

MERIA

HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF PALESTINIAN ISLAMIC GROUPS

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As was the case in the development of the Palestinians' nationalist identity, institutes of higher education throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip were crucial to the development of Palestinian Islamic groups throughout the 1980s. Focusing on the two most prominent Islamic groups— Hamas and Islamic Jihad—the author traces the origins and history of these movements and highlights the social and political impact of the universities on their growth.

The years following Israel's 1967 capture of the West Bank and Gaza Strip (henceforth known as the "Territories") witnessed monumental structural changes in Palestinian society. By the 1980s, the number of Arabs living in the Territories vastly grew due to natural increase, and also to immigration beginning at the end of the 1970s, as fewer Palestinians were able to find employment in the Persian Gulf. (1) While the population surged, the average age in the Territories plunged dramatically. (2) Despite the troubling demographics, Palestinians saw a rise in their standard of living and financial means, especially during the first half of the decade. The loss of income from Persian Gulf employment was compensated for by a constant rise in employment in Israel and heavy funding from the end of the 1970s by affiliates of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). (3) The resulting modernization process led to the formation of a Palestinian middle class.

One of the most important developments of the decade was a major rise in the level of education and the number of educational institutes in the Territories. The Palestinian national awakening was complemented by a growing appreciation of the importance of education and enlightenment to political, economic, and social development. These educational institutions proved a major battleground in the struggle between religious and secular-minded Palestinians to shape the character of Palestinian society, and eventually, a future Palestinian state. Islamic groups especially used colleges and universities throughout the Territories as important centers for recruiting, socializing, and mobilizing supporters.

It is important to note that the Palestinians' pre-1967 organizational development, which gave birth to the PLO and Fatah, took place outside of the Territories, among students and workers in Egypt and other Arab countries, and even in Germany. The post-1967 growth

of the Palestinians' socio-political organization in the Territories shifted their organizational weight from the traditional municipalities, whose activities could easily be curtailed by the Israelis, to a wide variety of new institutions and bodies, which rapidly developed during the first half of the 1980s. In the West Bank, and from the middle of the 1980s also in the Gaza Strip, there was a proliferation of research institutes, newspapers, information offices, workers' and professionals' unions, student committees, liberal profession unions, youth movements, women's organizations, social organizations and charity funds. These groups largely blended in with PLO factions.

One of the main factors enhancing this growth were institutes of higher education, that started to appear in the Territories at the end of the 1970s. In just a short while, these institutes became a most important factor in the political and social development of the Palestinians in the Territories. They provided an opportunity for social mobility for people who previously had little access to the higher education system. Available data indicates that in the West Bank, and even more so in Gaza's Islamic University, a large percentage of students came from refugee camps, small villages, and lower income families.(4)

The colleges and universities enhanced Palestinian political national awareness, and also introduced the PLO's structure to the Territories as an umbrella organization that included several active ideological and political movements. (5) The political

organization of students and its social impact led to two processes that quickly influenced the entire population and the national institutional foundation. The first was an almost total filling of the political void in the Territories, and the second was the politicization of almost every aspect of Palestinian life.

These processes, beginning in the early 1980s, were actually part of a larger transformation of Palestinian society toward creating a basis for a forthcoming state. The core of Palestinian nationalism was transferred inward, from the refugee camps in Lebanon to the Territories, and from external Arab patronage to direct struggle with Israel.

Before 1967, Islamic groups in the Territories—indeed, throughout the Arab world—centered their activities in socio-religious centers such as the Awqaf establishment and mosques, and in relatively few charity funds in Jerusalem and the West Bank. In the Egyptian-controlled Gaza Strip, the Muslim Brothers maintained an absolute grip on the largely Islamic population (despite the problems its sister organization in Egypt faced under Nasser.) Only several sheikhs who had adopted a strict Salafi or Wahhabi line during their studies in Saudi Arabia and received financial aid from there were able to remain unaffiliated with the Brothers. The Brothers also dominated in the Jordanian-ruled West Bank. Their group's candidates participated in Jordan's elections and even in the Jordanian government in the 1960s. This, plus their control of the Awqaf [religious foundation] establishment, made their activities in the West Bank

easier, even when their relationship with the authorities was marked by suspicion and caution.

Islamic groups were quick to absorb the changes brought on by Israel's entry in the Territories. Noting the importance of universities in shaping the ideologies of secular nationalist activists, Islamic factions decided to pour a heavy effort into their campus presence, especially since many students came from villages and refugee camps where Islam was already strong. It should be noted that, for the Islamic groups, education starting at a very young age, was a primary part of their socio-political activity, especially for the Muslim Brothers.

In contrast to the PLO, the Muslim Brothers had traditionally abstained from violent struggle against Israel. The group concentrated on building and reinforcing their social foundation through their influence in the educational arena and in the almost total control they had obtained in the mosques. But in the late 1980s, Hamas, a violent offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, became an important force in the intifada. And, in the 1990s, when the Palestinian national leadership chose to compromise with Israel and abandon terrorism, Hamas rejected these agreements and undertook terrorism.

Islamic groups in universities started forming as soon as nationalist secular groups did in the 1980s. Indeed, colleges and universities gave the Islamic groups a major organizational push. The fact that many students who were drawn to the Islamic group came from lower-class backgrounds enhanced the overt ideological and political rivalry

in higher education institutes between Islamic groups and nationalist secular groups.

Although Islamic groups organized themselves in colleges and universities, they did not do so on other levels, unlike the nationalist forces, which formed an assortment of front organizations in different fields. No Islamic factions or parties were formed in workers' or professional unions, for example, nor in economic or social societies. No Islamic information centers were established apart from student bulletins in some universities or charity funds that were a center of public activity (though several centers for the preservation of Islamic heritage were founded up until 1988.) (6) But, these were established at a far slower pace than comparable nationalist centers.

Still, after 1967, due to the relative freedom Israel granted and constant connections with the Jordanian regime and its supporters, the Islamic groups' stable position was not threatened by the nationalists. In addition, the national base in the West Bank, where most of the population was rural and even traditional, did not have a systematic world view contradicting the Muslim Brothers' ideology. In the Gaza Strip, where the Muslim Brothers were always popular, secular nationalist groups developed slowly and only accelerated their development in the mid-1980s. In Gaza's Islamic University—which became a leading political and social center—the Muslim Brothers had almost full control over the administration and the male and female student councils.

By the time of the intifada, which started in December 1987, the Islamic groups were independently organized in every higher education institute in the Territories. Representatives of the Islamic groups met once a year in a quasi-general assembly, usually during al-Israa' wal-Mi'raj events in Al-Aqsa mosque. The last assembly--the fourth—prior to the intifada took place in April 1987 and issued “recommendations” (da'wah) dealing with current issues in the Islamic world. (7) The Islamists attacked Arab regimes and Palestinians who supported compromise with Israel, probably because the assembly was held at the same time as the Palestinian National Council meeting in Algiers, which marked the start of a turn toward willingness to negotiate with Israel.

The Islamic groups' main activities at the universities were organizing events and ceremonies for Islamic holidays or important dates in Islamic history; staging exhibits of Islamic books and fairs to collect donations; and circulating bulletins, books, and sundry Islamic publications, distributed mainly from 1982 and on. This year can be considered a turning point in which a new stage in the organizational pattern of the Islamic groups emerged in the higher education institutes. The year was marked by Israel's invasion of Lebanon as well as the lingering fallout from the murder of Anwar Sadat and the trials of the Egyptian Jihad organization members. Iran's infiltration into Lebanon and the influence of the country's Islamic revolution certainly affected the growth of the Islamic Jihad group.

The first bulletins published by the Islamic groups at universities in 1982 sparked the wave of periodicals and one-time publications distributed by the Muslim Brothers and Islamic Jihad. What was special about these publications is that they were locally produced, in contrast to the imported Islamic literature previously copied and circulated. The percentage of local articles rose greatly in the 1980s but, in general, only a few Islamic thinkers came from Palestinian groups and until the establishment of Hamas, they imported all of their ideas.

The first publications in the spirit of the revolutionary Islamic Jihad, which probably posed a certain threat to the Muslim Brothers and also hastened their own publications, came from the Muslim Youth Association in Jerusalem. It was a series of three booklets published under different names (8): “Al-nur”, “Al-nur Al-rabbani”, and “Al-nur Al-Ilahi.” (9) The first was published in May or June 1982, before Israel's invasion of Lebanon and its content reveals a strong influence by the Egyptian radical Islamic monthly “Al-Mukhtar al-Islami.” The main issues in this publication and in the ones that followed were copied from the Egyptian publication and were written by Dr. 'Iz al-Din Ibrahim, then one of the literary pseudonyms of Dr. Fathi Shqaqi, the founder of the revolutionary faction of the Islamic Jihad in Gaza. (10)

The Muslim Brothers' first publications combined photocopied material from Islamic publications abroad with handwritten articles and news items, which mostly represented the situation in the higher education institutes. An example was the one-time

publication “Al-Risalah,” published in November 1982 by the Hebron University student union council, then ruled by the Muslim Brothers’ Islamic group. It contained an interview with a student named Muhammad Harb, an active Communist who repented and became a supporter of the Islamic group. (11) The article, which was propaganda against the Communists, accused nationalist groups of staging events at the university aimed at provoking the Israeli army into arresting Muslim students. This claim was occasionally used in subsequent years to justify the Islamic groups’ non-participation in the demonstrations against the Israeli army, since these were viewed as provocations with no “pure” intent.

That issue of Al-Risalah also contained a list of student council activities in 1982 sponsored by the Islamic groups that indicates their mode of operation. The list included: opening two mosques, one for male students and one for female students; distributing free robes to needy female students; contacts with the Hebron municipality, which donated 200 dinar; the sale of discounted books; and performing a ceremony for the birth (Mawlid) of the Prophet. Among those who attended this ceremony were prominent leaders of the Muslim Brothers such as Sheikh Ahmad Yassin from Gaza and Muhammad Fuad Abu Zaid from Qabatya/Jenin.. The groups also raised 15,000 dinar in donations. They held a festival to identify with widescale riots in the Gaza Strip in spring 1982; a Hebrew course; rallies for improving morality among youths, (after which several students were expelled for immoral behavior),

gave 800 Dinar scholarships and 400 Dinar loans to students; and donated blood to several residents. (12)

One of the main issues preoccupying Islamic students was “immoral behavior” at colleges and universities. These institutions, especially the mostly secular ones in the West Bank, became a social meeting place for young men and women in the Territories. A high percentage of students came from villages or refugee camps with strict moral norms and tight family control. In universities, meetings between Muslims and Christians, some of whom were more liberal regarding cross-gender relations, took place daily. Some Christians also belonged to Marxist organizations that ideologically advocated relative equality between the sexes. As a rule, the move from a strict closed, society into an open one with daily interchanges between the sexes, led to behavior strongly condemned by the Islamic groups.

One issue of Al-Muntalaq, the bulletin of the Islamic group in Al-Najah University, claimed that the “corruption and debauchery” of the student council was directly responsible for the founding of the Islamic group in 1987. (13)

Many Islamic groups complained about friction with university administrations, especially the secular-nationalist Bir Zeit University and Al-Najah University. In both, the administration and nationalist student parties shared joined interests. Islamic groups often confronted administrations while attempting to conduct separate—usually Islamic—events which interrupted studies and caused conflicts extending beyond academia’s walls. In

those institutions, and surely in Freres College (which became the ecumenical Bethlehem University,) a Christian influence also added to the tension. One issue of Al-Muntalaq termed Bethlehem University's administration, "the hostile crusade management." (14)

The Al-Muntalaq bulletin of February 1984 surveyed the achievements of the Islamic group in Al-Najah University six years after its establishment. It is interesting to see how the Islamic group's followers classified their achievements in order of importance. The first was saving young men and women from moral and ideological deterioration in view of the non-Islamic ideas existing at the university. The second was building two separate mosques, one for men and the other for women. The third was giving scholarships and loans to needy students, and the fourth was supplying Islamic books. Only in the thirteenth place can one find activities which may be viewed as socio-political, copied from the nationalist groups, and first introduced to the Territories by the Communist party: one day of volunteer work in Gaza and two in the university itself. (15)

The volunteer framework was developed by left-wing groups in the Territories as early as the second half of the 1970s and was adopted by Fatah supporters in the 1980s. The "youth committees for social work" (popularly known as "Shabibah") became one of the main elements of the younger generation's organization in all aspects of political and social life in the Territories. Among the Islamic groups, volunteering was mainly in the form of charity work.

The Islamic groups did not, however, extend their volunteer work beyond universities. Unlike their nationalist counterparts, they did not set up voluntary front organizations, with the exception of the Islamic group at Gaza's Islamic University, which set up an Islamic voluntary labor committee. The dominant influence of the Muslim Brothers at that university probably accounts for the rise of such a committee there. Indeed, a workers' union also formed at the university and served as an organizational center for the Muslim Brothers. (16)

Islamic groups were also concerned with recurring closings of educational institutions by the Israelis, whether due to violent clashes among students or to clashes with the army and riots. The Islamic groups placed the utmost importance on maintaining regular studies in the Territories, as demonstrated by an Al-Muntalaq editorial from December 1984:

"Owing to the reopening of the university after a forced closure of four whole months, we cannot but congratulate the new and senior brothers and sisters....We appeal to the senior students to be sensible and serve the public interest and abandon the activities that bring the university to give our enemies a golden opportunity....We call upon our new brothers to see things clearly and understand that regular studies and the opening of the university are the peak of constructive positive activity, and

this is what our people and nation want.” (17)

This position also demonstrated the Muslim Brothers’ passivity regarding resistance to the Israeli regime. Until the uprising, this policy advocated carrying on with life as usual in order to enable the movement to establish itself.

Unlike universities in the West Bank, the Islamic University in Gaza was established as an Islamic institute, although it also offered secular studies. Controlled by the Muslim Brothers, it became the biggest university in the Territories within several years, and thus became the institute with the most political and social weight in the Gaza Strip.

The Islamic group at the university—*Hamās*—became the most organized of all the Islamic groups in the Territories. Indeed, the Muslim Brothers’ activity became an inseparable part of the student council’s agenda. The Brothers established several active committees that became the movement’s main propaganda tools in the Gaza Strip in the 1980s. These included a cultural and educational committee, an art committee, a volunteer work committee, a mosque committee, a sport committee and several others. Similar committees existed in West Bank universities but they were run by secular nationalist groups. The Muslim Brothers’ control in Gaza opened possibilities that the Islamic groups in the West Bank did not have.

These committees circulated many information-loaded publications, pamphlets, and Islamic literature. The student council also published irregular

ideological publications headed “From The Young Generation’s Desk” (*Bi’aqlam al-Shabab*). (18) In addition, they occasionally published booklets including reviews of figures from recent Arab and Islamic history such as ‘Iz al-Din al-Qassam, ‘Abd al-Qadir ‘Udah and Marwan Hadid. (19) During the 1986-1987 period, the Islamic preaching and guidance committee in the student council published a series headed “Voice of Truth, Power and Freedom” (*Sawt al-Haqq Wal-Quwwah Wal-Hurriyyah*), a well-known slogan of the Muslim Brothers in Egypt. (20)

The student council’s culture committee was prolific, at times publishing material that was openly circulated under the name of the Muslim Brothers. (21) The student council’s publications in Gaza were also more ideologically clear than those in the West Bank. The *Al-Nidaa’* bulletin’s local writers were better acquainted with the Muslim Brothers’ philosophy and Islamic literature. As a rule, their publications resembled those of Islamic groups abroad.

It should be noted, however, that the Islamic group’s publications in Nablus’ *Al-Najah* University were better funded than those in Islamic University, probably due to the indirect Jordanian financing of the Muslim Brothers in the West Bank. The Jordanian Muslim Brothers were still part of the Jordanian government even after 1967.

The Islamic pamphlets in Gaza were signed by a variety of groups, hinting that the issuing of pamphlets—as opposed to publications—was at the discretion of small groups within the Muslim Brothers, not always its

leadership. It should also be stated that during the 1980s, the rivalry among different Islamic factions in the Gaza Strip increased considerably, with a few religious figures occasionally joining in and circulating their own pamphlets. (22)

A prominent subject in the Islamic group's publications—a large part of its activities—was the rivalry with nationalist secular groups. This rivalry was stronger in the West Bank, but there were also outbreak of violence in Gaza. In the West Bank, where the Muslim Brothers did not have the same measure of control as in parts of the Gaza Strip, colleges and universities became the main arena of competition. Very often, in electoral campaigns and other festive events, this rivalry united the nationalist groups, which represented rival Palestinian factions abroad.

Al-Najah University in Nablus was a fierce battleground for the two sides. From the early 1980s until it was closed during the intifada, student clashes left university administrators helpless. Tension peaked right before the uprising when a flyer published by the Islamic group on September 11, 1987 stated: "From the establishment of the Islamic group in Al-Najah University as a manifestation of the public's wish to return to Islam, the 'nationalist forces' have not stopped damaging the trust toward it and slander it with indictments, curses and false accusations, as if we were living in the times of Musaylima the liar." The pamphlet detailed offenses by the nationalist groups and called for Muslims to defend against them. (23)

Educational institutes in the West Bank, which employed not only secular

Palestinians but also relatively many Americans and Europeans, became the center of a secular revolution for many students who came from parochial backgrounds. The younger generation may also have wanted to rebel against its parents' life style and to blend in with the Western behavior that ruled the university culture. Since most of Islamic group's supporters came from similar social and family backgrounds, they fought hard to preserve the traditional life style in the universities.

Another point of contention between the two groups was the subject of Palestine in general. In fact, a review of their literature during the 1980s shows that not many issues outside of the Palestine arena were even raised. Most volumes dealt with the PLO's political line, Arab governments' neglect of the Palestinian cause, and local Palestinian problems arising from the Islamic-secular rivalry.

Such a focus is not surprising given that the Islamic Palestinian groups grew within a conflict that was nationalist in essence. Peripheral supporters of the various Islamic groups were well integrated with their surroundings. The transition of the West Bank Muslim Brothers from a Jordanian group into a mainly Palestinian group, which placed only a secondary emphasis on the problems of the Arab Islamic world and on pan-Arabism, was a direct result of the Islamic groups' activities in higher education institutions. Young activists had grown up fighting the Israeli occupation and their work in the Territories demanded that they address the establishment of a future independent state. Further, the Muslim

Brothers in the Gaza Strip had developed without organizational ties to the Muslim Brothers in other Arab countries, so the Palestine focus was natural.

Islamic students were not passive in the struggle against Israel. Indeed, in 1986, Islamic students were involved in riots in the educational institutes both in the Gaza Strip and in the West Bank in larger numbers than before. Islamic students for the first time took part in violent riots at Bir Zeit University in December 1986 initiated by leftist students. Both students killed in these clashes were Gaza-born members of the Islamic group. (24) The fact that they were Gaza residents is noteworthy because it represents an increase in the number of students from Gaza who studied in West Bank universities and their influence on the Islamic activity in this area. This increase accelerated the militancy of Islamic groups in the West Bank. Indeed, when the Muslim Brothers established the very militant Hamas, they did so in Gaza and not in the West Bank.

The political and social development of the Islamic groups in colleges and universities was accelerated by the competition with nationalist groups. But, it was also spurred on by competition from the inside in the form of the Islamic Jihad. It was difficult for the Muslim Brothers to cope with the popularity this opponent gained in 1986 and 1987 after it joined the violent struggle against Israel, something the Muslim Brothers refrained from consistently until then. In contrast, the Islamic Jihad groups developed slower and later in West Bank institutions.

The Islamic network at colleges and universities was fruitful ground for the growing revolutionary faction of the Islamic Jihad in Gaza, and later in the West Bank. (25) In contrast to the Muslim Brother's leadership, which consisted of religious figures or establishment employees from the West Bank, the first group of revolutionary Islamic Jihad leaders consisted of students and academics from Egyptian universities. There they absorbed the revolutionary ideas of Islamic groups from the 1970s, which were militant and partly aimed at violently destabilizing the Egyptian regime.

The Islamic Jihad, founded at Islamic University in Gaza in the middle of 1982, made clear its main ideological split from the Muslim Brothers: support for Iran's Islamic revolution. The content of its first publication, "Voice of The Oppressed" (Sawt Al-Mustad'afin), laid out the hallmarks of the revolutionary Islamic Jihad's platform: Khomeini's call to the Muslims of the world; an article about the Islamic revolution of the oppressed led by 'Iz al-Din al-Qassam; a call for permanent and organized dialogue among the Islamic groups; the battle against the tyranny of the Arab regimes based on the philosophy of Sayyid Qutb; and raising the jihad to the top of the Islamic struggle's agenda. (26)

The group ran in the late 1982 student council elections under the name "The Independent Islamists" (Al-Islamiyyun al-Mustaqillun), and in 1984, attempted to form independent parties within the Islamic groups under the name "The Islamic Student Movement" (Al-Harakah al-Islamiyyah al-

Tulabiyyah). In the interim, during the 1983 elections, it circulated a handwritten publication, its first, attacking the old Muslim Brothers' student council for kindling the fire of disagreement instead of striving to unite the Islamic groups.

It is interesting that the movement's first flyer in the Territories was published at Al-Najah University in Nablus in May 1983, rather than in Gaza. (27) The flyer severely attacked the secular student council for publishing a long declaration against the Islamic movement on different issues, including support for the Islamic revolution in Iran and neglect of the Palestinian cause.

Islamic Jihad reached a new organizational stage in 1985 when it formed a proper party in several universities in the Territories under a new name, "The Islamic Group" (Al-Jama'ah Al-Islamiyyah), which it used until the closing of the institutions during the intifada. The name, taken from the Islamic groups in Egyptian universities, was mainly a political code for violent jihad. Indeed, the movement was sometimes known as "The Islamic Jihad Movement" or "The Islamic Jihad Organization."

The group differed with the Muslim Brothers, and the nationalist and left-wing groups on three basic points. The first concerned Iran's revolution, which was not accepted by the Muslim Brothers, and the need to bring the Sunni and Shi'a factions of Islam together. The second involved the Palestine issue, on which Islamic Jihad leaders mainly explained their stand rather than attacking other groups. The third dealt

with the unity of Islamic groups not only in the Territories but around the entire Arab and Muslim world. Their effort, inspired by Iran, was an attempt to counter the Muslim Brothers who did not leave any room for ideological pluralism.

The revolutionary faction of the Islamic Jihad was the only one of the group's three factions that acted as an official party in the Islamic University and other universities in the West Bank. It refrained from using the name "Islamic Jihad" until the June 1987, when it circulated its first flyer bearing the name "Islamic Jihad Organization." By October-November 1987, Islamic Jihad was the only name in use and became the permanent name of the group led by Sheikh As'ad al-Tamimi.

The Islamic Jihad bulletins, published irregularly from 1982 and on, were dull in comparison to those of the Muslim Brothers. They contained few details regarding the activities of their different groups in the different institutes, revealing their inferior position in universities in numbers, organization, and finances. In fact, the revolutionary Islamic Jihad group was successful only in Gaza, where it originated. In the elections for male and female student unions at the Islamic University in the 1984-1986 period, it obtained six to seven percent of the male students' votes, and slightly fewer female votes. In the 1987 elections, held immediately after the outbreak of the intifada, the Islamic Jihad increased its support to 15 percent of the votes. One may assume that this relatively high percentage is mainly due to the military actions of the other Jihad factions.

The main importance of Islamic Jihad's revolutionary faction in universities in the Territories lay more in the challenge it put before the other Islamic groups than in any of its own achievements. It did, however, supply the ideological basis that encouraged the formation of armed Islamic Jihad groups in 1986 and 1987 that implemented the line of the revolutionary group. Islamic Jihad was thus active in two fronts, though the majority of the public could not distinguish among the different factions. In fact, there were three active separate factions that could not reach a consensus even during the uprising. They even split into five identifiable groups at the peak of the uprising. The revolutionary group also accelerated the militant processes that developed among the young generation of the Muslim Brothers. Its activity and mode of organization were based in the student arena. The higher education institutes, and foremost the Islamic University in Gaza, were therefore a critical center for its development.

Institutions of higher learning in the Territories had a crucial effect on the development of most of the Islamic groups, primarily the Muslim Brothers and the revolutionary faction of the Islamic Jihad. This effect had two main facets:

First, a new, young, and educated generation of leaders was created that introduced Palestinian nationalism to the Islamic arena in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, in lieu of the "Islamic cosmopolitanism" which characterized the Muslim Brothers until the 1980s.

Second, there was an emphasis on the political and cultural struggle

between the Islamic groups and the nationalist secular movement, the latter of which dominated the public and its institutional base in the 1980s. Actually, until the December 1987 intifada, universities were the main arena for the conflict, and the events that took place in them were a general rehearsal for the rivalry that engulfed the whole Palestinian community during the uprising.

The Islamic-nationalist conflict developed on a cultural background emphasized by the growth of the higher education system. Universities and colleges in the Territories, especially in the West Bank, accelerated the absorption of Western secular culture, especially among the lower-class traditional folk who came to dominate the student population. Bir Zeit and Bethlehem Universities grabbed the spotlight with a notable number of Christian professors, local or foreign, and even Israeli Arab citizens. Al-Najah University in Nablus, although it had a Muslim character and very few Christian students and professors, developed side by side with labor and professional unions with a relatively strong Communist and Marxist element.

In the Territories, as in other Arab and Islamic countries, secular attempts to create a specifically Palestinian nationalist history led to religious and cultural tension and were sometimes seen as part of an anti-Islamic battle. Colleges and universities were the main arena in which this culture in the Territories was formed, and the Islamic-national struggle in them became most significant regarding its intensity and influence during the uprising. Much of

the criticism coming from nationalist circles, particularly Fatah supporters, charged the Islamic movement with an “inability to breach the gap between the conscientious expectations and goals, and the reality which demands change and requires blood, sacrifices and resources, and not only hopes with no firm ground for their realization.” (28)

The combination of cultural and political battles on the two sides was characteristic of the Palestinian students’ activities in all the higher education institutions during the 1980s until the uprising. The events of the uprising spread the battle to the entire Palestinian population.

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NOTES

1) Regarding the demographic developments in the Territories and in the entire Palestinian arena, see: Gad Gilbar, Trends in the Palestinian Demographic Development, 1870-1987 (Moshe Dayan Center, Tel Aviv University, No. 108, September 1989).

2) The age group of 0-24 formed 69.5 percent of the entire population in the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and Gaza Strip in 1986. 60.5 percent of these were in the age group of 0-19. This is one of the world’s youngest populations, and this effected the

development of political awareness. The age group of 20-34, the potential age of students in higher education institutes in the Territories, then formed 21.5 percent, more than one fifth of the population.

According to a study made by The Higher Education Council in East Jerusalem, the number of those studying in higher education institutes in the school year of 1982-83 was 10,295, which formed 0.84 percent of the population in the Territories (including East Jerusalem). See: Majlis al-Ta’lim al-’Aali, *Hawl al-ta’lim al-’aali fi al-dhafah al-gharbiyyah wa Quta’ Ghazah* (Jerusalem, 1983), p. 170.

3) Naturally, there is no data, not even in general, regarding the extent of funding from PLO to the Territories, although this funding was not kept secret by the organization. The best known fund for helping the national foundation in the Territories was established during the convention of the Arab League at Baghdad in 1978. The funds were to come from all the Arab States. According to Arab publications, what happened was that in the 1980s only Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States participated in the funding. In the 1980s, “The Joint Jordanian-Palestinian Committee” which was to determine the distribution of the funds, operated on and off next to the “Baghdad Fund.” This committee’s activity varied according to changes in Jordan’s relations with the PLO. In July 1986 there was a long break in its activity after the expulsion of Kalil al-Wazir “Abu Jihad” from Jordan and the closing of most of the organization’s offices in Aman. After that it seldom assembled, according to the state of the political

relations between Jordan and the organization. For some details regarding the funding of the national institutes in the Territories see: Kalil Nakhleh, *Mu'asatuna al-Jamahiriyyah fi Filastin: Nahwa Tatwir Ijtima'i Hadif (Our Public Institutions in Palestine: towards comprehensive social development)* (Geneva, January 1990). A PLO inner publication. Private copy with author. Dr. Nakhleh is a sociologist, an Arab Israeli citizen who left Israel in the '70s and among other things was involved with the activities of Palestinian funds in Europe.

4) Several studies regarding the social influence of the Universities and the education of the Palestinian population in the Territories were published, some in the Territories themselves. See:

Anabtawi, Samir N., *Palestinian higher education in the West Bank and Gaza* (KPI, 1986). Badran, Nabil A., "The means of survival: education and the Palestinian Community 1948-1967," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (Summer 1980) pp. 44-74. Baramki, Gabi, "Aspects of Palestinian life under military occupation, with a special focus on education and development," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (1992), pp. 125-132. Baramki, Gabi, "Building Palestine Universities under occupation," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (Autumn 1987), pp. 12-20. Fasheh, Munir, "Education under occupation," in Nasser H. Aruri (ed.), *Occupation. Israel over Palestine* (Belmont, 1989), pp. 511-535. Graham-Brown, Sarah, "Impact on the social structure of Palestinian society," in Nasser H. Aruri (ed.), *Occupation: Israel over Palestine* (Belmont, AAAUG,

1983), pp. 230-256. Hallaj, Muhammad, "Mission of Palestinian higher education," in Emile A. Nakhleh (ed.), *A Palestinian agenda for the West Bank and Gaza* (Washington, American Enterprise Institute, 1980), pp. 58-63. Mahshi, Khalil, "The Palestinian uprising and education for the future," *Harvard Education Review*, Vol. 59, No. 4 (1989), pp. 470-483. Ramsden, Sally and Cath Senker (eds), *Learning the hard way: Palestinian Education in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Israel (B.R.)* Yusuf, Muhsin D., "The potential impact of Palestinian education on a Palestinian state," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (Summer 1979). Munir, Ahmad 'wad, *Al-Ta'lim al-'Aali fi al-Dhafah al-Gharbiyyah waQuta' Ghazah: Tatawwuruha waasahu (Jami'at al-najah al-wataniya, Markaz al-dirasat al-rifiyyah*, 1983). See also: Muhammed, R. Shadid, "The Muslim Brotherhood movement in the West Bank and Gaza," *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (April 1988), pp. 658-682.

5) For a good and concise view on the nationalist groups in the higher education institutes and their political division, see: Emile Sahliyah, *In search of Leadership: West Bank Politics since 1967* (Washington D.C., The Brookings Institution, 1988), pp. 115-136.

6) Samih, Hamuda, "Marakiz al-turath al-islami fi filastin" (The centers of Islamic heritage in Palestine), *Al-hilal Al-dawli* 15 (May 1-15 1988), p. 10.

7) A flyer of the fourth student Islamic convention, Sha'ban 1407 - April 1987.

8) Changing the names of bulletins was a known method of circumventing the need to receive a permit from the Israeli military rule for publishing a newspaper.

A one-time bulletin did not need a permit in the Territories nor in East Jerusalem under Israeli law. The method was to choose a word identifying the paper to the public, and add other word or words to every issue creating a different phrase, as if it were a one-time publication.

9) Al-Nur al-Rabbani (The celestial light), one-time publication of the culture department of The Young Muslims Association in Jerusalem. Undated, 41 pages. According to its content it was published during the first months of 1982. Al-Nur (The Light), one-time publication of the Young Muslims association, July 26th 1982, 77 pages. Al-Nur al-Ilahi (The Divine Light), one-time publication of the Young Muslims association, October 19, 1983, 73 pages.

10) This fact was related to the author from Dr. Fathi Shqaqi himself, during a discussion with him in February 1986 in the Gaza prison.

11) Al-Risalah, November 1982, pp. 6-9

12) *ibid*, pp. 34-37

13) Al-Muntalaq, the mosque committee of Al-Najah University's bulletin, No. 8 (February 1984) pp. 16-17.

14) Al-Muntalaq, No. 9 (April 1984), p. 49.

15) Al-Muntalaq, No. 8, pp. 18-19.

16) See, for example, the results of the union elections held on June 27, 1983, in which the Muslim Brothers won in all the faculties. Al-Nidaa', a publication of the student council in the Gaza university, undated (according to its content it was published in the summer of 1983), p. 22.

17) Al-Muntalaq, No. 11 (December 1984), p. 3.

18) At least four such undated publications were known to have been distributed by the culture committee in the student council. According to their content they were published during the years 1983-1985. They included more ideological content than the group's bulletins and were probably meant to enhance the Islamic awareness.

19) 'Abd al-Qadir 'Udah was one of the Muslim Brothers' leaders in Egypt, and the one who led the Muslim Brothers to fight in the war against Israel in 1948. The Egyptian government executed him after the war. Marwan Hadid was one of the founders of the Muslim brothers in Syria and one of the first opponents of the Ba'th regime when it came to power in March 1963. He died in the Syrian prison in 1976.

20) See, for example: Al-Haqiqah al-Ghaibah (The Disappearing Truth), November 1987, 55 pages. This was the second booklet in the series.

21) See, for example, the booklet about "The Islamic awakening and the Muslim Brothers", No. 1, a one-time cultural publication of the culture committee of the student council in the Islamic University in Gaza, undated.

22) For example, a flyer of Sheikh Salim Shurab, leader of the Salafi group in the Gaza Strip until his death in 1986, attacking the management of the Islamic University in Gaza. It was handwritten and undated. According to its content it was circulated during 1984. After his death his followers put out another flyer in his name in the spirit of Wahhabiyyah, which was made up of his different quotes and warned the public from corruption. See also a flyer of Sheikh Muhammad Sulayman Abu

Jami' circulated in May 1984, also against the management of the Islamic University and the Muslim Brothers.

23) A flyer signed by the Islamic group in Al-Najah University in Nablus, September 11, 1987. It is noteworthy that the tension in the Islamic University in Gaza, in regard to the elections there, continued in the first days after the outbreak of the Palestinian uprising. After the elections, Fatah supporters blamed the Islamic group for rigging the elections. See: Al-Fajr, December 7th and 9th 1987.

24) "The Islamic group in Bir Zeit University mourns it's dead," an undated flyer circulated in December 1986.

25) Islamic Jihad was divided into numerous factions in part based on which country was funding them.

26) Voice of The Oppressed (Sawt Al-mustad'afin), a publication on the occasion of the culture week in the Islamic University in Gaza, June 1986, 56 pages. The use of the Koranic term Mustad'afin was occasionally used by the Muslim Brothers, but was much more widely used in the terminology of the Islamic revolution in Iran, almost synonymous for revolutionists.

27) "The war against Islam continues," a manifest of the Islamic student movement in Al-Najah University, May 23, 1983.

28) Qulna... Ma Khafiya A'zam (Gaza, published by the student youth movement in the University of Gaza, November 22, 1987).