIJ in the West Bank engage in the same type of attacks as in Gaza (i.e. attacks against Israeli soldiers, settlers, checkpoints, and settlements with firearms and IEDs), but they also instigated a new wave of suicide bombings in Israel.

With the increasing number of suicide bombings against Israeli targets during the Second Intifada, PIJ audaciously named Jenin “the capital of the martyrdom-seekers” (*‘āshimat al-istishhādiyyīn*). Similarly, PIJ noted, “[In the Second Intifada] the Jenin camp was a safe haven for the wanted leaders of the various resistance factions in the West Bank.”²⁷ There was certainly truth to these statements as the majority of PIJ’s suicide bombings during the Second Intifada were prepared and executed from Jenin (only two out of twenty-two bombings came from the Gaza Strip).²⁸ In response, Israeli authorities began to reformulate their policies to reconquer the West Bank and its cities; and beginning on March 29, 2002, the largest military operation since the Six-Day War commenced, the so-called Operation Defensive Shield.²⁹ From March 2002, several battles took place in the West Bank – with Nablus, Jenin, Tulkarem, and Bethlehem under siege, in addition to Jabalya in the Gaza Strip. The most prominent battle was the Battle of Jenin in April 2002, which marked the beginning of the end for PIJ in the West Bank.

In fact, the Israeli army had already invaded the Jenin camp one month before Operation Defensive Shield, in February, and the Palestinian factions there understood that the Israeli army was preparing something greater to come.³⁰ Accordingly, the al-Quds Brigades, the ‘Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, and the al-Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades began to meet in the Jenin camp throughout March 2002 – represented by Bassam al-Sa‘di (al-Quds Brigades), Ibrahim al-Jabr (‘Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades), and ‘Ata Abu Rumayla (the al-Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades).³¹ Through these consultations, the Palestinian factions attempted to unify their ranks, assess and present each faction’s ability to contribute, and prepare for the battle they were expecting.³²

According to Mardawi, the al-Quds Brigades had already exhausted most of its resources, ammunition, and explosives during the invasion in February.³³ Thus, the armed Palestinian factions began collectively to produce great quantities of explosives in the forms of grenades, explosive vests, and IEDs, in addition to acquiring ammunition and rifles. Mahmud

al-Sa'di, who participated in the Battle of Jenin, and was imprisoned at its end, described the IEDs as “the most important resistance tactic.”³⁴ In the account of Mardawi:

This policy [of obtaining weapons] was launched by our work to buy what we could find and what we could get our hands on of ammunition and weapons parts, in addition to the raw materials needed in order to prepare the explosives and all related additives, and to prepare them into their final form. . . . After preparing and processing this material, the same crew went on preparing the IEDs in different sizes and shapes, as they manufactured large-sized packages for armored vehicles, as well as preparing packages of varying sizes intended for personnel. This was in addition to manufacturing and preparing more than a thousand small explosives that could be thrown by hand After we had finished preparing the IEDs, and after it had taken its final form ready for use, they were spread out to every entrance and axis, where they were planted and set up at the selected places . . . so if the first line did not withstand, it would continue to the second line, to the third line, and so on.³⁵

As the alleys of Jenin were filled with IEDs, “the ordeal turned into something of a joke,” with the boys of the camp cheering “The camp is Qandahar,” referring to the October 2001 American bombing campaigns in Afghanistan.³⁶ Yet, as a number of IEDs were connected to electrical batteries, the Palestinian militants depended on wires to detonate them. When the Israeli army prepared for the invasion by intensively shelling and bombing Jenin, the majority of the IEDs were defused as the wires were cut, thus rendering most of the planted explosives useless: “As time passed and the bombing increased, the possibility and probability of detonating [the IEDs] dropped to zero.”³⁷

With the invasion of Jenin on April 1, 2002, the fighting in the camp took place from house to house and alley to alley, under intense bombardment by Israeli planes and helicopter gunships. When the dust settled, PIJ's highest-ranking members in the Jenin district had either been killed or arrested. The Jenin commander responsible for the majority of PIJ suicide bombings so far, Mahmud Tawalba, had been killed, while Mardawi, Mahmud al-Sa'di, and 'Ali al-Saffuri were imprisoned and later given life sentences. The Jenin cell had in effect been shattered.

The Battle of Jenin came in addition to previous losses inflicted on PIJ since the eruption of the Intifada. The Israelis had, for example, already assassinated the *'ushshāq al-shahāda* founder Hamran on December 11, 2000; and his close friend and compatriot, Hardan, met the same fate on April 5, 2001.³⁸ Further, nearly the entire Tulkarem cell of Daqqa had been obliterated in September 2001 when he, Sufyan al-'Arida, and Wa'il 'Assaf were killed in a clash with Israeli soldiers who besieged their house.³⁹

Contrary to the situation in the 1990s, however, when the movement was practically caught in a state of asphyxiation, PIJ was able to persist in its armed struggle against the occupation, and did not immediately succumb to its losses. The resilience of PIJ may be partly explained by the strength of its network and the ability of its militants to transfer between cells in the northern West Bank. The PIJ militant Falah Musharaqa, for example, initially worked in the cell of Daqqa, but when Daqqa and the other cell members were killed in 2001, he easily transferred to the cell of Iyad Sawalha in Jenin.⁴⁰ Another who transferred to Sawalha's cell was Khalid Zakarna, who did so after his cell was defeated in the Battle of Jenin in April 2002.⁴¹ Both Musharaqa and Zakarna were thus able to continue their armed operations through their incorporation into other PIJ cells.

Conversely, in districts where the links between PIJ cells were fewer and frailer, it took far less effort to weaken the movement. The PIJ cell in Hebron, for example, led by Dhiyab al-Shwayki and Muhammad Sidr, carried out a number of attacks against Israeli targets. One example is that of Dhiyab's cousin, Hatim al-Shwayki, who opened fire on a bus in Jerusalem on November 4, 2001, before he was killed himself.⁴² The cell also carried out one of the most severe strikes against the Israeli army when PIJ killed twelve Israeli soldiers and injured a dozen in the Old City of Hebron on November 15, 2002.⁴³ Still, when the Israeli army assassinated Sidr and al-Shwayki in August–September 2003, PIJ was effectively debilitated in Hebron.⁴⁴

The collapse of PIJ in Hebron may be explained by the fact that the movement had far fewer members there, and so less force was required to weaken the movement. Yet, the Hebron branch was more than just Sidr and al-Shwayki. We may thus presume that while PIJ militants in a Jenin cell had greater opportunities for joining a second cell once they were facing violent counterinsurgency, the militants in Hebron did not. Thus, while Israeli counterinsurgency could effectively weaken PIJ in one district by targeting its leaders and organizers, this proved far less effective in the north, where militants transferred between cells to continue the fight.

Indeed, the aforementioned cell of Sawalha illustrates the structural differences between PIJ in the north and the south of the West Bank. As we noted, not only did Zakarna transfer from the defeated cell of Mardawi and Tawalba to Sawalha's cell; Musharaqa did likewise from Tulkarem. Consequently, PIJ activity in Jenin persisted, and Sawalha's cell set up one of the most lethal car bombs that Israel was exposed to during the Intifada, two months after the Battle of Jenin. As Hamza Samudi blew himself up next to an Israeli Egged bus at Megiddo, he killed himself and sixteen others, the majority of them Israeli soldiers.⁴⁵

The attack was, according to Samudi's martyr biography, to avenge the series of "massacres" of the people in Jenin, Nablus, and Gaza during Operation Defensive Shield.⁴⁶ Then, after Sawalha sent Muhammad Hasanayn and Ashraf al-Asmar to blow themselves up with a car bomb in the Karkur junction next to an Israeli Egged bus, on October 21, 2002, Israeli forces besieged the house of Sawalha one month later, in November, and killed him in the ensuing clash. While Zakarna had already been assassinated on May 22, 2002,⁴⁷ Musharafa persevered until he was killed in a clash with Israeli soldiers on September 14, 2004.⁴⁸

Perhaps because the remaining links between cells had been cut in the Jenin district with the defeat of Sawalha's cell, we see that the executive power of PIJ shifted from Jenin to the Tulkarem district for the first time in the course of the Second Intifada, under the leadership of Lu'ay al-Sa'di. When al-Sa'di was released from jail sometime around 2003, after the assassination of Daqqa and Sawalha, he continued the suicide operations of PIJ with his associates Majid and Ilyas al-Ashqar, Shafiq and Anwar 'Abd al-Ghani, 'Abd al-Fatah Radad, Muhammad Abu Khalil, Ahmad and 'Azmi 'Ajaj, and Mahmud Abu 'Abid.⁴⁹

First, the cell organized the suicide bombing of 'Abdallah Badran, who blew himself up outside the Stage nightclub in Tel Aviv on February 25, 2005. Five months later, al-Sa'di sent Ahmad Sami Ahmad Abu Khalil, who blew himself up outside of the HaSharon Mall in Netanya on July 12, 2005. Yet, as a symptom of the continuing decline in the West Bank due to the unrelenting counterinsurgency, the Israelis shot and killed al-Sa'di on October 24, 2005, after his partner, Majid al-Ashqar, unknowingly led Israeli soldiers to his hiding spot.⁵⁰ To a certain extent, we may correlate the conclusive downfall of PIJ in the West Bank with the assassination of al-Sa'di – when the majority of the cells there had been uprooted, and the remaining links were cut.

In the Gaza Strip, PIJ cadres met the same fate. Nahid Katkat was killed on November 12, 2003, during an armed clash with Israeli troops.⁵¹ The two founders of the al-Quds Brigades, Abu Jabr and Hamid, were then subsequently assassinated when Israeli missiles struck their car on December 25 of the same year.⁵² Mahmud 'Abd al-Fatah Jawda, a military commander of PIJ and partner of Abu Jabr and Hamid, was killed on February 29, 2004, by the same means when he traveled with Amin and Ayman al-Dahduh.⁵³ Last, on October 5, 2004, the same fate met Bashir al-Dabash, accompanied by Zarif al-'Ar'il, when an Israeli missile struck them in front of a UNRWA school.⁵⁴ By 2004, almost all of the founding leaders of PIJ's military wing – al-Zatma, Abu Jabr, Hamid, and al-Dabash – had been assassinated.

Although this section has primarily focused on providing chronology, there are a number of lessons to be drawn from it. To summarize, we see that the drought of PIJ in the 1990s added new acquaintances and links to its interconnected network throughout the northern West Bank. While kin and friendships sustained a substantial part of these links, a number of the most active cadres in the West Bank became acquainted in prison. In addition, several of them, such as Hardan and al-Sa'di, received armed training there, thus preparing them for continued armed struggle after their release. The links and uneven development of PIJ in the West Bank may help us understand why the movement was able to survive in Jenin despite heavy losses, while it succumbed much more easily in Hebron.

8.3 Explaining the Resurgence

As the preceding chronology shows, the situations for PIJ in the 1990s and in the Second Intifada were diametrically different. Certainly, PIJ lost important militants and cadres between 2000 and 2005; yet, while PIJ rapidly declined due to counterinsurgency in the 1990s, it did not do so during the Second Intifada. When members of one PIJ cell were killed or arrested, others took over, even within the same district, such as in Jenin. Then, when the cells in the Jenin district were debilitated in 2003, the executive power shifted to the Tulkarem district. We have seen that the direct and indirect links between PIJ cells in the northern West Bank contributed to this resilience. Yet, these links do not explain how PIJ as a whole was able to return with such force and establish itself as the third-largest Palestinian armed movement during and after the Second Intifada. How was PIJ able to do so after being reduced to a state of almost complete irrelevance in the 1990s?

There are several explanations for PIJ's resurgence. The perhaps most important is connected to the PA, and to violence becoming a currency of political legitimacy and power for the Palestinian factions. As we recall, Fatah was in a sense forced to participate in the Second Intifada if it was not to be sidelined altogether in Palestinian politics. Necessarily, its treatment of other armed movements such as PIJ and Hamas was affected "when there was a popular cry for [participating in the armed resistance] after the peace process collapsed."⁵⁵ This was a key factor in PIJ's resurgence. For example, it is unlikely that the PA had any capacity to impose order in a situation characterized by lawlessness, and it did little to prevent or punish armed operations against Israeli targets during the Second Intifada. Mainly, "[t]he PA's inaction was at least in part due to its unwillingness to confront the organizations carrying out [suicide bomb attacks], which enjoyed a high degree of popular Palestinian support."⁵⁶ As PIJ benefitted from increasing

Palestinian popular support; new waves of recruits; and fewer restrictions through an all-out war, PIJ obtained a greater space in which to maneuver, contrary to its situation in the 1990s when it was caught between the Israeli occupation and the security forces of the PA.

The PIJ cadres imprisoned by the PA in the 1990s were in effect released gradually after the eruption of the Intifada.⁵⁷ Some of the most prominent PIJ cadres released included al-Zatma (Qassam's main engineer and bomb-maker); Hardan (cofounder of *'ushshāq al-shahāda*); Abu Jabr and Hamid (cofounders of the al-Quds Brigades); and Mardawi (Jenin cell commander). In addition to being free and ready to engage in armed action, a number of the commanders such as Hardan and al-Sa'di had, as we recall, received training in the manufacture and use of weapons and explosives while behind bars.

Consequently, the militants who were released from jail came in addition to a new generation of cadres joining PIJ with the militarization of the Second Intifada. Examples include 'Adnan Bustan and Ahmad al-Shaykh Khalil, who joined the al-Quds Brigades in 2000 and participated in the development of PIJ's rocket program in the mid-2000s.⁵⁸ It is probable that their partner Rami 'Issa also joined the al-Quds Brigades in the same period.⁵⁹ Thus, not only did PIJ see a stream of already-trained cadres returning from prison, but also a new wave of recruits with the number of militants in the movement rising to new levels.

To illustrate how the PA was a key factor: Shallah noted in 2006 that PIJ was unable to return to its former strength in the West Bank following the Second Intifada because the Israeli occupation and the PA resumed their security cooperation, with the latter being particularly active in the northern West Bank. Moreover, PIJ was effectively weakened through the course of the Intifada due to, in Shallah's words, "an extermination war with its assassinations and imprisonments that affected thousands of mujahidin, resistance fighters, and all of those who believed in the resistance."⁶⁰ There were also new infrastructural mechanisms of pacification and control, such as the Separation Wall, which according to Shallah prevented PIJ from striking Israel "in its depths," in addition to the Israeli settlements, and which hindered their fighters' ability to "maneuver, walk, and run."⁶¹

The security cooperation between the PA and the Israeli occupation proved undeniably challenging for PIJ, as it had in the 1990s. As late as 2014, the PIJ representative in the West Bank noted in an interview with this author:

Right now, the situation is tough for PIJ. It is very difficult. Not just difficult, but very difficult and [it is so] everywhere. There is a combination of internal

[Palestinian] considerations, and the Palestinian relationship with the occupation. This tense relationship commenced with the establishment of the PA in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip where the late president Yasser Arafat worked to block the founders and the leadership of PIJ in Gaza and on the West Bank without reasons and without excuses, and the imprisoning continues until this moment. Until this moment, the imprisoning continues, the PA's security organs approve it, and there is a very great and intense harassment of the members and people of PIJ by [the PA] in the West Bank.⁶²

Certainly, this veritably affected other Palestinian factions as well. Ahmad Sa'adat, for example, the secretary-general of PFLP, noted in 2018 that his movement had advanced militarily in Gaza because it did not face the same conditions as in the West Bank under the security regime of the PA.⁶³ A local leader of Hamas in the Ramallah district noted similarly in an interview with this author:

The situation is very difficult for Hamas these days because of the entrapment from all directions. Unfortunately, even by the PA, which always complies with the sick requests of the Israeli army in its pursuit of all Islamic parties of all categories. ... The West Bank does not have a war, but it has arrests, killings, settlements, house demolitions, and attacks on holy sites.⁶⁴

As violence became a currency for political legitimacy and power, we may allude to the ceasefire (*tahdi'a*) negotiations that commenced in Cairo in 2002 as an example of how violence assisted the return of PIJ – not just to the military field, but also to the political one. In December 2002, PIJ joined the negotiations between Fatah and Hamas about the possibilities for a ceasefire with Israel, carried out under the supervision of the Egyptian authorities in general and Omar Suleiman, head of Egyptian intelligence, in particular. Although its attendance did not mean that PIJ agreed to a ceasefire at the time, the fact that the movement was requested to join the dialogue shows the increasing prominence of PIJ in Palestinian politics and resistance through its armed activity in the Second Intifada. Cairo had not invited PIJ to the first sessions, but the Egyptians gradually came to terms with the fact that no agreement between Fatah and Hamas could be implemented without the approval of PIJ, which had persistently organized suicide bombings inside Israel. As a PIJ representative who participated in the Cairo meetings stated, the movement had become a key player in the Palestinian resistance and, thus, “any search for order in the Palestinian house [*tarīb al-bayt al-filastīnī*] must be with [PIJ] present as an essential force.”⁶⁵

Through the course of the Second Intifada, PIJ had thus gained leverage that could be translated into political power when it came to the conditions for ceasefires and a cessation of armed action against the

Israelis by the Palestinian factions. As Shallah stated in the PIJ magazine *al-Jihad*, in 2004, one of the movement's most important achievements in the Second Intifada was becoming one of the three main forces in the Palestinian arena.⁶⁶

What does this tell us about PIJ? First, due to the very same dynamics that were discussed earlier in this study, we know that PIJ was more vulnerable than other movements to repression and counterinsurgency. If its militants were killed or arrested, then there were few alternative structures available whereby legitimacy through violence could be converted into political power. In this chapter, for example, we analyzed why PIJ was able to sustain its armed resistance in the northern West Bank for an extended period of time – something it was unable to do in Hebron – and we pointed to the links that enabled its cadres to move across cells. Yet, this dynamic of survival could not work once every cell was uprooted (which happened in Jenin in 2003, and then in Tulkarem in 2005).

Because PIJ does not engage in political institutions or in the social infrastructure, it leaves the movement highly vulnerable as it has few strings other than violence to play on. In contrast, Hamas also lost several of its most senior members such as Ahmad Yassin, 'Abdel 'Aziz al-Rantisi, and Salah Shahada during the Second Intifada. Yet Hamas had networks and institutions to absorb the blow, and while Hamas could fall back on its social services and political activism, PIJ could not. During the Oslo process, for example, the military and political wings of Hamas receded in favor of their social counterpart due to the pressures the movement was facing then.⁶⁷

True, the prison system proved decisive for PIJ as a sphere of recruitment and training. Yet, PIJ did not benefit when its cadres remained in prison without release. This was the case for PIJ in the 1990s, contributing to its weakening; and this was the case for PIJ in the West Bank after the Second Intifada. While the movement maintained its strong presence in the Gaza Strip as the Israeli occupation persisted without soldiers and settlers on the ground, the networks were uprooted in the West Bank. Hardan, Hamran, Daqqa, Tawalba, Sawalha, and Lu'ay al-Sa'di had all been assassinated, and Mardawi, Bassam al-Sa'di, and al-Saffuri were in prison. Although PIJ never had a particularly strong standing in the West Bank, it nevertheless maintained a presence there in the absence of the PA. Thus, as the movement lacked the necessary institutions and strong vertical ties to fill those positions that became vacant due to counterinsurgency, its presence in the West Bank soon collapsed with the end of the Second Intifada and it was incapable of reassembling itself into full force.

This is not to suggest that the effectiveness of PIJ's justification for existence, armed action, is not connected to Palestinian popular sentiments. As shown, PIJ did suffer due to its persistent military engagement with Israel in the 1990s at a time when Palestinians feared this tactic jeopardized a lasting peace and an autonomous Palestinian state. Similarly, its level of support in the Palestinian populace soared in correspondence with the support for armed resistance as the principal means to liberate the Occupied Palestinian Territories. There is thus a parallel between PIJ's situation in the Second Intifada and its situation in the mid-1980s, when there was considerable support for armed action in the absence of an appropriate organizational vehicle executing it.

8.4 Conclusion

PIJ has always been much weaker in the West Bank than in the Gaza Strip. As we have seen, this can mainly be explained by the weaker institutions for recruitment, in addition to weaker vertical ties between leadership and members. PIJ in the West Bank had to rely much more on friends and kinship in its recruitment efforts due to these deficiencies, and the movement saw an uneven development with PIJ's center of gravity to the north, in Jenin and Tulkarem.

Yet, due to dynamics specific to PIJ, we see that its cells in the northern West Bank were connected directly or indirectly. These links partly explain why PIJ could suffer heavy losses in the northern West Bank and continue its armed resistance against the Israeli occupation during the Second Intifada. If leading members of one military cell in Jenin were killed or imprisoned, for example, those who remained transferred to a second cell. In Hebron, where PIJ did not enjoy a similar network, far less was required to debilitate the movement.

Because PIJ was able to return with such force in 2000, I have discussed under what circumstances PIJ thrives and suffers. A key factor was the role of the PA through which PIJ obtained a 'free rein' to carry out armed operations. This explains both PIJ's resurgence in general and its weakening in the West Bank specifically once the Intifada ended. Necessarily, the strength of PIJ is connected to popular Palestinian sentiments as well, and we see that a new wave of members joined the movement when the uprising erupted. This legitimacy enabled PIJ to exert political influence in negotiations on ceasefires as violence became a currency for political power.

However, because PIJ lacks the structures of Hamas – such as social welfare and political institutions – it suffers far more once the channels for exercising violence become fewer. The West Bank is an example par

excellence of this. While PIJ has always been far weaker there compared to the Gaza Strip, we nevertheless see that it was able to grow and sustain its actions during the increase of violent conflict. Yet, with an increasing number of arrests and assassinations, it was also unable to recover.

As it developed into the third-largest Palestinian armed movement through the course of the Second Intifada, PIJ made Hamas increasingly anxious. As the latter felt PIJ trespassing beyond its supposed role, new tensions arose. These tensions increased further as “civil war” erupted in the Palestinian arena following Hamas’s electoral victory in the Palestinian legislative elections in 2006. This is where we turn to in [Chapter 9](#).

9 From Strife to the Arab Spring

After Hamas won the Palestinian legislative elections in 2006, strife soon erupted between it and Fatah with lasting effects on the Palestinian political fabric. When protests spread from Tunisia to the rest of the Arab world four years later, the Middle East was also transformed for the unforeseeable future. These two cases of change will be employed to analyze PIJ's quest for unity and dialogue in periods of intra-Palestinian conflict and Arab uprisings. As the ideological underpinnings for unity were subject of analysis earlier in this study, we will here assess it as a strategic rationale, and see how PIJ approaches the issue when it threatens its own *raison d'être*: armed struggle. As we will see, because unity is a means for the organization of a stronger resistance, it is also effectively sidelined when it threatens PIJ and its ability to participate in the armed struggle.

This chapter consists of three sections. I will begin by analyzing how PIJ navigated once strife erupted between Fatah and Hamas in 2007, and how the movement resorted to dialogue and negotiations in attempts to de-escalate the conflict. I proceed in the [second section](#) to see how these attempts to preserve unity were abandoned on the ground once Hamas attempted to establish law and order in Gaza, which led to violent clashes between it and PIJ. I will discuss in the [last section](#) how PIJ navigated regionally with the eruption of the Arab Spring. We will see that although PIJ is ideologically resistant to the Arab regimes and a supporter of the Arab Spring, the necessity of not alienating its patrons overrides this principle in practice.

9.1 Victory through Unity: PIJ between Fatah and Hamas

Since its emergence in the early 1980s, PIJ has developed into one of the least compromising Palestinian factions with its adherence to no compromise, no negotiations, no electoral participations under the Oslo Agreement, nothing but one Palestinian state in historical Palestine, and only armed struggle as the means of liberation. Yet, as we recall from earlier in this study, PIJ has also proven to be a pragmatic

Palestinian movement in regard to avoiding strife (*fitna*) in the Palestinian arena. Refusing to engage in violence against other Palestinian factions, PIJ stresses the necessity of dialogue and mutual understanding in times of disagreement. As we will see in this brief chronology, PIJ's emphasis was evident when dispute and violence erupted between Fatah and Hamas in 2007.

Although Hamas vacillated in its approach to electoral participation in the mid-1990s (opting for a formal boycott of the general elections), much had changed once the Second Intifada had ended. The peace process had failed, the political and charismatic authority of Yasser Arafat had disappeared once he resigned in September 2003, and Israel had formally withdrawn from the Gaza Strip. Hamas's role in the Second Intifada had also boosted its standing, and the movement consequently believed it was entitled a role in governance.¹ The second round of the Palestinian municipal elections further encouraged Hamas members in the Gaza Strip when the movement won seven out of ten municipal councils, and "[Hamas] felt confident that [it] could win a comfortable majority [in the legislative elections]."² As Tamimi notes, the boycott of 1996 had never been a decisively ideological issue, but rather "arose from the conviction that the elections were conducted in circumstances that did not guarantee fair play."³

Indeed, the decision to participate in the Palestinian legislative elections was closely connected to the movement's experience with, and analysis of, the Palestinian resistance: "For Hamas, resistance naturally encompassed a political element, and the political arena was an extension of military policies, particularly after the failure of armed struggle to achieve its goals."⁴ Hamas thus stressed that its electoral participation was not premised on the concessions of the PLO but rather on the "fundamentals of the Palestinian struggle."⁵ That is, Hamas defined political participation as a task to liberate the Palestinian National Authority (PA) from the clutches of Fatah and to use its institutions to strengthen the Palestinian resistance.⁶ Governance and resistance were consequently two sides of the same coin.

PIJ, on the other hand, still opposed any electoral participation. As we will return to the movement's conception of the state and its nature in [Chapter 10](#), it suffices to note that PIJ viewed the influence of political power with certain suspicion. Shallah, for example, reminisced of the 1990s when Hamas still rejected electoral participation, and he described a time when two distinct camps existed in the Palestinian political landscape – the Islamic camp forming "the camp of resistance" and those who did not. PIJ was from the mid-2000s, however, the only faction that

inhibited a “special reasoning” (*kāna lahu ijtihādahu al-khāṣṣ*).⁷ The conclusion was thus that electoral participation led to a uniformity of political lines of those participating:

There was a strange similarity in the political discourse found in the Authority [during the elections]. Hamas, Fatah, PFLP, DFLP, Palestinian People’s Party, Salam Fayyad, and everybody else talked in one language and with one speech. This was the speech of the “democratic wedding.”⁸

Moreover, PIJ referred to the structural constraints of Palestinian parliamentary democracy as the movement noted that the Palestinian National Authority (PA) knew how to limit and prevent the role of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC). PIJ thus concluded that “the parliamentary bloc will not be able, no matter how strong, and whatever support it has, to fix anything. The PLC, which remained in its position for nearly eleven years, did not leave any significant achievements behind, a lesson for those to consider.”⁹ The PLC would essentially be that of any other “parliamentary body in the Third World”: corrupt, unaccountable, and in the end be limited to giving the rulers a false bestowment of democratic legitimacy. Al-Hajj Muhammad underscored this point by referring to the Iraqi Hamas, which participated in elections under US occupation: “[Iraqi Hamas] justified its participation in the Iraqi government under the occupation; what seems as an interest for the Muslim is in fact an offense and forfeiture to God. Indeed, what seems to be fulfilling an interest is a mistake in concepts of strategy.”¹⁰ Shallah also noted the similarity of (Palestinian) Hamas and Iraqi Hamas as “there is an American occupation there, and there is a Zionist occupation here.”¹¹

Although encouraged by its results in the municipal elections, Hamas did nonetheless not predict the earthquake it would cause in the legislative elections when the movement won 74 out of 132 seats. As the ensuing Palestinian political split has been elaborately described and analyzed by other scholars, it suffices to note that Hamas’s relationship with Fatah, the previous ruling party, became increasingly tense due to the shifting power relations in the Palestinian political fabric.¹² As the two parties subsequently failed to create a national unity government, the tensions escalated. Then, in June 2007, a military confrontation between Hamas and Fatah erupted after which the former took control over the Gaza Strip. The result was a decisive political split between Gaza, where Hamas came to power, and the West Bank, where the PA remained in power.

After the “civil war” between Hamas and Fatah culminated in the summer of 2007, hostilities persisted. While the Fatah camp decried what it perceived to be a coup d’état, Hamas upheld its right to govern

as the winner of the legislative elections. PIJ chose to remain neutral. In fact, PIJ exerted a restraining role in this period, during which it emphasized the need for national Palestinian unity, to avoid strife, and to stand united against the Israeli occupation. Similarly, from the onset of the crisis, PIJ criticized both Fatah and Hamas severely. On the one hand, PIJ perceived that Hamas had taken control over Gaza while being unable to establish law and order for its citizens to abide by.¹³ On the other, it held Mahmoud Abbas responsible for the sharp division in the Palestinian arena.¹⁴ The main approach of PIJ was thus one of de-escalation and mediation, with which the movement attempted to create an atmosphere of shared responsibility through its mediating role. Throughout the split, PIJ approached the initiatives of Hamas with a conception of “Yes, but,” while simultaneously wanting to avoid alienating Fatah in doing so.¹⁵

The mediation of PIJ was not an act of opportunism that first occurred with the intra-Palestinian tensions in 2007. As we recall, when tensions ran high between Hamas and Fatah in 1992, al-Shiqaqi stated that it “hurt the heart” to witness the strife, and that “shedding [Palestinian] blood had no place but in the confrontation with the true enemy, Israel.”¹⁶ The strife between the two parties was in al-Shiqaqi’s view “destroying the accomplishment of the [First] Intifada.”¹⁷ Shallah repeated the same sentiment as late as 2015 when he emphasized the necessity of unity for victory:

In the process of struggle for national liberation, unity is not an option: it is a duty, an existential necessity, and a prerequisite for every Palestinian. . . . Thus, ending the division and the occupation are inseparable goals because unity and liberty are two sides of the same coin.¹⁸

Thus, when violent intra-Palestinian clashes became normalized, PIJ stepped in. In May 2007, PIJ vowed to bring its members into the street to end any internal armed feud, while it called for the formation of an impartial investigative committee to “reveal the circumstances of the clashes.”¹⁹ As the spokesperson of PIJ, Dawud Shihab, stated, “We will have to go down to the streets with the al-Quds Brigades . . . to resolve any disputes or armed clashes. The national interest requires us to take a firm stand against any attempt to drag the internal arena into infighting.”²⁰ PIJ worked actively on the ground with PFLP and DFLP in this period to mediate between Fatah and Hamas and to de-escalate the situation, and the three factions managed to persuade Fatah and Hamas to release the soldiers they had kidnapped from each other in January 2007.²¹

The movement actively pursued a pragmatic stance as a mediating partner during the strife between Fatah and Hamas, in which PIJ in practice did not differentiate between the two, whether secular-nationalist or Islamist.

Shallah's prescription for ending the crisis ("sitting down at the table of dialogue") is distinctively different from its prescription for ending the occupation. For example, the description of the strife by Khalid al-Batsh, one of the political leaders in PIJ, can hardly be described as that of a radical:

We do not have animosity towards either government, either in Gaza or in Ramallah. As far as we are concerned, both governments are our brethren. If we differ with them politically or as to performance, these differences do not reach the point of quarrels or fighting, and we manage our relations through dialogue and understanding.²²

To summarize this section, PIJ exerted a pragmatic role during the strife between Fatah and Hamas, underscoring the need for unity through dialogue and mutual understanding. As we recall from earlier in this study, unity is an obligation in the struggle against colonialism. Yet, we will see in the [next section](#) that PIJ had difficulties maintaining peace on the ground if unity in practice restricted its possibilities for waging resistance. In fact, despite PIJ's neutral stance, the relationship between it and Hamas rapidly soured once the latter attempted to establish law and order in Gaza. As Hamas attempted to limit the military operations of Palestinian factions, clashes between it and PIJ commenced in 2007.

9.2 Sidelineing Hamas? The Developing Tensions of PIJ and Hamas

As armed struggle is the *raison d'être* of PIJ, its pragmatism and quest for unity was put to test once Hamas had taken control of Gaza and attempted to obtain the monopoly on violence there. While the leadership of both PIJ and Hamas maintained cordial relations, armed clashes erupted on the ground when PIJ maintained its duty to resist the occupation violently while Hamas struggled to create law and order. To make matters worse, as Hamas had always perceived itself as the main representative of the Palestinian Islamic trend, further tensions developed when PIJ began to grow at its expense due to Palestinian frustrations with the deteriorating conditions in Gaza.

Already in 2004, during the Second Intifada, signs of tensions surfaced with the leak of a tape showing Fathi Hamad, a member of Hamas's shura council, slamming PIJ for allegedly attempting to "outmuscle" Hamas. Although Hamad focused on the perceived Shiite credentials of PIJ, stating that the movement was only a proxy of Iran and Hezbollah and that PIJ had no right to operate in the Palestinian streets, the tape seemingly indicated the frustration of Hamas. Specifically, although

Hamas was by far the larger organization, it felt PIJ was presented as equally important by the press.²³ As Hamad lamented:

We outnumber them, we have many more mosques, and much more commitment, but they are ahead of us in the satellite TV stations, and their Web sites are much bigger than the group itself. They are stealing attacks from Hamas, exaggerate the number of their killed, and inflate the numbers of their street demonstrations as if they are a domestic group, even though they are supported by Hezbollah. The media has turned them into the equals of the Muslim Brotherhood.²⁴

Consequently, while we recall that violent clashes between PIJ and Hamas had been virtually absent since they signed the Charter of Brotherhood and Cooperation in 1992, the tensions between the two persisted. As Hamas's outburst in 2004 illustrates, these tensions were essentially connected to its perception of PIJ as the "little brother," and of itself as the main Palestinian Islamic representative. During its strife with Fatah, for example, Hamas attempted to make PIJ declare its support and to position itself as an ally. As sources in PIJ stated at the time: "[Hamas] expects people to deal with it in the way that [Hamas] sees fit."²⁵ In extenso, although PIJ attempted to de-escalate the situation between Hamas and Fatah, the relationship of the two Islamic movements was inherently unstable once Hamas took control in Gaza.

As Hamas spent its first year in government taking control over the administrative institutions in Gaza, it also sought to gain a monopoly on violence and to establish law and order through the Executive Force (*al-quwwa al-tanfidiyya*).²⁶ Hamas pledged to keep the streets of Gaza safe, and sent a signal to other armed Palestinian groups to adhere to its rule, including PIJ.²⁷ When Hamas attempted to stop PIJ members firing weapons into the air during a wedding, a practice on which Hamas had issued a ban one month prior, clashes soon occurred.²⁸ As the man who fired the weapon fled into the house of a PIJ official, violence ensued when Hamas attacked the building, wounding ten and killing one.²⁹ Two months later, in October 2007, further clashes erupted between PIJ and Hamas.³⁰

The rapid changes Gaza underwent in this period certainly contributed to the deteriorating relationship between the two Palestinian Islamic movements, during which uncertainties reigned in the absence of effective governance. Yet, to limit the eruption of violence between PIJ and Hamas to the political transition of the Occupied Palestinian Territories is to ignore the fact that the clashes persisted. To illustrate, as late as June 2013, Hamas police officers killed Ra'id Jundiyya, one of the field commanders in PIJ's rocket unit.³¹ Less than two months later, PIJ

members and Hamas government security services clashed after a dispute over a sermon given by the imam of the PIJ-affiliated al-Tawhid Mosque in Beit Hanoun. Allegedly, the dispute was caused by the imam's criticism of the continuous power outages in the Gaza Strip and that one party, Hamas, led the country. Another claimed that the mosque was in possession of a substantial amount of Iranian food aid, which the security services attempted to confiscate.³²

Last, in April 2014, a new dispute between Hamas and PIJ erupted about one of the mosques of Gaza when the imam of the Ibrahim al-Khalil Mosque, Murid al-Qanouh, was dismissed by the Ministry of Religious Endowments and Affairs. While al-Qanouh claimed that he had been fired for political reasons, the ministry stated that it was because he had not done his job for two months. Consequently, the dispute developed into a fistfight between Hamas and PIJ worshippers in the mosque, with both leaderships quickly intervening in order to end the clashes. Then, in Rafah, another dispute erupted in Gaza when PIJ followers attacked a Salafi sheikh.³³

The fact that the clashes between PIJ and Hamas persisted (although sporadically) over seven years implies they were not isolated events, but rather symptoms of the underlying contradictions between the two movements. The main cause for these contradictions was presumably Hamas's attempt to establish law and order in Gaza, and the need to walk a far more delicate line between maintaining the ethos of a resistance movement and the responsibilities of a ruling party. This was in sharp contrast to PIJ, which adhered to its mantra that only armed resistance could liberate Palestine. Already in September 2007, for example, Ismael Haniyeh called on all Palestinian factions to avoid sending rockets and shelling the border crossings of the Gaza Strip in order to preserve commercial movement, security, and stability in the Strip.³⁴ Later, in 2013, Hamas arrested two members of PIJ in Khan Younis after they had sent mortars during an incursion of Israeli troops into the southern Gaza Strip.³⁵ As Baconi argues, although Hamas viewed its policies in Gaza as an existential mission to safeguard the broader Palestinian struggle, its biggest challenge was nonetheless "curbing the resistance activities of other factions, including Islamic Jihad," and Hamas had accordingly been "very effective at limiting rocket fire into Israel, even establishing a police force to restrain armed operations."³⁶

Certainly, this was not limited to PIJ. Abu al-Saed, the military spokesperson of the Popular Resistance Committees in the Gaza Strip, noted that Hamas security forces had arrested a number of members from the Palestinian factions for attempting to fire rockets into Israel.³⁷ The Palestinian artist Majida Shaheen certainly caught popular sentiment

about the Gazan situation when she drew a caricature of Haniyeh nervously trying to tame an angry dog with “the al-Quds Brigades” written on its collar.³⁸ While Hamas failed on multiple occasions to participate in military actions against the Israeli occupation, PIJ consequently found itself at the forefront.

This new Gazan reality, in which PIJ began to sideline Hamas in the armed resistance, could only add to these tensions. In the period following the Arab Spring, for example, with paradigmatic shifts in the Arab world, PIJ enjoyed considerable growth in the Gaza Strip and became the second-largest military force there. In terms of military power, only Hamas surpassed it. Simultaneously, PIJ saw a rapid growth in its public appeal. While 13.5 percent of Gaza’s population preferred PIJ in April 2014, 30.8 percent of the same population supported the movement in September 2014 after the Israeli bombing campaign, the so-called Protective Edge.³⁹

We may recall that PIJ’s ability to grow (or its lack thereof) was partly connected to popular Palestinian sentiment. This was the case during its drought in the 1990s and its resurgence during the Second Intifada. Much indicates that the support for armed resistance was a factor explaining the rapid growth of PIJ under Hamas rule in Gaza from 2007. For example, as 60.3 percent of the Palestinian population in Gaza believed armed resistance was the most appropriate means to attain Palestinian rights in 2014, while only 6.5 percent believed in negotiations, PIJ would necessarily thrive as long as Hamas sought a moderating line as the ruling party.⁴⁰ As a merchant in Gaza explained, “We have no other option; certainly no diplomatic option. That’s why we support Islamic Jihad.”⁴¹

In addition, the increasing popularity of PIJ was assisted by the development of the Arab Spring. As we will see, PIJ maintained relatively good relations with its foreign benefactors until approximately 2015. Similarly, the realignment of the political map in the Middle East does not seem to have initially favored Hamas, as it grew closer to the so-called Sunni axis. Muhammad Hijazi noted that many Palestinians were suspicious of the “moderation axis” of Qatar, Turkey, and the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, as many perceived it as Hamas getting closer to a “US sphere of understanding.”⁴² PIJ, on the other hand, maintained its unequivocal positions such as never accepting a state on the 1967 borders.⁴³

Moreover, while Hamas according to some estimates had previously received up to \$150 million annually from Iran, in addition to military support and training, the distancing of Hamas from Bashar al-Assad’s Syrian regime resulted in a dramatic decline of Iranian financial support.⁴⁴ According to other sources, the aid to Hamas was cut off completely while Iran increased its support for PIJ.⁴⁵ The financial

imbalance in Iranian funding to Hamas and PIJ manifested itself through the military development of the latter in Gaza. In 2012, PIJ managed to lead a military battle of substantial magnitude against Israel for the first time in its history.⁴⁶ This development continued when PIJ developed into a more cohesive, organized, and flexible militant organization as shown during the fighting with Israel two years later, in 2014.⁴⁷

The military development and professionalization of PIJ between 2011 and 2014 had decisive intra-Palestinian repercussions. While PIJ stated in 2012 that it had won the battle against Israel, Hamas had effectively been pushed into a corner with increasing criticism of its rule with electricity and water-supply problems.⁴⁸ Even worse, the self-constraint of Hamas strengthened the image many Palestinians began to conceive of it as yet another version of Fatah in the Gaza Strip.⁴⁹ The split between Hamas and Fatah was even reported to be a source of new members for PIJ.⁵⁰ In fact, the new circumstances in the Gaza Strip developed into a win-win situation for PIJ as the movement continued its confrontations with Israel, which earned it increased support among Palestinians, while Hamas, as the ruling party, was blamed for the deteriorating situation in Gaza, accelerated by the Israeli bombing campaigns. As Baconi notes: "Hamas's popular support is now shaped by the quality of its administration within the Gaza Strip and not by its commitment to resistance."⁵¹

Coupled with PIJ's ability to maintain cordial relations with several Arab states at once, the increased importance and sophistication of its armed activity also sidelined Hamas diplomatically. First, although some group leaders in Hamas voiced their support for the fighting in 2012, it showed itself unable to stop PIJ from firing rockets from the Gaza Strip, and had to appeal to Egyptian authorities to broker a truce agreement.⁵² Even worse, when PIJ fired a new round of rockets against Israel in 2014, the Egyptian intelligence services went as far as to broker a truce with PIJ without contacting Hamas, proving the increasing impotence of the latter. As Ghazi Hamad, a Hamas senior official, noted, "Egypt did not communicate with us about a return to calm, and limited its contact to Islamic Jihad. The Egyptians did not inform us of any agreements, despite the fact that they should coordinate with Hamas [regarding such matters]."⁵³

To summarize, there are two lessons from this section. First, as we recall that violence is a currency that can be converted to political power, we see that PIJ was strengthened when Hamas proved incapable both of stopping it and of participating in the armed resistance. As PIJ engaged militarily against Israel in 2012, and had developed into a more organized and professional militant organization by 2014, Egypt commenced negotiations with PIJ without bothering to consult Hamas. In terms of

diplomatic and military developments, PIJ managed to sideline Hamas, although the latter was still far bigger. This growth of PIJ was not limited to the politico-military field, but was also a result of the shifting alliances of the Arab Spring. As Hamas had sided against the regime of Bashar al-Assad and Iran, PIJ benefited economically for a period, as it remained Iran's main ally in the Palestinian arena.

Second, national unity and dialogue in intra-Palestinian conflict are a strategic rationale for PIJ as a means to achieve Palestinian victory against Israeli occupation. Yet, this rationale is challenged when PIJ has to balance between Palestinian harmony and the justification for its existence: armed struggle. Consequently, little indicates that PIJ actively sought to engage Hamas violently for its right to send rockets into Israel, and the relationship between PIJ and Hamas on the leadership level was cordial in this period. However, violent clashes erupted on the ground when Hamas security forces confronted or challenged the ability of PIJ militants to execute armed attacks against the occupation, and the situation cannot be described as anything but unstable.⁵⁴

9.3 Principled Pragmatism: PIJ and the Arab Spring

The Middle East hardly had a history of flourishing postcolonial democracy, Brynen and colleagues note. Although some Arab states featured some form of “elective, parliamentary, or quasi-democratic political system” upon independence, these were soon toppled in military coups or beset by civil war. Others developed into absolutist or authoritarian constitutional democracies, or single-party states. While this was a norm following postcolonial independence, and particularly so in Asia and Africa, what was distinct about the Middle East was its persistence.⁵⁵ Yet, in Tunisia, “a country that few would have identified as being ripe for regime change only a few months prior,” an escalating series of protests were set off after the self-immolation of Tunisian street vendor Mohamed Bouazizi following police harassment and his futile complaints.⁵⁶ Popular protests soon spread, first to Egypt with the masses occupying the Tahrir Square on January 25, 2011, then to Libya with a “Day of Rage” on February 17. Demonstrations and unrest followed in Syria on March 15, soon developing into civil war. The Middle East had effectively transformed.

The Arab Spring mattered for PIJ, as it did for the other Palestinian factions. One reason pertained to state authorities near Gaza, such as Egypt, which had acquired an increasingly important role in Palestinian politics following the Israeli blockade of the Strip in 2007. Another was the fact that PIJ's patrons – Iran and Syria – were drawn into the Syrian civil war erupting in 2011. Consequently, the Palestinian factions

maneuvered from country to country with great difficulty as the uprisings in the Middle East spread. While one revolution, such as the Tunisian one, received the support of all Palestinian factions, another, such as the Egyptian, was dismissed. Meanwhile, the Syrian uprising sowed division in the Palestinian arena.

The development of the Arab Spring is thus telling when assessing the Palestinian factions' attempt to balance between principles and pragmatism, as they could not afford to alienate potential benefactors. PIJ was no exception in this regard, and, as we will see, it refused to side with either the uprisings or the Arab regimes – or to take sides in the Syrian conflict. Yet, this neutrality was ambiguous. While PIJ was ideologically resistant to the Arab regimes and, in fact, supported the popular quest for freedom, its adherence to unity (expressed through official neutrality) essentially became a survival mechanism overriding ideological principles when the latter potentially threatened the interests of the movement.

When the Tunisian people toppled the regime of Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, the revolution attained the univocal support of all Palestinian factions. While the PLO praised the courage of the Tunisian people, Hamas commended the uprising against “injustice and tyranny.”⁵⁷ PIJ, on the other hand, organized a march in the Gaza Strip in support for the revolution, and PFLP and DFLP stated that they stood firmly with the Tunisian people.⁵⁸ Then, when demonstrations erupted in Egypt through which its people demanded the fall of Hosni Mubarak's regime, marches were organized in the Palestinian streets in solidarity with the Egyptian people. In these marches, high-ranking Palestinian politicians participated, such as Hanan Ashrawi, a member of PLO's Executive Committee; PFLP's senior political leader Khalida Jarrar; and former PA Information Minister Mustafa Barghouti.⁵⁹

The Palestinian factions had become more cautious by this time, however. Nimr Hammad, the advisor for the Palestinian president, criticized the Palestinian solidarity marches and stated they did not represent the PA.⁶⁰ Hamas leader Ayman Taha stated that the developments in Egypt were “an internal movement,” and that “[Hamas] do[es] not interfere in the internal affairs of Egypt or any other Arab country.”⁶¹ Even PIJ admitted that it had asked its supporters and members in Gaza to avoid marches that supported the demonstrations in Egypt.⁶²

When Mubarak resigned from power on February 13, 2011, however, the revolution seemingly stopped being an internal Egyptian affair. While the initial Palestinian demonstrations had not represented the PA, both the PA and the PLO now stated their support for the Egyptian people and their “decision to bring about change and to consolidate democracy.”⁶³ Hamas congratulated Egypt on the success of its revolution,⁶⁴ and PIJ

(which had asked its supporters not to organize demonstrations in support) now turned as Muhammad al-Hindi, member of its political bureau, stated: “Egypt is making glory not only for itself, but for the entire *umma*, while the Arab and Islamic peoples are rejoicing out of their hearts at what has been achieved by a proud people.”⁶⁵ As demonstrations erupted in Libya the same month, PIJ also supported the removal of Gaddafi.⁶⁶

Certainly, Egypt and Tunisia never were important patrons or allies for PIJ, and although it remained neutral during the Arab Spring, the movement could afford to congratulate the revolutions once they had succeeded. Similarly, there was hardly anything at stake for PIJ in supporting the end of Gaddafi. The situation turned more delicate, however, when protests erupted in Syria. Not only did the regime of Bashar al-Assad guarantee the safety of PIJ’s leadership in Damascus, but it was also one of the most important allies of PIJ’s main benefactor, Iran. The Syrian civil war illustrates the differing approaches of Hamas and PIJ when dealing with foreign affairs and allies.

Already in April 2011, it became clear that Hamas was leaving Damascus. The head of Hamas’s political bureau, Khalid Meshal, for example, headed to Qatar, which had agreed to host him. The deputy chairman of Hamas’s political bureau, Mousa Abu Marzouq, on the other hand, reportedly went to Egypt.⁶⁷ Then, approximately one year later, in February 2012, Hamas openly disavowed the regime of al-Assad and broke off with Syria politically and diplomatically while realigning itself with what has been described as the Sunni axis with Egypt, Qatar, and the rest of the Gulf.⁶⁸

PIJ, on the other hand, chose another approach when dealing with an issue that cannot be described as anything but highly sensitive. The strategy of PIJ throughout the Syrian civil war was to claim neutrality, and the movement refrained from directing any criticism against the Syrian regime.⁶⁹ As Khadr Habib noted, “We do not interfere in what is happening in Syria; this is an internal affair.”⁷⁰ Further, when both Shallah and his deputy, Ziyad al-Nakhala, left Damascus, it came only after alleged consultations with Iran and Hezbollah, and it was stated that it was an issue of security and not of a political realignment.⁷¹

With the dramatic developments in the Arab countries, with regime after regime falling, PIJ adhered to the same policy as it pursued in the Palestinian arena: complete neutrality. In the words of Shallah, PIJ adhered to a “principled pragmatism” in order to preserve the alliances of the movement in the Palestinian arena and in the region.⁷² The rationale of its principled pragmatism was the perceived necessity of keeping the Palestinian struggle outside of regional internecine struggles

due to the danger of making Palestine “just another regional flashpoint.”⁷³ This could only be achieved if the Palestinian factions, on the one hand, agreed that the Palestinian cause had to remain outside the regional struggles and that Arab and non-Arab actors, on the other, recognized Palestine’s “specificity and circumstances.”⁷⁴

By 2013, PIJ had managed to steer clear of the new axes being formed in the region through its adherence to neutrality. Yet, this neutrality seemingly had an expiration date as its relationship with Iran began to deteriorate by 2015. As civil war broke out in Yemen, and Saudi Arabia intervened in a bombing campaign, Iran allegedly asked PIJ to issue a statement on the crisis, supporting the Houthis while condemning the bombing campaign. PIJ defiantly refused.⁷⁵ When Iranian radio stations then subsequently stated that the leadership of PIJ supported the Houthis, PIJ strongly reiterated its opposition to intervention in the internal affairs of other Arab countries.⁷⁶ Accordingly, Iran chose to cut funding for PIJ, and instead reallocated it for the newly established *al-ṣābirīn* movement (“the patient ones”) in Gaza.⁷⁷

There are diverging analyses of the true reasons for the cut in Iranian funding to PIJ. Hazem Balousha, for example, stated that the financial crisis of PIJ was caused by the blockade on Gaza, particularly after the closing of the tunnels between Gaza and Egypt due to unrest in the Sinai Peninsula.⁷⁸ Other news outlets, like *Zamn Press*, reported that the cut was not a political issue and that Iran still supported PIJ. Instead, Iran was suffering from sanctions and economic blockade, in addition to the “war of attrition” in Syria, and the cut was thus a result of its financial burdens.⁷⁹ Yet, as al-Smadi argues, the increased financial burdens on Iran due to its increased presence in the region are a valid point, but hardly a primary reason.⁸⁰

More important was PIJ’s position of neutrality. As an anonymous PIJ leader noted, “The Iranians are no longer accepting neutral positions, and they are starting to put pressure on the movement to adopt a clear and unambiguous position and to support them in all major regional issues, especially in the Syrian and the Yemeni issues.”⁸¹ Moreover, although the member of PIJ’s political bureau Anwar Abu Taha rejected that Iran had cut its funding to PIJ in its entirety, he noted that the Arab Spring had certainly affected their relationship: “The affected relationship did not reach the level of cutting Iranian financing, but the relationship is affected. If you have two friends, they will anger each other. Okay, so what? But, the relationship is not as it used to be.”⁸²

Yet, more important, through Abu Taha’s account, we see that PIJ’s position of neutrality was more ambiguous than we have portrayed it so far. In fact, PIJ was on the ideological level less neutral than we have

perceived it to be; and Abu Taha replied, when asked about the neutrality of PIJ in the Arab Spring:

These Arab regimes are authoritarian, they kill their people, they are the agent of the West, and they take their orders from the White House, from London and Paris. The presidents are not democratically elected, and we are for a democratic political life in the Arab world under free and fair elections and circulation of power. We are with economic independence and against corruption and theft . . . and [we are] not with the interests of those who want the oil. So we are with those who rose up, with the Arab revolutions, and with the Arab Spring.⁸³

Correspondingly, when Abu Taha was asked whether this position pertained to the Syrian civil war as well, he stated:

Everywhere, even Syria. However, although we are with the Arab Spring everywhere and even in Syria, we are against turning the Arab Spring into an armed conflict. We want dialogue between the people and these regimes. What happened in Syria is that there are armed groups supported by Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Qatar, so I want to ask: Are Saudi Arabia and Qatar democratic states? How do you support [these] nondemocratic countries backing parties against a nondemocratic regime [Syria], and later [these parties] took up arms? In our position on Syria, we call for political dialogue between the Syrian opposition and the regime without the use of weapons and without the foreign supporters. This is our position, first. We are in principle with the freedoms of the people and with justice, but we are against the use of weapons and the financing of foreign parties, whether they are Arab, undemocratic, have a king or an emir. We support political dialogue; we do not want the killing of the people.⁸⁴

The neutrality of PIJ, its alliance with Syria and Iran, and the coinciding support for the people's revolutions in the Middle East may seem contradictory at best. Yet, Abu Taha cut the Gordian knot by adding another facet to the principled pragmatism espoused by Shallah and the noninterference of PIJ:

We do not intervene in any Arab affairs. It is a difference between the [ideological] position and practical work. In practice, we will never interfere. But you asked for our position: The position is with freedom, justice, and the political dialogue. On the practical level, however, we do not interfere in any Arab affairs. Why? Because if we intervened it would not benefit any party. Today, if I entered Syria, would it affect the battle? No. It would cause strife, and my effort against Israel's occupation would be damaged. I leave the Arab people to decide their fate as they want. . . . For example, there were counterrevolutions in Egypt and the Gulf, and we state that everything that the United Arab Emirates and its puppets do is against the Arab Spring. However, we go to Egypt in the interests of the political geography as it is next to the Gaza Strip, and we interact with the Egyptians. However, we do not care about Egyptian internal affairs, this is for Egyptians. We do not interfere in it. Yet, I have dialogue with the regime of al-Sisi about Palestine, Gaza, the blockade, and the border crossing.⁸⁵

Although we do not know with certainty whether the views of Abu Taha represent those of PIJ as a whole, it is nonetheless unlikely that someone from the movement's leadership would be so outspoken and direct on these contentious issues if he stood alone.

Iran's choice to cut funding hit PIJ hard because it had no other major benefactor. Subsequent reports stated that workers in PIJ's news agency *Palestine Today* had been let go in the West Bank while the capacities in the Gaza Strip were constrained to cut expenses.⁸⁶ The same applied to other civic and research institutions of PIJ. The budget for its media organizations was reduced, while the movement delayed payments to the cadres in its military wing, the al-Quds Brigades.⁸⁷ In December 2015, reports stated that PIJ had not been able to pay salaries for three months.⁸⁸

During this period of strained relationship with Iran, PIJ attempted to solve the financial problem by looking for alternative sources of financial support. In 2015, reports surfaced that Algerian authorities had begun financing PIJ "humanitarian projects."⁸⁹ Al-Hindi notably traveled to Turkey and Algeria to obtain financial support. This support, however, never exceeded that which had been provided by Iran previously, and was limited to sporadic payments, "according to the possibilities and circumstances" of the two parties.⁹⁰

Then, somewhat unexpectedly, Iran renewed its financial aid to PIJ when the Iranian Revolutionary Guard pledged a seventy-million-dollar transfer to the movement in May 2016.⁹¹ This transfer was seemingly not a free lunch. One month later, *al-Manar* stated that PIJ stood with the Yemeni people against [foreign] aggression, and that to target Yemen was equal to targeting the Palestinian cause.⁹² If true, it seems that one year was the approximate time required before PIJ was forced to renounce its principled pragmatism and neutrality. The true causes notwithstanding, as the newspaper *al-Masdar* noted about the development, "It is clear that [PIJ] is no longer the spoiled son."⁹³

Several lessons can be drawn from this section. First, the strategic rationale for unity was sidelined when PIJ feared it would threaten armed resistance. Yet, the Arab Spring proved that the tendency was not unidirectional. On the contrary, despite its ideological resistance to the Arab regimes, PIJ understood it was strategically sensitive to openly support the people's quest for freedom. Namely, this sensitivity pertained to the Arab regimes as a political reality PIJ could not ignore, and not merely in the interest of its own survival and longevity. Thus, while PIJ was against the Egyptian regime of Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, the political and geographical reality of Gaza made PIJ adhere to neutrality in practice.

The second lesson pertains to the differing trajectories of PIJ and Hamas during the Arab Spring. While PIJ publicly adhered to absolute

neutrality in what it perceived to be internal Arab affairs, Hamas positioned itself with the revolutions. One reason may be ideological heritage. PIJ does not, for example, have similar ideological ties to the Muslim Brotherhood as Hamas does. As the Muslim Brotherhood won the Egyptian elections in 2012 with its Freedom and Justice Party (*Hizb al-Ḥurriya wa-l-'Adāla*), Hamas may have seen the chance to improve its standings and have the blockade of the Gaza Strip lifted by realigning itself with Egypt at the expense of Iran. In so doing, Hamas moved closer to Turkey and to Qatar, which housed Khaled Mishal after he left Syria.

Hamas, as we have noted several times, is self-reliant to a much greater extent than PIJ ever has been – as proven by the dramatic shift in the latter's situation when Iran cut its funding. As PIJ has benefited from the funding and training provided by Iran, it shows that the movement also grew exceedingly dependent on it. In addition to neutrality being an inherent part of PIJ's political fabric, it was also the most feasible strategy for maintaining continued Iranian support while not alienating any Palestinian or foreign parties. As PIJ was considered to have cordial relations with Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Iran, it was well served by this strategy for a considerable time.

9.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have analyzed the quest for unity as a strategic rationale overridden by ideology, and as a rationale overriding ideology. First, I concluded that PIJ exercised a pragmatic role in the strife between Fatah and Hamas and in practice attempted to de-escalate the violence between them. The prescription for ending the crisis – dialogue and negotiations – is emphatically different from the solution to the Israeli occupation, and the tradition for avoiding strife and intra-Palestinian conflict goes back to the early 1990s. However, while the quest for unity is both an ideological component and a strategic rationale for ending the occupation, it faces difficulties when it threatens PIJ's ability to carry out military operations. Although the relationship between Hamas and PIJ was cordial at the leadership level, and PIJ often acquiesced to Hamas's desire for quiet in Gaza, violence erupted on the ground when PIJ militants felt threatened by the attempts of Hamas security forces to keep control and order in Gaza.

Similarly, when the Arab Spring threatened PIJ's ability to perform as a Palestinian resistance movement, then the strategic assessment overrode the ideological principles and calls for unity. Abu Taha summarized this perfectly as he noted that there is a difference between ideology and

practice; while PIJ is ideologically opposed to the regimes and supports the revolutions, the movement will not interfere. Thus, the lesson of Abu Taha is that while it is well and good for movements to be pure as driven snow, we also find many of them in the dustbin of history.

When assessing this relationship between pragmatism and principles, we see then that armed struggle is what tips the scale. Whether the quest for unity is facing difficulties because it inhibits the ability to carry out military operations, or whether its ideological principles may alienate the benefactors these operations depend on, armed struggle is the underlying leitmotif, the always-recurring theme, dictating the policies of the movement. After all, as we recall Abu Taha stating earlier in this study, PIJ is not a political movement engaging in the military field, it is a military movement engaging in the political field.

Despite its refusal to engage in political processes and state-building under occupation, PIJ nevertheless elaborated some theses on what constitutes a just society in general and what Palestinian society should be after liberation. This is the topic of [Chapter 10](#).

10 Revolution

PIJ, the State, and Civil Society

While colonialism, occupation, creedal conciliation, and resistance constitute the past and present, it is yet unclear how PIJ perceives future society once Palestine is liberated. What does, then, PIJ believe constitutes a just society and what are its main contradictions? How is power to be divided between constituents, and how does one avoid the state turning repressive? Answering these questions, I argue that PIJ perceives the state itself as the main threat to Islamic law and values, and PIJ correspondingly outlines a society in which the state is inherently weak, controlled by a strong civil society. As the movement's conception of a just society thus resembles classical liberalism insofar as a strong state may threaten the harmony of society, the institution of scholars (*mu'as-sasat al-'ulamā'*) emerges as the mediating institution between the citizen and the state.

As PIJ is an action-oriented and not theory-driven movement, it is important to note that it has written little about the state and future Palestinian society, and we rely on a number of scattered theoretical references instead of a comprehensive and developed political theory. Yet, as interviews with PIJ leaders such as Anwar Abu Taha corroborate the views of the late Fathi al-Shiqaqi, it shows that there does exist a narrative within the movement – although it is not canonized through literary production. In addition, by comparing PIJ's desire to return to a perceived idealized past society with the nature of its violence, we may question how revolutionary PIJ actually is. Indeed, even its violence is an attempt to *preserve* rather than *transform*.

This chapter consists of three sections. First, I will analyze PIJ's view of the state as outlined in its political philosophy with the perceived need to control it. I then proceed to analyze the constituents of the state, the political and democratic processes as outlined by PIJ, and the framework in which these processes take place. We will see that there are inherent democratic deficiencies and limitations to its outline of a just society. The future society of PIJ can, at best, be described as one that is non-liberal,

yet rights based. Third, after assessing the conception of a just society, I conclude this chapter by arguing that PIJ's desire to return to a perceived ideal past is reflected in its analysis of violence, which is of a conservative nature.

10.1 Controlling the State

For discerning what type of society PIJ seeks after liberation, little is stated by the movement, and al-Shiqaqi never outlined a grand vision for a future Islamic society and its organization. Instead, we often find generalizations and simple outlines such as the following principle, "to establish Islamic rule on the land of Palestine, which guarantees justice, freedom, equality, and consultation [*shūra*]." ¹ Yet, the subject of the state is an ambiguous matter in the political philosophy of PIJ, and it is hardly one with positive connotations. Because the movement believes that the state is repressive by nature and must progressively turn despotic, a just society is one with an inherently weak state, and with a strong civil society counterbalancing the monopoly of the former.

To understand the ambivalence of PIJ toward the state, one must understand the movement's analysis of secularism, and its diverging causes and consequences in Europe and in the Arab world. As noted earlier in this study, al-Shiqaqi viewed colonialism as an externally imposed process of deculturization through which European systems, laws, and traditions were adopted and emulated. He hence remarked that the word "secularism" was a non-Arabic word that arose in a European historical context, and which bore "Western Christian connotations." ² Similarly, "[secularism in Europe] emerged as a theory against the social and political domination of the Church in its miserable historical image . . . Secularism in the European context [thus] attempted to liberate man and society." ³

Al-Shiqaqi was then not a priori dismissive of secularism, at least not in its European context, as it served to dismantle the perceived despotism of the Church to the benefit of European society. The problem, however, was that the European historical context and contradiction did not have an applicable equivalent in the "Arab-Islamic experience" that could justify the secularism imposed on the new Arab states following the downfall of the Ottoman Empire:

The problem in the European experience was the domination of the Church over society and state, and its despotism with illusions and superstition. The problem in the Arab-Islamic experience [on the other hand] was the state's attempt to dominate society (that is, from controlling education, legislation, the market, the *waqf*, and the religious heritage) up to its almost complete hegemony with the

emergence of the nation-state from the labor pains of the nationalist dreams, especially today.⁴

In fact, while the Church had grown despotic in Europe, al-Shiqaqi noted it was the state which executed a similar role in the Arab-Islamic experience. Consequently, through al-Shiqaqi's historiography, the Islamic religious institutions were not something to be weakened through secularization, but rather to be strengthened as they counterbalanced the monopoly power of the state. In the previous quote, one discerns not only the perceived historical difference between the European experience and the Arab-Islamic one. More importantly, one discerns what al-Shiqaqi perceived to be the main contradiction in just society: that between state and civil society, in which the former will necessarily attempt to dominate the latter.

Without specifying where or when, al-Shiqaqi stressed this perceived contradiction by noting that while the state attempted to dominate society, the sources of legislation in Islamic society had historically been the Qur'an and the Sunna, in addition to the consensus of the scholars (*'ulamā'*). Accordingly, in al-Shiqaqi's view, a series of checks and balances existed to limit the powers of the state as "[the institution of scholars] oversaw legislation, justice, education, *waqf*, and it had closer relations to the market (the bazaars)."⁵ If the ruler wanted to impose a jurisprudential system, with all powers in the hands of the state, then he would be unable to do so without the consent of the scholars. In the words of al-Shiqaqi: "the institution of the scholars [*mu'assasat al-'ulamā'*] was able to protect society from the tyranny of the state and to preserve its cohesive fabric," and, "we had a true civil society for fourteen centuries, which was independent from the state and with education, health, *waqf*, and mosque in its hands. Even with the corruption and moral collapse of the state, with its justice or injustice, it did not leave a serious impact on society."⁶

For al-Shiqaqi, colonially imposed secularism proved so disastrous exactly because of his belief that the scholars exercised a counterbalancing role against the monopoly of the state. It was thus not a step toward liberation from religious tyranny, but rather a recipe for *political* tyranny as secularism abolished the division of political power and authority. Suddenly, all powers lay in the hands of the state. "At a time when the secularists wanted to separate religion and state, and to establish civil institution, they . . . struck the most important civil institution, which was completely subjected to the state after being dismantled, and its internal strength fragmented."⁷

A society where the state had all powers was certainly worrisome for al-Shiqaqi. In fact:

The state is repressive by nature, or a tool of repression against the government classes as defined by Lenin. It is the most dangerous instrument of power created by human society, so Islam worked to sort out a mode of human society depriving this state of its power and domination, and thus making it weaker than, and accountable to, society even if the most powerful caliphs and sultans controlled it.⁸

Yet, al-Shiqaqi arrived at the opposite conclusion to that of Lenin – the latter arguing that the working class had to consolidate its power in the state structure for the transformation of society into a classless one. Instead, the state had to be deprived of its power and tools of domination, making it accountable to civil society.

Abu Taha corroborated this notion of the state's nature to turn repressive, notably applying a Weberian instead of a Leninist conception when he stated:

It is in the nature of the state always to become despotic. A strong civil society prevents the state from controlling more power. What is the state? The definition of the state is the monopoly of force; it holds legitimate force. The power of any state, any society, must be distributed. If the economy, such as money, is distributed, then power is distributed – and it is not as if the state has its hands on everything. The state then becomes weaker and a servant for society, and not society as a servant for the state. Today, the university administration [should] serve the students, and not the students who [should] serve the university administration. The state [should] serve the people, and not the people serve the state.⁹

To summarize thus far, al-Shiqaqi opposed the secularization of Arab-Islamic societies. Yet, this rejection is not solely an issue of creedal purity for al-Shiqaqi. Rather, the rejection is rooted in the belief that secularization abolished the existing checks and balances and separations of powers, and allowed the state to become all-powerful. Because the state is repressive by nature, power and authority must be distributed, after which the state is held accountable to society (with the “fangs” of the state removed). A strong civil society is thus required to prevent the state from transgressing its mandate through the accumulation of power.¹⁰ As al-Shiqaqi stated, “Society has to be built with a great deal of independence from the state.”¹¹ This can only be done by transferring legislation, education, the market, and the pillar of the *waqf* to civil society in general and the institution of scholars in particular.¹²

PIJ's conception of the state and the need for civil society to keep it in check does, then, resemble the belief of classical liberalism that a strong state may threaten the harmony of society. While one postulation of classical liberalism is the individual as the fundamental bearer of morality,¹³ the institution of scholars emerges as the mediating institution between the individual and the state in PIJ's future society. PIJ's

conception of an ideal society can, then, be described as a form of an Islamic-Lockean constitutional system. This is applicable insofar as Lockean political philosophy has traditionally emphasized the importance of mediating institutions (churches, synagogues, etc.) to preserve a balance of power between those holding the reins of the government and ordinary citizens.¹⁴ Indeed, civil society has generally been “a discussion of the ways Muslims have understood that social life should be organized, so as to protect the relative independence of Islamic values from the authoritarian tendencies of governments.”¹⁵ For PIJ, the conclusion to this discussion is the reestablishment and revival of authority for the institution of scholars as center of civil society.

Certainly, it is unlikely al-Shiqaqi arrived at this conclusion from reading history alone, and the democratic ‘deficiencies’ of the PA must presumably have added to this feeling of state power inevitably turning authoritarian. His experience with authoritarian Arab regimes must have accentuated his perceptions of the state as well (after all, we may recall that Egyptian authorities imprisoned al-Shiqaqi twice during his studies in Egypt). When asked about the necessity of separating legislative power from the state, for example, al-Shiqaqi referred to Egypt:

The state controls everything today from legislation to jurisdiction and executive power. There is thus no legislative authority independent from the state preventing the latter from infringement, particularly since unlimited security apparatuses support this state. Take Press Law no. 93 of 1995 in Egypt, for example. The state imposed the law on the Egyptian parliament [*majlis al-sha'b*], despite the comprehensive opposition. The legislation has today become subjected to the state or the executive power, whilst it under Islam was subjected to the class of scholars and judges [*li-ṭabaqat al-‘ulamā’ wa-l-qaḍāh*], and those qualified to appoint or depose a ruler on behalf of the Muslim community [*ahl al-ḥall wa-l-‘aql*].¹⁶

Due to the emphasis on the inherent contradiction between state and society, it is thus somewhat misguided to say that PIJ seeks the establishment of an Islamic state in the traditional understanding of the term. As I have demonstrated, the state should be exempt from religious matters as it is the main contender and threat to Islamic values that the movement attempts to preserve as guidelines for societal development and order. Instead of seeking a strong Islamic state through which policies are implemented from the top down, values are maintained and preserved through civil society from the bottom up. As Abu Taha postulated, the state in an ideal society “becomes a functional state and not a divine state or a sovereign state; nor a theocratic state, a Marxist state or an Islamic state, no. It becomes a functional state apparatus that serves the people.”¹⁷ The function of the state will thus be limited to that of an executive branch of power. Although the institution of scholars emerges

as an institution of state-like power through its legislative function, the scholars are nevertheless portrayed as exterior to structures of the state in PIJ's political philosophy. Although this may appear to be a contradiction, al-Shiqaqi's point was not to prevent institutions of state-like power from emerging. Instead, his focus was on preventing *all* power from residing in *one* institution.

10.2 The Inherent Limitations of PIJ's Future Society

PIJ seeks a society with an inherently weak state held in check by civil society and its institutions. Similarly, the movement does not reject democratic elections and a multiparty system. Yet, as we will see in this section, there are inherent structural and democratic limitations to its conception of future society, and, because religion is perceived to be over and above politics, there is little room for maneuver outside of its confines. Essentially, we may question whether PIJ's quest to avoid political despotism leads the movement to design a system of religious despotism instead.

Several in PIJ have emphasized the need for elections and representative democracy in future society. Al-Shiqaqi, for example, never dismissed the idea of a parliament representing the populace, nor did he dismiss a multiparty system (*ta'addudiyya*) with the rotation of power. As he postulated, "Islam does not mean this party or that movement."¹⁸ In fact, al-Shiqaqi explained that the apparent dismissal of "democracy" by Islamists was an issue of semantics as

the problem that some Islamists have with democracy is with the term and not with the principle of consultation [*shūra*] and political participation. Nor do they have a problem with the mechanisms, means, systems, institutions, and experiences achieving the purposes and objectives of democracy.¹⁹

Al-Shiqaqi thus noted that to reject political oppression and to call for the widest political popular participation in democracy was a divine obligation (*farīda ilāhiyya*).²⁰ Indeed, "pluralism is a natural issue and it is not possible to suppress it. As for the rotation of power, it is acceptable, and it even pushes the Islamists to innovate and avoid stagnation."²¹ A PIJ member underscored the same necessity for democratic structures, as he noted that future society had to be based on human rights and democracy. Referring to the Islamic State (IS), he noted: "We do not believe in cutting off hands or heads."²² Last, Abu Taha corroborated this support for elections and parliamentary representation, too, stating that democracy was a political and historical system compatible with Islam because it was merely the shape of representation and consultation that had changed, and not their essence.²³

Today, in some states, there are people's councils or councils of lords, one council, or several councils; this is not a problem. The issue is always to have a state that represents society, which emanates from the parliament, the president, or government, and that they represent the people, and [not emanate] from corruption or acquisition.²⁴

Alternatively, as al-Shiqaqi described:

It is true that the Islamic political system is not static. However, from the time when it was set up in the era of the Prophet, it is possible to rely on [its] foundations, principles, and fixed assets to develop our Islamic political system according to any new reality and according to the facts that arise.²⁵

That is, "the details [of Islam] are influenced by time and place in the context of these [Islamic] principles, but do not depart from them."²⁶ What mattered, then, was the importance of dividing power between parliament, courts, and government: "The judge must be separated from the state, and the state must be held accountable. Where is the problem? When a person like [Vladimir] Putin [also] constitutes the parliament and the judge, [then] he cannot be held accountable."²⁷

Although PIJ promotes elections, multiparty systems, and a rotation of power, there are nevertheless inherent structural limitations to its visions for a democratic future society. For example, consider the following description by al-Shiqaqi on participation in democratic elections and its requirements:

I believe that Islam forms the *umma*'s identity and its civilizational heritage, which cannot be abandoned and which simultaneously is its reference [*marjī' iyyathā*]. With the recognition of this reference, then there is no problem with pluralism. Islam does not mean this party or that movement. All of these Islamic movements and organizations do not equate Islam, but are only a part of it. All currents that recognize one reference for the *umma* are a part of it and have the right to express themselves in the appropriate manner. We therefore believe in pluralism and the rotation of power within the framework of all recognizing the reference of the one *umma* and the constitution on which the *umma* agrees. After that, if there are a number of independent reasonings [*ijtihādāt*] and interpretations [*tafsīrāt*], even in the understanding of the constitution and religion itself, there is still no problem.²⁸

In other words, political pluralism is allowed, and free elections and democracy are mandatory; yet this can only take place within the consensus and common recognition of Islam as the reference of society through which Islamic law constitutes the fundamental framework for constitution and legislation. That is, "It is intended that the Qur'an provides the constitution with the basis and principles on which the constitution is based,"²⁹ and "the human authority remains governed by the philosophy of Islam in legislation (what is allowed and prohibited)."³⁰

Moreover, we may recall that the real power in future society should be in the hands of civil society and the institution of scholars, which are nonelected and not a part of future democratic process – at least not as outlined by the texts of PIJ. When al-Shiqaqi described ideal past society, it was one in which the state had little influence over society. When he was asked who should have legislative power in future society, for example, al-Shiqaqi noted that it should reside in the *umma* and its representatives, and not in the state, in order to preserve Islamic values and law.³¹ In addition, the responsibilities of the states, such as “the opportunity to life and health, as well as education,” were fixed according to “Islamic jurisprudence and law [*fi al-fiqh wa-l-shari‘a al-islāmiyya*].”³²

Indeed, these postulations cannot be ignored when al-Shiqaqi notes that “the Qur’an is not simply a book of law,”³³ or that

[i]t is well known that sovereignty in legislation is that of God. Yet, man remains the authority in accordance with this divine law: elaborating it; and codifying its tenets, its rules, its principles, and sectioning it. As such, man has the authority of independent reasoning [*ijtihād*] in what is not revealed in heavenly law.³⁴

Essentially, although PIJ does not advocate a notion of the *complete* sovereignty of God’s law (*hākimiyya*), one nevertheless sees that man-made laws are to be subordinated to divine law in a fair society aiming for justice. One may, then, question the degree to which political parties that do not recognize Islam as the reference and authority of society (such as Marxist ones) might challenge the framework of political participation, constitution, and legislation. The issue of a fixed religious foundation for society additionally raises the question of religious minorities’ rights in the future Palestinian state of PIJ – Christians and Jews, respectively. Al-Shiqaqi, for example, noted that *jizya* (per capita annual tax for non-Muslim subjects) was to be imposed in future Palestine as an Islamic land, and underscored the associated allocation of certain rights (exemption from *jizya* through military service or exemption from it through payment, for example).³⁵ Correspondingly:

It is necessary to apply Islamic principles and laws that do not oppress, differentiate, or discriminate, and through which Christians will find glory and dignity just as they found when they lived under Islam in all the past centuries. . . . I assure you that those Christians who believe in their homeland, its independence, and the duty to defend it will not be required to pay any *jizya*.³⁶

To summarize, although PIJ stresses the importance of free elections; a multiparty system; and the rotation of power, it is nevertheless clear that there are structural and inherent constraints to its democratic potential. Because Islam – as PIJ perceives it – must be the reference of the political

system, and because the constitution and legislation must be based on supposed Islamic values, it is only within this framework that politics can navigate, negotiate, and implement change. While minorities such as Christians and Jews have certain rights allocated within this system, there is little to indicate that the Islamic framework may be transcended. The future society that PIJ outlines can, then, at best, be described as non-liberal, yet rights based.

PIJ does not stand isolated in the Islamic political tradition in this regard, and the movement does have ideological cousins, although outside of Palestine. Both al-Shiqaqi and Rachid Ghannouchi, for example, the cofounder of the Tunisian Islamic party Ennahda, share sentiments on the necessity of civil society operating independently of the state, and there are clear similarities in their political philosophies. As we recall, al-Shiqaqi longed for an imagined past before colonialist secularism upset the political balance in the Arab-Islamic world; so Ghannouchi also looks back to what he perceives as an ideal Islamic rule when the authority of the ruler never exceeded the executive power, and when the legislative authority was in the domain of the scholars. Similarly, while al-Shiqaqi outlined a harmonious society with little influence from the state, so Ghannouchi referred to the independence of educational, cultural, and legal institutions, with a number of unofficial, public institutions operating and financed through *waqf* and alms (*sadaqa*). Thus, in the Ghannouchian historical narrative and analysis, society is also capable of maintaining a high level of independence from the state – guaranteeing the prevention of despotism.³⁷

Similarly, as al-Shiqaqi did not dismiss secularism as a matter of creedal purity, but rather because he considered secularism a recipe for political tyranny, so does Ghannouchi share his opinion. In fact, as Marzouki stresses, Ghannouchi's rejection of secularism is a direct consequence "of his denunciation of state intrusion into people's minds, hearts, and customs," and "the question, therefore, argues Ghannouchi, is not how to impose religion on politics, but how to liberate religion from the state."³⁸ In consequence, because civil society is at once the victim of and the solution to the authoritarian state, it represents both "a form of political utopia and an ideal model of social contract."³⁹

We do of course not know whether Ghannouchi influenced al-Shiqaqi, or if it was because of this Tunisian intellectual that al-Shiqaqi developed his ideas on civil society and the state. We may nevertheless recall that there was contact between the two, and that they met in the 1990s. Indeed, Ghannouchi was one of the contributors when the collected works of al-Shiqaqi was published after his assassination in 1995.⁴⁰ This uncertainty notwithstanding, we may summarize this section by

noting that while al-Shiqaqi's political theory is regressive due to its desire to return to a time when Arab-Islamic society was perceived as harmonious, little indicates that his conception of future society is utopian. Rather, we may perceive it through Rawls' concept of a "well-ordered society" insofar as it is highly idealized through its romanticizing of the past, yet simultaneously achievable.⁴¹

10.3 Reviving the Past through Violence

It is not immediately clear how PIJ's perception of future society and its logic of violence are linked. Indeed, what they have in common seems to be PIJ's theoretical neglect of the two. PIJ in general has published little on violence, and al-Shiqaqi in particular showed little interest in the issue. Most often, PIJ's leaders and theoreticians suggest violence as a strategic issue of defense, deterrence, or revenge, and its insignificance is likely caused by the perceived self-evidence of its nature.⁴² Abu Taha, for example, outlines resistance as a universal and inalienable natural right by virtue of Man being God's creation.⁴³ Because there are few theoretical works on violence by PIJ, the most detailed accounts are often those of its militants who reflect upon the source, meaning, and significance of the means they employ.

We will see in this section that PIJ's romanticizing of the past is not limited to its perception of the state, but is also extended to, and reflected in, the very logic of its armed resistance. As it stresses resistance as the protection of culture, traditions, and identity, PIJ consequently portrays violence as preservative rather than transformative. We may hence question whether the movement is in fact revolutionary, although it is described as such by existing research.⁴⁴ In addition, as many of these accounts refer to an incompleteness of Palestinian existence due to exile and the loss of a homeland, we will see that there are certain Fanonian perceptions of anti-colonial violence in PIJ.

One of the best examples is Thabit Mardawi's narrative of the Battle of Jenin in April 2002. Violently clashing with the Israeli invasion for eleven days, Mardawi describes how they in the battle encountered an injured Israeli soldier lying helpless on the ground, and how Mahmud Tawalba executed him:

What would [this Israeli soldier] have done now if he had lived far from our Palestine? If he had not come to our homeland, occupied our land, and assaulted us? ... [Tawalba] emptied his rifle into the body of the soldier, thus ending a repugnant life resting on the hill of our skulls. ... Joy and happiness [then] overwhelmed [Tawalba], and his face appeared smiling and laughing.⁴⁵

Despite this veneration of violence, Mardawi's intention is to stress the humaneness of Tawalba's pleasure in killing the Israeli soldier, as it was "an expression of the situation of any human being having lost his life and soul to jihad, struggle, and revolution against the injustice represented here by the occupation."⁴⁶ The laughter and joy of Tawalba was accordingly the manifestation of "a sense of self-fulfillment; and there is no other emotion capable of filling you with such satisfaction."⁴⁷ Because "a person is not fully human if he does not resist and fight the occupation no matter the political circumstances, balances, or calculations," Tawalba had "every right to feel the pleasure of self-realization [by killing the soldier]."⁴⁸ Anti-colonial violence was, then, for Mardawi, in the words of Fanon, "the veritable creation of new men."⁴⁹

One explanation for Mardawi's ontological justification of violence may be the fact that he analyzes contemporary events as reflections of those in the past, and their resistance hence carried additional layers of meaning. Mardawi describes the feeling of confronting the Israeli army in the Jenin camp where he had grown up: "I felt like time had been set back one hundred years, and that the camp had transformed into Palestine. This home, which the occupation wanted to occupy, was a part of Palestine from where [Israel] would proceed like cancer to the rest of [the land]. To lose a part of Palestine was then to lose all of it."⁵⁰ Violence hence became a device of agency through its connection to the past as the fighters stood up to defend what they had lost fifty-four years before in the *nakba* of 1948. Reflected in the imagined thoughts of Mardawi's brother-in-arms Taha al-Zubaydi during the battle:

That life full of misery, poverty, and wretchedness . . . as Taha carried all the suffering of homelessness and exile on his back. Reviewing his life as he lived it. Comparing what had been to what was. These stories and tales he had heard from his parents, of their earlier lives in earlier Palestine. About their earlier village. About their earlier farm, and their earlier house. How it once was. . . . Taha thought about it, and rediscovered it, raising the question of exile and homelessness. Why and how? Why do we live in the camp? All of blessed Palestine is for us: Its north, its south, its east, and its west. How did we become the children of the camps? How did what happened happen? How was an entire people expelled from its land, and its history erased . . . ? Taha asked these questions and certainly knew the answer. Yet, he [only] raised them because the main cause of this situation [the Israeli soldier] now stood in front of him.⁵¹

This stood in stark contrast to the leadership of PIJ and its secretary-general Ramadan 'Abdallah Shallah. While the social embeddedness of the PIJ militants in Jenin camp contributed in elevating violence to an existential issue of self-realization and as a marker of collective memory, the PIJ leadership found themselves far from the battlefield and those

aggrieved by the invasion. In fact, Shallah had asked his militants to abandon the camp before the invasion, as he believed their chances of survival were minimal. Yet, according to Mardawi, the PIJ militants refused to comply and prepared themselves for military confrontation and for martyrdom.⁵² For the leadership whose greatest task was to ensure the organizational efficiency and survival of the movement, violence was a means to an end, a tactical issue, and its militants were pieces to be moved on the chessboard. For the local militant refugees in PIJ, on the other hand, violence was not only the resistance against a second displacement, but also an affirmation that they were still human.

While Mardawi's account stresses violence not so much as a strategy as for the discovery of social identity and being, its connection to an idealized past is a recurring subject in PIJ. Abu Taha, for example, outlines three levels of resistance and its legality: natural resistance, societal resistance, and cultural resistance. What these levels have in common is a sense of urgency to preserve what *is* and *has been*, and which now is under external attack. Indeed, Abu Taha implies that the present as a direct continuation and preserver of the past is valuable in and of itself. The natural principle of resistance is, for example, "a natural, elementary, and fundamental act to preserve one's existence, life, being, and authority in this existence. . . . Human nature entails self-defense for the preservation of life and the self."⁵³

At the onset, one may interpret the natural principle of resistance to be limited to the physical survival of the individual. Yet, only in relation to the other levels of resistance does it acquire greater meaning. The highest goal of societal resistance, for example, is the preservation of the collective's stability and safety: "The most important resistance of the community and nation is *to defend its identity and self* against what threatens it."⁵⁴ Consequently, the third level is the preservation of ideas, customs, traditions, and societal models under threat. The goal of resistance, and the desires this act entails, are, then, not based on the necessity of forcibly creating a radically *new* utopian society. On the contrary, it is the preservation of past structures, customs, and identities that are perceived to be under Western colonial threat. If there is anything conspicuously absent in Abu Taha's concept of resistance, it is the future.

The absence of any future is equally reflected in the martyr biographies of PIJ, which often refer to the historical, Arabic names of Palestinian villages when describing martyrdom operations within the Green Line. Sami 'Antar and 'Abdallah Badran did not blow themselves up in Tel Aviv during the Second Intifada, but in "occupied Tal al-Rabi'."⁵⁵ Lutfi Abu Sa'da, Ahmad Abu Khalil, and Rami Ghanim, on the other hand, did not blow themselves up in Netanya, but in "Umm Khalid," the

Palestinian village from which its inhabitants fled in 1948.⁵⁶ In its narrative production and claim to liberate historical Palestine from the river to the sea, PIJ consequently stresses the defense of a past and original Palestinian identity preliminarily erased by a contemporary Israeli colonial structure.

Certainly, I do not suggest that references to the past are ipso facto antithetical to revolutionary traits. Already in 1852 did Karl Marx note in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*:

Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brains of the living. And just as they seem occupied with revolutionizing themselves and things, creating something that did not exist before, precisely in such epochs of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service, borrowing from them names, battle slogans, and costumes in order to present this new scene in world history in time-honored disguise and borrowed language.⁵⁷

Yet, Abu Taha does not merely reference an idealized past, but proposes violence and resistance as preservative rather than transformative; and the movement's militancy is not so much "bringing about a major or fundamental change" – the definition of revolutionary – as it is a desire "to preserve what is established" – the definition of conservatism.⁵⁸

Indeed, PIJ does not come forth as a particular political or theological rupture with that which is already established. Regarding the movement as a Palestinian political rupture, PIJ's criticism of the PLO was not solely against the latter's secularism but essentially about the fact that the PLO had abandoned the one true path to liberation. PIJ thus never intended to transform the Palestinian resistance, but rather to preserve its essence as it continued to "carry the fire."⁵⁹ Further, contrary to groups such as *takfir wa-l-hijra*, which isolated itself from society and rejected "the Shari'a wholesale as the product of time-serving ulama," PIJ emphasized its Palestinian communal presence and theological continuity as the movement sought to employ "the *umma*'s righteous heritage" in its conflict with the Israeli occupation.⁶⁰

PIJ is, then, revolutionary if we apply the term as synonymous with "violent"; and if we are to describe its violence, it may be more fruitful simply to refer to it as what I call "mnemonic counterviolence" – commemorating and stressing *what has been* in order to challenge *what is*. While both Mardawi and the martyr biographies refer to idealized life in Palestinian villages before exile, they do so to challenge the normalization of Israeli villages and people's existence in their places today, the very precondition for the exile of Palestinians. As Tuastad analyzes resistance

against hegemonic power: "The means of production in this sense [in constructing a hegemonic version of reality] is also the means to produce distorted images of dominated people. Hence, resistance also involves resistance to the imaginaries produced by the hegemonic power."⁶¹ The imaginaries to which PIJ refers through its counterviolence are accordingly contemporary reality in an Israeli post-*nakba* social geography that rejects Palestinian claims to the land.

It is, then, unlikely that this view on violence and resistance is anything particular to PIJ, but rather is a trait of the Palestinian armed resistance in general. Jamal Hawil, for example, who fought for the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades during the Battle of Jenin, presents many of the same sentiments on violence and social embeddedness as Mardawi.⁶² Further, the martyr biographies of Hamas also refer to "occupied Tal al-Rabi'" and "occupied Umm Khalid."⁶³ Last, as we recall that PIJ's concept of martyrdom was a product of Palestinian mythos and literary traditions, Abufarha similarly refers to "a number of common themes and process of polarization in the [Palestinian] performances of martyrdom and their cultural representations."⁶⁴ One of these is the revival of Palestine "in Palestinian memory and the cultural imaginary to regain its Palestinian characteristics and retain its Palestinian identity" and "Palestine is [thus] recreated in its natural setting: pre-Israel, pre-colonization."⁶⁵ Another is the way the Palestinian "sacrificers" take their lives into their own hands and assert agency, control, and independence.⁶⁶ Both are features underscored in the analysis of PIJ's mnemonic counterviolence. While the former points to the defense of a past identity and land, the latter points to the Fanonian aspects of violence as a means of self-realization. Abufarha's analysis thus underscores the similarity of the Palestinian factions' violence rather than their distinctiveness, and little indicates that the violence of PIJ is particular in a Palestinian historical context.

To summarize, while I introduced this section by noting that PIJ's perception of the state and its logic of violence seem disassociated at first, I proceeded to show that both are inspired by a longing for an idealized past. While its conception of a just society is premised on a perception of Arab-Islamic society before its subjection to Western colonialism, violence is portrayed as the defense of traditions, cultures, and identities under colonial attack. They are thus two sides of the same coin. While "the State and Revolution" would be an alluring description of this connection, I have nonetheless argued that there is hardly anything revolutionary about PIJ as it does not seek fundamental change, but rather to preserve what is established. As noted, the future is conspicuously absent in the thought of PIJ.

10.4 Conclusion

PIJ's conception of future society, and its perception of justice, are based on PIJ's belief that the state must inevitably turn repressive. The state must therefore be weakened and deconstructed in order to be kept under control, and traditional governing responsibilities and tasks will be transferred to civil society. The well-ordered society of PIJ does thus resemble the postulates of classical liberalism and Lockean political philosophy. However, while classical liberalism stated that the strong state was a threat to the harmony of society and the rights of the individual, we see that PIJ perceives it to be a threat to Islamic law and values. Although PIJ stresses the need for democratic processes, a multiparty system, and a rotation and division of power, this can only take place within an Islamic framework that cannot be transcended. There are, then, inherent limitations to the democratic potential of its future society, and PIJ's conception can, then, at best, be described as non-liberal, yet rights based.

While I have argued that PIJ's conception of future society is regressive, the same can be said of its violence. Although PIJ is often portrayed as a revolutionary movement, the preceding analysis has instead stressed the nature of its violence as the attempted preservation of past structures, customs, identities, and traditions. Namely, its violence is inherently conservative. I have termed one aspect of its resistance as "mnemonic counterviolence" through which PIJ challenges the hegemonic construction of contemporary imaginaries by creating an alternative version of the present through its narration of the past. Yet, it is not a given that this particular aspect of resistance is particular to PIJ. On the contrary, it is shared by most Palestinian armed movements. Thus, if we call PIJ revolutionary due to its militancy, the same may be said about the majority of Palestinian armed movements, which offers little analytical value.

11 Conclusion

Why PIJ?

If the difference between PIJ and Hamas disappeared once the latter took up arms, why did PIJ survive as a separate organization with a justification for existence? I proceed through four sections in this chapter. First, I present the historical argument, which elaborates on the historical causes for the emergence of PIJ and why it did not merge with Hamas subsequently once the latter was founded. I then proceed to present the ideological argument in the second section. The third assesses the socio-geographical argument, in which I discuss whether PIJ has a distinct class character and geographical distribution that sets the movement apart from Hamas. I conclude this chapter by outlining the implications and limitations of this study, in addition to suggestions for future research on PIJ.

11.1 The Historical Argument

The Six-Day War in 1967 and the Iranian Revolution of 1979 contributed to produce a new segment of former secular-nationalist Palestinians turned Islamists, a trend only accelerated by the increasing political concessions of the PLO from 1974 onward. Turning to religion, however, did not mean leaving their political ethos – their belief in direct action and the possibilities for qualitative change in this world. Instead, they kept the traditions, practices, and secular analyses of their former organizations while rephrasing their political slogans using religious symbolism and signifiers. This combination of action legitimized by religion explains the creation of a new opportunity structure enabling an organization such as PIJ to surface in the absence of Hamas.

The consequence of this rearticulation was small, yet significant, for these Palestinian Islamists: they became organizationally homeless. While the PLO was unattractive for the Palestinian Islamists because of its secularism and political concessions, they never truly felt at home in the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood because of its quietism and political

passivity. Politics was not a dirty word for them, and armed struggle was not something to be avoided. The only solution was thus to organize themselves in a new movement through which the better of two worlds were fused organically.

Fathi al-Shiqaqi's personal trajectory illustrates this point. When the Arab states were defeated in the Six-Day War, the ideological world around al-Shiqaqi crumbled. Only in religion could he find his answers. Yet, his belief in political action and his sympathies for the Palestinian guerrilla movements made al-Shiqaqi's transition into the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood uneasy, and he only became a member hesitantly. Conflicts and disputes mark his career there. Later, as he developed the ideology of PIJ in the 1980s through writing, the emphasis on secular, even materialist, analysis was always obvious – certainly augmented by the sense of having history on his side through the deduction of divinely predestined triumph.

The focus on political action and armed resistance instead of postponing the struggle made the initial framework of PIJ similar to that of Fatah's founding fathers. The founding fathers of PIJ, for example, returned to Gaza and rallied the students at the Islamic University of Gaza, stating that one could not wait for the caliphate or the return of Palestinian society to Islamic values. Twenty years earlier, Arafat had done the same when he rallied students at the University of Cairo, stating that one could not wait for Arab unity.¹ Indeed, the founding fathers of Fatah – such as Salah Khalaf and Khalil al-Wazir (Abu Jihad) – had once been members of the Muslim Brotherhood, too.² They also grew disillusioned for the same reasons as those who established PIJ. One of the main causes for the emergence of both was thus the belief in violence as the most appropriate means to achieve liberation at a time when there was no proper organizational vehicle for its facilitation. Both Fatah in the 1960s and PIJ in the 1980s proposed immediate action without detours and digressions on the path of liberation. What differed was the language with which they explained and justified its necessity.

Fatah and PIJ were nonetheless dissimilar in their organizational approach. As we recall, PIJ developed into an ideologically strict movement while Fatah attenuated these features in order to incorporate a greater variety of members and militants. While both adhered to Palestinian unity through armed struggle, Fatah did so through the same “constructive opaqueness” it adhered to during the Oslo process by weakening the ideological signifiers of the movement. PIJ, on the other hand, could be highly selective about whom was allowed to join the movement while stressing Palestinian unity not only by allowing, but also by encouraging, a range of Palestinian armed factions working side

by side instead of subsuming them under one greater (or, in this case, lesser) umbrella.

Khaled Hroub notes that “there were no real political or ideological differences” between PIJ and Hamas throughout the 1990s, and we may recall that there were several attempts by the movements to merge their structures in this period.³ Yet, the legacy of the Palestinian Islamic movement and its inherent contradictions enfeebled these efforts. First, while PIJ considered Hamas a “latecomer who was harvesting the fruit [of PIJ’s military effort],” Hamas considered PIJ a splinter group that should be reunited with its mother organization.⁴ Indeed, as Hatina states, Hamas’s arrogance was the cause of its refusal to move beyond limited local cooperation and coordination with PIJ.⁵

Second, the lagging process of organizational integration was partly because PIJ and Hamas interpreted ideological notions differently in order to justify their respective practices and political considerations. One example is the notion of “interest” (*maṣlaḥa*), which refers to the judicial principle of preventing harm as preferable to bringing about benefits.⁶ That is, the duty to preserve the public’s welfare.⁷ Klein, for example, notes that Hamas’s openness to public needs made the movement “pragmatize its core attitudes” in the 1990s “due to the grass-roots nature of the organization.”⁸ Further, as we recall, Hamas attempted vigorously to prevent other armed factions sending rockets into Israel once it seized power in 2007 in order to prevent devastating Israeli bombing campaigns in return. While Hamas still believed in the principle of armed resistance, the movement nevertheless realized that new Israeli bombings would further deteriorate the dilapidating living conditions in the Strip.

PIJ, on the other hand, postulated that only armed resistance could liberate the Occupied Palestinian Territories, and it was thus its duty to persist. That is, the *benefits* of armed resistance outweighed the potential *harm* and *damages* it could inflict on the Palestinian public. Indeed, the movement explicitly rejected what it termed “the jurisprudence of interest [*fiqh al-maṣlaḥa*]” proposed by Hamas,⁹ with which political actors comply with the rules and maximize its gains within the framework of the system. As we recall, it was this concept PIJ referred to when it dismissed Hamas’s electoral participation in the Palestinian legislative elections in 2006.

Another example is “patience” (*ṣabr*), which for Hamas served as a normative justification for engaging in pragmatic initiatives and for its “political inaction towards, or acquiescence in, an accepted reality that might have been regarded as a deviation from religious dogma.”¹⁰ It was partly through this concept that Hamas was able to distinguish between

a permanent and temporary settlement; between a short-term policy temporarily delaying its ultimate goals and a long-term strategy; and between its willingness to accept ad hoc arrangements of coexistence and its denial of the legitimacy of the PLO and of the PA.¹¹ In the case of electoral participations, for example, Hamas attempted to do the best out of an unfavorable situation, and was thus afforded greater maneuverability to interact with the constraints of reality without relinquishing its ideological tenets or religious determinism.¹²

Sheikh Yassin embodied this pragmatic maneuverability when he came out in favor of electoral participation: “If the council shall have the authority to legislate, why should we not practice opposition within this council as we do in the streets?”¹³ Mishal and Sela consequently suggest that adjustment became the main feature of Hamas’s political conduct.¹⁴ In fact, PIJ did not refer particularly, if at all, to *sabr*—presumably because it is not well-suited to its strategy and organizational structure. To restate Abu Taha’s account of the difference between the two movements: “The answer is that Hamas is a political movement that deals with the military field, while PIJ is a military movement that deals with the political field.”¹⁵ Or, as put by Mishal and Sela: “[Hamas] is more political than military.”¹⁶

This persisting rigidity of PIJ meant that there were few incentives for change in the movement—whether turning into a mass movement or providing social services. This constrained its growth and development. Although partly explained by Hamas’s dominance in the field (added by its trepidation over anyone infringing on its territory), PIJ never had a particular focus on, or an interest in, building a statist infrastructure of social services and welfare. Only in the diaspora did an infrastructure of significant size appear in the refugee camps, where the possibilities of exercising armed struggle were fewer, and where the PIJ deportees were not already a part of the camps’ social and political fabric.

Consequently, PIJ had difficulties adapting to pressure as it had far fewer strings to play on than Hamas, which had a far more varied repertoire of political strategies for survival and growth. While Hamas turned to social welfare in periods of counterinsurgency, PIJ simply suffered due to its limited maneuverability when challenged by a changing political landscape. PIJ could thus not grow to the size of Hamas without essentially transforming the nature of its organization as a whole. Then again, to grow for its own sake was never a priority for PIJ, which above anything else was identifying as a militant forefront to end occupation instead of being a political mass movement. Certainly, as Hatina notes, the meager support for PIJ in the 1990s could also be a blessing in disguise as “the

organization was less constrained by cost-benefit considerations [*maṣlahā*] and ideological questioning.”¹⁷

These differing developments do not necessarily imply that PIJ created its own concept of resistance (*muqāwama*), but rather that Hamas’s pragmatic maneuverability widened the gap that initially narrowed in the early 1990s. If Hamas drew closer to PIJ by joining the Palestinian armed struggle, it simply seems to have been too little, too late. As I will return to below, due to the differing maneuverability of the two movements, PIJ and Hamas came to constitute – whether or not by design – two dissimilar historical Palestinian currents in the debate on how, and how much of, the occupied homeland was to be liberated.

11.2 The Ideological Argument

We often refer to PIJ as an ideologically strict movement, but seldom as an intellectual one. Yet, the PIJ founding fathers in general, and its first secretary-general Fathi al-Shiqaqi in particular, were avid readers and bookworms. Violence and intellectual immersion were not mutually exclusive.

The omission of PIJ from research on Islamic political thought is thus undeserved – imbued as the movement is with ideological influences and theoretical and religious references. While Fathi al-Shiqaqi believed God had predestined the victory of the Palestinians, this victory would also introduce independence for all states in the Global South under the shade of Western colonialism. While PIJ’s principal tool for Palestinian popular mobilization in the First Intifada was religious symbolism, its analysis of the conflict in the same period was, and still is, largely secular. While being one of the least compromising Palestinian factions regarding ceasefires with, and armed struggle against, Israel, it is also one of the most ardent proponents of dialogue and peaceful discussions in intra-Palestinian conflict.

One can nonetheless discuss whether PIJ’s anti-colonialism is something that sets it apart from Hamas, and whether that is what characterizes the former. Indeed, also Hamas deems its project as that of achieving the renaissance.¹⁸ Moreover, the initial view of Hamas on the “Zionist-Western alliance” is virtually indistinguishable from what I have presented earlier in this study on PIJ, and it is unlikely that the average Hamas member would disagree with al-Shiqaqi’s historical account of Western colonialism. Consider, for example, the following Hamas excerpt in which the movement discusses the mutuality of Zionist and imperialist interests appearing

when the leaders of Western imperialism discussed the affairs of our *umma* and our region and discovered that the object of their long cherished wish would be

served by supporting the Zionist entity. The latter could be instrumental in the service of their interests, which are based on stealing our resources and depriving us of the bases for unity, pride and dignity.¹⁹

It is also true that Hamas views Palestine as blessed by God – the land of *isrāʾ*, the first *qibla* of Islam, and “the center of its national-religious identity.”²⁰ In fact, al-Shiqaqi presumably deduced the Qur’anic dimension of the Palestinian cause through his reading of Muslim Brotherhood sources as one of his main references was the Syrian Brotherhood ideologue Saʿid Hawwa.²¹

These qualifications, however, do not necessarily weaken my claim that the thought and practice of PIJ and Hamas derive from two different political traditions. First, both movements opposed Western colonialism and its complicity in the crimes of the Israeli occupation. Yet, Hamas’s theorization about the instrumental Zionist-Western relationship made it explore the division of responsibilities in the liberation struggle. That is, the movement explored the issue of who had to bear the greatest costs of “Zionists and imperialist projects.”²² Hamas concluded that liberation could not be borne by the Palestinian resistance alone. Hroub thus argues that “one finds evidence of the line of thinking [in Hamas] that originated in the 1970s ... that is, an Islamic state [should first] be established outside (Palestine), and such a state should take a lion’s share of the responsibility for liberation.”²³ Accordingly, Hamas never expected the First Intifada to lead to the liberation of Palestine.²⁴ This conclusion would necessarily distinguish Hamas from PIJ, with the confidence of the latter in the Palestinian masses and their armed struggle. As Hatina notes: “A general enlistment of the Muslim world to join the struggle in Palestine [was] acknowledged as impractical [by PIJ]. The main burden, in consequence, at least in the initial phase, [had to] fall on the Muslims of Palestine.”²⁵

Second, these differing views on the division of responsibilities, and the realism of the Palestinian struggle, would necessarily affect their approach to the West and the application of their anti-colonial analysis in daily and diplomatic practices. As Hamas began to mature about three years after its foundation, so did its perspective on international affairs. This maturation reflected the emergence of a new political discourse relying on international law (alongside Islamic ideology) to justify and legitimate its struggle, and “Hamas’s discourse in this area has evolved in the direction of acknowledging and seeking ‘international legitimacy.’”²⁶

Essentially, whilst Hamas commenced modifying its analysis of the West soon after the First Intifada, we have difficulties imagining al-Shiqaqi or any other leading PIJ personality calling for a “cultural

dialogue with the West in the interest of humanity” as Sheikh Yassin did in the early 1990s.²⁷ As PIJ itself stated in its political document as late as in February 2018: “We cannot rely on the so-called ‘international legitimacy’ to determine the fate of our people and their cause.”²⁸ PIJ further postulated in the same document that

[t]he Western forces controlling the contemporary international system are still haunted by the West’s historical animosity to Islam, which it classifies as the main enemy of Western civilization. It sees any attempt to reach the Arab and Islamic renaissance as a threat against the West and considers any form of resistance against American and Zionist domination in the region and in the world as “terrorism.”²⁹

Indeed, PIJ’s persistent emphasis on Israel as an extension of Western colonialism became highly adaptable to international, regional, and local developments, and thus highly sustainable. As colonialism in general is the main culprit for the calamity of the Palestinians, it does not matter who the main agent of this phenomenon is, and it might very well change without consequences for PIJ. Although France and Great Britain commenced as the main superpowers of Western colonialism from the late eighteenth to the mid-twentieth century, the United States and the Soviet Union subsequently took over – representing the capitalist and communist West. Then, with the conclusion of the Cold War, the United States remained as the sole superpower and colonial representative. Just as Marxism has ideological relevance as long as capitalism endures, the ideology of PIJ will remain similarly relevant as long as there is a superpower that supports Israel and its occupation of the Palestinian territories.

This is not to suggest that PIJ’s view on Western colonialism was not subject to any change. Shallah, for example, never cared as much about economic driving forces as al-Shiqaqi, and the former repeatedly referred to what he perceived as Christian-Zionist neoliberals in the White House who supported Israel to usher in the Second Coming of Christ.³⁰ Shallah equally stressed the West’s historical animosity against Islam. PIJ thus commenced the “culturization” of the Palestinian cause from the early 2000s. As stated in its political program: “The Western position on the Palestinian cause stems from the centrality of the Israeli entity in the culture of the West and its policies.”³¹ Yet, despite this “culturization,” PIJ never abandoned its analysis of Israel as an essential cogwheel in the machinery of Western colonialism.

Last, although PIJ and Hamas agree on God’s blessings upon Palestine and its centrality for all Muslims, they nevertheless drew two distinctively different conclusions. While its historical roots made Hamas focus on

Islamization to obtain liberation, PIJ stressed liberation for Islamization – not just for Palestine, but also for the world in its entirety. Hamas thus Islamized the Palestinian cause by emphasizing the need for religious observance and morality in the struggle, and Khalidi notes that Hamas “subsume[d] Palestinian nationalism within one or another form of Islamic identity.”³² PIJ, on the other hand, ended up “Palestinianizing” Islam not only by emphasizing the blessed land of Palestine as the launching pad, but also as the precondition, for the commencement of Islam’s global victory. I thus draw a different conclusion than Klein, although it is more fruitful to approach this issue as a spectrum rather than as a binary categorization.³³

The point of this discussion is not that either PIJ or Hamas is the “true” heir of the PLO in the late 1960s. Nor is it to suggest that there are no similarities between the PLO and Hamas, and Hroub duly describes the role of Hamas as “effectively inheriting the strategy of the armed struggle from the PLO.”³⁴ My argument is instead twofold: First, PIJ does not constitute a rupture but instead a continuation of the early PLO of the late 1960s and the past Palestinian attempts at decolonization and liberation. Although the two are not identical (indeed, the differences are numerous), PIJ and the PLO of the late 1960s nonetheless share several traits – both ideologically and practically. We have, for example, already noted how the initial frameworks of PIJ and Fatah were similar in their aim to commence armed struggle against the Israeli occupation. Let us further compare PIJ and its ideology with the following description of Fatah’s stance in the 1960s:

War should be waged relentlessly against Israel, political deals that left Israel in existence should be rejected, the Arab governments were not to be trusted and their attempts at hegemony or tutelage should be resisted, and, above all, the people of Palestine should . . . unite all their resources in the armed struggle.³⁵

Besides, when Fatah had developed a more elaborate rationale by 1967, it too analyzed Israel as an “advanced imperialist base” for Western military intervention in Africa and Asia, which prevented the countries of the eastern Mediterranean from uniting, and diverting their resources from economic development into defense.³⁶ Similarly, while PIJ, on the one hand, framed the Qur’anic dimension of Palestine to stress the centrality of the Palestinian cause, this bears resemblance to Fatah’s doctrine of “Palestine first,” on the other. The same applies to the leftist currents, such as the PFLP, with its focus on Israel’s colonial role, the historical colonial role of the West, and the primacy of Palestine.³⁷

There are additionally several similarities to anti-colonial thinkers outside of Palestine, although they are seldom explicit. For example, al-

Shiqaqi did not view the colonial attack as limited to the Islamic homeland alone, but a threat to all oppressed nations. He accordingly identified himself with Nelson Mandela's struggle against apartheid. Similarly, as al-Shiqaqi wrote about the transformation of man into a market unit, Frantz Fanon wrote: "After a phase of accumulation of capital, capitalism has today come to modify its conception of the profit-earning capacity of a commercial enterprise. The colonies have become a market. The colonial population is a customer who is ready to buy goods."³⁸ Alternatively, al-Shiqaqi's assessment of the white man only caring about his own prosperity (and the dreadful disparity between the North and the South) is similar to Fanon: "The cause is the consequence; you are rich because you are white, you are white because you are rich."³⁹ Certainly, I do not suggest Fanon or other anti-colonial thinkers would have sympathized with PIJ and its quest for worldwide Islamization, but rather that the secular-nationalist backgrounds of its founding fathers presumably colored off on PIJ. Al-Shiqaqi's notion of the capitalist and communist West, for example, and the rejection of both, is a concept we find in secular postcolonial theory represented by Gamal Abdel Nasser, Jawaharlal Nehru, and the Non-Aligned Movement.

Second, I propose that PIJ and Hamas represent two distinct currents in the historical Palestinian discussion on who is to liberate Palestine, how it is to be liberated, and how much of it is going to be. Although their answers and methods have been subject to change, PIJ and Hamas nonetheless propose different solutions by virtue of emphasizing different aspects of the conflict based on the two different political and ideological trajectories to which they belong. While Hamas emerged as the organic synthesis of the long-ranging debate concerning the priority to be accorded to the armed struggle thesis versus the social change thesis, PIJ did not.⁴⁰ While Hamas accordingly softened its approach to reduce its number of enemies, PIJ sustained its view on Western colonialism in general and American imperialism in particular. Indeed, the three chapters on ideology in this study – featuring both early texts by al-Shiqaqi and recent interviews with contemporary members of PIJ's leadership – highlight how anti-colonialism permeates the movement's view on history, creedal conciliation between Sunnis and Shiites, and future liberated society.

The lines from Fatah in the 1960s to the contemporary PIJ imply that Palestinian anti-colonialism was, and is, prevalent in factions that were, and are, inherently centrist. We should thus not consider it an ideological feature restricted to the Palestinian left. Although PIJ frames the conflict in religious terms, the anti-colonial essence is nonetheless similar. This is not necessarily controversial insofar as we recall that the ideology of PIJ

was multilayered and that al-Shiqaqi and the founding fathers of the movement innovatively rearticulated the ideologies of the Muslim Brotherhood (the Qur'anic dimension, for example) and the PLO currents (their anti-colonial features) through frame transformation in Egypt.

This emphasis on continuation rather than a rupture within the Palestinian resistance in general and with the Palestinian secular-nationalist currents in particular is not to neglect or overlook the religious aspects of the movement, nor its utopian elements. Rather, as Burgat notes, it is to avoid limiting the secular aspect of Islamist mobilization in its sole religious dimension as this mobilization actually serves to carry more widely cultural, political-nationalist claims.⁴¹ For example, the religious references were far from subtle when PIJ attempted to mobilize the Palestinian masses for the popular protests in the First Intifada. Yet, this mobilization could never rest on Qur'anic verses alone, but had to build upon the grievances the Palestinians were experiencing under occupation. Similarly, while PIJ employs religious texts and traditions for analysis, it is nonetheless this actually existing world the movement must engage with.

Other political movements and struggles demonstrate this unclear demarcation between religion and secular politics, too. One example is the cultural battles of 1940s Egypt in which “[leftists and Islamists] ‘borrowed’ arguments of cultural criticism from each other” and offered an “essentially equivalent set of solutions to Egypt’s problems.”⁴² Another is the religious Taiping revolutionary movement in nineteenth-century China, which had “both secular and anti-secular dimensions” – and its Heavenly Kingdom “was as much a material as a spiritual reality.”⁴³ A third is the postwar Italian Communist Party, which “combined the tradition of the old socialist movement with the organizational efficiency of Leninism and the moral authority of a secular Catholic Church.”⁴⁴ As its leader, Palmiro Togliatti, stated: “In every household a picture of [Karl] Marx next to the one of Jesus Christ.”⁴⁵

This ambiguity between religion and secular analysis refers to the “syncretic” features of PIJ, as it redresses social and political Palestinian grievances through religious justification and employs religion as “an affirmation of ethnonational identity.”⁴⁶ Although religion plays a fundamental part, PIJ nonetheless seeks a “temporal transcendence” opposed to an “ontological” one – as the former “concerns a new earth in the future” (the liberation of Palestine and all the oppressed) whereas the latter “concerns heaven above.”⁴⁷ As Boer notes: “To restrict religion to either its spiritual (metaphysical) dimension or to its material base is to truncate a complex phenomenon,” precisely because religion so often

becomes a material force when expressing the longings of those seeking political change.⁴⁸

PIJ is no exception in this regard, and the ambiguity of its innovative rearticulation of earlier Palestinian nationalist ideologies implies that its justification for existence lies partly in its intermediate position between the PLO and Hamas. Indeed, this was a position that PIJ in general and Fathi al-Shiqaqi in particular were eager to emphasize as it attempted to fuse the better of two worlds. Al-Shiqaqi, for example, was asked in 1994 what the title of PIJ's new magazine would be and responded that it would simply be called *Palestine* in order to interposition itself between the magazine of Hamas, *Muslim Palestine (Filasṭīn al-Muslima)*, and the magazine of the PLO, *Revolutionary Palestine (Filasṭīn al-Thawra)*. The magazine should thus be seen as the “resulting message [of the PLO and Hamas],” and PIJ's new magazine would effectively outbid both.⁴⁹

11.3 The Socio-Geographical Argument

One of the hypotheses proposed in the introduction was that PIJ exists because the movement recruits from a distinctively different economic class than Hamas does, and from different areas in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. If correct, then one would expect PIJ to exist due to a socio-geographical character.

By comparing the socio-geographical data on 908 PIJ martyrs and 1,540 martyrs from the 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades of Hamas, we see that both movements are relatively well-educated (see [Table 11.1](#)). For example, 68.4 percent in PIJ have a secondary or higher level of education, with approximately one-fourth pursuing a university education. The number is somewhat higher for Hamas with 76 percent pursuing secondary or higher education. Yet, almost half pursued a university education. While this number may be expected for the political wing of

Table 11.1 *The educational level of PIJ and al-Qassam Brigades (1992–2012)*

Level of education	PIJ	al-Qassam Brigades
Elementary school	37 (4.1%)	58 (3.8%)
Intermediate school	190 (20.9%)	172 (11.2%)
Secondary school	387 (42.4%)	495 (32.1%)
University	233 (25.9%)	677 (44%)
Vocational diploma	37 (4.1%)	60 (3.9%)
Unknown	24 (2.6%)	78 (5%)

Hamas, it is striking that so many of its militants had a university education.⁵⁰

As we see, PIJ and Hamas's 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades have approximately the same number of martyrs percentagewise with a vocational diploma or with only an elementary level of education. However, PIJ martyrs are overrepresented when assessing those who ended their education during, or straight after, intermediate level with approximately one-fifth of its martyrs in this category. One-tenth of the 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam martyrs, on the other hand, did not pursue education beyond the intermediate level.

Despite the educational background of the PIJ martyrs, we do not see a transition to specialized labor or to employment in the academic field. On the contrary, when assessing their employment, the trend of occupation is manual, low-skilled labor. As we recall from earlier in this study, only six martyrs were hired in specialized labor, and the general picture is that of PIJ as a relatively well-educated working-class movement.

When comparing the employment of PIJ martyrs with those in the al-Qassam Brigades, we see similarities and divergences (Table 11.2).⁵¹ For example, presumably attributed to their young age (as that of the PIJ martyrs), the majority of those who fell in the ranks of 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam were pupils or students. We also see manual and/or low-skilled labor on the list insofar as a number of its martyrs were salesmen, tailors, and farmers. Yet, first, the 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades has a number of martyrs who were employed in specialized labor insofar as the tenth most common employment was teaching. Indeed, while only 0.4 percent in PIJ was in specialized labor, 4.35 percent in Hamas were so.⁵² This is

Table 11.2 *Martyrs' type of employment, al-Qassam Brigades (1992–2012)*

Type of employment	Number of martyrs
Student	200
Police officer	106
Executive forces	83
Construction worker	52
Salesman	49
State security forces	48
Tailor	34
Farmer	29
Governmental employee	26
Teacher	23

not to say that the 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam is an academic or petite bourgeoisie military wing, but rather that there seem to be certain economic class differences between PIJ and Hamas's military wing.

We may recall that PIJ always struggled in the West Bank and that it never managed to establish itself there firmly. Only with the eruption of the Second Intifada did the movement make its mark. Yet, it does not seem to be a regional difference between PIJ and the 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, and they seem to equally distributed in the Occupied Palestinian Territories in terms of regions.

Certainly, PIJ seems slightly stronger percentagewise in the West Bank than Hamas if counting all twenty years together, as shown by [Table 11.3](#). Yet, the numbers are misleading if one assesses the period 1992–2012 irrespective of the great political shifts that took place in the Occupied Palestinian Territories after the Palestinian legislative elections in 2006, and the subsequent “civil war” between Fatah and Hamas. When analyzing the number of martyrs in PIJ and the 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades pre- and post-2007, we see that their regional distribution is quite similar. While the 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades had sixteen martyrs in the West Bank after 2007, PIJ had seventeen.

That is not to suggest there are not any geographical differences. Indeed, while the distribution of martyrs is similar in the Gaza Strip, we see clear geographical divisions in the West Bank (see [Table 11.4](#)). While PIJ was far stronger in the north (in the Jenin and Tulkarem districts), Hamas had its stronghold in Hebron; and it is striking that where one of the movements has a strong presence, the other is marginalized. For example, while the 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades had eleven martyrs in Ramallah, PIJ had one; while PIJ had fifty-eight martyrs in Tulkarem, the al-Qassam Brigades had ten; and while the al-Qassam Brigades had seventy-seven martyrs in Hebron, PIJ had twenty-four. The exceptions

Table 11.3 Regional distribution of PIJ and al-Qassam Brigades (1992–2012)

Region	PIJ	al-Qassam Brigades
Gaza	646 (71.3%)	1,301 (84.4%)
West Bank	257 (28.5%)	235 (15.4%)
Jerusalem	3 (0.1%)	2 (0.1%)
Egypt	2 (0.1%)	0
Galilee	0	2 (0.1%)

Table 11.4 *West Bank distribution of PIJ and al-Qassam Brigades (1992–2012)*

District	PIJ	al-Qassam Brigades
Jenin	119	40
Tulkarem	58	10
Hebron	24	77
Nablus	23	60
Bethlehem	21	15
Tubas	11	4
Jerusalem	3	2
Ramallah	1	11
Salfit	0	0
Jericho	1	0

are the Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Salfit, and the Jericho districts, which have a relatively equal distribution.

It is nonetheless difficult to explain PIJ's existence by these numbers, and one should be cautious drawing conclusive remarks. For example, I chose to compare the socio-geographical background of the PIJ martyrs with those in the 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades because there was not sufficient information about martyrs in Hamas's political wing. If there was any information describing those in the political wing, it was often (at best) limited to the date of birth and death if it did not describe a leading Hamas personality. Moreover, we may presume that Hamas's military wing has far more casualties than the political one due to the nature of its work. It is thus unlikely that the martyrs of the 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades provide an accurate picture of Hamas in its entirety. Consequently, Hamas in general and its militant wing in particular could also have relatively well-educated members hired in nonspecialized and manual labor. The two Palestinian Islamic movements may thus simply reflect the labor division in Palestinian society.

Moreover, these numbers do not explain variations within geographical centers. They only state that PIJ is strong in certain areas where the al-Qassam Brigades is relatively weaker, and vice versa. The same numbers show that the martyrs of PIJ are slightly less (formally) educated than those in the al-Qassam Brigades. While I have argued earlier in this study that PIJ's strength in the northern West Bank was caused by the movement's use of kin and preexisting social networks, the numbers do not offer further explanation to the greater question of "why PIJ?" PIJ's socio-geographical

character is thus an explanation for which we can provide suggestions but no definitive answer.

11.4 Implications, Limitations, and Future Research

As PIJ embodies the red thread running through the Palestinian history of resistance, this study contributes to our understanding of the Palestinian resistance in general. What divided the secular Palestinian factions in the 1960s and the 1970s was not so much what ideology should prevail after liberation, but instead the questions on how to liberate Palestine, who was to do it, and how much of Palestine should be liberated. The same applies to the contemporary PIJ, which stresses the liberation of Palestine in its entirety through armed struggle. While PIJ has sketched general outlines for what constitutes a fair, future Palestinian society after liberation, the vagueness of these ideas implies that this theorization is yet to be a priority for the movement as long as occupation persists. What is particular about PIJ is, then, its lack of particularity as a part of longer Palestinian historical lines – historical lines stressing the inherent continuities instead of ruptures once the armed Palestinian Islamic currents grew in prominence.

The second implication of this study is that history matters. As Staniland postulates: “Conflict does not play out on a blank slate that actors can make and remake as they wish.”⁵³ How we understand armed movements and their preferred tactics and policies depends, then, on the analytical starting points of our inquiry. To limit one’s focus to particular eruptions of violence, such as the Second Intifada, for example, is to miss deeper structural patterns that limit and constrain the actors involved as “politics do not start – or stop – when the first bullet is fired.”⁵⁴ Equally important, it misses how armed movements tend to reflect broader societal patterns as they do not operate in a void. PIJ consequently reflects the developments of Palestinian society in general. While the emergence of PIJ in the early 1980s reflected the loss of faith in the PLO in general and the de-secularization of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in particular, its irrelevance in the 1990s was an indication of Palestinian hopes in peaceful negotiations. The resurgence of PIJ in 2000 does not merely represent the failure of the Oslo Agreement with the eruption of the Second Intifada, but also how the Palestinian armed movements accumulate political capital using violence in periods of increasing conflict.

The last implication is that new dynamics are made visible when considering organizational preconditions for the development of an efficient insurgency, whether in Palestine or outside. The best example is PIJ’s recruitment of secular-nationalist militants in the mid-1980s, which essentially accelerated its development into an armed group in the Gaza

Strip. Yet, the introduction of these opportunistic elements ironically contributed to the downfall of PIJ ten years later, in the mid-1990s. Similarly, while PIJ reorganized its armed wing into Qassam in 1992 to streamline its military operations and improve organizational security, it also made it difficult for sympathizers to join the movement, and PIJ became vulnerable to counterinsurgency because it ended up relying on a select few key personalities who soon were assassinated or imprisoned.

The implications of this study are nonetheless marked by certain limitations. I did not provide an adequate answer to two interesting hypotheses, and theoretical courses were thus left unexplored. First, little indicates that PIJ is an Iranian puppet or that its growth is directly connected to Iranian financial and logistical support. True, Iran stepped in during the 1990s in times of financial mismanagement, Israeli counterinsurgency, and mass arrests by the PA. It is equally true that PIJ grew rapidly with an increase in Iranian financial aid shortly after the falling-out between it and Hamas. Yet, little indicates that the growth of PIJ has been *caused* by Iranian aid, although it certainly has been sustained by it. Instead, what has determined the growth of PIJ, and its rapidity, is the Palestinian population's belief in armed struggle as the means to achieve liberation. This was the case in the 1980s, and so it was with the eruption of the Second Intifada in 2000. PIJ further stood its ground when it felt that the Iranians were threatening its strategic positions or its organizational independence. That being said, when it comes to analyzing the exact dynamics between PIJ and Iran in this study, much is left to be discovered. Because it is a matter of state secrets and a sensitive topic for fieldwork and interviews, it has been a challenge to provide clear and decisive answers, and the conclusions on this matter are vague. We may have to wait decades for the opening of classified archives.

Second, as mentioned above, I was notably unable to assess adequately the role of socioeconomic background in the Palestinian Islamic resistance, and whether it provided answers to the distinctiveness of PIJ. This inability was mainly caused by the lack of relevant data on martyrs in the political wing of Hamas. Thus, while I analyzed the socioeconomic background of PIJ martyrs from 1992 until 2012, we do not know if they differ markedly from other Palestinian movements.

Critics may also argue that my analysis is insufficiently based on fieldwork, and there is no doubt that the analysis would have benefited from research in both the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. This does not merely pertain to the descriptive elements and elaboration of historical developments, but also to the political and ideological aspects of the movement. While I have focused on the ideological similarities between PIJ and Fatah of the late 1960s, and the continuities of their practice, it is not a given

that this matters to the grassroots of the movement. To illustrate, when asked why he chose PIJ, a member in Burj al-Barajneh stated bluntly that he had joined the movement because his friends did so. He noted accordingly that if his friends had joined Hamas or any other faction, chances were high he would have done the same. As he stated: “*al-ṣāḥib sāḥib*” (“the friend pulls”).⁵⁵

These limitations imply fields on which future research on PIJ may focus. First, there is the need for thorough ethnographic fieldwork in the Occupied Palestinian Territories to study the grassroots of PIJ. Though such fieldwork poses several difficulties, it is far from impossible. Second, due to the research question of this study and its frame, I have focused on the armed practice and ideology of PIJ. The civil infrastructure and social welfare of PIJ has received less attention. Although it is minuscule compared to that of Hamas, it nonetheless exists, and future research should thus delve into its role and position so that we may attain a greater appreciation of PIJ’s organizational complexity. Third, the role of females in PIJ is ambiguous, and women are conspicuously absent in this study. Yet, they are an inherent part of the movement, and deserve scholarly attention.

Though predicting the future has proven to be a fruitless affair, and “determinism is always bound to be disappointed by history,”⁵⁶ I may nevertheless end this study by suggesting that the growth, success, and possible downfall of PIJ are inherently connected to the issues of armed struggle, the two-state solution, and negotiations and governance under the rule of occupation. As long as Fatah and the PA apparatus provide an ever-increasing number of concessions to the Israeli occupation – while Hamas falls further down into the rabbit hole of governance, responsibility, and negotiations – PIJ will not only have a justification for existence alongside Hamas, but will also prosper.

Notes

Introduction

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1 The Roots of PIJ

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 75. Abu Taha, *Ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn*, 16.
 76. David A. Snow and Robert D. Benford, “Ideology, Frame Resonance, and Participant Mobilization,” in *From Structure to Action*, ed. Bert Klandermans, Hanspeter Kriesi, and Sidney G. Tarrow (Greenwich: JAI Press, 1988). This

86. Charbel, “Ziyāra li-dhākirat al-amīn al-‘āmm li-ḥarakat ‘al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn.’ Shallah: ṭālabtuhu bi-tashkīl tanzīm wa-ḥīn kashaf al-sirr bāya’tuhu bay’at ‘al-jihād’ al-Shiqāqī ‘an Ḥassan Naṣrallāh: sayakūn Khumaynī al-‘arab idhā ‘āsh 4.”
87. Hatina, *Islam and Salvation in Palestine*, 23.
88. Milton-Edwards, *Islamic Politics in Palestine*, 118.
89. Abu-Amr, *Islamic Fundamentalism in the West Bank and Gaza*, 91.
90. Muru, *Fatḥī al-Shiqāqī*, 2.
91. Fathi al-Shiqaqi, “al-Tārīkh limādhā ...?” [Why history ...?] [1983], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 328.
92. Bilal, interview with author, August 6, 2018, *WhatsApp*.
93. *Ibid.*
94. *Ibid.*
95. PIJ representative, interview with author, November 16, 2014, Ramallah.
96. Al-Shiqaqi, “al-Tārīkh limādhā ...?” 326–327.
97. *Ibid.*, 328–329.
98. Al-Sarsawi and ‘Ali, *d. Fatḥī al-Shiqāqī al-shāhid wa-l-shahīd*, 16.
99. Loren D. Lybarger, *Identity & Religion in Palestine: The Struggle between Islamism & Secularism in the Occupied Territories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 17–18.
100. Nelly Lahoud, *The ‘Jihadis’ Path to Self-destruction* (London: Hurst & Company, 2010), 121.
101. Charbel, “Ziyāra li-dhākirat al-amīn al-‘āmm li-ḥarakat ‘al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn.’ Shallah: ṭālabtuhu bi-tashkīl tanzīm wa-ḥīn kashaf al-sirr bāya’tuhu bay’at ‘al-jihād’ al-Shiqāqī ‘an Ḥassan Naṣrallāh: sayakūn Khumaynī al-‘arab idhā ‘āsh 4.”
102. Muru, *Fatḥī al-Shiqāqī*, 2; Charbel, “Ziyāra li-dhākirat al-amīn al-‘āmm li-ḥarakat ‘al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn.’ Shallah: ṭālabtuhu bi-tashkīl tanzīm wa-ḥīn kashaf al-sirr bāya’tuhu bay’at ‘al-jihād’ al-Shiqāqī ‘an Ḥassan Naṣrallāh: sayakūn Khumaynī al-‘arab idhā ‘āsh 4.”
103. Al-Sharq al-Awsat, “al-Jihād,” 1141.
104. Ramadan Shallah, *Ḥaqā’iq wa-marwāqif* (Damascus: Mu’assasat al-Aqsa al-Thaqafiyya, 2007), 17.
105. Sayyid Ahmad, “Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf,” 52.
106. Al-Hajj Muhammad, *al-Masīra al-jihādiyya li-ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn*, 46.
107. Muru, *Fatḥī al-Shiqāqī*, 4.
108. Charbel, “Ziyāra li-dhākirat al-amīn al-‘āmm li-ḥarakat ‘al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn.’ Shallah: ṭālabtuhu bi-tashkīl tanzīm wa-ḥīn kashaf al-sirr bāya’tuhu bay’at ‘al-jihād’ al-Shiqāqī ‘an Ḥassan Naṣrallāh: sayakūn Khumaynī al-‘arab idhā ‘āsh 4.”
109. Saraya al-Quds, “Dhikrā ‘al-Shiqāqī’ fi dhākirat ‘al-Shāmī.”
110. *Ibid.*
111. Al-Hajj Muhammad, *al-Masīra al-jihādiyya li-ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn*, 37.
112. Shallah, *Ḥaqā’iq wa-marwāqif*, 23.
113. *Ibid.*, 24.

114. Saraya al-Quds, “Dhikrā ‘al-Shiqāqī’ fī dhākirat “al-Shāmī.””
115. Milton-Edwards and Farrell, *Hamas*, 209.
116. Jacob Høigilt, “The Palestinian Spring That Was Not: The Youth and Political Activism in the Occupied Palestinian Territories,” *Arab Studies Quarterly* 35, no. 4 (Fall 2013): 346.
117. Abufarha, *The Making of a Human Bomb*, 49.
118. The Ten-Point Program of the PLO implied that the liberation of Palestine could be partial, thus opening up the possibility for a two-state solution. Simultaneously, it allowed for employing other means than armed struggle.
119. Al-Hajj Muhammad, *al-Masīra al-jihādiyya li-ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn*, 31.
120. Quoted in Sayyid Ahmad, “Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf,” 59.
121. Shaul Bartal, *Jihad in Palestine: Political Islam and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 84.
122. Ramadan Shallah and Khalid al-‘Ayid, “The Movement of Islamic Jihad and the Oslo Process,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 28, no. 4 (1999): 62.
123. Shallah, *Ḥaqā’iq wa-mawāqif*, 23.
124. Al-Mujahid, “Kalimat al-mujāhid: al-majlis al-waṭanī al-filasṭīnī” [Brief announcement of al-Mujahid: The Palestinian National Council], no. 85 (April 5, 1991): 1.
125. Robert D. Benford and David A. Snow, “Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 26 (2000): 625.
126. Abu Taha, *Ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn*, 15.

2 Awareness: The Anti-colonial Front

1. Fathi al-Shiqaqi, “al-Khumaynī: al-ḥall al-islāmī wa-l-badīl” [Khomeini: The Islamic solution and alternative] [1979], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 468.
2. Al-Shiqaqi, “al-Tārīkh limādhā ...?” 319.
3. Al-Shiqaqi, “al-Khumaynī,” 467.
4. *Ibid.*
5. Fathi al-Shiqaqi, “Markaziyyat Filasṭīn wa-l-mashrū‘ al-islāmī al-mu‘āshir” [The centrality of Palestine and the contemporary Islamic project] [1989], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 431.
6. Fathi al-Shiqaqi, “al-Qaḍiya al-filasṭīniyya: hiya al-qaḍiya al-markaziyya li-l-ḥaraka al-islāmiyya ... limādhā?” [The Palestinian cause: It is the central cause of the Islamic movement ... why?] [1980], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 178–179.
7. Fathi al-Shiqaqi, “Afghānistān: judhūr al-ṣirā‘ ... al-thawra ... al-mustaqbal ... hal huwa inbi‘āth ṣalībī jadīd?” [Afghanistan: The roots of the conflict ... the revolution ... the future ... is it a new resurgence of the crusaders?] [1980], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 139.
8. *Ibid.*, 140–141.
9. *Ibid.*, 144.

10. *Ibid.*, 140.
11. Fathi al-Shiqaqi, “Wijhat nazar: al-damm al-masfūh bayn Fath wa-Hamas” [Viewpoint: The blood shed between Fatah and Hamas] [1992], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 665.
12. Al-Shiqaqi, “al-Qaḍiya al-filasṭīniyya,” 175, 178.
13. *Ibid.*, 185.
14. Fathi al-Shiqaqi, “Hal takhdim Ḥamās maṣāliḥ Amrīka?” [Is Hamas serving the interests of America?] [1990], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 1523.
15. *Ibid.*
16. Fathi al-Shiqaqi, “Kalima fi yawm al-taḍāmūn ma’ al-sha‘b al-muslim fi al-būsna” [Speech on solidarity day with the Muslim people of Bosnia] [1995], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 1407.
17. *Ibid.*
18. Fathi al-Shiqaqi, “Arba‘at a‘wām ‘alā intiṣār al-thawra al-islāmiyya” [Four years after the victory of the Islamic revolution] [1983], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 307.
19. Al-Shiqaqi, “Afghānistān,” 142.
20. Kihan al-‘Arabi, “Istrāṭījiyya al-‘amal al-islāmī” [The strategy of the Islamic work] [1994], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 1067.
21. *Ibid.*, 1066.
22. Fathi al-Shiqaqi, “Sarāb al-intikhābāt: ‘ḥattā idhā jā’ahu lam yajdhu shay’an” [The mirage of elections: “Even if he came, he would not find anything”] [1989], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 1431.
23. Al-Shiqaqi, “al-Qaḍiya al-filasṭīniyya,” 174.
24. *Ibid.*; al-Shiqaqi, “Markaziyyat Filasṭīn wa-l-mashrū‘ al-islāmī al-mu‘āṣir,” 450.
25. *Ibid.*, 451.
26. *Ibid.*, 454.
27. Fathi al-Shiqaqi, “Nelson Mandela: al-qaḍiya wa-l-dars” [Nelson Mandela: The cause and the lesson] [1990], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 1478.
28. Sahifat al-Khalij, “Filasṭīn nuqtat al-ṣidām ma’ al-mashrū‘ al-gharbī al-isti māri” [Palestine is the collision point with the Western colonial project] [1989], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 707.
29. Fathi al-Shiqaqi, “al-Jihād wa-l-mufāwaḍāt” [Jihad and the negotiations] [1994], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 962.
30. Al-Shiqaqi, “Markaziyyat Filasṭīn wa-l-mashrū‘ al-islāmī al-mu‘āṣir,” 432.
31. *Ibid.*, 433.
32. Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine, “no title,” no date, <http://jgaza.ps/go/?download=program&id=17> [accessed April 25, 2017].
33. Al-Shiqaqi, “Markaziyyat Filasṭīn wa-l-mashrū‘ al-islāmī al-mu‘āṣir,” 434.
34. Sahifat al-Khalij, “Filasṭīn nuqtat al-ṣidām ma’ al-mashrū‘ al-gharbī al-isti māri,” 709.
35. As translated by Quran.com, “‘Surah Al-Isra [17]’ [verses 4–7],” no date, <https://quran.com/17> [accessed June 13, 2018].

36. Al-Shiqaqi, “Markaziyyat Filasṭīn wa-l-mashrū‘ al-islāmī al-mu‘āṣir,” 437.
37. *Ibid.*, 441.
38. *Ibid.*, 437.
39. *Ibid.*, 441.
40. *Ibid.*
41. *Ibid.*, 437.
42. Shallah, *Ḥaqā‘iq wa-mawāqif*, 18.
43. Abu Imad al-Rifa‘i, *Ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn: bidāyāt al-mashrū‘ al-jihādī wa-samātihi* [Palestinian Islamic Jihad: Beginnings of the jihadist project and its features] (Beirut: PIJ, 2001), 22.
44. See e.g. Fathi al-Shiqaqi, “Mā hiya ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn?” [What is Palestinian Islamic Jihad?] [1992], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 347; Jaridat al-‘Arab, “Lā budd min taghyir mawāzin al-qiwa” [We must change the balance of power] [1992], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 789; al-Hayat, “Lā zaltu antaḥīr al-shahāda” [I am still waiting for martyrdom] [1995], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 1164.
45. Abu Taha, *Ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn*, 45–46.
46. Anwar Abu Taha, interview with author, March 19, 2018, Beirut.
47. *Ibid.* Figure 2.1 is a recreation of a drawing he made during the interview.
48. It should be noted that faith (*īmān*) and creed (*‘aqīda*) are not synonymous. However, as al-Shiqaqi employs these two terms interchangeably, I have chosen to couple them instead of dismissing one of them. For the sake of clarity, I will employ the word “creed.”
49. Al-Shiqaqi, “Markaziyyat Filasṭīn wa-l-mashrū‘ al-islāmī al-mu‘āṣir,” 433.
50. Sahifat al-Khalij, “Filasṭīn nuḡṭat al-ṣidām ma‘ al-mashrū‘ al-gharbī al-isti‘mārī,” 713.
51. Al-Shiqaqi, “al-Khumaynī,” 469.
52. Sahifat al-Khalij, “Filasṭīn nuḡṭat al-ṣidām ma‘ al-mashrū‘ al-gharbī al-isti‘mārī,” 713.
53. Al-Shiqaqi, “al-Tārīkh limādhā . . .?” 319; al-Shiqaqi, “al-Khumaynī,” 464, 468, 469.
54. Al-Shiqaqi, “al-Khumaynī,” 472, 473.
55. Al-Shiqaqi, “al-Qaḍiya al-filasṭīniyya,” 180.
56. Al-Shiqaqi, “al-Tārīkh limādhā . . .?” 326.
57. Fathi al-Shiqaqi, “Da‘wa ilā al-waḥda al-islāmiyya” [A call for Islamic unity] [1981], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 1416 (emphasis added).
58. Sahifat al-Khalij, “Filasṭīn nuḡṭat al-ṣidām ma‘ al-mashrū‘ al-gharbī al-isti‘mārī,” 709–710.
59. Kihan al-‘Arabi, “Istrāṭījiyya al-‘amal al-islāmī,” 1068.
60. Al-Shiqaqi, “al-Tārīkh limādhā . . .?” 318.
61. *Ibid.*, 329.
62. Al-Shiqaqi, “al-Qaḍiya al-filasṭīniyya,” 184.
63. Anwar Abu Taha, “Anwar Abū Ṭaha,” in *al-Khiṭāb al-islāmī . . . Ilā ayna?* ed. Wahid Taja (Damascus: Dar al-Fikr, 2006), 96.
64. *Ibid.*
65. *Ibid.*, 90.

66. Hatina, *Islam and Salvation in Palestine*, 23.
67. Al-Sharq al-Awsat, “al-Jihād,” 1140.
68. Al-Shiqaqi, “al-Qaḍiyya al-filasṭīniyya,” 178, 183.
69. James Toth, *Sayyid Qutb: The Life and Legacy of a Radical Islamic Intellectual* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 73.
70. Shallah, *Haqā'iq wa-mawāqif*, 78.
71. Toth, *Sayyid Qutb*, 103.
72. *Ibid.*, 78.
73. Fathi al-Shiqaqi, “Muqābila: ‘an ḥarakat al-jihād wa-qaḍāyāhā” [Interview: About Islamic Jihad and its causes] [1990], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 727.
74. Fathi al-Shiqaqi, “Fī dhikrā istishhād Khālīd al-Islāmbūlī” [In memory of Khalid al-Islambuli’s martyrdom] [1983], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 624–625.
75. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: ‘al-Shiqāqī’ kān mu‘taqalan ḥīnhā . . . ‘al-i‘lām al-ḥarbī’ yubḥar fī dhākīrat mufajjir thawrat al-sakākīn” [News: “al-Shiqaqi” was detained at the time . . . the “military media” sails through the memory of the ignitor of the knife revolution], September 28, 2012, <https://saraya.ps/post/23994/-الشقاقي-كان-معتقلا-حينها-الإعلام-الحربي-يبحر-في-ذاكرة-مفجر-ثورة-السكاكين-بذكرى-عملية-ال3> [accessed March 30, 2017].
76. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: al-asīr al-muḥarrar ‘Muḥammad Abū Jalāla’: ṣalābat al-fīkr wa-ṣīd al-intīmā” [News: The freed prisoner “Muhammad Abu Jalala”: The firmness of thought and the sincerity of belonging], November 10, 2011, <https://saraya.ps/post/15879/-الأسير-المحرر-محمد-أبو-جلالة-صلاية-الفكر-وصدق-الانتماء> [accessed June 15, 2018].
77. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā’id ‘Riyāḍ Muḥammad Budayr’: ‘āsh fī ṭalab al-shahāda fa-bā’ al-dunyā wa-ishtarā al-silāh” [The martyr commander “Riyad Muhammad Budayr”: He lived in a demand for martyrdom, so he sold this world and bought weapons], April 5, 2014, <https://saraya.ps/post/2107/-الشهيد-القائد-رياض-محمد-بدير-عاش-في-طلب-الشهادة-فباع-الدنيا-واشترى-السلاح> [accessed April 29, 2017].
78. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: al-asīr al-muḥarrar ‘Muḥammad Abū Jalāla’”; Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-mujāhid ‘Ḥassan Ṣāliḥ Brāhma’: maḍā shahīdan naḥw al-janān” [The martyr mujahid “Hassan Salih Brahma”: He departed as a martyr toward the heavens], July 16, 2011, <https://saraya.ps/post/13075/-الشهيد-المجاهد-حسن-صالح-براهمة-مضى-شهيدا-نحو-الجنان> [accessed March 30, 2017].
79. Anwar Abu Taha, interview with author, March 19, 2018, Beirut.
80. Thomas Hegghammer, “Introduction: What Is Jihadi Culture and Why Should We Study It?” in *Jihadi Culture: The Art and Social Practices of Militant Islamists*, ed. Thomas Hegghammer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 16.
81. Lahoud, *The Jihadis’ Path to Self-destruction*, 115.
82. Audah khotab, “Asmā’ fī ḥayātī – al-ḥalqa al-ūlā – al-shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ‘Awda” [Names in my life – the first episode – Sheikh ‘Abd al-‘Aziz ‘Awda], YouTube, November 10, 2014, www.youtube.com/watch?v=5gn985OnFew [accessed January 22, 2018].
83. Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age 1798–1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 114.

84. Fathi al-Shiqaqī, “al-Uṣūliyya wa-l-‘ilmāniyya” [Fundamentalism and secularism] [1995], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 594.
85. Al-Shiqaqī, “al-Khumaynī,” 473–474; al-Sharq al-Awsat, “al-Jihād,” 1142.
86. Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age 1798–1939*, 117.
87. Al-Shiqaqī, “al-Tārīkh limādhā . . .?” 323.
88. Islamic Jihad in Palestine, “no title.”
89. Al-Shiqaqī, “al-Qaḍiyya al-filasṭīniyya,” 182.
90. *Ibid.*, 182–183.
91. *Ibid.*, 183.

3 Organizing the Movement: PIJ’s Recruitment of New Militants

1. Sara Roy, *The Gaza Strip: The Political Development of De-development* (Washington, DC: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1995), 104.
2. Milton-Edwards, *Islamic Politics in Palestine*, 75.
3. Roy, *The Gaza Strip*, 104.
4. *Ibid.*, 105.
5. Yezid Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State: The Palestinian National Movement, 1949–1993* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 203.
6. *Ibid.*, 287.
7. *Ibid.*
8. Milton-Edwards, *Islamic Politics in Palestine*, 76.
9. Jean-Pierre Filiu, “The Origins of Hamas: Militant Legacy or Israeli Tool?” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 41, no. 3 (2012): 63.
10. *Ibid.*
11. Though the Islamic Association was founded not by Ahmad Yassin, but by Isma‘il Abu Shanab and Ahmad Bahar, it was effectively an instrument for the Islamic Center. Primarily, the Islamic Association established kindergartens, health clinics, summer camps, and various religious and social activities. Roy, *Hamas and Civil Society in Gaza*, 74.
12. Hatina, *Islam and Salvation in Palestine*, 20.
13. See e.g. Milton-Edwards, *Islamic Politics in Palestine*; Mishal and Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas*; Tamimi, *Hamas*; Milton-Edwards and Farrell, *Hamas*.
14. Milton-Edwards, *Islamic Politics in Palestine*, 119–120.
15. Abu Taha, *Ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn*, 21.
16. Jean-Pierre Filiu, *Gaza: A History* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 185; Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine, *Masīrat ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn* [The march of Palestinian Islamic Jihad] (Beirut: PIJ, 1989), 16.
17. Saraya al-Quds, “Dhikrā ‘al-Shiqāqī’ fī dhākirat ‘al-Shāmi.”
18. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: al-qiyaḍī al-Shāmī li-‘l-i‘lām al-ḥarbī”: al-Shiqāqī ṣāna’ mashrū’ islāmī thawrī shāmī” [News: The leader al-Shami to the “military media”: al-Shiqaqī made a comprehensive revolutionary Islamic project], October 27, 2013, <https://saraya.ps/post/31997/-الاعلام-القيادي-الشامي-للمشروع-الاسلامي-ثوري-شاملي> [accessed March 31, 2017].

19. Riyad Salih Hashish, *Rihlat ḥayā bayn al-bilād wa-l-shahāda* [A life journey between country and martyrdom] (Gaza: al-Kalima li-l-Nashr wa-l-Tawzi, 2018), 165–166.
20. *Ibid.*, 171.
21. Al-Sarsawi and ‘Ali, *d. Fathī al-Shiqāqī al-shāhid wa-l-shahīd*, 19.
22. Hashish, *Rihlat ḥayā bayn al-bilād wa-l-shahāda*, 168.
23. *Ibid.*, 174.
24. *Ibid.*
25. Baconi, *Hamas Contained*, 18.
26. Milton-Edwards, *Islamic Politics in Palestine*, 118.
27. Al-Sarsawi and ‘Ali, *d. Fathī al-Shiqāqī al-shāhid wa-l-shahīd*, 19–20.
28. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: ‘al-i’lām al-ḥarbī’ yastaḍīf aḥad rifāq darb al-shahīd Fathī al-Shiqāqī” [News: The “military media” hosts one of the comrades of the martyr Fathi al-Shiqaqi’s path], October 8, 2012, <https://saraya.ps/post/24158/الإعلام-الحربي-يستضيف-أحد-رفاق-درب-الشهيد-فتحى-الشفاقى> [accessed March 31, 2017]. I have not succeeded in finding any PIJ preachers in this period besides al-Shiqaqi and ‘Awda. Salih here is presumably referring to PIJ activists who spoke in the mosques on behalf of the movement, although this is uncertain. Al-Shami himself only refers to al-Shiqaqi and ‘Awda when speaking of mosque preachers in this period. Saraya al-Quds, “Dhikrā ‘al-Shiqāqī’ fī dhākirat ‘al-Shāmi.”
29. Saraya al-Quds, “‘Šuwwar . . . al-shahīd al-qā’id ‘Maḥmūd al-Khawājā’: ḥaqqan annahu rajul lā yatakarrar” [Pictures . . . the martyr commander “Mahmud al-Khawaja”: Truly, he was a man not to be repeated], November 22, 2015, <https://saraya.ps/post/41860/صور-الشهيد-القائد-محمود-الخواجا-حقاً-إنه-رجل-لا-يتكرر> [accessed March 31, 2017]. Hani ‘Abid was the first editor of PIJ’s newspaper, *al-Istiqlāl*.
30. Hashish, *Rihlat ḥayā bayn al-bilād wa-l-shahāda*, 171.
31. *Ibid.*, 162–163.
32. Ahmad, “Rihlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf,” 59.
33. Milton-Edwards, *Islamic Politics in Palestine*, 120.
34. Hatina, *Islam and Salvation in Palestine*, 29.
35. Saraya al-Quds, “‘Fathī al-Shiqāqī’ . . . thawra tajūb al-waṭan . . . wa-fikra tardād tawajjuhan” [“Fathi al-Shiqaqi” . . . a revolution roams the homeland . . . and an idea glows brightly], October 25, 2015, <https://saraya.ps/post/44064/فتحى-الشفاقى-ثورة-تجوب-الوطن-وفكرة-تزداد-توهجا> [accessed March 31, 2017].
36. The martyr biographies confirm these accounts. Ahmad Abu Husayra was recruited from the Hassan al-Banna Mosque/‘Anan Mosque in al-Shati, Khalid Shahada from the ‘Izz al-Din al-Qassam Mosque in Beit Lahiya, Fakhri ‘Attiya al-Dahduh from the Salah al-Din Mosque, and Anwar ‘Aziz from Abu Khusa Mosque, according to the martyr biographies and interviews of PIJ. Khalid al-Ju‘aydi – who carried out several stabbing operations in the 1980s and received iconic status after his release from Israeli prison in the Gilad Shalit prisoner exchange deal in 2011 – was recruited from the Islamic University of Gaza. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: aḥad mu’assasī awwal khaliyya ‘askariyya li-l-jihād yudkhil ‘āmat al33 . . . al-asīr ‘Aḥmad Abū Ḥuşayra’ . . . ṣabr al-rījāl wa-ṣumūd al-jibāl” [News: One of the founders of the first military cell of Islamic

- Jihad enters the 33rd year ... the prisoner “Ahmadd Abu Husayra” ... the patience of men and the steadfastness of mountains], June 19, 2015, <https://saraya.ps/post/3909/> [accessed March 31, 2017]; Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: šuwwar ... bi-dhikhrāhi al-19 ... al-istishhādī Khālīd Shāḥāda: dammuhu athmar ‘izzan wa-našran” [News: On his 19th anniversary ... the martyrdom-seeker Khalid Shahada: His blood yielded honour and victory], December 6, 2012, <https://saraya.ps/post/25577/> [accessed March 31, 2017]; Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-mujāhid ‘Fakhrī ‘Atīya al-Daḥdūh’: baṭal ‘amaliyyat al-ṭa’n bi-‘Tal Abīb’ allatī qutīl fīhā 4” [The martyr mujahid “Fakhri ‘Atiya al-Dahduh”: Hero of the stabbing operation in “Tel Aviv,” which killed 4], January 15, 2012, <https://saraya.ps/post/12183/> [accessed March 31, 2017]; Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-mujāhid ‘Anwar ‘Abdallāh ‘Azīz’: munaffidh awwal ‘amaliyya istishhādiyya fī Filasṭīn” [The martyr mujahid “Anwar ‘Abdallah ‘Aziz”: Executor of the first martyrdom operation in Palestine], August 20, 2010, <https://saraya.ps/post/6500/> [accessed March 31, 2017]; Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: ‘mufajjir thawrat al-sakākīn’ yarwī tafāṣīl ‘amaliyyātihi al-naw’iyya” [News: “Ignitor of the knife revolution” narrates details about his operations], December 6, 2011, <https://saraya.ps/post/16357/> [accessed March 31, 2017].
37. Al-Hajj Muhammad, *al-Masīra al-jihādiyya li-ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn*, 46–48.
 38. Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine, *Masīrat ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn*, 16.
 39. Al-Rifa’i, *Ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn*, 11.
 40. Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine, *Masīrat ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn*, 16–17.
 41. Al-Hajj Muhammad, *al-Masīra al-jihādiyya li-ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn*, 47.
 42. Reuven Paz, “The Development of Palestinian Islamic Groups,” 2012, http://publikationen.uni-frankfurt.de/files/12026/ICSS.The_Development_of_Palestinian_Islamic_Groups.pdf [accessed April 19, 2018], 12.
 43. Saraya al-Quds, “Bi-dhikrāhi al-20 ... al-shahīd al-qā’id Maḥmūd al-Khawājā: riḥlat al-‘aṭā’ wa-rahīl al-‘uzamā’” [On his 20th anniversary ... the martyr commander Mahmud al-Khawaja: The journey of giving and the departure of the great], June 22, 2015, <https://saraya.ps/post/41857/> [accessed March 31, 2017]; Filastin Dhakirat al-Shuhada, “al-Shahīd Hānī ‘Ābid ... muhandis al-i’lām al-muqāwim” [The martyr Hani ‘Abid ... engineer of the resistant media], August 10, 2015, www.shuhadaa-pal.org/2015/08/10/ [accessed March 31, 2017].
 44. Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine, *Masīrat ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn*, 14–15.
 45. Adnan Abu Amir, “Ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī: al-nash’a wa-l-taṭawwur wa-l-mawāqif al-siyāsiyya” [Palestinian Islamic Jihad: Origin, evolution, and

- political positions], January 16, 2018, <http://adnanabuamer.com/post/120> [accessed April 3, 2018].
46. The *Toward Conscious Vanguard* series consisted of six studies: (1) “The Palestinian Cause Is the Central Cause . . . Why?”; (2) “The Battle of Beirut: The Palestinian Experience from an Islamic Viewpoint”; (3) “Fatah from Its Launch to Its Demise”; (4) “Is There Revolution in Islam? Articles on Its Code”; (5) “Tides in the Islamic March”; and (6) “Features of the Desired Self.” Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine, *Masīrat ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn*, 15–16.
 47. Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine, *Masīrat ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn*, 15–16; al-Hajj Muhammad, *al-Masīra al-jihādiyya li-ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn*, 48.
 48. Reuven Paz, “Higher Education and the Development of Palestinian Islamic Groups,” *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, 2000, <https://bit.ly/3cw hddf> [accessed March 1, 2019], 13.
 49. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: ‘al-i‘lām al-ḥarbī’ yastaḍīf aḥad rifāq darb al-shahīd Fathī al-Shiqāqī.”
 50. Paz, “Higher Education and the Development of Palestinian Islamic Groups,” 4, 9, 10.
 51. Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine, *Masīrat ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn*, 14. Although we do not know the details, in 1982 Bashir Nafi’ moved from Egypt to the United Kingdom, where he became a member of *The Islamic Vanguard*’s editorial board. Allegedly, Nafi’ cooperated with al-Shiqāqī on distributing the magazine in the Occupied Palestinian Territories in the 1980s. Yale Law School Lillian Goldman Law Library, “September 11, 2001: Attack on America. DOJ Oversight: Preserving Our Freedoms While Defending against Terrorism – Statement of Steven Emerson before the Committee on the Judiciary United States Senate; December 4, 2001,” December 4, 2001, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/sept11/emerson_001.asp [accessed April 8, 2019].
 52. Ahmad, “Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf,” 60.
 53. Abu Amir, “Ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī.”
 54. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: al-qiyādī al-Shāmī li-‘l-i‘lām al-ḥarbī.”
 55. Hroub, *Hamas*, 215.
 56. Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine, *Masīrat ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn*, 13.
 57. Hatina, *Islam and Salvation in Palestine*, 29.
 58. Jean-François Legrain, “HAMAS: Legitimate Heir of Palestinian Nationalism?” in *Political Islam: Revolution, Radicalism, or Reform?* ed. John L. Esposito (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1997), 165–166.
 59. Al-Rifa’i, *Ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn*, 11–12.
 60. Paul Staniland, *Networks of Rebellion: Explaining Insurgent Cohesion and Collapse* (Ithaca, London: Cornell University Press, 2014), 9, 17, 217.
 61. *Ibid.*, 27, 32.
 62. Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine, *Masīrat ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn*, 14.
 63. *Ibid.*, 15.

64. *Ibid.*, 17; Ahmad Mansour, “Ab‘ād da‘wa ‘Abbās li-l-ḥiwār ma‘ Ḥamās” [The dimensions of ‘Abbas’s call for dialogue with Hamas], *Aljazeera*, June 16, 2008, www.aljazeera.net/programs/withoutbounds/2008/6/16/أبعاد دعوة عباس للحوار مع حماس [accessed April 16, 2018].
65. Al-Mujahid, “Taqdīm al-shaykh ‘Abdallāh al-Shāmī li-l-muḥākama” [Sheikh ‘Abdallah al-Shami presented for trial], no. 29 (March 16, 1990): 7.
66. Paz, “The Development of Palestinian Islamic Groups,” 2–3.
67. Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State*, 608.
68. While 42.46 percent of the PIJ martyrs in this period were either engaged in or had finished secondary level of education, 25.87 percent were either engaged in or had finished university studies, and 3.93 percent were engaged in or had finished vocational training, which corresponds to secondary education although not in an academic direction. While the category “laborer” (‘*āmīl*’) is ambiguous insofar as it may refer to several types of occupation, I am assuming that it refers to neither an academic position nor a bourgeois one. While the category “unknown employment” (n = 55) was on the list initially, I did not include it in this section because it neither affirms nor invalidates my hypothesis.
69. These were pediatrician (n = 1), lawyer (n = 1), engineer (n = 2), or director (*mudīr*) (n = 2).
70. The eastern neighborhoods of al-Shuja‘iyya had forty-six martyrs, al-Zaytun had forty-six, and al-Turkman had thirty-one martyrs. The western neighborhoods of Tel al-Hawa had only ten, while al-Rimal (both southern and northern parts included) had only two martyrs. Last, the neighborhood of al-Sabra had only four martyrs.
71. In the north, Beit Lahiya had forty-six martyrs. In the south, Rafah City had nineteen martyrs; Rafah camp had nineteen martyrs, and al-Shabura neighborhood alone in the western part of Rafah camp had in addition twelve martyrs. Tel al-Sultan refugee camp was, however, second in the Rafah district with twenty-six martyrs.
72. There were in theory three additional Islamic Jihad groups if we count the Islamic Jihad Brigades (Sarāyā al-Jihād al-Islāmī). However, as it evolved and operated within the framework of Fatah, I have not included it in this particular analysis.
73. While Milton-Edwards refers to him as Jamal Amar, Hatina and Abu-Amr refer to him as Jabr ‘Ammar. Yet, all three accounts of ‘Ammar’s trajectory point to the same person. Milton-Edwards, *Islamic Politics in Palestine*, 117; Abu-Amr, *Islamic Fundamentalism in the West Bank and Gaza*, 94; Hatina, *Islam and Salvation in Palestine*, 33.
74. Hatina, *Islam and Salvation in Palestine*, 33.
75. Staniland, *Networks of Rebellion*, 36.
76. *Ibid.*, 29.
77. Paz, “The Development of Palestinian Islamic Groups,” 7.
78. Al-Sarsawi and ‘Ali, *d. Faṭḥ al-Shiqāqī al-shāhid wa-l-shahīd*, 89.
79. Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine, *Masīrat ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn*, 17.
80. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: aḥad mu‘assasī awwal khaliyya ‘askariyya li-l-jihād yudkḥil ‘āmat al33.”

81. Filastin al-Yawm, “al-Sira al-dhātīyya li-l-amīn al-‘āmm al-muntakhab li-harakat al-jihād al-islāmī al-ustādh al-Nakhāla” [The biography of the elected secretary-general of Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Professor al-Nakhala], September 27, 2018, <https://paltoday.ps/ar/post/332124/-السيرة-الذاتية-للامين-السيرة-الذاتية-للامين-العام-المنتخب-لحركة-الجهاد-الاسلامي-الاستاذ> [accessed September 28, 2018].
82. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā’id ‘Miṣbāh al-Šūrī’: khaḍḍab bi-dammihi judrān sijn Ghazza al-markazī” [The martyr commander “Misbah al-Suri”: He colored the walls of Gaza Central Prison with his blood], October 6, 2011, <https://saraya.ps/post/7354/-الشهيد-القائد-مصباح-حسن-الصوري-خضب-بدمه-جدران-سجن-غزة-المركزي> [accessed March 31, 2017]; Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: al-shahīd Sāmī al-Shaykh Khalīl jihād mā bi-‘addat jihād” [News: The martyr Sami al-Shaykh Khalil, a jihad like several jihads], October 6, 2009, <https://saraya.ps/post/2281/-الشهيد-سامي-الشيخ-خليل-جهاد-ما-بعدة-جهاد> [accessed March 31, 2017]; Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā’id ‘Muḥammad Sa’īd al-Jamal’: dhikrā buṭūlat ta’abbā al-nisyan” [The martyr commander “Muhammad Sa’id al-Jamal”: Anniversary of heroism not to be forgotten], October 6, 2011, <https://saraya.ps/post/7355/-الشهيد-القائد-محمد-سعید-الجمال-ذكرى-بطولة-تأبى-النسيان> [accessed March 31, 2017]; Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā’id ‘Iṣṣām Mūsā Brāhma’: Awwal qā’id ‘askarī li-l-jihād al-islāmī bi-l-ḍiffa al-muḥtalla” [The martyr commander “Issam Musa Brahma”: The first military commander of Islamic Jihad in the occupied West Bank], June 29, 2011, <https://saraya.ps/post/3636/-الشهيد-القائد-عصام-عزیز-براهمة-أول-قائد-عسكري-للجهاد-الاسلامي-بالضفة-المحتلة> [accessed March 31, 2017].
83. Ahmad, “Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf,” 59; Milton-Edwards, *Islamic Politics in Palestine*, 120; Hatina, *Islam and Salvation in Palestine*, 33; Anwar Abu Taha, interview with author, March 19, 2018, Beirut.
84. Filiu, *Gaza*, 190.
85. *Ibid.*, 18.
86. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: muḥarrarūn: ‘al-Shiqāqī’ kassar ‘unjuhiyyat al-iḥtilāl bi-mawāqifihi al-ṣulba wa-wa’iyya al-mustanīr” [News: The freed: “al-Shiqaqi” broke the arrogance of the occupation with his solid stances and enlightened awareness], October 15, 2014, <https://saraya.ps/post/37568/-محررون-الشقاقي-كسر-عنجهية-الاحتلال-بموافقه-الصلبة-وعية-المستنير> [accessed March 31, 2017].
87. *Ibid.*
88. *Ibid.*
89. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: al-shahīd Sāmī al-Shaykh Khalīl jihād mā bi-‘addat jihād.”
90. Filastin al-Yawm, “Ba’d 24 ‘āman ‘alā istishhādihi . . . ‘Iṣṣām Brāhma qīṣṣat ‘ashq li-l-silāh wa-muqāra’at al-a’dā” [24 years after the martyrdom . . . ‘Issam Brahma is a story of love for arms and fighting the enemies], December 12, 2016, <https://paltoday.ps/ar/post/286624/-بعد-24-عاما-على-استشهاده-عصام-براهمة-قصة-عشق-للسلاح-ومقارعة-الاعداء> [accessed May 22, 2018].
91. Abufarha, *The Making of a Human Bomb*, 144.
92. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: aḥad mu’assasī awwal khaliyya ‘askariyya li-l-jihād yudkhil ‘āmat al33.”
93. Khadr Abbas, “Shahīd al-ghurba wa-l-ib’ād Aḥmad Ḥassan Muḥannā ‘Abū al-Ḥassan” [A martyr of desolation and deportation, Ahmad Hassan Muhanna

- “Abu al-Hassan”], *Dunya al-Watan*, January 16, 2015, <https://pulpit.alwatanvoice.com/content/print/354279.html> [accessed April 16, 2018].
94. Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State*, 56, 195.
 95. Frode Løvlie, “Questioning the Secular-Religious Cleavage in Palestinian Politics: Comparing Fatah and Hamas,” *Politics and Religion* 7, no. 1 (2014): 103.
 96. Muhammad Abu Tayr, *Sayyidī ‘Umar: dhikriyyāt al-shaykh Muḥammad Abū Tayr fī al-muqāwama wa-thalātha wa-thalāthīn ‘āman min al-i’tiqāl* [Sayyidi ‘Umar: The recollections of Sheikh Muhammad Abu Tayr in the resistance and thirty-three years of detention] (Beirut: al-Zaytouna Center, 2017), 72.
 97. *Ibid.*, 78.
 98. *Ibid.*, 79.
 99. *Ibid.*, 72.
 100. *Ibid.*, 83.
 101. *Ibid.*, 72.
 102. *Ibid.*, 83, 86.
 103. Bilal, interview with author, August 6, 2018, *WhatsApp*.
 104. Abu Samir Musa, interview with author, March 21, 2018, Rashidieh.
 105. *Ibid.*
 106. Abu Samir Musa, interview with author, April 20, 2018, *WhatsApp*.
 107. Abu Samir Musa, interview with author, March 21, 2018, Rashidieh.
 108. Abu Samir Musa, interview with author, April 20, 2018, *WhatsApp*.
 109. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: aḥad rijāl al-sarāyā al-awā’il bi-l-ḍiffa ... al-shahīd al-qā’id Falāh Mushāraqa ... jihād bi-lā ḥudūd ... wa-shahāda min al-wadūd” [News: One of the first men of the al-Quds Brigades in the West Bank ... jihad without borders ... and martyrdom from the devoted], September 23, 2010, <https://saraya.ps/post/6992/أحدر-جال-السرايا-الأوائل-بالضفة-الشهيد-القائد-فلاح-مشارقة-جهاد-بلا-حدود-وشهادة-من-الودود> [accessed May 25, 2018].
 110. Manfred Sing, “Brothers in Arms: How Palestinian Maoists Turned Jihadists,” *Die Welt des Islams* 51, no. 1 (2011): 6.
 111. Statistics compiled from Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine, “Jadwal tafṣilī bi-‘amaliyyāt ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī mundhu nash’athā ḥattā (2/2006)” [Detailed table of Palestinian Islamic Jihad’s operations from its inception until (2/2006)], 2006. Document in author’s possession.
 112. Roy, *The Gaza Strip*, 23.
 113. *Ibid.*, 24; Dag Tuastad, *Palestinske Utfordringer* (Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk, 2014), 73.
 114. Sara Roy, “Civil Society in the Gaza Strip: Obstacles to Social Reconstruction,” in *Civil Society in the Middle East*, volume II, ed. August Richard Norton (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), 228.
 115. Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State*, 468.
 116. Al-Mujahid, “Su’āl wa-jawāb: mā hiya ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn?” [Q&A: What is Palestinian Islamic Jihad?], no. 147 (July 3, 1992): 4. The exception is the sermons that ‘Awda held at the al-Aqsa Mosque during *laylat al-qadr*.
 117. Saraya al-Quds, “Hānī ‘Ābid ... al-qalam alladhī mazzaq wa’d ‘Balfūr” [Hani ‘Abid ... the pen that tore up the “Balfour” Declaration], November 3, 2016,

- <https://saraya.ps/post/48778/> هاني-عابد-القلم-الذي-مزق-وعد-بلفور [accessed May 29, 2018].
118. Al-Hajj Muhammad, *al-Masīra al-jihādiyya li-ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn*, 49.
 119. *Ibid.*, 50.
 120. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā’id ‘Nu’ mān Tāhīr Ṭahāyina’: min riḥāb al-kitāb ilā jad’ al-bunduqiyya shahāda bi-l-damm wa-l-fikr” [The martyr commander “Nu’man Tahir Tahayna’: From the fold of the book to the young man of the rifle, martyrdom with blood and thought], July 15, 2012, <https://saraya.ps/post/5923/> الشهيد-القائد-نعمان-طاهر-طحاينة-من-رحاب-الكتاب-إلى-جدع [accessed May 22, 2018].
 121. Al-Hajj Muhammad, *al-Masīra al-jihādiyya li-ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn*, 50.
 122. *Ibid.*, 49.
 123. Filastin Dhakirat al-Shuhada, “al-Shahīd Hānī ‘Ābid.”
 124. *Ibid.*
 125. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā’id ‘Nu’ mān Tāhīr Ṭahāyina.’”
 126. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā’id ‘As’ad Daqqa’: qā’id min al-tirāz al-awwal adhāq al-’adw al-waylāt” [The martyr commander “As’ad Daqqa’: Commander of the first class who distressed the enemy], September 13, 2011, <https://saraya.ps/post/14680/> الشهيد-القائد-أسعد-دقة-قائد-من-الطرز-الأول-أذاق [accessed May 22, 2018].
 127. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā’id ‘Yusūf Aḥmad Bashārāt’: āsh muṭāradan wa-raḥal shahīdan” [The martyr commander “Yusuf Ahmad Basharat’: He lived as a fugitive and departed as a martyr], February 2, 2012, <https://saraya.ps/post/13893/> الشهيد-القائد-يوسف-أحمد-بشارات-عاش-مطاردا-ورحل-شهيدا [accessed May 22, 2018].
 128. Muhjat al-Quds, *‘Iṣṣām Brāhma, shahīd ma’ sabaq al-iṣrār* [‘Issam Brahma, a premeditated martyr] (Gaza: Muhjat al-Quds Foundation, 2014), 22–23.
 129. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā’id ‘‘Iṣṣām Mūsā Brāhma.’”
 130. Muhjat al-Quds, *‘Iṣṣām Brāhma, shahīd ma’ sabaq al-iṣrār*, 24.
 131. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-mujāhid ‘Ḥassan Ṣāliḥ Brāhma.’”
 132. Muhjat al-Quds, *‘Iṣṣām Brāhma, shahīd ma’ sabaq al-iṣrār*, 122, 128–129, 143–144, 146.
 133. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā’id ‘Ḥussām Luṭfi Jarādāt’: sajjal namūdḥajān fi al-jihād wa-l-muqāwama” [The martyr commander “Hussam Lutfi Jaradat’: He embodied a model in jihad and resistance], August 22, 2013, <https://saraya.ps/post/13074/> الشهيد-القائد-حسام-لطفی-جرادات [accessed May 30, 2018]; Saraya al-Quds, “‘Amaliyyat ‘al-Khuḍayra’ al-istishhādiyya” [The “Hadera” martyrdom operation], no date, <https://saraya.ps/post/44757/> عملية-الخضيرة-الاستشهادية [accessed May 30, 2018]; Saraya al-Quds, “al-Istishhādī Rāghib Jarādāt: intalaq min wasaṭ al-ma’raka wa-zalzal ‘arsh al-ṣahāyina” [The martyrdom-seeker Raghīb Jaradat: He set off from the middle of the battle and shook the throne of the Zionists], April 5, 2015, <https://saraya.ps/post/40300/> الاستشهادي-راغب-جرادات-انطلق-من-وسط-المعركة-وزلزل-عرش-الصهيانية [accessed May 30, 2018].

134. Muḥjat al-Quds, *‘Iṣṣām Brāhma, shahīd ma‘ sabaq al-iṣrār*, 118, 127; Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: al-‘adw yujaddid al-i‘tiqāl al-idārī li-l-qiyādi ‘Sharif Ṭahāyṇa’ min Jinīn” [News: The enemy renews the administrative detention for the leader “Sharif Tahayna” from Jenin], October 10, 2014, <https://saraya.ps/post/37508/العفو-يجدد-الاعتقال-الإداري-للقائد-ي-شريف-طحاينة-من-جنين> [accessed May 30, 2018]; Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-mujāhid ‘Sulaymān Mūsā Ṭahāyṇa’: kān kathīr al-ṣiyyām wa-tilāwat al-qur’ān” [The martyr mujahid “Sulayman Musa Tahayna”: He used to fast and recite the Qur’an], July 17, 2011, <https://saraya.ps/post/13153/الشهيد-المجاهد-سليمان-موسى-طحاينة-كان-كثير-الصيام-وتلاوة-القرآن> [accessed May 30, 2018]. We may refer to a failed suicide bombing of PIJ in Jerusalem, 1998. Underscoring the importance of kinship, Sulayman Tahayna, one of the suicide bombers, was the brother of Salih, who was found brutally tortured to death in Ramallah in 1996, presumably by the security forces of the Palestinian National Authority (PA). According to the martyr biography of Sulayman, the torture and death of Salih had a profound impact on him. Once Sulayman was released from prison, he and al-Zughayr were vetted by Iyad Hardan, while Anwar Hamran prepared them before they blew themselves up.
135. Muḥjat al-Quds, *‘Iṣṣām Brāhma, shahīd ma‘ sabaq al-iṣrār*, 121, 124–125; Saraya al-Quds, “al-Asīr al-qā’id ‘Thābit Mardāwī’ ... ṣaqr al-sarāyā wa-aḥad al-maṭlūbīn al-‘ashra li-l-taṣfiya” [The prisoner commander “Thabit Mardawi” ... falcon of the brigades and one of the ten most wanted for liquidation], February 2, 2016, <https://saraya.ps/post/45553/الأسير-القائد-ثابت-المرادوي-صقر-السراية-واحد-المطلوبين-العشرة-للتصفية> [accessed May 23, 2018]; Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā’id ‘Wā’il Mutlaq ‘Assāf: al-mu’min al-ṣādiq wa-l-assad al-miqdām” [The martyr commander “Wa’il Mutlaq ‘Assaf”: The sincere believer and brave lion], no date, <https://saraya.ps/martyr/12/الشهيد-القائد-وائل-مطلق-عساف-المؤمن-الصادق-والأسد-المقدام> [accessed May 30, 2018].
136. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā’id ‘Nu’ mān Ṭāhīr Ṭahāyṇa.”
137. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā’id ‘Aḥmad Radād Radād’: fārisan irtadā ‘abā’at al-majid al-khālīd wa ṣana’ min dammihi malḥama lā tansā” [The martyr commander “Ahmad Radad Radad”: A knight who wore the mantle of immortal glory and made an unforgettable epic with his blood], February 7, 2012, <https://saraya.ps/post/8965/الشهيد-القائد-أحمد-راداد-فارس-الخاليد-واحدة-من-دمه-ملحمة-لا-تنسى> [accessed May 30, 2018]; Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: al-shahīd al-qā’id ‘Shafīq ‘Awnī ‘Abd al-Ghanī’: laqqan junūd al-‘adw darsan qabl an yartaqī li-l-ḥanān” [News: The martyr commander “Shafiq ‘Awni ‘Abd al-Ghani”: He taught the enemy’s soldiers a lesson before he rose to the heavens], May 2, 2012, <https://saraya.ps/post/13202/الشهيد-القائد-شفيق-عوني-عبد-الغني-لقن-جنود-العدو-درس-قبل-أن-يرتقي-للحنان> [accessed May 30, 2018]; Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-mujāhid ‘Mājid Samīr al-Ashqar’: ta’athar bi-istishhād mu’allemihi Anwar ‘Abd al-Ghanī fa-sār ‘alā darbihi” [The martyr mujahid “Majid Samir al-Ashqar”: Affected by the martyrdom of his teacher Anwar ‘Abd al-Ghani, he walked on his path], November 30, 2011, <https://saraya.ps/post/15818/الشهيد-المجاهد-ماجد-سمير-الأشقر-تأثر-بإستشهاد-معلمه-أنور-عبد-الغني-فسار-على-دربه> [accessed May 30, 2018]; Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: al-shahīd al-qā’id ‘Zāhīr ‘Īsā al-Ashqar’:

qitāl ḥattā al-shahāda” [News: The martyr commander “Zahir ‘Isa al-Ashqar”: Fighting until martyrdom], July 29, 2012, <https://saraya.ps/post/6143/الشهيد-القائد-زاهر-عيسى-الأشقر-قتال-حتى-الشهادة> [accessed May 30, 2018]; Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-mujāhid ‘Ilyās Khayrī al-Ashqar’: rafaḍ al-istislām wa-qātāl ḥattā al-shahāda” [The martyr mujahid “Ilyas Khayri al-Ashqar”: He rejected surrender and fought until martyrdom], May 14, 2012, <https://saraya.ps/post/11477/الشهيد-المجاهد-الibas-خيرى-الأشقر-رفض-الاستسلام-وقاتل-حتى-الشهادة> [accessed May 30, 2018]; Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-mujāhid ‘Muhammad Šāfi al-Ashqar’: shahīd ma’ rakat al-ṣumūd wa-l-taḥaddī fi sijn al-Naqab” [The martyr mujahid “Muhammad Safi al-Ashqar”: Martyr of the battle of steadfastness and confrontation in the Negev Prison], October 22, 2012, <https://saraya.ps/post/5875/الشهيد-المجاهد-محمد-صافي-الأشقر-شهيد-معركة-الصمود-والتحدي-في-سجن-النقب> [accessed May 30, 2018]; Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-mujāhid ‘Rāmī Ṭālib al-Ashqar’: sayf al-‘arīn” [The martyr mujahid “Rami Talib al-Ashqar”: Sword of the den], March 12, 2012, <https://saraya.ps/post/13150/الشهيد-المجاهد-رامي-طالب-الأشقر-سيف-العرين> [accessed May 30, 2018]; Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-mujāhid ‘Sa’īd Ṭālib al-Ashqar’: al-rajul al-mujāhid šāḥib al-bī’ al-rābiḥ” [The martyr mujahidin “Sa’id Talib al-Ashqar”: The mujahid who was given a bargain], November 3, 2012, <https://saraya.ps/post/13906/الشهيد-المجاهد-سعيد-طالب-الأشقر-الرجل-المجاهد-صاحب-البيع-الرابح> [accessed May 30, 2018].

138. Roy, *The Gaza Strip*, 23.

139. This is not to say that there were no links between the north and the south. Muhammad Basharat, for example, moved from Jenin to Hebron in order to complete his studies, and Basharat became part of the Hebron cell of Dhiyab al-Shwayki and Muhammad Sidr. However, I have not found evidence of any cooperation between Jenin and Hebron despite this connection. Saraya al-Quds, “Al-Shahīd al-qā’id ‘Yusūf Aḥmad Bashārāt.”

4 From Students to Militants: Commencing the Armed Struggle

1. Milton-Edwards, *Islamic Politics in Palestine*, 121; Abu-Amr, *Islamic Fundamentalism in the West Bank and Gaza*, 96; Tamimi, *Hamas*, 44.
2. Are Knudsen, “Crescent and Sword: The Hamas Enigma,” *Third World Quarterly* 26, no. 8 (2005): 1379.
3. Hatina, *Islam and Salvation in Palestine*, 32.
4. Holly Fletcher, “Palestinian Islamic Jihad,” *Council on Foreign Relations*, April 10, 2008, www.cfr.org/israel/palestinian-islamic-jihad/p15984 [accessed April 1, 2017]; The Mackenzie Institute, “Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ),” *The Mackenzie Institute Security Matters*, January 21, 2016, <http://mackenzieinstitute.com/palestinian-islamic-jihad-pij/> [accessed April 1, 2017]; BBC News, “Who are Islamic Jihad?” June 9, 2003, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/1658443.stm [accessed April 1, 2017].
5. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: al-qiyādī al-Shāmī li-‘l-i’lām al-ḥarbī.”

- heroes of the Battle of al-Shuja'iyya], October 6, 2011, <https://saraya.ps/post/7350/الشهيد-القائد-أحمد-عمر-حلس-أحد-أبطال-معركة-الشجاعية> [accessed April 2, 2017].
21. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā'id ‘Muḥammad Sa'īd al-Jamal.”
 22. David McDowall, *Palestine and Israel: The Uprising and Beyond* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 109.
 23. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā'id ‘Muḥammad Sa'īd al-Jamal.”
 24. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: al-shahīd Sāmī al-Shaykh Khalīl jihād mā bi-'addat jihād.”
 25. Saraya al-Quds, “Abū Sarhad yarwī li-'l-i'lām al-ḥarbī' adaq tafāṣīl 'amaliyyat al-hurūb al-mu'jiza li-l-marra al-ūlā ... ṣuwwar.”
 26. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā'id ‘Muḥammad Sa'īd al-Jamal.”
 27. Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine, *Masīrat al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn*, 19.
 28. Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine, “jadwal tafṣīlī bi-'amaliyyāt ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī mundhu nash'athā ḥattā (2/2006),” 2006, 2–3 (attack no. 9).
 29. *Ibid.*, (attack no. 18).
 30. Bergman, *Rise and Kill First*, 310.
 31. See e.g. Abu Taha, *Ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn*, 24.
 32. *Ibid.*, 25.
 33. Al-Rifa'i, *Ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn*, 14–15.
 34. Baruch Kimmerling and Joel S. Migdal, *The Palestinian People: A History* (Cambridge, MA, London: Harvard University Press, 2003), 296.
 35. Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine, *Masīrat ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn*, 17.
 36. Al-Rifa'i, *Ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn*, 12–13.
 37. Filastin al-Yawm, “al-Sira al-dhātīyya li-l-amīn al-'āmm al-muntakhab li-ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī al-ustādh al-Nakhāla.”
 38. Abbas, “Shahīd al-ghurba wa-l-ib'ād Aḥmad Ḥassan Muḥannā 'Abū al-Ḥassan.”
 39. See e.g. Milton-Edwards, *Islamic Politics in Palestine*, 120; Abu-Amr, *Islamic Fundamentalism in the West Bank and Gaza*, 99.
 40. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: al-shahīd Muḥammad Sa'īd al-Jamal ... qamar al-jihād wa-ḥiṣāb al-qadr al-jamīl” [News: The martyr Muhammad Sa'īd al-Jamal ... the moon of jihad and an account of the beautiful destiny], October 6, 2009, <https://saraya.ps/post/2280/الشهيد-محمد-سعيد-الجمال-قمر-الجهاد-وصحاب-القدر-الجميل> [accessed April 3, 2017].
 41. Hatina, *Islam and Salvation in Palestine*, 35.
 42. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: al-qiyādī al-Shāmī li-'l-i'lām al-ḥarbī.”
 43. *Ibid.*
 44. Saraya al-Quds, “Abū Sarhad yarwī li-'l-i'lām al-ḥarbī' adaq tafāṣīl 'amaliyyat al-hurūb al-mu'jiza li-l-marra al-ūlā ... ṣuwwar”; Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: al-shahīd al-qā'id: 'Bashīr al-Dabash': wa'y 'amiq ... imān rāsikh ... thawra mutaḥidda” [News: The martyr commander: “Bashīr al-Dabash”: A deep awareness ... a firm faith ... a blazing revolution], October 5, 2011, <https://saraya.ps/post/15100/الشهيد-القائد-بشير-الدبش-وعمي-عميق-إيمان-راسخ-ثورة-متحدة> [accessed April 4, 2017].
 45. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: 'ā'ilat al-shahīd al-qā'id Rā'id Abū Fanūna fi dhikrāhi ... 'shumūkh ya'talī fakhr al-shahāda” [News: Family of the

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 47. Saraya al-Quds, "al-Shahīd al-mujāhid 'Ḥassan Ṣālīḥ Brāhma.'"
 48. Saraya al-Quds, "Abū Sarhad yarwī li-'l-'lām al-ḥarbi' adaq tafāṣīl 'amaliyyat al-hurūb al-mu'jiza li-l-marra al-ūlā ... ṣuwwar."'
 49. Saraya al-Quds, "al-Shahīd al-qā'id 'Iyād Muḥammad Ḥardān': adhāq al-'adw al-waylāt wa-jarā'hum ka's al-manūn" [The martyr commander "Iyad Muhammad Hardan": The enemy tasted the woes and drank the poisoned chalice], April 5, 2014, <https://saraya.ps/post/13071/> - الشهيد القائد - إياد محمد حردان - أذاق العدو الويلات وجر عهم كأس المنون [accessed April 30, 2017].
 50. Muḥjat al-Quds, *'Iṣṣām Brāhma, shahīd ma' sabaq al-īṣrār*, 156, 158–163.
 51. Saraya al-Quds, "Abū Sarhad yarwī li-'l-'lām al-ḥarbi' adaq tafāṣīl 'amaliyyat al-hurūb al-mu'jiza li-l-marra al-ūlā ... ṣuwwar."'
 52. Saraya al-Quds, "al-Shahīd al-qā'id 'Khālīd Sha'bān al-Daḥdūḥ': rajul 'askarī farīd min al-ṭirāz al-awwal" [The martyr commander "Khalid Sha'ban al-Dahduh": An unequalled military man of the first class], March 1, 2012, <https://saraya.ps/post/9317/> - الشهيد القائد - خالد شعبان - الدحوح - رجل - أرقب من الطراز الأول [accessed April 3, 2017].
 53. Saraya al-Quds, "al-Shahīd al-mujāhid 'Fakhrī 'Aṭīya al-Daḥdūḥ'"; Saraya al-Quds, "al-Shahīd al-qā'id 'Ayman Sha'bān al-Daḥdūḥ': rajulan aḥabb al-jihād wa-'ashaq al-shahāda" [The martyr commander "Ayman Sha'ban al-Dahduh": A man who loved jihad and martyrdom], July 18, 2011, <https://saraya.ps/post/13053/> - الشهيد القائد - أيمن شعبان - الدحوح - رجل - أحب - الجهاد - عشق - الشهادة [accessed September 3, 2018]; Saraya al-Quds, "al-Shahīd al-qā'id 'Muḥammad Sha'bān al-Daḥdūḥ': aḥad qādat al-wiḥda al-ṣārūkhiyya" [The martyr commander "Muhammad Sha'ban al-Dahduh": One of the rocket unit's leaders], July 18, 2011, <https://saraya.ps/post/13057/> - الشهيد القائد - محمد شعبان - الدحوح - أحد قادة الوحدة الصاروخية [accessed September 3, 2018]; Saraya al-Quds, "Khabar: al-shahīd al-qā'id 'Ayman Ḥamdān al-Daḥdūḥ': sajjal ḥāfil bi-l-jihād wa-l-'aṭā'" [News: The martyr commander "Ayman Hamdan al-Dahduh": A track record of jihad and giving], February 3, 2012, <https://saraya.ps/post/9284/> - الشهيد القائد - أمين حمدان - الدحوح - سجل حافل بالجهاد والعطاء [accessed September 3, 2018]; Saraya al-Quds, "al-Shahīd al-qā'id 'Mahdī Marwān al-Daḥdūḥ': aḥad qādat al-wiḥda al-ṣārūkhiyya" [The martyr commander "Mahdi Marwan al-Dahduh": One of the rocket unit's leaders], May 4, 2012, <https://saraya.ps/post/12330/> - الشهيد القائد - مهدي مروان - الدحوح - أحد قادة الوحدة الصاروخية [accessed September 3, 2018]; Saraya al-Quds, "al-Shahīd al-mujāhid 'Kāmil Khālīd al-Daḥdūḥ': 'alā darb wālidīhi maḍā'" [The martyr mujahid "Kamil Khalid al-Dahduh": On the path his father went], September 24, 2011, <https://saraya.ps/post/2187/> - الشهيد المجاهد - كامل خالد - الدحوح - على درب والده مضي [accessed September 3, 2018]; Saraya al-Quds, "al-Shahīd al-qā'id al-maydānī 'Karīm Marwān al-Daḥdūḥ': mujāhid fi al-maydān ... 'āshiq li-janān al-raḥmān" [The martyr field commander "Karim Marwan al-Dahduh": A mujahid in the field ... in love with the heavens of the Most Merciful], December 17, 2012, <https://saraya.ps/post/12352/> - الشهيد القائد - الميداني - [accessed September 3, 2018].

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54. Majid Abu Salama, Facebook message to author, March 24, 2017.
 55. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā’id ‘Khālīd Sha’bān al-Daḥdūh.”
 56. Saraya al-Quds, “Muqtaṭafāt al-sīra al-‘aṭira li-l-shahīd al-qā’id ‘Abdallāh al-Saba’” [Excerpts from the fragrant biography of the martyr commander ‘Abdallah al-Saba’], February 22, 2015, <https://saraya.ps/post/39458/-مقتطفات-من-السيرة-العطرة-للمشيد-القائد-عبد-الله-السبع> [accessed April 4, 2017].
 57. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: ‘āyish al-Shiqāqī wa-ta’athar bi-fikrihi.”
 58. The Sinai Peninsula does, indeed, recur when one assesses the acquisition of weapons, as the martyr biography of al-Jamal states that al-Suri was ambushed by Israeli soldiers when he traveled to al-Arish to buy weapons for his cell. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā’id ‘Muḥammad Sa’īd al-Jamal.”
 59. Abu Amir, “Ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī.”
 60. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: sarad ḥikāyāt li-awwal marra tarwī . . . ‘al-i’lām al-ḥarbī’ yubḥir fī dhākirat mufajjir ‘thawrat al-sakākīn’ al-jihādiyya . . . ṣuwwar” [News: Stories narrated for the first time . . . the “military media” sails through the memory of the igniter of the jihadist “knife intifada” . . . pictures], October 25, 2011, <https://saraya.ps/post/15516/-سرد-حكايات-لأول-مرة-تروى-الإعلام-الحربي-يبحر-في-ذاكر-مفجر-ثورة-السكاكين-الجهادية-صور> [accessed April 16, 2019].
 61. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: ‘mufajjir thawrat al-sakākīn’ yarwī tafāṣīl ‘amaliyyātihi al-naw’iyya.”
 62. Wendy Kristiansen, “Challenge and Counterchallenge: Hamas’s Response to Oslo,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 28, no. 3 (Spring 1999): 21.
 63. Mishal and Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas*, 57.
 64. Tamimi, *Hamas*, 44; Khaled Hroub, “Hamas: Conflating National Liberation and Political Change,” in *Political Islam: Context versus Ideology*, ed. Khaled Hroub (London: Saqi, 2010), 170.
 65. Sahifat al-Khalij, “Filasṭīn nuqṭat al-ṣidām ma’ al-mashrū’ al-gharbī al-isti māri,” 711–713.
 66. Al-Mujahid, “Ḥamās wa-l-jihād al-islāmī: bayan mushtarak fī dhikrā al-taqṣīm” [Hamas and Islamic Jihad: Joint statement on the anniversary of the partition], no. 14 (December 1, 1989): 1.
 67. *Ibid.*
 68. Hatina, *Islam and Salvation in Palestine*, 82.
 69. Al-Mujahid, “al-Qiyāda al-islāmiyya al-muwaḥadda” [The unified Islamic leadership], no. 38 (May 18, 1990): 7.
 70. *Ibid.*, 1.
 71. Al-Mujahid, “Bayan ‘askarī šādir ‘an ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn” [Military statement issued by Palestinian Islamic Jihad], no. 98 (July 5, 1991): 3.

72. Al-Mujahid, “Ghaddan naltaqī fī bayt al-maqdis” [Tomorrow, we meet in Jerusalem], no. 101 (July 26, 1991): 5.
73. *Ibid.*
74. Abu Taha, *Ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn*, 53–54.
75. Milton-Edwards, *Islamic Politics in Palestine*, 172.
76. Al-Mujahid, “Abṭāl ‘Izz al-Dīn al-Qassām yaqtulūn dābiṭan wa-jundiyyīn min al-ṣahāyina” [The heroes of ‘Izz al-Din al-Qassam kill an officer and soldiers of the Zionists], no. 170 (December 11, 1992): 1.
77. Quoted in al-Liwa’ al-Lubnaniyya, “Ḥarakatnā muḥāwala li-l-ijāba ‘an al-su’āl al-islāmī filasṭīniyyan” [Our movement is an attempt to answer the Islamic question in Palestine] [1990], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 733.
78. Wikalat al-Anba’, “Ḥawl qarār al-ib’ād wa-muwāṣalat al-jihād” [On the deportation verdict and the continuation of jihad] [1993], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 878.
79. Quoted in Nida’ al-Watan, “Khayyār Ghazza – Ariḥa’ akhtar min Camp David” [The “Gaza-Jericho option” is more dangerous than Camp David] [1993], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 841.
80. Abu Taha, *Ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn*, 54.
81. Kristianasen, “Challenge and Counterchallenge,” 22–23.
82. Mishal and Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas*, 23.
83. Beverley Milton-Edwards, “Prepared for Power: Hamas, Governance and Conflict,” *Civil Wars* 7, no. 4 (2005): 313.
84. Mishal and Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas*, 15–16.
85. *Ibid.*, 16.
86. Anwar Abu Taha, interview with author, March 19, 2018, Beirut.
87. PIJ member 1, interview with author, March 13, 2018, Burj al-Barajneh.
88. PIJ member 2, interview with author, March 15, 2018, Burj al-Barajneh.
89. PIJ member 2, interview with author, March 15, 2018, Burj al-Barajneh.
90. *Ibid.*
91. Wendy Pearlman, “Spoiling Inside and Out: Internal Political Contestation and the Middle East Process,” *International Security* 33, no. 3 (2008/2009): 100.
92. Roy, *Hamas and Civil Society in Gaza*, 24.
93. Sara Roy, “The Political Economy of Despair: Changing Political and Economic Realities in the Gaza Strip,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 20, no. 3 (1991): 65.
94. Hatina, *Islam and Salvation in Palestine*, 81.
95. *Ibid.*
96. Hroub, *Hamas*, 127.
97. Hatina, *Islam and Salvation in Palestine*, 80.
98. Al-Hajj Muhammad, *al-Masīra al-jihādiyya li-ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn*, 185.
99. Ghassan Charbel, “Ziyāra li-dhākirat al-amīn al-‘ām li-ḥarakat ‘al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn’ 1. Shallāḥ: ‘al-jihād’ iṭlaqat awwal ‘amaliyya istishhādiyya fī Filasṭīn ‘ām 1993 wa-l-muqāwama al-lubnāniyya iftataḥat al-‘amaliyyāt al-istishhādiyya bi-tafjīr maqarr al-marīnz fī 1983” [A visit to the memory of

“Palestinian Islamic Jihad’s” general-secretary 1. Shallah: “Islamic Jihad” launched the first martyrdom operation in Palestine in 1993 and the Lebanese resistance introduced the martyrdom operations with the bombing of the Marines headquarters in 1983], *al-Hayat*, January 7, 2003, https://daharchives.alhayat.com/issue_archive/Hayat_INT/2003/1/7/زيارة-لذاكرة-أمين-العام-لحركة-الجهاد-الاسلامي-في-فلسطين-1-شبح-الجهاد-اطلقت-أول-عملية-استشهادية-في-فلسطين.html [accessed April 27, 2017].

100. Hroub, *Hamas*, 128.

101. *Ibid.*, 127.

5 Deportation, Patronage, and Organizational Reform

1. Ann M. Lesch, “Israeli Deportation of Palestinians from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, 1967–1978,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 8, no. 2 (Winter 1979): 108.
2. Alfred T. Moleah, “Violations of Palestinian Human Rights: South African Parallels,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 10, no. 2 (Winter 1981): 24.
3. Eyal Levy, “Raising the bars: Inside Israel’s high security prisons,” *The Jerusalem Post*, July 1, 2017, www.jpost.com/Magazine/Raising-the-bars-494508 [accessed May 10, 2018].
4. Al-Sarsawi and ‘Ali, *d. Fatḥ al-Shiqāqī al-shāhid wa-l-shahīd*, 89–90.
5. Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine, *Masīrat ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn*, 21.
6. *Ibid.*
7. Wafa Info, “Sayyid Ḥusayn Baraka” [Sayyid Husayn Baraka], no date, <http://info.wafa.ps/atemplate.aspx?id=3513> [accessed April 4, 2017]; Institute for Palestine Studies, “Ḥadīth ṣaḥāfī li-murshid ḥarakat ‘al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn’ yu’akkid fih wujūd khilāfāt ‘amīqa dākhil al-ḥaraka. Dimashq. ** [muqtaṭafāt]” [Interview with the guide of “Palestinian Islamic Jihad” confirms there are deep disputes inside the movement. Syria. ** [excerpts]], *Journal of Palestine Studies* 6, no. 23 (1995), www.palestine-studies.org/sites/default/files/mdf-articles/9312.pdf [accessed April 4, 2017].
8. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: ‘āyish al-Shiqāqī wa-ta’athar bi-fikrihi.”
9. Abu Taha, *Ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn*, 28.
10. *Al-Mujahid* was issued almost weekly from its inception in August 1989 until December 1993 when it was published biweekly. With the assassination of al-Shiqāqī on October 26, 1995, *al-Mujahid* was published far less often, with a complete halt in production from July 15, 1995, until October 26, 1997, on the two-year memorial of al-Shiqāqī’s death. From 1997 until March 2002, *al-Mujahid* was published irregularly with only nine issues before the magazine began publishing monthly from July 2002. Initially, *al-Mujahid* was specifically issued by PIJ in Lebanon, but later by the movement as a whole starting with number 162 on October 16, 1992.
11. Abu Samir Musa, interview with author, March 21, 2018, Rashidieh.
12. Sayyid Ahmad, “Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf,” 54.
13. Picture in author’s possession.

14. ‘Abdallah Anas, interview with author, September 4, 2017, Oslo. This is not to suggest that al-Shiqaqi or Anas went to Sudan with the purpose of meeting each other. Instead, Anas emphasizes that they met by coincidence. My intention is to suggest that al-Shiqaqi traveled extensively in this period making contacts and acquaintances among a range of actors across the Arab and Islamic world; Fahmi Huwaydi, “Wafā bi-wa‘da: fa-lam yaghfir aw yansā” [A promised death: So it will not be forgiven or forgotten], in *Rihlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 33; Rachid Ghannouchi, “Fathī al-Shiqaqi: akbar min ramz li-iḥyā’ al-jihād li-taḥrīr Filasṭīn, ramz al-taḥawwul fi ittijāh al-islām” [Fathi al-Shiqaqi: More than a symbol for the revival of jihad for the liberation of Palestine, he was a symbol of the move toward Islam], in *Rihlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 26.
15. Al-Mujahid, “Muḥāḍara li-l-shaykh al-mujāhid ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ‘Awda fi al-shāriqa” [A lecture by the mujahid sheikh ‘Abd al-‘Aziz ‘Awda in Sharjah], *al-Mujahid*, no. 16 (December 15, 1989): 2; United States District Court Middle District Florida Tampa Division, “United States of America v. Sami Amin al-Arian, Ramadan Abdullah Shallah, Bashir Musa Mohammad Nafi, Sameeh Hammoudeh, Muhammad Tasir Hassan al-Khatib, Abd al-Aziz Awda, Ghassan Zayed Ballut, Hatim Naji Fariz. Case No. 8:03-CR- -T-,” no date, 14, https://fas.org/irp/ops/ci/al-arian_indict_022003.pdf [accessed May 15, 2018]; al-Mujahid, “Naṣṣ al-kalima allaṭī alqāhā al-shaykh al-mujāhid ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ‘Awda al-murshid al-rūḥī li-ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn fi mu’tamar nuṣrat al-thawra al-islāmiyya fi Filasṭīn alladhī in’aqad fi Teheran mā bayn 19–23 t1/1991” [Text of the speech delivered by the mujahid sheikh ‘Abd al-‘Aziz ‘Awda, the spiritual guide of Palestinian Islamic Jihad, at the conference in support for the Islamic revolution in Palestine, which was held in Tehran 19–23 t1/1991], no. 116 (November 8, 1991): 6.
16. Milton-Edwards, *Islamic Politics in Palestine*, 170.
17. al-Mujahid, “al-Duktūr al-Shiqaqi yaltaqi wafd al-shūrā al-irānī” [Dr. al-Shiqaqi meets delegation from the Iranian shura], no. 121 (December 13, 1991): 2.
18. According to Anas, neither al-Shiqaqi nor PIJ received significant attention from the Afghan-Arabs or Afghan Mujahidin, and the interview does not denote a special relationship between the two parties. ‘Abdallah Anas, interview with author, September 4, 2017, Oslo.
19. Anayat Allah Khalil, “al-Jihād fi Afghānistān a’tā daf’an wa-quwwa li-l-intifāda al-islāmiyya fi kull al-‘ālam” [The jihad in Afghanistan gives a push and a strength to the Islamic intifada in the whole world], *al-Mujahidum*, no. 28 (July, 1991): 32–33. Jihadi Document Repository at FFI/UiO, Oslo.
20. Al-Sarsawi and ‘Ali, *d. Fathī al-Shiqaqi al-shāhid wa-l-shahīd*, 90–91.
21. Hatina, *Islam and Salvation in Palestine*, 41.
22. *Ibid.*
23. Israeli Security Agency, “I’tiqāl nashīt li-l-jihād al-islāmī fi qitā’ ghazza wa-l-taḥqiq ma’hu ba’d qiyām jihāt istikhbārātiyya irāniyya wa-‘anāshir hizb allāh al-lubnāniyya bi-tashghilihi (1996)” [A Palestinian Islamic Jihad activist was arrested in the Gaza Strip and interrogated after Iranian intelligence agencies and Lebanese Hezbollah operatives directed him (1996)], September 1,

- 1996, www.shabak.gov.il/arabic/history/affairs/Pages/IranHiz-a.aspx [accessed April 4, 2017].
24. Muhjat al-Quds, “Maḥmūd Ṣaqr Rāghib al-Zaṭma” [Mahmud Saqr Raghīb al-Zatma], no date, www.almuhja.com/prson-1606.html [accessed October 15, 2018].
 25. International Congress of the Martyrs of Islam World, “al-Shahīd Maḥmūd al-Zaṭma” [The martyr Mahmud al-Zatma], 2014, <http://ar.icmiw.com/print/3822> [accessed April 3, 2017].
 26. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā'id ‘Maḥmūd Ṣaqr al-Zaṭma’: al-muhandis al-awwal li-qassam wa-sarāyā al-quds” [The martyr commander “Mahmud Saqr al-Zatma”: The first engineer of Qassam and the al-Quds Brigades], April 5, 2014, <https://saraya.ps/post/3906/-الزطمة-المهندس-الشهيد-القائد-محمود-صقر-الأول-لقسم-وسرايا-القدس> [accessed April 3, 2017].
 27. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: al-shahīdayn al-qā'idayn ‘Ayman al-Razāyna’ wa-‘Umar al-A'raj’ ... riḥlat jihād wa-‘aṭā’ mu‘abbada bi-taḍḥiyāt al-jusām” [News: The martyr commanders “Ayman al-Razayna” and “Umar al-A'raj” ... a journey of jihad and giving, paved with daunting sacrifices], February 3, 2011, <https://saraya.ps/post/8923/-الشهيدان-القائدين-أيمن-الرزايينة-وعمار-الأعرج-رحلة-جهاد-وعطاء-معبدة-بالتضحيات-الجسام> [accessed April 3, 2017].
 28. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā'id ‘Nāhiḍ Muḥammad Katkat’: al-qā'id al-ṣāmit wa-l-mujāhid al-miqdām” [The martyr commander “Nahid Muhammad Katkat”: The silent commander and fearless mujahid], November 12, 2014, <https://saraya.ps/post/6655/-الشهيد-القائد-ناهض-محمد-كتكت-السامت-والمجاهد-المقدم> [accessed April 3, 2017].
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 31. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: ‘al-i'lām al-ḥarbī’ yastaḍīf aḥad rifāq darb al-shahīd Fathī al-Shiqāqī.”
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 33. al-Mujahid, “Tarīqnā istishhādī ... wa-laysa intihāriyyan” [Our path is one of martyrdom ... and not one of suicide], no. 117 (November 16, 1991): 6.
 34. *Ibid.*
 35. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā'id ‘Maḥmūd al-Hīla’: ḥikāyat mujāhid ṣandīd ṣana' majdan lā yunṣīb” [The martyr commander “Mahmud al-Hila”: A story of a courageous mujahid who made unyielding glory], July 18, 2017, <https://saraya.ps/post/52514/-الشهيد-القائد-محمود-الحيلة-حكاية-مجاهد-صنديد-صنع-مجدا-لاينضب> [accessed July 27, 2017].
 36. *Ibid.*
 37. Clifford Bob, *The Marketing of Rebellion: Insurgents, Media, and International Activism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 20.
 38. *Ibid.*, 5.
 39. Marc R. Devore, “Exploring the Iran-Hezbollah Relationship: A Case Study of How State Sponsorship Affects Terrorist Group Decision-Making,” *Perspectives on Terrorism* 6, no. 4–5 (2012): 86, 88.

40. Tamimi, *Hamas*, 163
41. Charbel, “Ziyāra li-dhākirat al-amīn al-‘ām li-ḥarakat ‘al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn’ 1. Shallaḥ: ‘al-jihād’ itlaqat awwal ‘amaliyya istishhādiyya fi Filasṭīn ‘ām 1993 wa-l-muqāwama al-lubnāniyya iftataḥat al-‘amaliyyāt al-istishhādiyya bi-taffīr maqarr al-marīnz fi 1983.”
42. Al-Nahar, “al-Silāḥ al-filasṭīnī fi Lubnān: as’ilat al-‘awda al-thāniyya,” October 29, 1999. I thank Dr. Erling Lorentzen Sogge for this reference.
43. Mohsen M. Milani, “Iran’s Policy towards Afghanistan,” *Middle East Journal* 60, no. 2 (Spring 2006): 235–236.
44. See e.g. Hafizullah Emadi, “Exporting Iran’s Revolution: The Radicalization of the Shiite Movement in Afghanistan,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 31, no. 1 (1995): 1–12; Gary Sick, “Iran: The Adolescent Revolution,” *Journal of International Affairs* 49, no. 1 (1995): 145–166.
45. Abbas W. Samii, “A Stable Structure on Shifting Sands: Assessing the Hizbullah-Iran-Syria Relationship,” *Middle East Journal* 62, no. 1 (Winter 2008): 34–35.
46. Shireen Hunter, “Iran’s Pragmatic Regional Policy,” *Journal of International Affairs* 56, no. 2 (Spring 2003): 139.
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49. Rola El Hussein, “Hezbollah and the Axis of Refusal: Hamas, Iran and Syria,” *Third World Quarterly* 31, no. 5 (2010): 809; Samii, “A Stable Structure on Shifting Sands,” 37.
50. Al-Hajj Muhammad, *al-Masīra al-jihādiyya li-ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn*, 64.
51. Anwar Abu Taha, interview with author, March 19, 2018, Beirut.
52. Al-Hajj Muhammad, *al-Masīra al-jihādiyya li-ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn*, 65.
53. Al-Shiqaqi was referred to as the secretary-general of PIJ in *al-Mujahid*, no. 110 (September 27, 1991). Between 1989 and 1991, he was referred to as official spokesperson of PIJ. See e.g. *al-Mujahid*, no. 14 (December 1, 1989); *al-Mujahid*, no. 15 (December 8, 1989); *al-Mujahid*, no. 16 (December 15, 1989); *al-Mujahid*, no. 42 (June 15, 1990); *al-Mujahid*, no. 60 (October 19, 1990); *al-Mujahid*, no. 87 (April 19, 1991); *al-Mujahid*, no. 91 (May 17, 1991); *al-Mujahid*, no. 100 (July 19, 1991); *al-Mujahid*, no. 101 (July 26, 1991).
54. Anwar Abu Taha, interview with author, March 19, 2018, Beirut.
55. Charbel, “Ziyāra li-dhākirat al-amīn al-‘ām li-ḥarakat ‘al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn’ 1. Shallaḥ: ‘al-jihād’ itlaqat awwal ‘amaliyya istishhādiyya fi Filasṭīn ‘ām 1993 wa-l-muqāwama al-lubnāniyya iftataḥat al-‘amaliyyāt al-istishhādiyya bi-taffīr maqarr al-marīnz fi 1983.”
56. I have personally constructed Figure 5.1 based on the preceding secondary sources and interview with Anwar Abu Taha. It does not intend to reflect the exact number of regional shura councils or organizing committees, but instead the organizational hierarchy of PIJ.

57. See e.g. Gunning, *Hamas in Politics*, 99.
58. Charbel, “Ziyāra li-dhākirat al-amīn al-‘ām li-ḥarakat ‘al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filastīn’ 1. Shallaḥ: ‘al-jihād’ iṭlaqat awwal ‘amaliyya istishhādiyya fi Filastīn ‘ām 1993 wa-l-muqāwama al-lubnāniyya iftataḥat al-‘amaliyyāt al-istishhādiyya bi-tafjīr maqarr al-marīnz fi 1983.”
59. Al-Sharq al-Awsat, “al-Jihād,” 1142.
60. *Ibid.*
61. Anwar Abu Taha, interview with author, March 19, 2018, Beirut.
62. Thabit Mardawi, *Namūt fi al-waṭan . . . wa-lan nughādir: malḥamat Jinīn bi-shahādat al-asīr al-mujāhid Thābit Mardāwī* [We will die in the homeland . . . and we will never leave: The epic of Jenin in the account of the mujahid prisoner Thabit Mardawi] (Gaza: al-Markaz al-Filastini li-l-Tawasul al-Hadari, 2006), 134.
63. Mishal and Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas*, 161.
64. Hashish, *Riḥlat ḥayā bayn al-bilād wa-l-shahāda*, 222.
65. *Ibid.*, 224. The small military council had a fifth member, but is anonymized by Hashish as the latter claims this member is still alive.
66. Hashish, *Riḥlat ḥayā bayn al-bilād wa-l-shahāda*, 224.
67. *Ibid.*, 227.
68. *Ibid.*, 228.
69. *Ibid.*
70. *Ibid.*, 222.
71. *Ibid.*, 218.
72. *Ibid.*, 222.
73. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: al-qā’idayn ‘Hānī ‘Ābid’ wa-‘Maḥmūd al-Khawājā’ . . . al-taw’ amān li-tariq wāhid” [News: The commanders “Hani ‘Abid” and “Mahmud al-Khawaja” . . . twins on one road], June 22, 2010, <https://saraya.ps/post/5564/القائدين-هاني-عابد-و-محمود-الخواجا-التوأمين-لطريق-واحدة> [accessed April 3, 2017].
74. Originally posted on previous website of PIJ: Nida’ al-Quds, “Min ‘qassam’ ilā ‘sarāyā al-quds’ al-janāḥ al-‘askarī li-l-jihād al-islāmī: al-ḍarabāt al-mazdūja li-l-iḥtilāl” [From “Qassam” to the “al-Quds Brigades,” the military wing of Islamic Jihad: Double strikes against the occupation], no date, <https://web.archive.org/web/20080611190339/http://www.qudsway.com:80/more.php?type=News&id=140921> [accessed June 27, 2017]; reposted on Lahib al-Saraya, “Min ‘qassam’ ilā ‘sarāyā al-quds’ al-janāḥ al-‘askarī li-l-jihād al-islāmī: al-ḍarabāt al-mazdūja li-l-iḥtilāl” [From “Qassam” to the “al-Quds Brigades,” the military wing of Islamic Jihad: Double strikes against the occupation], November 28, 2007, <http://alqaqsagate.org/vb/showthread.php?t=22327> [accessed June 27, 2017].
75. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā’id ‘Maḥmūd Ṣaqr al-Zaṭma.”
76. Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine, “Jadwal tafšīli bi-‘amaliyyāt ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī mundhu nash’ athā ḥattā (2/2006).”
77. Roy, “The Political Economy of Despair,” 65.
78. See e.g. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-mujāhid ‘Mu’ayyan Muḥammad al-Bur’ī: ‘indamā yatamassak al-aḥfād bi-arḍ al-ajdād” [The martyr mujahid “Mu’ayyan Muhammad al-Bur’i”: When the grandchildren cling to the

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79. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: al-qā’idayn ‘Miqlid Ḥamīd’ wa-‘Nabīl Abū Jabr.’”
 80. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā’id ‘Ayman Dīb al-Razāyina.’”
 81. Hatina, *Islam and Salvation in Palestine*, 40.
 82. Saraya al-Quds, “22 ‘āman ‘alā irtiqā’ Hānī ‘Ābid ... wa-lā zālat shahādatuhu nibrāsan yuḏī ṭarīq al-ḥaqq” [22 years after the ascension of Hani ‘Abid ... and his martyrdom is still a beacon illuminating the path of Truth], November 2, 2016, <https://saraya.ps/post/48767/22-عاما-على-ارتقاء-هاني-عابدو-لازال-الشهادة-نبراسا-يضيء-طريق-الحق> [accessed April 3, 2017].
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 85. Al-Raya, “al-Ittifāq ḥall al-mashākil allatī yu’ānī minhā al-kayān al-ṣahyūnī mundhu ihtilāl 1967 ḥattā alān” [1994] [The agreement solved the problems the Zionist entity suffered since the 1967 occupation until now], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 912.
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 88. Mishal and Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas*, 67; Gunning, *Hamas in Politics*, 42.
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 90. *Ibid.*
 91. *Ibid.*, 42–43.
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 93. Hroub, *Hamas*, 50, 64.
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 96. Al-Shiqaqī, “Hal takhdīm Ḥamās maṣāliḥ Amrīka?” 1523–1524.
 97. Milton-Edwards, *Islamic Politics in Palestine*, 173.
 98. Al-Jumhur, “Kayfiyyat al-ta’āmūl ma’ sulṭat ‘Arafāt al-jadīda” [1993] [How to deal with Arafāt’s new authority], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 869.
 99. Al-Mujahid, “Taḥwīl d. Muḥammad al-Hindī ilā al-i’tiqāl al-idārī” [Dr. Muḥammad al-Hindi transferred to administrative detention], no. 210

- (December 13, 1994): 10; al-Mujahid, “al-Mujāhid Nāfidh ‘Azzām khārij al-sijn. Fī muqābila ma’ ‘al-quds’: lan nushārik fī al-intikhābāt” [The mujahid Nafidh ‘Azzam out of prison. In an interview with al-Quds: We will never participate in elections], no. 219 (October 1, 1994): 2; al-Mujahid, “Bayān šādīr ‘an ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn: i’tiqāl al-mujāhidīn, min qabl sulṭa al-ḥukm al-dhātī, taḥdīd mubāshir li-waḥdat sha’bna” [Statement issued by Palestinian Islamic Jihad: The arrest of the mujahidin by the self-governing authority is a direct threat against the unity of our people], no. 218 (September 15, 1994): 13.
100. Al-Mujahid, “al-Mujāhidūn al-mukhrajūn yadfanūn mišdāqiyyat majlis al-aman” [The mujahidin in exile bury the credibility of the Security Council], no. 180 (February 19, 1992): 1; Tamimi, *Hamas*, 69–70.
 101. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā’id ‘Nāhiḍ Muḥammad Katkat.”
 102. International Congress of the Martyrs of Islam World, “al-Shahīd Maḥmūd al-Zaṭma”; Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: al-qā’idayn ‘Miqlid Ḥamīd’ wa-‘Nabīl Abū Jabr.”
 103. Salih al-Masri, “Istishhād muhandis awwal ‘amaliyya istishhādiyya fī Filasṭīn bayt lid yuṭārid al-iḥtilāl” [Martyrdom for the engineer of the first martyrdom operation in Palestine, Beit Lid pursues the occupation], *al-Ahed News*, April 18, 2003, <http://archive.alahednews.com.lb/alahed.org/archive/2003/1804/palastine/doc3.htm> [accessed April 2, 2017].
 104. Amnesty International, “Amnesty International Report 1997 – Palestine,” January 1, 1997, www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6a9f334.html [accessed April 4, 2017].
 105. Saraya al-Quds, “šuwwar ... bi-dikhrā raḥīlhimā al-20: al-i’lām al-ḥarbī yakshif li-awwal marra ‘an ‘amaliyyāt al-shahīdayn al-Razāyna wa-l-A’raj” [Pictures ... 20th anniversary of their departure: the military media reveals for the first time about the operations of the two martyrs al-Razayna and al-A’raj], February 3, 2016, <https://saraya.ps/post/45572/-20الرحيلهما-الصور-بذكرى-رحيلهما-20> [accessed August 24, 2018].
 106. Amnesty International, “Amnesty International Report 1997 – Palestine.”
 107. Al-Hajj Muhammad, *al-Masīra al-jihādiyya li-ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn*, 70.
 108. Subsequently, as hope for the peace process faded, the support for the two Islamic factions climbed to 15.5 percent in April 2000 and to 19 percent by early September 2000, six weeks after the collapse of the Camp David talks. Jamil Hilal, “Hamas’s Rise as Charted in the Polls,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 35, no. 3 (Spring 2006): 7.
 109. There were more attacks within Israel compared to the Gaza Strip in 1991, but these operations were prepared and/or carried out by members in Gaza.
 110. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-mujāhid ‘Mu‘ayyan Muḥammad al-Bur‘ī.”
 111. *Ibid.*
 112. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-mujāhid ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Dhiyāb al-Kaḥlūt’: laqā rabbahu muqbilan ghayr mudbir” [The martyr mujahid “Ala’ al-Din Dhiyab al-Kahlut’: He met his Lord charging, not running away],

- September 14, 2011, <https://saraya.ps/post/11996/الشهيد-المجاهد-علاء-الدين-ذياب> [accessed February 12, 2020].
113. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar ... šuwwar ... bi-dhākirat al-19 ... al-istishhādī Khālīd Shāhāda.”
 114. Mishal and Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas*, 106.
 115. *Ibid.*
 116. Hatina, *Islam and Salvation in Palestine*, 99.
 117. *Ibid.*
 118. Bergman, *Rise and Kill First*, 423.
 119. *Ibid.*, 430–431.
 120. *Ibid.*, 431.
 121. Abbas Shiblak, “A Time in Hardship and Agony: Palestinian Refugees in Libya,” *Palestine-Israel Journal* 2, no. 4 (1995), www.pij.org/details.php?id=596 [accessed April 3, 2017].
 122. Ghassan Charbel, “Ziyāra li-dhākirat al-amīn al-‘āmm li-ḥarakat ‘al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn.’ Shallah: rujūt al-Shiqāqī allā yadḥhab wa-ḥadhartuhu min Māltā fa-alahḥ al-lībiyyūn wa-takaffalū ḥimāyathu kashaf al-Musād hawiyat ‘al-lībī’ Ibrāhīm Chaouch fa-‘ād al-amīn al-‘āmm shahīdan 2” [A visit to the memory of “Palestinian Islamic Jihad’s” general-secretary. Shallah: I begged al-Shiqaqi not to go and warned him of Malta so the Libyans insisted and guaranteed his safety and Mossad revealed the identity of the “Libyan” Ibrahim Chaouch so the secretary-general returned as a martyr 2], *al-Hayat*, January 8, 2003, [https://daharchives.alhayat.com/issue_archive/Hayat at INT/2003/1/8/زيارة-لذاكرة-الامين-العام-لحركة-الجهاد-الاسلامي-في-فلسطين-شلح-رجوت-الشيكاقي-الشقاقي-الايدهب-وحذر-تضمن-مالطا-فألح-اللي.html](https://daharchives.alhayat.com/issue_archive/Hayat%20at%20INT/2003/1/8/زيارة-لذاكرة-الامين-العام-لحركة-الجهاد-الاسلامي-في-فلسطين-شلح-رجوت-الشيكاقي-الشقاقي-الايدهب-وحذر-تضمن-مالطا-فألح-اللي.html) [accessed May 8, 2017].
 123. *Ibid.*
 124. See e.g. Milton-Edwards, *Islamic Politics in Palestine*, 144–145; Roy, “The Political Economy of Despair,” 48. Roy states that PIJ only began to reemerge in the Gaza Strip in early 1991 although there were, as shown, far more attacks in Gaza the previous year, in 1990.

6 Faith: The Conciliatory Movement

1. Rekhess, “The Iranian Impact on the Islamic Jihad Movement in the Gaza Strip,” 192.
2. See e.g. al-Shiqaqi, “al-Khumaynī,” 480–481.
3. Fathi al-Shiqaqi, “al-Sunna wa-l-shī‘a ... ḍajja mufta‘ala wa-mu‘ sifa” [1981] [The Sunnis and the Shiites ... a fabricated and regrettable pandemonium], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 278.
4. *Ibid.*, 283.
5. *Ibid.*, 282.
6. *Ibid.*, 275.
7. Hatina, *Islam and Salvation in Palestine*, 55.
8. Al-Shiqaqi, “al-Sunna wa-l-shī‘a ... ḍajja mufta‘ala wa-mu‘ sifa,” 275.
9. *Ibid.*, 278; quoted in *ibid.*, 279.
10. *Ibid.*, 290–291.

11. Rekheşş, "The Iranian Impact on the Islamic Jihad Movement in the Gaza Strip," 192–194.
12. Meir Hatina, *Martyrdom in Modern Islam: Piety, Power, and Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 99.
13. *Ibid.*, 106.
14. *Ibid.*, 113.
15. Abufarha, *The Making of a Human Bomb*, 44.
16. *Ibid.*, 47.
17. Al-Shiqaqi, "al-Qaḍiya al-filasṭīniyya," 181.
18. Fathi al-Shiqaqi, "'al-Qassām' al-manāra al-shāmikhā 'alā imtidād tārikhnā al-ṭawīl" [1989] ["'al-Qassam' the majestic lighthouse throughout our long history], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 652.
19. Mardawī, *Namūt fi al-waṭan*, 120.
20. Rana Issa, "Poetics of Martyrdom in Early Modern Palestine," in *Twenty-First Century Jihad: Law, Society and Military Action*, ed. Elisabeth Kendall and Ewan Stein (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2015), 276.
21. Al-Shiqaqi, "Muqābila," 723.
22. Both *mustaḍ'afīn* and *istikbār* are terms associated with the Iranian Revolution in general and Khomeini in particular. According to Abrahamian, Khomeini employed *mustaḍ'afīn* from 1970 "in almost every single speech and proclamation to depict the angry poor, the 'exploited' people, and the 'downtrodden masses.'" *Istikbār*, on the other hand, was the force of oppressors (*mustakbārīn*) who stood in an antagonistic relationship with the oppressed. Ervand Abrahamian, *Khomeinism: Essays on the Islamic Republic* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1993), 27, 47.
23. Al-Shiqaqi, "al-Khumaynī," 479–480.
24. *Ibid.*, 484.
25. Fathi al-Shiqaqi, "al-Thawra al-islāmiyya fi Īrān wa-l-thawra al-filasṭīniyya" [1993] [The Islamic revolution in Iran and the Palestinian revolution], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 558.
26. Shallah, *Ḥaqā'iq wa-mawāqif*, 80.
27. *Ibid.*
28. Al-Shiqaqi, "al-Qaḍiya al-filasṭīniyya," 181.
29. Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine, "Jadwal tafṣīlī bi-'amaliyyāt ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī mundhu nash'athā ḥattā (2/2006)," 16, 17, 19 (attack no. 116–118, 122, 133, 136).
30. Al-Shiqaqi, "al-Qaḍiya al-filasṭīniyya," 181.
31. Ervand Abrahamian, "Ali Shariati: Ideologue of the Iranian Revolution," *Middle East Research and Information Project* 12 (1982), www.merip.org/mer/mer102/ali-shariati-ideologue-iranian-revolution [accessed June 14, 2017].
32. Najam Haider, *Shi'i Islam: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 201.
33. *Ibid.*, 206.
34. *Ibid.*, 205–206.
35. As a curious digression, as al-Shiqaqi was accused of being a Shiite in disguise because of his support for the Iranian Revolution, Shariati similarly had his Shiite beliefs questioned because of his support for the

- Palestinian cause (with the Palestinians allegedly being Sunni and Wahhabis). Hamid Dabashi, *Theology of Discontent: The Ideological Foundation of the Islamic Revolution in Iran* (New Brunswick, London: Transaction Publishers, 2006), 129.
36. *Ibid.*, 104.
 37. *Ibid.*, 137.
 38. *Ibid.*, 144.
 39. *Ibid.*, 142.
 40. Quoted in *ibid.*, 142.
 41. Mehran Kamrava, “Khomeini and the West,” in *A Critical Introduction to Khomeini*, ed. Arshin Adib-Moghaddam (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 159.
 42. *Ibid.*, 160, 166.
 43. *Ibid.*, 168.
 44. Al-Shiqaqi, “Muqābila,” 729.
 45. Quoted in Dabashi, *Theology of Discontent*, 448.
 46. *Ibid.*, 475.
 47. “The goods of this land are sufficient for all humankind to live in real prosperity, but with a slight difference between people.” Al-Shiqaqi, “Afghānistān,” 143.
 48. Anwar Abu Taha, interview with author, March 19, 2018, Beirut.
 49. Mattias Gardell, *Bin Laden i våre hjerter. Globaliseringen og fremveksten av politisk islam* (Oslo: Spartacus Forlag, 2005), 45.
 50. Toth, *Sayyid Qutb*, 180.
 51. Anwar Abu Taha, interview with author, March 19, 2018, Beirut.
 52. Sahifat al-Khalij, “Filasṭīn nuqtat al-ṣidām ma’ al-mashrū’ al-gharbī al-isti’ māri,” 715.
 53. *Ibid.*, 716.
 54. Fathi al-Shiqaqi, “al-Qiyāda al-islāmiyya al-muwaḥadda” [1990] [The United Islamic Leadership], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 1505.
 55. Fathi al-Shiqaqi, “al-Intifāda bayn al-tafjīr al-islāmī wa-l-istithmār al-‘ilmānī” [1992] [The intifada between Islamic blast and secular exploitation], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 362.
 56. Al-Shiqaqi, “Wijhat nazar,” 665; Fathi al-Shiqaqi, “Shar’iyyat al-bunduqiyya al-filasṭīniyya fī muwājahat Isrā’īl faqaṭ” [1990] [The legality of the Palestinian rifle is only in confrontation with Israel], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 1526.
 57. Al-Shiqaqi, “al-Qiyāda al-islāmiyya al-muwaḥadda,” 1506.
 58. Hatina, *Islam and Salvation in Palestine*, 73.
 59. Al-Shiqaqi, “Muqābila,” 729.
 60. Al-Shiqaqi, “Mā hiya ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn?” 353.
 61. *Ibid.*
 62. *Ibid.*, 354.
 63. *Ibid.*, 355.
 64. Al-Shiqaqi, “al-Thawra al-islāmiyya fī Īrān wa-l-thawra al-filasṭīniyya,” 563.
 65. Al-Shiqaqi, “al-Uṣūliyya wa-l-‘ilmāniyya,” 594.

7 The Collapse of PIJ

1. Jamal Khashoqji, Faysal al-Shaboul, and ‘Abd al-Latif al-Furati, “‘Ḥamās’ takhaṭṭaṭ li-wārithat al-munazzama. Mu‘āraḍa li-l-iqtitāl murfaqa bi-taḥdhīr li-l-shurṭa al-filasṭīniyya iḡhtiyāl mas’ūl fi ‘Fath’ wa-Ghazza takhshā al-raṣāṣa al-ūlā” [“‘Ḥamas’ plans to inherit the PLO. Opposition to the fighting accompanied by a warning to the Palestinian police to assassinate a Fatah official and Gaza fears the first bullet], *al-Hayat*, September 27, 1993, https://daharchives.alhayat.com/issue_archive/Wasat_magazine/1993/9/27/-/حماس-تخطط-لوراثة-المنظمة-معارضة-للاقتتال-مرفقة-بتحذير-للشرطة-الفلسطينية-اغتيال-9/27/-مسؤول-في-فتح-وغز-تخشى-الرصاصة.html [accessed May 5, 2017].
2. Al-Liwa’, “Khilāfāt al-ḥaraka wa-maṣīr al-qādiya al-filasṭīniyya” [1995] [The disputes in the movement and the fate of the Palestinian leadership], in *Riḥlat al-damm alladhī hazam al-sayf*, 1197; Khashoqji, al-Shaboul, and al-Furati, “‘Ḥamās’ takhaṭṭaṭ li-wārithat al-munazzama”; al-Qanas, “Muqābila ṣaḥāfiyya ma’ murashaḥ ri’āsa” [Interview with a presidential candidate], December 27, 2004, 13:39, #1, www.paldf.net/forum/showthread.php?t=23962 [accessed April 25, 2018].
3. Muhammad Ashtia, *Marwsū‘at al-muṣṭalaḥāt wa-l-mafāhīm al-filasṭīniyya* [Encyclopedia of Palestinian terms and concepts] (Amman: Dar al-Jalil, 2011), 244.
4. Abu Samir Musa, interview with author, March 21, 2018, Rashidieh.
5. Khashoqji, al-Shaboul, and al-Furati, “‘Ḥamās’ takhaṭṭaṭ li-wārithat al-munazzama.”
6. Anwar Abu Taha, interview with author, March 19, 2018, Beirut.
7. Hatina, *Islam and Salvation in Palestine*, 102–103; Ashtia, *Marwsū‘at al-muṣṭalaḥāt wa-l-mafāhīm al-filasṭīniyya*, 244.
8. United States District Court Middle District Florida Tampa Division.
9. Quoted in al-Liwa’ al-Lubnaniyya, “Ḥarakatnā muḥāwala li-l-ijāba ‘an al-su’āl al-islāmī filasṭīniyyan,” 735.
10. Shihab, “‘al-Jihād al-islāmī’ al-filasṭīnī fī ghayāb qā’idihi.”
11. Khashoqji, al-Shaboul, and al-Furati, “‘Ḥamās’ takhaṭṭaṭ li-wārithat al-munazzama.”
12. Abu Samir Musa, interview with author, March 21, 2018, Rashidieh.
13. Institute for Palestine Studies, “Ḥadīth ṣaḥāfi li-murshid ḥarakat ‘al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn’ yu’akkid fih wujūd khilāfāt ‘amīqa dākhl al-ḥaraka.”
14. Shihab, “‘al-Jihād al-islāmī’ al-filasṭīnī fī ghayāb qā’idihi.”
15. Hatina, *Islam and Salvation in Palestine*, 102–103.
16. U.S. Department of Justice, “Sami al-Arian pleads guilty to conspiracy to provide services to Palestinian Islamic Jihad,” April 17, 2006, www.justice.gov/archive/opa/pr/2006/April/06_crm_221.html [accessed April 1, 2019].
17. United States District Court Middle District Florida Tampa Division, 20.
18. *Ibid.*, 22.
19. *Ibid.*, 31–32.
20. *Ibid.*, 23–24.
21. *Ibid.*, 22.
22. *Ibid.*, 20.
23. *Ibid.*, 23.

24. *Ibid.*, 24–25.
25. *Ibid.*, 50.
26. *Ibid.*, 30.
27. *Ibid.*, 59–60.
28. Anwar Abu Taha, interview with author, March 19, 2018, Beirut.
29. Abu Samir Musa, interview with author, March 21, 2018, Rashidieh.
30. Al-Shiqaqi, “Muqābila,” 727.
31. Picture from al-Yarmouk in author’s possession.
32. Hatina, *Islam and Salvation in Palestine*, 103.
33. Robert C. Tucker, “The Theory of Charismatic Leadership,” *Daedalus* 97, no. 3 (Summer 1968): 737–738.
34. Staniland, *Networks of Rebellion*, 41.
35. *Ibid.*, 42.
36. Al-Mujahid, “Naṣṣ al-kalima.”
37. Gustav Niebuhr, “Professor talked of understanding but now reveals ties to terrorists,” *New York Times*, November 13, 1995, www.nytimes.com/1995/11/13/us/professor-talked-of-understanding-but-now-reveals-ties-to-terrorists.html [accessed May 15, 2018].
38. *Ibid.*
39. Federal Bureau of Investigation, “Ramadan Abdullah Mohammad Shallah,” no date, www.fbi.gov/wanted/wanted_terrorists/ramadan-abdullah-mohammad-shallah/view [accessed May 15, 2018].
40. United States District Court Middle District Florida Tampa Division, 11–12.
41. *Ibid.*, 6, 12.
42. *Ibid.*, 14, 16.
43. Quoted in al-Hajj Muhammad, *al-Masīra al-jihādiyya li-ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn*, 61.
44. Al-Hajj Muhammad, *al-Masīra al-jihādiyya li-ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn*, 59–60.
45. Anwar Abu Taha, interview with author, March 19, 2018, Beirut.
46. *Ibid.*
47. *Ibid.*
48. Quoted in al-Hajj Muhammad, *al-Masīra al-jihādiyya li-ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn*, 61.
49. Anwar Abu Taha, interview with author, March 19, 2018, Beirut.
50. Shihab, “‘al-Jihād al-islāmī’ al-filasṭīnī fi ghayāb qā’idihi.”
51. *Ibid.*
52. Anwar Abu Taha, interview with author, March 19, 2018, Beirut.
53. Shallah and al-‘Ayid, “The Movement of Islamic Jihad and the Oslo Process,” 63.
54. PIJ member 2, interview with author, March 15, 2018, Burj al-Barajneh.
55. Ghassan Charbel, “Ziyāra li-dhākirat al-amīn al-‘āmm li-ḥarakat ‘al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn.’ Shallah: lam yu’ayyid qatl al-madaniyyīn fi 11 aylūl wa-sha’artu bi-shāmita wa-l-shafqa qara’ al-ṣawāhirī ḥadīthī ‘an al-yahūd fi ‘al-wasat’ fa-ba’ath ilayy bi-risāla ‘itāb” [A visit to the memory of “Palestinian Islamic Jihad’s” general-secretary. Shallah: Does not

- support the killing of civilians on September 11, and I felt gloat and pity when al-Zawahiri read my interview in “al-Wasat” about the Jews, so he sent me a rebuking letter], *al-Hayat*, January 9, 2003, https://daharchives.alhayat.com/issue_archive/Hayat_INT/2003/1/9/زيارة-لذاكره-الامين-العام-لحركة-الجهاد-الاسلامي-في-فلسطين-شلع-لم-نؤيد-قتل-المدنيين-في-11-ايلول-وشعرت-بالشماتة.html [accessed May 3, 2017].
56. Ramadan Shallah, “Bi-ṣuḥbat al-amīn” [Accompanying the secretary], *al-Jihad*, no. 3 (May 21, 2004): 2.
 57. Al-Shiqaqi, “Muqābila.”
 58. Quoted in Muntasir al-Zayyat, *The Road to Al-Qaeda: The Story of Bin Laden’s Right-Hand Man* (London: Pluto Press, 2004), 61–62. The authenticity may, however, be questioned, and I have been unable to find the original condolence letter.
 59. Charbel, “Ziyāra li-dhākirat al-amīn al-‘āmm li-ḥarakat ‘al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filastīn.’ Shallah: lam yu’ayyid qatl al-madaniyyīn fi 11 aylūl wa-sha’artu bi-shāmita wa-l-shafqa qara’ al-zawāhirī ḥadīthī ‘an al-yahūd fi ‘al-wasaṭ’ fa-ba’ath ilayy bi-risāla ‘itāb”; For al-Shiqaqi’s comments on the battle not being with the Israelis because they are Jews, see *Sahifat al-Khalij*, “Filastīn nuqtat al-ṣidām ma’ al-mashrū’ al-gharbī al-isti’marī,” 711; al-Shiqaqi, “al-Jihād wa-l-mufāwaḍāt,” 962; al-Sharq al-Awsat, “al-Jihād,” 1145.
 60. Charbel, “Ziyāra li-dhākirat al-amīn al-‘āmm li-ḥarakat ‘al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filastīn.’ Shallah: lam yu’ayyid qatl al-madaniyyīn fi 11 aylūl wa-sha’artu bi-shāmita wa-l-shafqa qara’ al-zawāhirī ḥadīthī ‘an al-yahūd fi ‘al-wasaṭ’ fa-ba’ath ilayy bi-risāla ‘itāb.”
 61. Rafah tajma’na, “Jināzat al-duktūr Fathī al-Shiqaqī al-amīn al-‘āmm li-ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī” [The funeral of Dr. Fathi al-Shiqaqi, secretary-general of Palestinian Islamic Jihad], YouTube, 2016, 02:40–03:00, www.youtube.com/watch?v=bZIN51Byl3s [accessed May 8, 2017].
 62. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: al-istishhādīyān ‘Rubḥī al-Kaḥlūt’ wa-‘Muḥammad Abū Hāshim’ ... fārisān ṣana’ā min dimā’ihim majan lā yaghīb” [News: The martyrdom-seekers “Rubhi al-Kahlut” and “Muhammad Abu Hashim” ... two knights who from their blood made glory that will not disappear], November 2, 2010, <https://saraya.ps/post/7512/-الاستشهاديان-ربحي-الكحلوت-و-محمد-أبو-هاشم-فارسان-صنعاء-من-دمائهم-مجدا-لا-يغيب> [accessed May 4, 2017].
 63. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Istishhādī Rāmiz ‘Ubayd: rasam al-ra’b fi shawārī’ ‘Tal Abīb’” [The martyrdom-seeker Ramiz ‘Ubayd: He drew terror in the streets of “Tel Aviv”], March 4, 2017, <https://saraya.ps/post/51351/-الاستشهادي-رامز-عبيد-رسم-الرعب-في-شوارع-تل-أبيب> [accessed May 4, 2017].
 64. Al-Hajj Muhammad, *al-Masīra al-jihādīyya li-ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filastīn*, 72.
 65. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-mujāhid ‘Yūsuf Muḥammad al-Zughayr’: ḥikāyat fāris jassad kull ma’ānī al-taḍḥiya wa-l-fidā” [The martyr mujahid “Yusuf Muhammad al-Zughayr”: The tale of a knight embodying all meanings of sacrifice and redemption], October 26, 2010, <https://saraya.ps/post/7412/-الشهيد-المجاهد-يوسف-محمد-الزغير-حكاية-فارس-جسد-كل-معاني-التضحية-و-الفداء> [accessed May 4, 2017].

66. Al-Hajj Muhammad, *al-Masīra al-jihādiyya li-ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn*, 72.
67. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā’id ‘Miqlid Ḥamīd Ḥamīd’: masīrat jihād ḥattā al-shahāda” [The martyr commander “Miqlid Hamid Hamid”: The march of jihad until martyrdom], December 25, 2014, <https://saraya.ps/post/3241/الشهيد-القائد-مقلد-حميد-حميد-مسيرة-جهاد-حتى-الشهادة> [accessed May 4, 2017].
68. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: al-qā’idayn ‘Miqlid Ḥamīd’ wa-‘Nabīl Abū Jabr.”
69. United States District Court Middle District Florida Tampa Division, 19.
70. *Ibid.*, 35–36, 38.
71. *Ibid.*, 41.
72. Department of Treasury, “TERRORIST ASSETS REPORT (January 1996). 1995 Annual Report to the Congress on Assets Belonging to Terrorist Countries or International Terrorist Organizations,” January 6, 1996, www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Documents/tar1995.pdf [accessed May 18, 2018].
73. Nora Boustany, “Palestinians denounce freezing of assets,” *The Washington Post*, January 26, 1995, <https://wapo.st/33V4xuG> [accessed May 18, 2018].
74. United States District Court Middle District Florida Tampa Division, 18.
75. Kenneth Katzman, *Terrorism: Near Eastern Groups and State Sponsors*, 2001 (McLean: Booz Allen & Hamilton, 2001), 7.
76. United States District Court District of Columbia, “Stephen M. FLATOW, Plaintiff v. the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, the Iranian Ministry of Information and Security, Ayatollah Ali Hoseini Khamenei, Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, Ali Fallahian-Khuzestani, and John Does 1–99, Defendants. No. 97–396 (RCL),” March 11, 1998, www.uniset.ca/islamicland/999FSupp1.html [accessed February 27, 2019].
77. United States District Court Middle District Florida Tampa Division, 19.
78. Khaled Hroub, “ Hamas after Shaykh Yasin and Rantisi,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 33, no. 4 (Summer 2002): 22.
79. Mishal and Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas*, 57, 209 (note 6).
80. United States District Court Middle District Florida Tampa Division, 28.
81. *Ibid.*, 28–29.
82. *Ibid.*, 27.

8 The Comeback of PIJ

1. This is not to suggest that the cell was absent in the 1990s, just weakened. Salih Tahayna, for example, had been sentenced to thirty-three years in prison, yet managed to escape after changing his identity papers with Nu‘man, who was expected to be released shortly after. Once Salih had gotten out, he and Hardan shot and killed an Israeli police officer at a market in the Jenin district in June 1996, in addition to injuring the officer’s wife. Two months later, Hardan’s group opened fire on several Israelis in Baqa al-Gharbiyya and injured two of them. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā’id ‘Ṣāliḥ Mūsā Ṭaḥāyina’: aḥad mu’assasī khalāyā ‘ushshāq al-shahāda” [The martyr commander “Salih Musa Tahayna”: One of the founders of the Lovers of Martyrdom cells], July 1, 2012, <https://saraya.ps/post/13216/الشهيد-صالح-موسى-طهائنا-احد-مؤسسي-خلايا-وششاق-الشهادة>

1. القاتد-صالح-موسى-خليفة-عشاق-الشهادة [accessed May 23, 2017]; Saraya al-Quds, "al-Shahīd al-qā'id 'Iyād Muḥammad Ḥardān."
2. Abufarha, *The Making of a Human Bomb*, 76.
3. Hilal, " Hamas's Rise as Charted in the Polls," 7.
4. Avi Shlaim, *Israel and Palestine: Reappraisals, Revisions, Refutations* (London, New York: Verso Books, 2009), 192.
5. Kimmerling and Migdal, *The Palestinian People*, 359.
6. Shlaim, *Israel and Palestine*, 198.
7. Kimmerling and Migdal, *The Palestinian People*, 359.
8. Jeremy Pressman, "The Second Intifada: Background and Causes of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict," *Journal of Conflict Studies* 23, no. 2 (2003), <https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/JCS/article/view/220/378> [accessed February 10, 2018].
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10. David A. Jaeger, Esteban F. Klor, Sami H. Miaari, and M. Daniele Paserman, "Can Militants Use Violence to Win Public Support? Evidence from the Second Intifada," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 59, no. 3 (2015): 532.
11. Pressman, "The Second Intifada."
12. Saraya al-Quds, "Khabar: al-qā'idayn 'Miqlid Hamīd' wa-'Nabīl Abū Jabr"; Saraya al-Quds, "Khabar: al-shahīd al-qā'id: 'Bashīr al-Dabash'."
13. Charbel, "Ziyāra li-dhākirat al-amīn al-'āmm li-ḥarakat 'al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn.' Shallah: lam yu'ayyid qatl al-madaniyyīn fi 11 aylūl wa-sha'artu bi-shāmīta wa-l-shafqa qara' al-zawāhirī ḥadīthī 'an al-yahūd fi 'al-wasaṭ' fa-ba'ath ilayy bi-risāla 'itāb."
14. Al-Hajj Muhammad, *al-Masīra al-jihādīyya li-ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn*, 73.
15. Shallah, *Ḥaqā'iq wa-mawāqif*, 21 (emphasis added).
16. Saraya al-Quds, "al-Shahīd al-qā'id 'Nāhiḍ Muḥammad Katkat."
17. Høigilt, "The Palestinian Spring That Was Not," 349.
18. Samy Cohen, *Israel's Asymmetric Wars* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 91.
19. Milton-Edwards and Farrell, *Hamas*, 104–105.
20. An exception was the PIJ commander in Jenin, Iyad Sawalha, who, as we recall, joined PIJ in prison in the 1990s as a member of Fatah's Black Panthers (*al-fuhūd al-aswad*).
21. Saraya al-Quds, "al-Shahīd al-qā'id 'Iyād Muḥammad Ḥardān."
22. Saraya al-Quds, "al-Muḥarrar 'Izz al-Dīn li-'l-i'lām al-ḥarbī': Lu'ay al-Sa'dī ṣana' jayshan min al-mujāhidīn" [The liberated 'Izz al-Dīn to the "military media": Lu'ay al-Sa'di created an army of mujahidin], October 24, 2016, <https://saraya.ps/post/48683/صنع-جيشا-من-المحرر-عز-الدين-ل-الإعلام-الحربي-لوي-السعدي> [accessed June 9, 2017].
23. Saraya al-Quds, "al-Shahīd al-qā'id 'As'ad Daqqa."
24. Saraya al-Quds, "al-Muḥarrar 'Izz al-Dīn li-'l-i'lām al-ḥarbī."
25. Picture in author's possession.
26. Saraya al-Quds, "al-Asīr al-qā'id 'Thābit Mardāwī."
27. Saraya al-Quds, "Khabar: ba'd thamāniyat a'wām 'alā al-ma'raka . . . 'āṣimat al-istishhādīyyīn tarwā dhikriyyāt al-butūla wa-l-fidā'" [News: Eight years after

- the battle ... the capital of martyrdom-seekers narrates memories of heroism and redemption], April 8, 2010, <https://saraya.ps/post/4593/> [accessed May 24, 2017].
28. The first from Gaza was Nabil al-‘Ar‘il against an Israeli military post in Gaza in 2000, while the latter was ‘Abd al-Hamid Khattab, who blew himself up near Kfar Darom settlement in 2004. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Istishhādī al-mujāhid ‘Nabīl Faraj al-‘Ar‘il’: mufajjir al-‘amal al-istishhādī fi intifāḍat al-aqṣā” [The martyr mujahid “Nabil Faraj al-‘Ar‘il’: The trigger of the martyrdom action in the al-Aqsa Intifada], October 25, 2011, <https://saraya.ps/post/7400/> [accessed May 30, 2018]; Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: al-shahīd al-mujāhid ‘‘Abd al-Hamīd Hamdān Khaṭṭāb’: Fāris ‘amaliyyat Kfar Darom al-istishhādīyya” [News: The martyr mujahid “‘Abd al-Hamid Hamdan Khattab”: The knight of the Kfar Darom martyrdom operation], July 17, 2011, <https://saraya.ps/post/12488/> [accessed May 30, 2018].
29. Operation Defensive Shield had consequences not only for the Palestinian armed resistance, however, but also for the Palestinian civilians. While the operation resulted from Israelis’ anger at the suicide bombings and civilian casualties, the Israeli human rights organization B’Tselem noted that “the intensity of pain and anger felt by Israelis made them forget just who the enemy was. Instead, almost two million innocent civilians were attacked by the most powerful army in the Middle East. ... The entire population of the West Bank suffered as a result of the operation [Defensive Shield].” B’Tselem, *Operation Defensive Shield: Soldiers’ Testimonies, Palestinian Testimonies* (Jerusalem: B’Tselem – The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, 2002), 3.
30. See e.g. Saraya al-Quds, “‘Mukhayyam Jinīn’ al-uṣṭūra ... ‘arīn al-shaykh al-jinīrāl ‘Maḥmūd al-Ṭawālba” [“The Jenin Camp” the legend ... the den of the general sheikh “Mahmud al-Tawalba”], April 5, 2015, <https://saraya.ps/post/40303/> [accessed May 24, 2017]; Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: ba‘d thamāniyat a‘wām ‘alā al-ma‘raka”; Saraya al-Quds, “‘Alī al-Safūrī’ ... ṣaṭar maḥama buṭūliyya fi Jinīn wa-ḥawwal warshatahu ilā maṣna’ li-l-qanābil wa-l-‘abwāt” [“‘Ali al-Safuri’ ... he wrote down a heroic epic in Jenin and turned his workshop into a bomb and IED factory], April 5, 2015, <https://saraya.ps/post/40305/> [accessed May 24, 2017].
31. The primary sources vary somewhat on who from the al-Quds Brigades participated, although the majority states that Mahmud Tawalba coordinated with the other factions as “[one] could watch Tawalba and [the] other leaders from the factions in a mobile operations room.” Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: ṣuwwar ... qā‘id ma‘rakat al-Jinīn ... Maḥmūd Ṭawālba: Uṣṭūra hazzat kayān al-‘adw” [News: Pictures ... commander of the Battle of Jenin ... Mahmud Tawalba: A legend who shook the enemy’s entity], April 7, 2013, <https://saraya.ps/post/28026/> [accessed May 24, 2017].

32. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: bi-qiṣādāt ‘Ṭawālba’ . . . ma‘ rakat ‘Jinīn’: Uṣṭūra takhallud wa-buṭūla lā tansā” [News: Under the leadership of “Tawalba” . . . the Battle of “Jenin”: A perpetuating legend and a heroism not forgotten], April 14, 2011, <https://saraya.ps/post/10024/-اسطورة-تخلد-بقيادة-طوالبة-مركة-جنين> [accessed May 26, 2017].
33. Mardawi, *Namūt fī al-waṭan*, 25.
34. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: ba‘ d thamāniyat a‘ wām ‘alā al-ma‘ raka.”
35. Mardawi, *Namūt fī al-waṭan*, 26, 28.
36. Saraya al-Quds, “‘Alī al-Ṣafūrī.”
37. Mardawi, *Namūt fī al-waṭan*, 36.
38. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā‘id ‘Anwar Maḥmūd Hamrān’: rawā bi-dammihī al-tāhir jabal al-nār” [The martyr commander “Anwar Mahmud Hamran”: He narrated the mountain of fire with his pure blood], June 28, 2011, <https://saraya.ps/post/1805/-الشهيد-القائد-أنور-محمود-حمران-روى-دمه-الطاهر-جبل-النار> [accessed May 30, 2018]; Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā‘id ‘Iyād Muḥammad Ḥardān.”
39. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā‘id ‘As‘ad Daqqa.”
40. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: aḥad rijāl al-sarāyā al-awā‘il bi-l-ḍiffa.”
41. The martyr biography of Zakarna does not explicitly state that he moved to Sawalha’s cell, yet it mentions that he assisted in the preparation of the suicide bombing of Hamza Samudi, which was carried out by Sawalha. Additionally, there is a possible anachronism in the biography as Zakarna was assassinated on May 22, 2002, while Samudi blew himself up on June 5. Yet, although Zakarna was killed before the operation was carried out, he could nevertheless have been a part of its preparations. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā‘id ‘Khālīd Maḥmūd Zakārna’: qā‘id ‘amaliyyāt al-sarāyā fī shimāl Filasṭīn al-muḥtalla” [The martyr commander “Khalid Mahmud Zakarna”: Commander of the al-Quds Brigades’ operation in northern occupied Palestine], April 7, 2010, <https://saraya.ps/post/4578/-الشهيد-القائد-خالد-محمود-زكارنة-قائد-عمليات-السرابة-في-شمال-فلسطين-المحتلة> [accessed May 31, 2018].
42. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā‘id ‘Dhiyāb ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-Shwaykī’ Assad ṣana‘ min dammihī malḥamat ‘azz wa-buṭūla” [The martyr commander “Dhiyab ‘Abd al-Rahim al-Shwayki,” a lion who made an epic of glory and heroism with his blood], June 29, 2011, <https://saraya.ps/post/6040/-الشهيد-القائد-ذياب-عبد-الرحيم-الشويكي-أسد-صنع-من-دمه-ملحمة-عز-وبطولة> [accessed June 9, 2017]; Saraya al-Quds, “al-Istishhādī al-mujāhid ‘Ḥātim Yāqīn al-Shwaykī’: ‘ashaq al-shahāda fa-kānat lahu” [The martyr mujahid “Hatim Yaqin al-Shwayki”: He loved martyrdom, so it was his], July 17, 2011, <http://saraya.ps/post/2662/-الاستشهادي-المجاهد-حاتم-ياقين-الشويكي-عشق-الشهادة-فكانت-له> [accessed June 11, 2017]; The Guardian, “Israel bus shooting leaves three dead,” November 4, 2001, www.theguardian.com/world/2001/nov/04/israel [accessed June 11, 2017].
43. Alan Philps, “Gunmen kill 12 Israelis after prayers,” *The Telegraph*, November 16, 2002, www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/israel/1413388/Gunmen-kill-12-Israelis-after-prayers.html [accessed June 5, 2018].
44. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: (ṣuwwar) Muḥammad Sidr: qā‘id min zaman al-ṣaḥāba adhalla al-ṣaḥāyna” [News: (Pictures) Muhammad Sidr: Commander

- from the time of the Companions who humiliated the Zionists], August 14, 2013, [https://saraya.ps/post/30624/\(-الصحابية-أذل-\)](https://saraya.ps/post/30624/(-الصحابية-أذل-)) (صور) محمد-سدر-قائد-من-زمن-الصحابية-أذل- [accessed May 30, 2018]; Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā'id ‘Dhiyāb ‘Abd al-Rahīm al-Shwaykī.”
45. BBC News, “Israel bus attack kills 17,” June 5, 2002, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/2026113.stm [accessed June 9, 2017]; Saraya al-Quds, “‘Amaliyyat muftaraq Majdū al-naw‘iyya” [The Megiddo junction operation], no date, <https://saraya.ps/uploads//images/3c78f386bf6f2790607d68863119450e.jpg> [accessed June 12, 2017].
 46. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-mujāhid ‘Hamza ‘Arif Samūdī’: baṭal ‘amaliyyat muftaraq Majdū al-naw‘iyya” [The martyr mujahid “Hamza ‘Arif Samudi”: Hero of the Megiddo junction operation], July 16, 2011, <https://saraya.ps/post/13077/-مجذو-عملية-مفترق-بطل-سمودي-عارف-حمزة-المجاهد-الشهيد> النوعية [accessed June 9, 2017].
 47. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā'id ‘Khālīd Maḥmūd Zakārna.”
 48. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: aḥad rijāl al-sarāyā al-awā'il bi-l-ḍiffa.”
 49. Wikalat Filastin al-Yawm al-Ikhbariyya, “al-Qā'id Lu'ay al-Sa'dī ... usṭurat al-jihād allatī marraghat unūf al-muḥtall fī al-turāb” [The commander Lu'ay al-Sa'dī ... the legend of jihad who rubbed the noses of the occupier in the dirt], October 24, 2016, <https://paltoday.ps/ar/post/283000/-القائد-لوي-السعدي-أسطورة-الجهاد-التي-مرغت-أنوف-المحتل-في-التراب> [accessed June 9, 2017]; Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-mujāhid ‘Mājid Samīr al-Ashqar.”
 50. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-mujāhid ‘Mājid Samīr al-Ashqar.”
 51. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā'id ‘Nāhiḍ Muḥammad Katkat.”
 52. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā'id ‘Miqlid Hamīd Ḥamīd.”
 53. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā'id ‘Maḥmūd ‘Abd al-Fatāḥ Jawda’: tārikh jihādī musharriḥ” [The martyr commander “Mahmud ‘Abd al-Fatah Jawda’: An honorable jihadi history], February 28, 2012, <https://saraya.ps/post/4661/-الشهيد-القائد-محمود-عبد-الفتاح-جودة-تاريخ-جهادي-مشرف> [accessed June 11, 2017].
 54. Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: al-shahīd al-qā'id: ‘Bashīr al-Dabash.”
 55. Abufarha, *The Making of a Human Bomb*, 82.
 56. *Ibid.*, 114; Joe Stork, *Erased in a Moment: Suicide Bombing Attacks against Israeli Civilians* (New York, Washington, London, Brussels: Human Rights Watch, 2002), 112.
 57. Yoram Schweitzer, “The Rise and Fall of Suicide Bombings in the Second Intifada,” *Strategic Assessment* 13, no. 3 (2010): 42.
 58. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-qā'id ‘Adnān Muḥammad Bustān’ ṣafaḥāt jihād mushriqa ... wa-shahāda fī sabīl allāh mubāraka” [The martyr commander “Adnan Muhammad Bustan” bright pages of jihad ... and blessed martyrdom in the path of God], July 18, 2011, <https://saraya.ps/post/12271/-الشهيد-القائد-عدنان-محمد-بستان-صفحات-جهاد-مشرقة-وشهادة-في-سبيل-الله-مباركة> [accessed July 27, 2017]; Saraya al-Quds, “Khabar: al-shahīd al-qā'id ‘Aḥmad Khalīl al-Shaykh Khalīl’: qā'id ṣana' fa-abda' wa-ḍarab fa-awja'” [News: The martyr commander “Ahmad Khalil al-Shaykh Khalil’: A commander who created and achieved excellent results, he struck and caused pain], November 16, 2011, <https://saraya.ps/post/15803/-الشهيد-القائد-أحمد-خليل-الشيخ-خليل-قائد-صنع-فأبد-ع-وضرب-فأوجع> [accessed July 27, 2017].

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60. Shallah, *Ḥaqā’iq wa-mawāqif*, 40.
61. *Ibid.*
62. PIJ representative, interview with author, November 16, 2014, Ramallah.
63. Samidoun, “Ahmad Sa’adat: Palestine will be freed by the people, not the elites,” December 11, 2018, <https://samidoun.net/2018/12/ahmad-saadat-palestine-will-be-freed-by-the-people-not-the-elites/> [accessed December 11, 2018].
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65. Ibrahim Hamidi, “al-Qāhira taṭlub min ‘al-jihād’ al-tahdī’a wa-l-inḍimām ilā ḥiwār ‘Faṭh’ wa-‘Ḥamās” [Cairo demands ceasefire from “Islamic Jihād” and to join the dialogue of “Fatah” and “Hamas”], *al-Hayat*, December 15, 2002, https://daharchives.alhayat.com/issue_archive/Hayat_INT/2002/12/15/القااهرة_تطلب_من_الجهاد_التهدية_والانضمام_الى_حوار_فتح_وحماس.html [accessed June 10, 2017].
66. Shallah, “Bi-ṣuḥbat al-amīn,” 2.
67. Roy, *Hamas and Civil Society in Gaza*, 13.

9 From Strife to the Arab Spring

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2. Tamimi, *Hamas*, 210–211.
3. *Ibid.*, 211.
4. Baconi, *Hamas Contained*, 80.
5. *Ibid.*, 80–81.
6. *Ibid.*, 83–84.
7. Shallah, *Ḥaqā’iq wa-mawāqif*, 43–44.
8. *Ibid.*, 44.
9. Al-Hajj Muhammad, *al-Masīra al-jihādiyya li-ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn*, 192.
10. *Ibid.*, 193.
11. Shallah, *Ḥaqā’iq wa-mawāqif*, 57.
12. See e.g. Beverley Milton-Edwards, “The Ascendance of Political Islam: Hamas and Consolidation in the Gaza Strip,” *Third World Quarterly* 29, no. 8 (2008): 1585–1599; Baconi, *Hamas Contained*; Tamimi, *Hamas*.
13. Jihan al-Husayni, “Maṣādir qarība min ‘al-jihād al-islāmī’ taḥmal ‘alā qiyādat ‘Ḥamās’ wa-‘Abbās” [Sources close to “Islamic Jihād” refer to the leadership of “Hamas” and Abbas], *al-Hayat*, August 5, 2007, https://daharchives.alhayat.com/issue_archive/Hayat_INT/2007/8/5/مصادر_قريبة_من_الجهاد_الاسلامي_تحمل_على_قيادة_حماس_و_عباس.html [accessed August 1, 2017].
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10 Revolution: PIJ, the State, and Civil Society

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42. Only in periods when violence becomes contentious does it seem PIJ actually discusses its necessity and legitimacy, and the arguments thus depend partly on which debate and period one refers to. The targeting of civilians is a case in point. For example, as a number of attacks during the Second Intifada were retaliations for Israeli state violence against Palestinians, PIJ's justification for violence adjusted to this reality. Mardawi was certainly no exception as he noted in an interview with the Israeli newspaper *Maariv*: "Palestinian civilians are killed, and the response is to kill Israeli civilians." PIJ similarly attempted to negate the status of Israeli civilians as noncombatants when there was an outcry against the practices of the Palestinian factions in this period. Conversely, the context in which these justifications were presented stands in sharp contrast to the situation in which PIJ and the other Palestinian factions found themselves shortly after the terrorist attacks in the United States, September 11, 2001, when PIJ attempted to differentiate itself and its practice from that of al-Qaida. Yet, to do so posed a theoretical conundrum, as PIJ had to distance itself from attacks on US civilians in general, while simultaneously avoiding delegitimizing its own attacks on Israeli civilians. Al-Hajj Muhammad, who engaged in the debate, did so by developing an interpretation of *jus in bello* through which the legality of violence depended on the existence or absence of alternative channels of political influence. See e.g. Mardawi, *Namūt fī al-waṭan*, 144; Ibrahim Hamidi, "Za'imā 'Ḥamās' wa-'al-jihād' yataḥadathān ilā 'al-ḥayā' 'an bu'dayhā al-siyāsī wa-l-dīnī: al-'amaliyyāt al-intihāriyya hal hiya 'mūt 'abathī' min ajl 'ḥayāt afḍal?'" [Leaders of "Hamas" and "Islamic Jihad" talk to "al-Hayat" about their political and religious dimensions: The suicide operations, are they a "death in vain" for "a better life"?], *al-Hayat*, May 1, 2002, www.alhayat.com/article/1129626 [accessed May 30, 2015]; al-Hajj Muhammad, *al-Masīra al-jihādiyya li-ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filasṭīn*, 81–84.
43. Anwar Abu Taha, "al-Assas al-'aḳdiyya wa-l-fikriyya li-'thaqāfat al-muqāwama'" [The creedal and intellectual foundations of the "culture of resistance"] (n.p.: n.d.), 3. Document in author's possession.
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45. Mardawi, *Namūt fī al-waṭan*, 66–67.
46. *Ibid.*, 68.
47. *Ibid.*, 67.

48. *Ibid.*, 76.
49. Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (London: Penguin Classics, 2001), 28.
50. Mardawi, *Namūt fi al-waṭan*, 57.
51. *Ibid.*, 73–74.
52. *Ibid.*, 134.
53. Abu Taha, “al-ʿAssas al-ʿaqīdiyya wa-l-fikriyya li-ʿthaqāfat al-muqāwama,” 1.
54. *Ibid.*, (emphasis added).
55. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Istishhādī al-mujāhid ‘Sāmī ‘Abd al-Hāfiẓ ‘Antar’: kharaj min Nāblis wa-zalzal al-aman al-ṣahyūnī fi ‘Tal Abīb” [The martyr mujahid “Sami ‘Abd al-Hafiz ‘Antar”: He left Nablus and shook the Zionist security in “Tel Aviv”], September 6, 2009, <https://saraya.ps/post/1832/> [The martyr mujahid “Sami ‘Abd al-Hafiz ‘Antar”: He left Nablus and shook the Zionist security in “Tel Aviv”], September 6, 2009, <https://saraya.ps/post/1832/> [accessed December 13, 2017]; Saraya al-Quds, “al-Istishhādī al-mujāhid ‘ʿAbdallāh Saʿīd Badrān’: baṭal ʿamaliyyat ‘Tal al-Rabī’ al-nawʿiyya” [The martyr mujahid “ʿAbdallah Saʿid Badran”: Hero of the “Tel Aviv” operation], no date, <https://saraya.ps/martyr/301/> [accessed December 13, 2017].
56. Saraya al-Quds, “al-Shahīd al-mujāhid ‘Luṭfī Amīn Abū Saʿda’: baṭal ʿamaliyyat Natanyā al-istishhādīyya” [The martyr mujahid “Lutfi Amin Abu Saʿda”: Hero of the Netanya martyrdom operation], December 5, 2011, <https://saraya.ps/post/13002/> [accessed December 13, 2017]; Saraya al-Quds, “al-Istishhādī al-mujāhid ʿAḥmad Sāmī Abū Khalīl’: munaffidh ʿamaliyyat Natanyā al-buṭūliyya” [The martyr mujahid “Ahmad Sami Abu Khalil”: Executor of the heroic Netanya operation], July 12, 2015, <https://saraya.ps/post/42234/> [accessed December 13, 2017]; Saraya al-Quds, “al-Istishhādī al-mujāhid ʿRāmī Muḥammad Ghānim’: munaffidh al-ʿamaliyya al-buṭūliyya fi Natanyā” [The mujahid martyr “Rami Muhammad Ghanim”: Executor of the heroic operation in Netanya], January 22, 2010, <https://saraya.ps/post/3598/> [accessed December 13, 2017].
57. Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, trans. Saul K. Padover (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1937), 5, www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/pdf/18th-Brumaire.pdf [accessed September 20, 2019].
58. Merriam-Webster, “revolutionary,” no date, www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/revolutionary [accessed May 7, 2019]; Merriam-Webster, “conservatism,” no date, www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/conservatism [accessed May 7, 2019].
59. The expression is borrowed from Cormac McCarthy, *The Road* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), 70.
60. Gabriel A. Almond, R. Scott Appleby, and Emmanuel Sivan, *Strong Religion: The Rise of Fundamentalism around the World* (Chicago, London: Chicago University Press, 2003), 49–50; Islamic Jihad in Palestine, “no title.”
61. Dag Tuastad, “Neo-orientalism and the New Barbarism Thesis: Aspects of Symbolic Violence in the Middle East Conflict(s),” *Third World Quarterly* 24, no. 4 (2003): 591.

62. Jamal Mustafa Aysa Hawil, “Ma’rakat mukhayyam Jinīn: tashkīl wa-l-uṣṭūra (naysān 2002)” [Battle of the Jenin Camp: Formation and myth (April 2002)] (master’s thesis, Birzeit University, 2012).
63. See e.g. ‘Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, “Filastīnī yuṭ‘an jundī ṣahyūnī qarib Tal al-Rabī‘ wa yafarr min al-makān” [Palestinian stabs Zionist soldier near Tel Aviv and flees from the place], May 3, 2009, www.alqassam.ps/arabic/أخبار-القسام/4967/فلسطيني-يطعن-جندي-صهيوني-قرب-تل-الربيع-ويفر-من-المكان [accessed May 10, 2019]; ‘Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, “Bi-ṣuwwar ... al-dhikrā al13 li-‘amaliyyat hashārūn al-istishhādiyya” [With pictures ... 13th anniversary of the HaSharon martyrdom operation], May 18, 2014, www.alqassam.ps/arabic/تقارير-القسام/5690/بالصور-الذكرى-ال13-لعملية-هشارون-الاستشهادية [accessed May 10, 2019].
64. Abufarha, *The Making of a Human Bomb*, 183.
65. *Ibid.*, 184.
66. *Ibid.*, 185.

11 Conclusion: Why PIJ?

1. Wendy Pearlman, *Violence, Nonviolence, and the Palestinian National Movement* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 64.
2. *Ibid.*
3. Hroub, *Hamas*, 125.
4. *Ibid.*, 126–127.
5. Hatina, *Islam and Salvation in Palestine*, 81.
6. Hatina, *Martyrdom in Modern Islam*, 197.
7. *Ibid.*, 107.
8. Menachem Klein, “Competing Brothers: The Web of Hamas-PLO Relations,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 8, no. 2 (1996): 128.
9. Al-Hajj Muhammad, *al-Masīra al-jihādiyya li-ḥarakat al-jihād al-islāmī fī Filastīn*, 193.
10. Mishal and Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas*, 151.
11. *Ibid.*
12. I extend my gratitude to an anonymous peer reviewer for this suggestion.
13. Quoted in Hroub, *Hamas*, 65.
14. Mishal and Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas*, 147.
15. Anwar Abu Taha, interview with author, March 19, 2018, Beirut.
16. Mishal and Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas*, 169.
17. Hatina, *Martyrdom in Modern Islam*, 119.
18. Baconi, *Hamas Contained*, 24.
19. Quoted in Hroub, *Hamas*, 46.
20. Hroub, *Hamas*, 26; Klein, “Competing Brothers,” 113.
21. Al-Shiqaqi, “Markaziyyat Filastīn wa-l-mashrū‘ al-islāmī al-mu‘āṣir,” 439.
22. Hroub, *Hamas*, 46.
23. *Ibid.*, 48.
24. *Ibid.*
25. Hatina, “Theology and Power in the Middle East,” 247.
26. Hroub, *Hamas*, 190, 199.

27. *Ibid.*, 190–191.
28. Palestinian Islamic Jihad, “al-Wathīqa al-siyāsiyya” [Political document], 2018, <https://jehad.ps/uploads/documents/293c6d55fd9b43be483c2bda815074d5.pdf> [accessed November 12, 2019], sixth bullet point in “The International Situation.”
29. *Ibid.*, first bullet point in “The International Situation.”
30. See e.g. Ramadan ‘Abdallah Shallah, *al-Islām wa-l-gharb: jadl al-sirā’ fi al-tārīkh wa-l-wāqi’* [Islam and the West: The interweaving of the conflict in history and reality] (Beirut: Mu’assasat al-Aqsa al-Thaqafiyya, 2018); Charbel, “Ziyāra li-dhākirat al-amīn al-‘amm li-harakat ‘al-jihād al-islāmī fi Filasṭīn.’ Shallah: lam yu’ayyid qatl al-madaniyyīn fi 11 aylūl wa sha’artu bi-shāmīta wa-l-shafqa qara’ al-zawāhirī ḥadīthī ‘an al-yahūd fi ‘al-wasaṭ’ fa-ba’ath ilayy bi-risāla ‘itāb.”
31. Palestinian Islamic Jihad, “al-Wathīqa al-siyāsiyya,” second bullet point in “The International Situation” (emphasis added).
32. Quoted in Hroub, *Hamas*, 44.
33. Klein argues that Hamas “Palestinianized” Islam because (1) the movement stressed the difference between the conditions in the Arab countries and those in Palestine; (2) the movement views the Palestinian land as blessed; (3) jihad in Palestine and the First Intifada would, in Hamas’s view, determine “the existential struggle against all enemies of Islam.” The main cause for my disagreement is primarily, added by the arguments above, that Klein bases his conclusion on the Hamas Charter of 1988. Yet, as Hroub notes, “Hamas’s doctrinal discourse has diminished in intensity since the mid-1990s, and references to its Charter by its leaders have been made rarely, if at all.” Klein, “Competing Brothers,” 113; Hroub, *Hamas*, 44.
34. Hroub, “Hamas,” 171.
35. Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State*, 84–85.
36. *Ibid.*, 198.
37. Harold M. Cubert, *The PFLP’s Changing Role in the Middle East* (London, Portland: Frank Cass, 1997), 96.
38. Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 51.
39. *Ibid.*, 31.
40. Hroub, *Hamas*, 35.
41. Burgat, *Face to Face with Political Islam*, 24.
42. Giedre Sabaseviciute, “Sayyid Qutb and the Crisis of Culture in Late 1940s Egypt,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 50 (2018): 96.
43. Roland Boer, “Marxism, Religion and the Taiping Revolution,” *Historical Materialism* 24, no. 2 (2016): 19.
44. Eric Hobsbawm, *Interesting Times: A Twentieth-Century Life* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2002), 128.
45. Quoted in *ibid.*
46. Almond, Appleby, and Sivan, *Strong Religion*, 110.
47. For a distinction on temporal and ontological transcendence, see Boer, “Marxism, Religion and the Taiping Revolution,” 17–19.
48. *Ibid.*, 13, 19.
49. Khaled Hroub, “Between Islam and Nationalism,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 31, no. 3 (Spring 2002): 108.

50. A qualification is nonetheless required. As many of the martyrs in both PIJ and Hamas were killed as students, the numbers do not reflect obtained university degrees, but rather the commencement of higher education.
51. I have excluded the category “unknown” (597 martyrs) from the list in [Table 11.2](#).
52. Sixty-seven ‘Izz al-Din al-Qassam martyrs were in specialized labor, ranging from accountant (four martyrs) via therapist (one martyr) to banker (one martyr).
53. Staniland, *Networks of Rebellion*, 218.
54. *Ibid.*, 219.
55. PIJ member 2, interview with author, March 15, 2018, Burj al-Barajneh.
56. Ellen Meiksins Wood, *Democracy against Capitalism: Renewing Historical Materialism* (London, New York: Verso Books, 2016), 9.

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Index

- Abbas, Mahmoud, 183–184
'Abd al-'Al, Salih, 145, 148
'Abid, Hani, 62, 64
 assassination of, 125, 126–127
 Independence edited by, 78, 119, 243
Abu Husayra, Ahmad, 73–74, 85
Abu Jabr, Nabil, 158–159, 165–166
 in First Intifada, 119
 under PA, arrest, torture of, 122
 in Second Intifada, 167, 170–171, 174, 176
Abu Jalala, Muhammad, 53, 91, 93, 118
Abu Mu'ammār, Ibrahim, 19, 233
Abu Taha, Anwar, 7, 53, 89
 on armed struggle, PIJ and, 60, 197, 216
 on colonialism, 46, 47
 on defections, 145, 148, 149, 150
 on economic system, 139
 on Hamas and PIJ, 96, 97
 as ideological thinker, 38, 46, 47, 196–197
 on Iran cutting funding, 193
 on leadership, PIJ, 112, 154–155
 on *al-Mukhtār al-Islāmī*, 22
 on neutrality, PIJ, 193–195
 on Shallah, 154–155
 on state, 198, 201, 202
 on training camps, 108
 on violence, 207, 209, 210
 on *wa'y* (deeper awareness), 51
Abu Tayr, Muhammad, 72–74, 75
Abu al-Walid. *See* al-Dahduh, Khalid
al-Afghani, Jamal al-Din, 54–55, 56, 57
Afghanistan, 106, 258
ALF. *See* Arab Liberation Front
Algeria, 107, 108–109, 136, 195
'Ammar, Jamal/Jabr, 68–69, 246
Anas, 'Abdallah, 7, 106, 258
apartheid, struggle against, 42, 220–221
'*aqida* (creed), 48–50, 240
al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, 3–4, 211
Arab Liberation Front (ALF), 90
Arab Spring
 Egyptian, 190–192, 194, 195–196
 Hamas and, 188–189, 191–192, 195–196
 PIJ and, 9, 181, 188, 190–197
 Syrian, 190–191, 192
 Tunisian, 190–191, 192
Arafat, Yasser, 125, 214
 Oslo Agreement and, 120–122, 148
 PA under, 117, 122, 176–177
 resignation of, 182
al-A'raj, 'Ammar, 108, 122–123, 124–125
al-Arian, Sami, 145, 147–148, 153–154, 159
armed struggle, 229
 Abu Taha on, 60, 197, 216
 exile impacting, 117–118
 former secular-nationalist militants in
 PIJ, 70, 84–90, 99, 152, 161, 227–228
 funding, supplies for PIJ, 90–93, 255
 Gazan, secular-nationalist, 59, 75, 76–77
 Hamas and, 2, 84, 93–94, 97–98, 99, 100, 140–141, 213, 217
 Hizb al-Tahrir opposing, 33–34, 47–48
 martyrdom in, concept of, 211
 mnemonic counterviolence in, 210–211, 212
 Oslo Agreement and, 120, 121–122
 Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood and, 1–2, 5, 30, 35, 47–48, 57, 58, 60, 84, 94, 100, 213–214
 Palestinian unity and, 140–142, 190, 197, 214–215
 PIJ, decline of, 120, 123, 127, 158–159, 263
 PIJ, First Intifada and, 100
 of PIJ, early, 84–89, 100
 PIJ and, 2–3, 5, 30, 35, 36–37, 57, 58, 60, 144, 215, 227, 228
 popular sentiment on, 188, 228
 secular-nationalist militants and transition to, 84–90, 99
 Ten-Point Program and, 238

- al-Assad, Bashar, 188–189, 190, 192
 awareness. *See wa'y*
 'Awda, 'Abd al-'Aziz, 67
 assaults on, 1, 60, 94
 Egypt expelling, 20
 exile of, 104, 105–106, 107
 al-Ghazali influencing, 54
 ICP conferences attended by, 153–154
 PIJ, conflicts in, and, 145, 146, 148–150, 151, 152
 PIJ financial difficulties and, 147–148
 preaching by, 1, 63, 77
 Azerbaijan, 40
 'Azzam, Nafidh, 19
- Bahrain, 111
 Baraka, Sayyid Hussein, 104, 105–106, 145, 146, 148, 149–151
 Basharat, Muhammad, 78, 170, 251
 al-Batsh, Khalid, 184–185
 “Bilal” (al-Shiqaqi, F., associate), 61–62
 in Egypt, 7, 19, 21–22, 29–30, 74
 militant background of, 74, 75
 Bosnia, war in, 41
 boundary framing, 25–26, 27
 Brahma, 'Issam, 91
 killing of, 165–166
 in prison, joining PIJ, 70, 71, 78–79
 in West Bank, 70, 78–79, 81, 93
- charismatic authority, 150–151, 153
 Charter of Brotherhood and Cooperation, 96, 186
 China, 222
 Christians, PIJ entry for, 145, 148–149, 150, 152, 161
 class
 of Hamas and PIJ, compared, 3, 213, 223–225, 226–227, 228
 Khomeini on, 138–139
 PIJ recruitment and, 3, 67, 68, 80, 223–227, 228, 246
 Clinton, Bill, 159
 colonialism
 Abu Taha on, 46, 47
 al-Afghani on, 54–55
 Fatah on, 220
 Hamas, PIJ, and, 217–219
 Palestinian unity against, PIJ and, 139–143
 in PIJ ideology, 39–43, 46, 48–50, 54–55, 56, 57, 129, 133–135, 137–138, 139–143, 199–200, 206, 217–219, 220–222
 secularism and, 199–200, 206, 220–221
- Shiites, Iran, and, 129, 130–131, 133–136, 137–139, 142, 221
 al-Shiqaqi, F., on, 39–43, 48–50, 54–55, 56, 57, 129, 130–131, 133–136, 137–138, 139, 142–143, 199–200, 206, 217–218, 219, 220–222
 violence and opposing, 207, 208, 209–211
 creed ('*aqida*), 48–50, 240
 culturization, 219
- al-Dahduh, Khalid (Abu al-Walid), 91–92
 al-Dahduh clan, 79–80, 91–92
 Damascus, Syria
 Hamas leaving, 192
 PIJ in, 106, 107, 118, 126–127, 192
 Daqqa, As'ad, 78, 170, 172–173, 174, 178
 decline, PIJ, 161
 of attacks, 123, 127, 158–159, 263
 defections in, 145, 146, 147–150, 151–153, 161
 financial difficulties in, 147–148, 150, 159–162
 leaders, assassination of, in, 126–127
 military reorganization and, 115–117, 123–125, 227–228
 organizational structure and, 115–117, 145, 147–151, 152–153, 161
 Oslo Agreement and, 120, 123, 166, 227
 PA and, 117, 120, 122–123, 124, 125, 127, 145
 in popularity, 123, 263
 Second Intifada resurgence compared with, 175–176, 227
 shura council disintegrating and, 144–153, 157
 US freezing assets and, 159–160
 in West Bank, 165–166, 168, 270
- deeper awareness. *See wa'y*
 defections, 145
 of Baraka, 145, 146, 148, 149–151
 of Muhanna, 145, 146, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152
 organizational structure and, 145, 147–151, 152–153, 161
 shura council and, 145, 147–150, 151
 Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), 72–73, 74–76, 82–83, 184, 191
 dissimulation (*taqiya*), 133
- education
 of Hamas and PIJ, compared, 223–225, 226–227

- education (cont.)
 of PIJ recruits, 223–225, 226–227, 246
 of PIJ recruits, West Bank, 80
- Egypt
 Arab Spring in, 190–192, 194, 195–196
 ceasefire negotiations in, 177
 Hamas and truce brokered by, 189
 leftists and Islamists in 1940s, 222
 on PIJ, influence from, 13–14
 PIJ nucleus and radical groups in, 28–32
 PIJ nucleus in, 7, 9, 13–14, 15–16, 18–27, 33, 36–37, 54, 153, 202, 235
 Shallah in, 19–20, 25, 28–29, 153, 235
 al-Shiqaqi, F., in, 13–14, 15–16, 18–27, 28–32, 36–37, 202, 235
 state in, al-Shiqaqi, F., on, 202
 students in, 17–20, 21–22, 25, 36
 study circles in, 13–14, 15–16, 18–19, 20–22, 24–27, 32, 36–37, 235
 al-Takfir wa-l-Hijra in, 28, 29, 210, 236
- Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ), 52
 PIJ and, 28–29, 31–32, 156–157
 Sadat assassinated by, 28, 31–32, 53–54, 236
- Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. *See* Muslim Brotherhood, Egyptian
- The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (Marx), 210
- EIJ. *See* Egyptian Islamic Jihad
- elections
 Hamas and, 9, 182–184, 215–216
 in PIJ future society, 203–205
 PIJ opposing, 2–3, 182–183, 197, 215
- Ennahda, 206
- ethnographic fieldwork, Occupied Palestinian Territories, 228–229
- excommunication (*takfir*), 52
- Executive Order 12947, US, 159
- exile, Hamas in, 114, 155
- exile, PIJ in
 alliances enabled by, 103, 107, 108–111
 ‘Awda in, 104, 105–106, 107
 al-Hila in, 109
 Iran, alliance with, and, 103, 107, 108–109, 110–111, 127, 128
 leadership in, 9, 100, 103, 104–107, 109, 112–115, 119–120, 122, 127, 144–145, 152–153, 155, 157, 161, 165
 in Lebanon, 9, 100, 103, 104–107, 109, 122, 144–145
 local leadership and, 119–120
 military impact of, 117–118
 organizational structure reformed in, 103, 112–117, 119–120, 127, 152–153
 as restraining, 103
 al-Shiqaqi, F., in, 9, 103, 104–107, 109, 112, 114–115, 119, 120, 258
 travel enabled by, 103, 105–106, 107
 exile, PLO in, 75
- Fanon, Frantz, 136, 207, 208, 211, 220–221
- Fatah, 35, 73, 246
 al-Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades of, 3–4, 211
 with Hamas, Israeli ceasefire negotiations of, 177
 Hamas and, 97, 120–121
 Hamas civil war with, 9, 139–140, 180–185, 189, 196
 Hamas conflict with, early 1990s, 139–140, 184
 ideology of, 72–74, 75–76, 220
 in Muslim Brotherhood, founding fathers of, 214
 Oslo Agreement and, 120–121, 166, 214–215
 PA and, 120–121, 175–176, 182, 183, 229
 in PIJ, former militants of, 70, 71, 74, 75, 78–79, 82–83, 86
 PIJ compared with, 220, 221–222, 228–229
 in Second Intifada, 175–176, 177
 Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), 147, 153
- fieldwork, Occupied Palestinian Territories, 228–229
- financial difficulties, PIJ, 147–148, 150, 159–162
- FLN. *See* National Liberation Front
- Gaddafi, Muammar, 126, 192
- Gaza Strip, 225, 227–228
 armed secular-nationalist resistance in, 59, 75, 76–77
 blockade of, 7, 190–191, 194, 195–196
 al-Dahduh clan of, 79–80, 91–92
 districts of, recruitment in, 67–68, 246
 in First Intifada, 118
 under Hamas, 183–184, 185–189, 215
 Hamas in, elections and, 182
 Israel killing PIJ in, 174
 Israeli withdrawal from, 182
 mosques in, PIJ recruiting through, 62–63, 67–68, 81–82, 243
 PA in, 123

- Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood in, 59–60, 242
- PIJ military wing in, 115–116
- PIJ nucleus returning to, 58, 59–60, 214
- PIJ recruiting and, 58, 63, 64–67, 77, 78, 79–80, 81–82
- PLA in, 59, 75, 76–77
- in Second Intifada, 76–77, 174
- students of, PIJ recruiting, 63, 64–67, 78, 81–82
- West Bank differences from, 76–77, 82
- Yassin and Islamic movement in, 59, 242
- Ghannouchi, Rachid, 106, 206–207
- al-Ghazali, Muhammad, 15–16, 54
- Habib, Khadr, 32, 192
- al-Hajj Muhammad, Yusuf 'Arif, 33, 34, 98, 183
- on attacks, declining, 158
- on exile, PIJ reorganization and, 112
- on PIJ recruitment, 63, 77–78
- on Qassam, al-Quds Brigades and, 167
- on al-Shiqaqi, F., in Egypt, 28, 32
- Hamad, Fathi, 185–186
- Hamad, Ghazi, 189
- Hamas (Islamic Resistance Movement), 3–4, 228–229
- Abu Tayr of, 72–73, 75
- Arab Spring and, 188–189, 191–192, 195–196
- armed struggle and, 2, 84, 93–94, 97–98, 99, 100, 140–141, 213, 217
- class character of PIJ and, 3, 213, 223–225, 226–227, 228
- on colonialism, PIJ and, 217–219
- diaspora leadership of, 114
- doctrinal discourse of, 285
- early PIJ violence compared with, 93
- Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and, 195–196
- elections and, 9, 182–184, 215–216
- in exile, 114, 155
- with Fatah, Israeli ceasefire negotiations of, 177
- Fatah and, 97, 120–121
- Fatah civil war with, 9, 139–140, 180–185, 189, 196
- Fatah conflict with, early 1990s, 139–140, 184
- in First Intifada, 84, 93–95, 96, 118, 160, 285
- Gaza under, 183–184, 185–189, 215
- income sources of, 160, 161–162
- international legitimacy sought by, 218–219
- Iran and, 111, 195–196, 228
- 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades of, 167, 223–227
- on *maqslaha*, 215
- Oslo Agreement and, 97–98, 120–122, 123, 166, 178
- PA and, 177, 182, 215–216
- from Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood, developing, 93–94, 97, 98
- PIJ compared with, 2–3, 5–6, 51–52, 97, 113, 114, 118, 160, 178, 179–180, 195–196, 213, 229
- PIJ conflict, rivalry with, 94, 97–99, 100, 121–122, 180, 185–190, 196, 215
- PIJ cooperation with, 94–97, 98–99, 100, 120, 140–141, 159, 160–161, 186, 196, 215
- PIJ ideology compared with, 8, 215–220, 221
- PIJ neutrality compared with, 195–196
- PIJ not merging with, 213
- PIJ sidelining, 188–190
- PLO and, 97–98, 121, 122, 182, 215–216, 220, 223
- popularity of PIJ and, 123, 166–167, 188, 263
- al-Quds Brigades and, 184, 187–188
- rocket attacks and, 187–188, 189, 190
- on *ṣabr*, 215–216
- in Second Intifada, 168, 175–176, 178, 182, 185–186
- Sham'a of, 61
- al-Shiqaqi, F., and, 94–95, 96, 99, 120, 184, 223
- socio-geographical character of, 223–227, 228
- Syria and, 188–189, 190, 192
- two-state solution and, 95, 97, 120
- US blocking assets of, 159–160
- violence of, 93, 97–98, 100
- in West Bank, PIJ compared with, 225–226
- Hamid, Miqlid, 167, 170–171, 174, 176
- Hamid, Usama, 19, 28, 122
- Hamran, Anwar, 79, 165–166, 170–171, 172, 178
- Haniyeh, Ismael, 187–188
- Hardan, Iyad, 91, 178, 270
- arrest, imprisonment of, 165–166, 170, 175
- release of, 170–171, 176

- al-Hasani, Muhammad, 85, 92, 104–105
 Hawwa, Sa'id, 218
 Hebron, West Bank
 education level and PIJ in, 80
 PIJ in, 78, 80–81, 82, 84–85, 168, 173, 175, 178, 179, 225–226, 251
 Hezbollah, 111
 PIJ and, 107, 108–110, 127, 140, 144–145, 185–186
 in Syrian civil war, 192
 training camps of, 107, 108–109, 127
 Hezbollah-Palestine, 145, 146, 149
 al-Hila, Mahmud, 109
 al-Hindi, Muhammad, 19–20, 77, 195
 Hizb al-Tahrir (Islamic Liberation Party), 4, 5, 33–34, 35, 36–37, 47–48
 Houthis, 193
How Do We Understand Islam (Kayfa Nafhamu al-Islām) (al-Ghazali), 15–16
 Hroub, Khaled, 121, 218, 285
 on PIJ, Hamas and, 2, 99, 215
 on PLO, Hamas and, 220
 Husayn ibn 'Ali, 135, 136
 Husayra, Abu, 71
 Hussein, Saddam, 118
- ICP. *See* Islamic Concern Project
 ideology, Fatah, 72–74, 75–76, 220
 ideology, PIJ, 229
 Abu Taha on, 38, 46, 47, 196–197
 al-Afghani influencing, 54–55, 56, 57
 colonialism in, 39–43, 46, 48–50, 54–55, 56, 57, 129, 133–135, 137–138, 139–143, 199–200, 206, 217–219, 220–222
 de facto dimension of, 38, 46, 47, 48–49, 51
 Hamas compared with, 8, 215–220, 221
 historical dimension of, 38, 39–43, 46, 47, 48–49, 51
 influences on, 35, 38, 51–56, 57, 217, 218, 220–221
 al-Qassam, I., influencing, 55–56, 57
 Qur'anic dimension of, 38, 43–50, 51, 56, 218, 220, 221–222
 Qutb, S., and, 20–21, 29, 51–52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57
 study circles and developing, 25, 36–37
 as syncretic, 222–223
 wa'y (deeper awareness) in, 38, 50–51
 improvised explosive devices (IEDs), 91, 93, 107, 108, 171–172
- Independence (al-Istiqlāl)* (newspaper), 78, 119, 122, 243
 interest (*maṣlaḥa*), 215, 216–217
 Intifada, First
 exile and, 104
 Hamas in, 84, 93–95, 96, 118, 160, 285
 Israel and, 100, 103, 104
 Oslo Agreement prompted by, 103
 PIJ and, 69–71, 85, 90–91, 92–93, 94–95, 96, 100, 103–104, 106, 118, 139–141, 222
 PIJ attacks preceding, 89
 PIJ growth enabled by, 118–119, 144–145
 UNLU during, 140–141
 Intifada, Second, 3–4, 228, 282
 Fatah in, 175–176, 177
 Gazan, 76–77, 174
 Hamas in, 168, 175–176, 178, 182, 185–186
 Israel killing PIJ militants in, 172
 Oslo Agreement, frustration with, and, 166–167
 PIJ after, 176–178
 PIJ popularity during, 166–167, 188
 PIJ resurgent in, 9, 162, 165, 168, 175–176, 177–180, 185–186, 188, 227
 al-Quds Brigades in, 119, 165, 167–168, 170, 176, 272
 suicide bombings in, 167–168, 170–171, 173–174, 177, 209–210
 in West Bank, 76–77, 78, 165, 168–175, 176, 179–180
- Iran. *See also* Shiites
 colonialism and, 129, 133–136, 137–139, 142, 221
 Hamas and, 111, 195–196, 228
 Hezbollah and, 111, 144–145, 185–186
 Islamic Center and, 130–131, 136–137
 Khomeini, 129, 130–131, 132, 133–135, 138–139, 142, 265
 Muslim Brotherhood and, 60, 130–132, 136–137
 Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood and, 4–5, 60, 130–132, 136–137
 PIJ, conflicts in, and, 145–146, 147–149
 PIJ alliance with, 9, 103, 107, 108–109, 110–111, 128, 144–145, 157, 159–162, 185–186, 188–189, 190–191, 228
 PIJ and revolution in, 4–5, 9, 13, 23–24, 53–54, 60, 75, 128, 129, 130–132, 133–136, 142–143, 145–146, 148–149, 213

- PIJ financial difficulties and, 147–148, 159–162, 228
- PIJ funding cut, restored by, 193, 195, 196
- Shariati, 129, 136–139, 142
- al-Shiqaqi, F., and, 41, 106, 108–109, 129, 130–131, 133–135, 138–139, 142
- suicide bombings and influence of, 132
- Syrian civil war and, 111, 192, 194–195
- Yemeni civil war and, 193, 195
- Iraq, 118, 183
- al-Islambouli, Khalid, 53–54
- Islamic Association, 59, 61, 242
- Islamic Center, 59, 242
- Iranian Revolution and, 130–131, 136–137
- PIJ nucleus and, 5–6, 33–34, 35, 36–37, 60–62, 130–131, 136–137
- Islamic Concern Project (ICP), 153–154
- The Islamic Digest* (al-Mukhtār al-Islāmī) (journal), 22
- Islamic Group (PIJ student group), 64–65, 66–67, 78
- Islamic Group (prison group), 71–74, 75–76
- Islamic Jihad Brigades, 246
- Islamic Jihad Jerusalem Brigade, 68–69
- Islamic Jihad Palestine, 68–69
- Islamic Liberation Party. *See* Hizb al-Tahrir
- Islamic Mujahid Forces. *See* Qassam
- Islamic Resistance Movement. *See* Hamas
- Islamic University of Gaza, 64–65, 66, 67, 78, 214
- The Islamic Vanguard* (al-Ṭalī'a al-Islāmiyya) (magazine), 64, 65, 245
- Islamic Vanguard, 24, 28–29
- formation of, 13, 26
- in Palestinian context, 32–36
- Israel
- ceasefire with, negotiations on, 177
- civilians of, PIJ on, 282
- First Intifada and, 100, 103, 104
- from Gaza, withdrawal of, 182
- in Gaza Strip, PIJ killed by, 174
- Gazan armed resistance suppressed by, 59, 75, 76–77
- to Lebanon, PIJ leaders exiled by, 100, 103, 104–107
- Operation Defensive Shield of, 114, 171–172, 207–209, 211, 272
- Operation Protective Edge campaign of, 188
- Oslo Agreement and, 166
- PA security cooperation with, 176–177
- Palestinian unity and, 129, 139–143
- prisons of, recruitment from, 70–73, 78–79, 81–83, 84, 86, 170
- Qur'an and occupation of, 43–48, 56
- in Second Intifada, PIJ militants killed by, 172
- al-Shiqaqi, F., assassinated by, 126–127
- al-Shiqaqi, F., on colonialism and, 42–43
- Six-Day War of, 4–5, 13, 15, 17–18, 34, 36, 39, 59, 75, 213–214
- al-Istiqlāl* (Independence) (newspaper), 78, 119, 122, 243
- Italian Communist Party, 222
- 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, 167
- class character of PIJ and, 223–225, 226–227
- in West Bank, PIJ compared with, 225–226
- al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, 18–19, 28–29, 52, 156–157, 236
- al-Jamal, Muhammad Sa'id, 86–88
- Jenin, West Bank
- Battle of, 171–172, 173, 207–209, 211
- kinship ties and PIJ in, 77, 79, 80
- PIJ in, 80, 81, 82, 93, 114, 169–170, 171–174, 175, 178, 179, 207–209, 211, 225–226, 271
- jihad, 129, 130–131, 132, 133, 136
- al-Ju'aydi, Khalid, 70–71, 243
- just society, PIJ on, 198–199, 211–212, 227
- Katkat, Nahid, 107, 108, 119, 122, 167–168, 174
- Kayfa Nafhamu al-Islām* (How Do We Understand Islam) (al-Ghazali), 15–16
- Khalil, al-Shaykh, 86–88
- al-Khatib, Taysir, 147, 150
- al-Khawaja, Hassan, 107, 108–109
- al-Khawaja, Mahmud, 60–61, 62–63, 64, 107, 122
- killing of, 124–125, 126–127
- Qassam under, 115, 116–117, 119, 126–127
- Khomeini* (al-Shiqaqi, F.), 23, 129–130
- Khomeini, Ruhollah, 23, 129–130, 265
- on classes, 138–139
- colonialism and, 133–135, 138–139, 142
- on jihad, 129, 130–131, 132, 133
- kinship, PIJ and
- in Gaza Strip, 79–80, 91–92
- in West Bank, 77, 79–81, 82, 165, 175, 179, 226–227, 251

- leadership, PIJ
 Abu Taha on, 112, 154–155
 assassination of, 126–127
 in exile, 9, 100, 103, 104–107, 109, 112–115, 119–120, 122, 127, 144–145, 152–153, 155, 157, 161, 165
 local, 119–120
 Shallah on, 112–113
 Shallah style of, 155–157, 161
 al-Shiqaqi, F., conflicts with, 145–151
 al-Shiqaqi, F., style of, 144, 146–147, 155–157
 Lebanon, 110
 PIJ branch in, 7, 74–75, 105–106
 PIJ exiled in, 9, 100, 103, 104–107, 109, 144–145
 PIJ infrastructure in, 105, 144–145, 216
 training camps in, 107–109, 127
 Lenin, Vladimir, 200–201, 222
 Libya, 106, 108, 126–127
The Light (al-Nūr) (magazine), 64, 65
 Lithuania, 40
 Locke, John, 201–202, 212

 Mahmud, ‘Abd al-Rahim, 133
 Mandela, Nelson, 42, 220–221
 Mardawi, Thabit, 132–133, 178, 207–209, 210–211, 282
 martyr biographies, 6–7
 martyrdom, concept of, 132–133, 135, 211
 Marx, Karl, 210, 222
 Marxism, 72–75, 137–139, 219
maṣlaḥa (interest), 215, 216–217
 middle class, Palestinian. *See* class
 military wing, PIJ, 114
 reorganization of, 115–117, 120, 123–125, 127, 227–228
 al-Shiqaqi, F., establishing, 90
 mnemonic counterviolence, 210–211, 212
 mosques, recruitment through, 62–63, 81–82, 243
 Mubarak, Hosni, 191–192
 Muhammad (prophet), 43–44
 Muhanna, Ahmad, 90
 defection of, 145, 146, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152
 in exile, 104, 105–106
 in prison, 71–72, 73–74
al-Mujāhid (magazine), 6, 105, 112, 152, 257
 Mujahidin, Afghan, 106, 258
al-Mukhtār al-Islāmī (The Islamic Digest) (journal), 22, 23, 235

 Musa, Abu Samir
 in Lebanon, PIJ branch led by, 7, 74–75, 105–106
 on PIJ conflicts, 145, 148–150, 152
 Musharafa, Falah, 173–174
 Muslim Brotherhood, 31–32, 218, 221–222
 Fatah founding fathers in, 214
 generations of, 30–31, 54
 Iran, Shiites, and, 60, 130–132, 136–137
 Muslim Brotherhood, Egyptian
 in Arab Spring, 195–196
 groups splintering from, 236
 Hamas and, 195–196
 PIJ, Shiites and, 136–137
 PIJ nucleus and, 13–14, 21, 22–24, 25–26, 27, 28–32, 33, 36–37, 54, 61, 133
 al-Takfir wa-l-Hijra and, 236
 Muslim Brotherhood, Lebanese, 74
 Muslim Brotherhood, Palestinian, 6
 armed struggle and, 1–2, 5, 30, 35, 47–48, 57, 58, 60, 84, 94, 100, 213–214
 ‘Awda and, 1, 60, 94
 in Gaza Strip, 59–60, 242
 Hamas developing from, 93–94, 97, 98
 Iran and, 4–5, 60, 130–132, 136–137
 Nasser and, 59
 PIJ compared with, 4–5, 47–48, 59–60
 PIJ conflict with, 4, 58–62, 94, 98, 100
 PIJ nucleus and, 4–5, 8, 13–14, 16–17, 21, 29–31, 33, 35–36, 47–48, 56, 58, 59–60, 61–62, 84, 94, 98, 100, 130–132, 214
 PIJ recruitment and, 61, 62
 al-Shiqaqi, F., and, 16–17, 29–31, 33, 35–36, 56, 58, 59–60, 61–62, 94, 214

 al-Nabhani, Taqi al-Din, 33–34, 35
 Nafi’, Bashir, 19–20, 22, 147, 245
*Naḥw Ṭalā’i’ Wā’iyya. See Toward Conscious Vanguard*s book series
nakba, 76–77, 208, 209–210
 al-Nakhala, Ziyad, 90, 104, 105–106
 Nasser, Gamal Abdel, 15, 17–18, 59, 220–221
 Nasserism, 9, 13–14, 15–17, 21–22, 59
 National Leadership of the Uprising (UNLU), 140–141
 National Liberation Front (FLN), 136
 nationalism. *See* secular-nationalist militants
 neutrality, PIJ
 on Arab Spring, 181, 191, 192, 193–195
 Hamas compared with, 195–196

- Iran and, 193
 on Syrian civil war, 192–193, 194–195
al-Nār (The Light) (magazine), 64, 65
- Operation Defensive Shield, 114, 171–172, 207–209, 211, 272
- Operation Protective Edge, 188
- organizational structure, PIJ
 defections and, 145, 147–151, 152–153, 161
 exile and reform of, 103, 112–117, 119–120, 127, 152–153
 local leadership and, 119–120
 military wing, 90, 114, 115–117
 military wing, reorganization of, 115–117, 120, 123–125, 127, 227–228
 political wing in, 112–115, 119, 127
 al-Shiqaqi. F., and, 112, 114–115, 120
 shura council in, 112–114
 violence and early, 92–94, 99–100
- Oslo Agreement
 Arafat and, 120–122, 148
 armed struggle and, 120, 121–122
 Fatah and, 120–121, 166, 214–215
 First Intifada prompting, 103
 frustration with, 166–167, 227
 Hamas and, 97–98, 120–122, 123, 166, 178
 Israel and, 166
 PA and, 120–121, 166
 PIJ and, 2, 75, 120–122, 123, 148, 155, 166, 181–182, 227
- PA. *See* [Palestinian National Authority](#)
- Palestine* (magazine), 223
- Palestine Liberation Army (PLA), 75–76
 in Gazan resistance, 59, 75, 76–77
 in PIJ, former militants of, 70, 71–72, 73–75, 76, 85, 90, 104, 152
- Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), 75–76, 210, 213–214. *See also* [Fatah](#)
 on Arab Spring, 191–192
 exile of, 75
 in First Intifada, 103, 140–141
 Hamas and, 97–98, 121, 122, 182, 215–216, 220, 223
 ideology of, 72, 73–74
 Oslo Agreement and, 120, 122
 peaceful negotiations proposed by, 95
 in PIJ, militants from, 2–3, 76, 82–83, 109
 PIJ and, 34–37, 97–98, 108, 122, 140–142, 220, 221–222, 223, 227
 after Six-Day War, 59
- Ten-Point Program of, 34, 35–36, 75, 238
- Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ). *See* [specific topics](#)
- Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), 183
- Palestinian Liberation Front (PLF), 70, 86
- Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood. *See* [Muslim Brotherhood, Palestinian](#)
- Palestinian National Authority (PA), 202
 Arab Spring and, 191–192
 Fatah and, 120–121, 175–176, 182, 183, 229
 in Gaza Strip, 123
 Hamas and, 177, 182, 215–216
 Israeli security cooperation with, 176–177
 Oslo Agreement and, 120–121, 166
 PIJ arrests, assassinations under, 122–123, 125, 127, 165–166, 176–177, 228
 PIJ decline and, 117, 120, 122–123, 124, 125, 127, 145
 PIJ militants tortured by, 122, 123, 125
 PLC limited by, 183
- Palestinian Popular Struggle Front (PPSF), 70, 86
- partition, Palestinian, 14, 94
- patience (*ṣabr*), 215–216
- PFLP. *See* [Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine](#)
- PFLP-GC. *See* [Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command](#)
- PIJ (Palestinian Islamic Jihad). *See* [specific topics](#)
- PLA. *See* [Palestine Liberation Army](#)
- PLC. *See* [Palestinian Legislative Council](#)
- PLF. *See* [Palestinian Liberation Front](#)
- PLO. *See* [Palestine Liberation Organization](#)
- political wing, PIJ, 112–115, 119, 122, 127
- Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), 3–4, 155, 191, 220
 Fatah, Hamas war and, 184
 on Islam, members of, 72–73, 75–76
 PA and, 177
 in PIJ, al-Suri from, 70, 86
- Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC), 86
- Popular Resistance Committees, 187–188
- PPSF. *See* [Palestinian Popular Struggle Front](#)
- preservative, violence as, 198, 207, 209–210, 211
- prisons
 Islamic Group in, 71–74, 75–76

prisons (cont.)

- recruitment from, 70–73, 78–79, 81–83, 84, 86, 170, 178, 271
 - al-Suri escaping from, 86–88
 - West Bank PIJ and, 70, 71, 78–79, 170–171, 175, 176, 271
- al-Qaida, 282
- Qassam (Islamic Mujahid Forces), 107, 119, 120, 227–228. *See also* military wing, PIJ
- compartmentalization of, 124–125
 - Katkat in, 108, 119
 - under al-Khawaja, M., 115, 116–117, 119, 126–127
 - al-Quds Brigades developing from, 167–168
 - secrecy of, 123–124, 125
 - after al-Shiqaqi, F., assassination, bombing by, 157–158
 - al-Zatma in, 108, 116–117, 119, 125–126, 158–159, 176
- al-Qassam, 'Izz al-Din, 55–56, 57, 132, 135
- Qatar, 188, 192, 194, 195–196
- al-Quds Brigades, 195
- Fatah, Hamas conflict and, 184
 - founders of, 168, 174, 176
 - Hamas and, 187–188
 - in Operation Defensive Shield, 171–172, 272
 - Qassam developing into, 167–168
 - in Second Intifada, 119, 165, 167–168, 170, 171–172, 176, 272
- Qur'an
- Israeli occupation predestined in, 43–48, 56
 - in PIJ ideology, dimension of, 38, 43–50, 51, 56, 218, 220, 221–222
 - PIJ on state and, 200, 204, 205
- Qutb, Muhammad, 73, 75–76
- Qutb, Sayyid, 236
- PIJ and influence of, 15–16, 20–21, 29, 51–52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 139
 - prisoners reading, 71, 72, 73, 75–76
 - al-Shiqaqi, F., and, 15–16, 21, 29, 51–52, 54, 55, 56, 57, 139
- Rabin, Yitzhak, 126, 157–158
- Rawls, John, 207
- al-Razayna, Ayman, 122–123, 124–125
- al-Razim, Fu'ad, 70–71
- recruitment, PIJ
- class and, 3, 67, 68, 80, 223–227, 228, 246
 - districts in, 67–68, 246
 - education level and, 80
 - festivals, demonstrations, and, 64
 - Gaza focus of, 77
 - institutions for, 65–66, 68
 - kinship ties in, 77, 79–81, 82, 165, 179, 226–227
 - through mosques, 62–63, 67–68, 81–82, 243
 - name in, 66
 - other Palestinian Islamic Jihad groups and, 68–69
 - Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood and, 61, 62
 - from prisons, 70–73, 78–79, 81–83, 84, 86, 170, 178, 271
 - through publications, 64–65, 66–67, 68, 245
 - of secular-nationalist militants, 69–76, 84
 - al-Shiqaqi, F., and, 63, 64, 69
 - social networks and, 66–67, 68, 69, 77, 81–82, 165, 179, 226–227, 228–229
 - of students, 63, 64–67, 68, 78, 81–82, 246
 - in sympathizer homes, 62–63
 - in West Bank, 77–82, 165, 179
 - refugee camps, Lebanese, 105–106, 144–145, 216
 - rocket attacks, 187–188, 189, 190
 - routinization, charismatic, 150
 - ru'ya* (vision), 48–50, 52
- Sa'adat, Ahmad, 177
- ṣabr* (patience), 215–216
- Sadat, Anwar, 28, 31–32, 53–54, 236
- al-Sa'di, Lu'ay, 170, 174, 175, 176, 178
- Salafism, 52
- al-Sarhad, 'Abd al-Salam Abu, 86–87
- Saudi Arabia, 193, 194
- Sawalha, Iyad, 71, 173–174, 178, 271
- secularism
- colonialism and, 199–200, 206, 220–221
 - al-Shiqaqi, F., on, 34–35, 199–200, 201, 206
- secular-nationalist militants, 72–73, 213, 222–223
- Gazan armed resistance of, 59, 75, 76–77
 - on martyrdom, 132–133
 - in PIJ, former, 69–76, 82–83, 84–90, 99, 152, 161, 227–228
 - PIJ compared with, 221–222, 227, 228–229
 - PIJ nucleus and, 8, 20, 21–22, 25, 34–36
- Shaheen, Majida, 187–188

- Shallah, Ramadan 'Abdallah, 31–32, 67, 98, 160–161
- Battle of Jenin and, 208–209
- culturization under, 219
- in Egypt, 19–20, 25, 28–29, 153, 235
- on electoral participation, 182–183
- on excommunication, 52
- on Fatah, Hamas civil war, 184–185
- on Hezbollah influence, 110
- on Iranian Revolution, 135
- on leadership structure, PIJ, 112–113
- leadership style of, 155–157, 161
- on neutrality, PIJ, 192–193, 194
- on Palestinian radical currents, 33–35
- on Qassam, al-Quds Brigades and, 167–168
- on Second Intifada, PIJ after, 176, 177–178
- as secretary-general, PIJ, 144, 153, 154–157, 161, 162
- al-Shiqaqi, F., and, 13, 24, 153–158, 161
- shura council and, 144, 153–154, 155–156, 157
- on Syrian civil war, 192–193, 194
- US and, 153–154, 159
- Sham'a, Muhammad, 61
- al-Shami, 'Abdallah, 33, 67, 125
- arrest, exile of, 122
- on al-Shiqaqi, F., 34, 60, 90–91
- Shariati, Ali, 129, 136–139, 142
- Shiites
- on jihad, 129, 130–131, 132, 133, 136
- Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood and, 130–132, 136–137
- Palestinian unity and, 141–142
- PIJ and, 3–4, 9, 110–111, 129, 130–132, 136–137, 145–146, 185–186
- PIJ martyrdom compared with, 132–133, 135
- al-Shiqaqi, F., on, 129–136, 141–142, 145–146
- al-Shiqaqi, F., on colonialism and, 130–131, 133–136, 137–138, 139, 142, 221
- al-Shiqaqi, 'Abd al-'Aziz, 28, 236
- al-Shiqaqi, Fathi, 1, 7
- on 'aqida, 48–50, 240
- assassination of, 6, 28, 126–127, 144, 157–158, 161, 257
- Baraka and, 146
- birth, early life of, 14–15
- charismatic authority and, 150–151, 153
- on colonialism, 39–43, 48–50, 54–55, 56, 57, 129, 142–143, 199–200, 206, 217–218, 219, 220–222
- on colonialism, Shiites and, 130–131, 133–136, 137–138, 139, 142, 221
- on de facto dimension, 38, 46, 48–49
- in Egypt, 13–14, 15–16, 18–27, 28–32, 36–37, 202, 235
- Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and, 13, 22–24, 25–26
- exile of, 9, 103, 104–107, 109, 112, 114–115, 119, 120, 258
- First Intifada and, 69–71, 90–91, 92–93, 103–104, 106, 139–140
- on first PIJ attacks, 85
- to Gaza, return of, 59–60
- Hamas and, 94–95, 96, 99, 120, 184, 223
- al-Hila and, 109
- on historical dimension, 38, 39–43, 46, 48–49
- ideological influences on, 38, 51–56, 57, 217, 218, 220–221
- imprisonment of, 69–71, 90–91, 92–93, 103–104
- Iran and, 41, 106, 108–109, 129, 130–131, 133–135, 138–139, 142
- on al-Islambouli, 53–54
- Islamic Center and, 33, 35, 60, 130–131
- Islamic Vanguard and, 13, 26, 27, 28–29
- to Islamism, turn of, 9, 13–14, 15–17
- Khomeini and, 23, 129–131, 133–135, 138–139, 142
- leadership style of, 144, 146–147, 155–157
- on martyrdom, 132
- militants, support for, and, 90–91, 92–93
- military wing established by, 90
- al-Mukhtār al-Islāmī* and, 22, 23, 235
- on Muslim Brotherhood, generations of, 30–31
- Nasserism of, 9, 13–14, 15–17, 59
- in Occupied Palestinian Territories, travel of, 77
- organizational structure and, 112, 114–115, 120
- on Oslo Agreement, 120
- Palestinian Islamic currents and, 32–33, 34–35
- Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood and, 16–17, 29–31, 33, 35–36, 56, 58, 59–60, 61–62, 94, 214
- Palestinian unity supported by, 139–143, 184
- PIJ defections and, 148–150

- al-Shiqaqi, Fathi (cont.)
 PIJ financial difficulties and, 147–148, 159, 160–161
 with PIJ leadership, conflicts of, 145–151
 on Qur'anic dimension, 38, 43–50, 56, 218
 Qutb, S., and, 15–16, 21, 29, 51–52, 54, 55, 56, 57, 139
 recruitment and, 63, 64, 69
 on *ru'ya*, 48–50, 52
 on secularism, 34–35, 199–200, 201, 206
 Shallah and, 13, 24, 153–158, 161
 al-Shami on, 34, 60, 90–91
 Shariati and, 129, 136–139, 142
 on Shiites, 129–136, 137–138, 139, 141–142, 145–146, 221
 on state, 198, 199, 200–201, 202–204, 205, 206–207
 study circles organized by, 13–14, 15–16, 18–19, 20–22, 24–27, 32, 36–37, 235
 on two-state solution, 42–43, 56
 on *wa'y* (deeper awareness), 38, 50–51
 in West Bank, 77
 Yassin and, 16–17, 30, 35–36, 62
 al-Zatma and, 107
- al-Shiqaqi, Fathiyya, 14–15, 104, 106–107
 al-Shiqaqi, Khalil, 16
 al-Shuja'iyya, Battle of, 88–89
 Shukri, Mustafa, 236
 shura council, PIJ, 19–20, 142–143. *See also* political wing, PIJ
 al-Arian on, 145, 147–148, 153–154
 defections and, 145, 147–150, 151
 disintegration of, 144–153, 157
 financial difficulties and disintegration of, 147–148, 150
 in organizational structure, 112–114
 Shallah and, 144, 153–154, 155–156, 157
- Sinai Peninsula, 92, 255
 al-Sisi, Abdel Fattah, 194, 195
 Six-Day War, 59, 75
 Egyptian student movement and, 17–18
 in PIJ formation, as factor, 4–5, 13, 15, 34, 36, 39, 213–214
- social networks. *See* recruitment, PIJ
 Soviet Union, fall of, 40, 41
 state, PIJ on
 Abu Taha on, 198, 201, 202
 Christians and Jews in, 205–206
 controlling, 198–203, 206, 212
 democratic processes in, 198–199, 203–205, 212
 Egyptian, 202
 Ghannouchi and, 206–207
 as Islamic-Lockean, 201–202, 212
 just society and, 198–199, 211–212
 Qur'an, Islamic law in, 200, 204–207
 secularism and, 201, 206
 al-Shiqaqi, F., on, 198, 199, 200–201, 202–204, 205, 206–207
 violence and, 207, 211, 212
- students, 214
 in Egypt, Islamist, 18–19
 Egyptian student movement, 17–18, 21–22
 Islamic Group of, 64–65, 66–67, 78
 PIJ recruiting, 63, 64–67, 68, 78, 81–82, 246
- study circles, 13–14, 15–16, 18–19, 20–22, 32, 235
 boundary framing of, 25–26, 27
 collective identity constructed through, 27, 36
 ideological development through, 25, 36–37
 Shallah molded in, 20, 25
 symbolic production of, 26
- Sudan, 106, 109, 258
- suicide bombings
 decreasing, 158–159
 Iranian influence and, 132
 PIJ, 1990s, 118, 125–126, 166
 in Second Intifada, 167–168, 170–171, 173–174, 177, 209–210
 after al-Shiqaqi, F., assassination, 157–158
 of Tahayna, Sulayman, failed, 250
 al-Zatma preparing, 108, 125–126, 158–159
- al-Suri, Misbah Hassan, 73–74, 86, 88–89
 from prison, escape of, 86–88
 prison recruitment of, 70, 86
 support, supplies for, 90–91, 92, 255
- symbolic production, 26
- Syria, 109, 218
 Arab Spring in, 190–191, 192
 Hamas and, 188–189, 190, 192
 Iran and civil war in, 111, 192, 194–195
 PIJ alliance with, 109, 110, 127, 157, 190–191, 192, 194
 PIJ and civil war in, 111, 190–191, 192–193, 194–195
 PIJ in, 106, 107, 109, 114, 118, 126, 192
- Taha, Ayman, 191
 Tahayna, Nu'man, 77, 78, 165–166, 170–171

- Tahayna, Salih, 165–166, 270
 Tahayna, Sulayman, 250
 Taiping revolutionary movement, 222
takfir (excommunication), 52
 al-Takfir wa-l-Hijra, 28, 29, 210, 236
al-Tali'a al-Islāmiyya (*The Islamic Vanguard*) (magazine), 64, 65, 245
 al-Tamimi, As'ad Bayyud, 68–69
taqiya (dissimulation), 132, 133
 Tawalba, Mahmud, 172, 178, 207–208, 272
Toward Conscious Vanguards book series, 64–65, 245
 training camps, 107–109, 127
 Tulkarem, West Bank
 education level and PIJ in, 80
 kinship ties and PIJ in, 77, 79, 80
 PIJ in, 78, 80–81, 82, 169, 174, 175, 178, 179, 225–226
 Tunisia
 Arab Spring in, 190–191, 192
 Ennahda in, 206
 Ghannouchi of, 106, 206–207
 Turkey, 188, 194, 195–196
 two-state solution
 PIJ and, 42–43, 56, 95, 97, 120, 188
 PLO Ten-Point Program and, 238
 United Nations (UN), 14, 94
 United States (US)
 assets frozen by, 159–160
 Shallah and, 153–154, 159
 unity, Palestinian, 184, 220
 armed struggle and, 140–142, 190, 197, 214–215
 against colonialism, 139–143
 Fatah, Hamas war and, 181–182, 183–185, 196
 in First Intifada, PIJ and, 139–141
 Israel and, 129, 139–143
 Syrian civil war and, 192–193
 UNLU. *See* National Leadership of the Uprising
 US. *See* United States
'ushshāq al-shahāda, 123, 168, 172
 Brahma and, 78–79, 91, 93
 imprisoned militants of, 165–166, 170, 176
 violence, 210
 Abu Taha on, 207, 209, 210
 as anti-colonial, 207, 208, 209–211
 defenses of PIJ, 207, 282
 funding, supplies for PIJ, 90–93, 99–100, 255
 Hamas using, 93, 97–98, 100
 Mardawi on, 207–209, 210–211, 282
 as mnemonic counterviolence, 210–211, 212
 organizational structure, early PIJ, and, 92–94, 99–100
 PIJ attacks, level of, 117–118, 120, 123, 124
 PLO and, 97–98, 122
 as preservative, 198, 207, 209–210, 211
 secular-nationalist militants in, 99
 state and, 211, 212
 vision (*ru'ya*), 48–50, 52
wa'y (deeper awareness), 38, 50–51
 weapons, PIJ, sources for, 90–93
 Weber, Max, 201
 West Bank
 Brahma in, 70, 78–79, 81, 93
 education level and PIJ in, 80
 Gaza Strip compared with, 76–77, 82
 Hebron, PIJ in, 78, 80–81, 82, 84–85, 168, 173, 175, 178, 179, 225–226, 251
 Jenin, PIJ in, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 93, 114, 169–170, 171–174, 175, 178, 179, 207–209, 211, 225–226, 271
 kinship ties and PIJ in, 77, 79–81, 82, 165, 175, 179, 226–227, 251
 Operation Defensive Shield in, 114, 171–172, 207–209, 211, 272
 PIJ decline in, 165–166, 168, 270
 PIJ geographically divided in, 81, 165, 179, 225, 226–227, 251
 PIJ in, Hamas compared with, 225–226
 PIJ spreading to, 58, 76–82
 prisons and PIJ in, 70, 71, 78–79, 170–171, 175, 176, 271
 recruitment in, 77–82, 165, 179
 Second Intifada in, 76–77, 78, 165, 168–175, 176, 178, 179–180
 al-Shiqaqi, F., in, 77
 students in, 78
 Tulkarem, PIJ in, 77, 78, 80–81, 82, 169, 174, 175, 178, 179, 225–226
 WISE. *See* World and Islamic Studies Enterprise
 women, PIJ, 229
 working class, Palestinian. *See* class
 World and Islamic Studies Enterprise (WISE), 147–148, 153–154, 159

- Yassin, Ahmad, 178
 armed struggle and, 94
 on electoral participation, 216
 in Gaza, Islamic movement constructed
 by, 59, 242
 al-Shiqaqi, F., and, 16–17, 30, 35–36,
 62
 Yemen, 108, 193, 195
 al-Zagazig University, 18–20
 Zakarna, Khalid, 173–174
 Zarnuqa, expulsion from, 14
 al-Zatma, Mahmud
 detention, torture of, 122, 124–125,
 165–166, 176
 in Qassam, 108, 116–117, 119, 125–126,
 158–159, 176
 in al-Quds Brigades, 167–168
 training camps and, 107–108
 al-Zawahiri, Ayman, 157
 al-Zubaydi, Taha, 208
 al-Zughayr, Yusuf, 158