**Islam and Judaism Between Peace and Conflict: The Declaration of Principles as a Test Case**

***Introduction***

Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) signed a historic agreement on September 13, 1993, known as the “Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements” (DOP for short or, later, “Oslo Accord I”). It stipulated an interim period of five years before the parties would reach a permanent settlement based on the principle of “land for peace.” During this interim, Israel would withdraw from Jericho and the Gaza Strip, with Palestinians establishing an autonomous authority. The DOP focused on practical issues, intentionally leaving the roots of the conflict in religion and identity and substantive issues including Jerusalem, refugees, and borders for future discussion. This constructive ambiguity left significant gaps to be bridged and the seeds of destruction were within the agreement from the start.[[1]](#footnote-1)

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is an example of “identity conflict” as it is termed in the research: A conflict that incorporates objective dimensions like territory and subjective factors, primarily those of rival identities informed by history, culture, and religion. Identity conflicts tend to be bloodier and more protracted, as well as perceived as zero-sum ones. To resolve such complex conflicts, both sides need to profoundly modify their perception of their own identities in a way that enables coexistence.[[2]](#footnote-2) Religion is a factor in identity conflicts, for better or worse, given its four social dimensions: Creating a worldview that guides believers’ understanding of reality; establishing laws and norms of behavior that direct believers’ actions; lending legitimacy to certain institutions or actions, even non-religious ones, such as whether a government or certain of its decision are acceptable; and uniting people in a broad collective.[[3]](#footnote-3) Religion can change a conflict’s direction through the inherent ambiguities in monotheistic religions on issues that combine laws and values. These arise from different and even contradictory sources and commandments and the existence of a flexible space for interpretation, thus allowing religious grounding for almost any view. These religious ambiguities can foster reconciliation and lend legitimacy to activities for and figures engaged in peacemaking between conflicting societies.[[4]](#footnote-4)

Religion is particularly significant for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict for several reasons. Firstly, it is a conflict over territory considered sacred to both religions, meaning political discourse in both communities is imbricated with religious values and symbols related to the land, its sanctity, the struggle for it, and the historical national ethos. Secondly, identity, nationality, and the connection with territory in both Judaism and Islam are largely based on religion and its derivatives, tradition, and cultural heritage, which also influence the identity of those who do not define themselves as believers. Thirdly, the two communities are each backed by their respective faith’s external forces, which can be mobilized to intervene in the conflict on religious grounds. Finally, there are radical groups willing to use violence to thwart any possibility of infringing its religious principles on the conflict. While such groups do exist on both sides, they are predominantly on the Palestinian rather than on the Israeli side. Given all of this, religious values and beliefs, whether genuinely expressed or exploited for propaganda purposes, can be a formidable barrier to any negotiation, a “religious barrier to peace” as it is termed in the literature.[[5]](#footnote-5)

A salient religious barrier to peace in the discourse around the DOP has been the sanctity of the land. There are special commandments in Judaism that relate to settling on land and prohibit abandoning it to the nations.[[6]](#footnote-6) In Islam too, Palestine has a special legal status as *waqf* land which means its ownership cannot be transferred.[[7]](#footnote-7) The theological sanctity of the land in both Judaism[[8]](#footnote-8) and Islam[[9]](#footnote-9) deems it holy, blessed, and God’s gift to the chosen people. There is also the importance of human life. In Judaism, this is expressed through the principle of *pikuach nefesh* (saving a life, mainly Jewish ones) which overrides almost all other commandments. The unique aspect of *pikuach nefesh* is how it depends on an assessment of reality, meaning it can be used to justify opposite views.[[10]](#footnote-10) In Islam, the importance of human life is reflected in it being one of the conditions allowing the signing of a peace treaty (*hudna*) when Muslims are militarily inferior, relying on the precedent of the Prophet Muhammad signing the Treaty of Al-Hudaybiya with the Quraysh in 628 CE when he was militarily and numerically weaker.[[11]](#footnote-11) On the Muslim side is the principle of *jihād*, which has practically meant throughout most of Muslim history a holy war to impose Islam on the rest of the world, which is also an important factor here. In the light of modern realities and international law, there is a broad agreement that *jihād* is an ideological-cultural struggle, except in the one place in which it remained an armed struggle: Palestine, which was under Muslim rule until its inhabitants were dispossessed of their land.[[12]](#footnote-12) These religious issues at the heart of disputes over the DOP, coupled with political and security issues, created a situation where each side felt it was a victim of the process. Thus, one of the most basic conditions for a successful peace process was not met: The understanding on both sides that peace trumps violence.[[13]](#footnote-13)

This paper examines the role of religion concerning peace and conflict around the DOP by examining the positions on the theological and religious-moral aspects of the agreement held by six prominent religious leaders, including both supporters and opponents of the agreement, both Jews and Muslims, and both those on the Israeli and those on the Palestinian side. The analysis is based on religious rulings and articles published by these figures, as well as excerpts from newspaper reports from the relevant period, all concerning the political arena within which they operated.

***The National-Religious Sector: Between Sanctities of Land and People***

Rabbi Yehuda Amital

Rabbi Yehuda Amital (born Romania 1924, died Israel 2010) was an influential thinker, head of the Har Etzion Yeshiva, founder of the politically moderate, religious Zionist Meimad Party, and a minister in the twenty-sixth government of Israel.[[14]](#footnote-14) In his public, educational, and political activities, he adhered to two fundamental principles. The first was “to heed the cry of a child,” an expression based on a Hasidic tale that means a believing Jew should engage in activity to assist the general public when required. The second is *kiddush hashem*, the sanctification of God’s name, being any action that promotes Judaism. A sincere expounder and practitioner of his views, Amital heeded the cry of the child in his public and educational activities by opposing what he saw as “desecrations of God’s name,” matters that undermined Judaism, even if this meant battling accepted rabbinical opinions.[[15]](#footnote-15) This thinking shaped his attitude toward the DOP.

When the Oslo agreement became known, Rabbi Amital and Dr. Yehuda Ben-Meir, his partner in the leadership of Meimad, met with the Labor leader Yitzhak Rabin, which they supported during the 1992 election. After that, Meimad publicly lauded his government for their “brave and heavily onerous decision” to sign an agreement “opening up a real opportunity for peace and the prevention of bloodshed.”[[16]](#footnote-16) This supportive statement was the first issued form within the national-religious community, but it emphasized that there were promises that no harm would come to the settlements, no Palestinian state would be established, and no negotiations would take place over Jerusalem’s status.[[17]](#footnote-17) Rabbi Amital support was based on halachic arguments similar to those made by Rabbi Ovadia Yosef in his famous speech accepting territorial concessions for peace, which have been extensively researched and need not be elaborated on here. The innovation in Amital’s position was the predominantly moral and ethical arguments he used for it.

One article that Amital published in October 1993 clearly and systematically expressed his moral and ethical views regarding the DOP.[[18]](#footnote-20) IT opens with an inspiring quotation of Maimonides: “Great is peace, for the Torah was given to make peace in the world,”[[19]](#footnote-21) but is immediately followed by this assertion: “This issue did not lead me to support the agreement...I am far from being carried away by the visionaries.”[[20]](#footnote-22) Amital’s primary rationale is based on *realpolitik*: The agreement is a *fait accompli*, meaning, in his word to Ben-Meir:

[I]t is our duty to ensure that the problems arising from the DOP are addressed and to care for the Jewish settlements, but we must convey to the government that the leadership in Judea and Samaria is interested in reaching an understanding within the existing situation.”[[21]](#footnote-23)

That is, the interest of the right wing—which for security and/or ideological reasons supports settlements and sovereignty throughout the country and is reluctant to compromise with the Palestinians—is to join with the government to take advantage of the interim period and Israel’s position of power to create a permanent agreement that will guarantee important principles such as “our consolidation in the area and the setting of security boundaries.”[[22]](#footnote-24) Amital also states that “time is not working solely in our favor...and any political agreement between Israel and the Arabs must involve painful compromise.”[[23]](#footnote-25) Therefore, an agreement at that point, with Israel in a position of strength, was preferable to a future one with Israel in a tougher position.[[24]](#footnote-26)

On a deeper level, the agreement is support-worthy because it constitutes a test of values. The classic national-religious outlook is based on three interrelated central concepts: The Torah of Israel, the People of Israel, and the Land of Israel. The Gush Emunim movement, the dominant force in religious Zionism from the early 1970s, emphasized “the Land of Israel” out of a belief that the messianic destiny of the Jewish people would come about through settlement throughout the Holy Land, even if some of the Israel public opposed that. Contrary to that and also the publicly expressed views of most rabbis, Amital primarily emphasized “the People of Israel” concept, based on the belief that redemption would come from “a more just society...[and] moral values in individual and communal life,”[[25]](#footnote-27) realizing the destiny of the Jewish people as a light unto the nations.[[26]](#footnote-28) Even when the debate on the DOP came down to the practical level, Amital continued to uphold the key concept of the “People of Israel.” For him, this concept had three dimensions, all of which were jeopardized by Israel’s contemporary reality of constant struggle. The first is the preservation of human life. As he said as early as 1978: “Can peace be a gamble?... The danger that Israel could face [to its internal security] is a gamble!”[[27]](#footnote-29) The second is belief in basic Zionist tenets threatened by the struggles Israel is engaged in:

Every casualty...weakens the Zionist devotion of masses of Jews in the Land of Israel, who believe in the accepted Zionist ideology that Zionism came to solve the problem of Jewish existence. Every war plants doubts in them about the righteousness of the path.[[28]](#footnote-30)

Finally, there is the place of Judaism in Israeli society, which is harmed by links between religion and tradition on one hand and militancy and opposition to peace on the other. Amital argued that the unwillingness of the national-religious public to compromise on the ideals of settlements, despite the risks involved, harmed “the very ability to identify with this perception” in Israeli society and, more seriously, “the very ability to identify with the way of the Torah,”[[29]](#footnote-31) the salient aspect of this ideal.

In another article, Amital described how “for years I have made every effort to prevent an identification between ‘the opinion of the Torah’ and political extremism...to clarify that there are different opinions in religious Judaism.”[[30]](#footnote-32) This issue was close to his heart because such a false association between political extremism and the Torah was a “desecration of God’s name” and undermined the influence of the Jewish tradition on the Israeli public and, thus, Israel’s ability to be a light unto the nations.[[31]](#footnote-33) The DOP could remove the threat to all three central concepts and so was support-worthy.

From all of this, we see that Amital supported the DOP for practical and sober reasons out of a desire to preserve Jewish lives and Judaic unity based on renowned halachic sources that resolve the apparent prohibitions against ceding land to gentiles in certain situations. His support relied on exploiting religious ambiguity to emphasize alternative sacred notions, primarily that of the People of Israel, over the accepted idea of the sanctity of the land that constituted a barrier to peace. That said, he focused on his community and its needs while upholding the inequality between the two sides and emphasized support for the agreement as a means to secure the interests of Israel and settlement, something the Palestinians most feared and which was the chief argument against the agreement on their side. Although Amital placed importance on peace as a religious value, he states that there is no connection between this and his support for the agreement, which remained practical in character and had a religious-moral dimension arguably not substantial enough to foster religious reconciliation based on the political agreement.

Rabbi Shlomo Goren

One of the prominent voices for the value of the sanctity of the Land of Israel at that time was Major general (Res.) Rabbi Shlomo Goren (born Poland 1918, died Israel 1995), the Israel Defense Forces (IDF)’s first Chief Rabbi and the Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of Israel, a combatant in Israel’s wars and an important and pioneering halachic authority on issues of religion and state.[[32]](#footnote-34) The Israeli battle victories in 1967, in which he participated led him to believe that the State of Israel is the beginning of the redemption process—“the first growth of our redemption” as it is called in religious Zionist circles—and aroused expectations in him of a “religious and national spiritual upheaval.”[[33]](#footnote-35) However, the years that followed ushered in Western-style materialism, religion-state conflicts, and the trauma of the Yom Kippur War, leading him to declare: “There was a time when even the state was sacred in my eyes,” but that that was no longer the case. What was the breaking point for him was the Oslo Process: “Since the agreement, I no longer see it that way...because they are dividing it in two and handing it over to the gentiles.”[[34]](#footnote-36)

There were three main reasons for Goren’s staunch opposition to the DOP. Firstly, his view of the sanctity of the Land of Israel. Apart from the halachic prohibitions on transferring territories over to Palestinian control, such as the prohibition of *lo techonem* (“Do not allow them to thrive”), and its contradiction of the commandment to settle the land,[[35]](#footnote-37) Goren argued that the Jewish people’s connection with God had always been inseparable from that with the Land of Israel and that, therefore, “[t]he Land of Israel [is] the soul of faith...Compromise on the wholeness of our Holy Land...constitutes an injury to the wholeness of the Torah and the Jewish faith.”[[36]](#footnote-38) Secondly, the principle of *pikuach nefesh* (saving a life, mainly Jewish ones) was key for Goren, since Israel was battling an enemy whose goal was to remove Jews from the land. This made the struggle a *milchemet mitzvah* (obligatory war) that overrode *pikuach nefesh*. In other words, it is not only permissible to retain control over territories, despite the potential risk to human life, but the risk posed by relinquishing territories in exchange for empty promises is far greater. Goren’s view was that “experience proves that terror against us will never cease as long as Israel exists.”[[37]](#footnote-39) In fact, withdrawal from territories would erode Israel’s security, terrorism, and even lead to war:

All our achievements in the Six-Day War are slipping from our grasp...Under the guise of peace with the arch-murderers, terror against us will intensify...until, eventually, a war breaks out between us and the Palestinian state that will be established.[[38]](#footnote-40)

Therefore, the agreement is invalid and unnecessary “as long as we remain strong in spirit and power.”[[39]](#footnote-41)

The third argument relates to that same strong spirit. Like Amital, Goren identifies an erosion of the Zionist and Jewish spirit within Israeli society, though the manifestations of it he points to were fundamentally different. For Goren, the DOP encapsulated the ultimate expression of this degeneration. The loss of the Zionist spirit was primarily reflected in the perilous recognition of Palestinian national claims, particularly by leaders within Israel, which is “a Jewish state in the Land of Israel...and not a state of Israelis and Palestinians who never had any national rights in the land.”[[40]](#footnote-42) Another expression of this was Israeli willingness to grant Israeli Arabs power within the Jewish state, with the government supported by Arab Knesset members “willing to lend a hand in the destruction of the state.”[[41]](#footnote-43) Moreover, he argued that this was halachically inadmissible and that, therefore “the current government operates only by virtue of a minority of the people and loses its authority.”[[42]](#footnote-44) Finally, Israel and its leaders were granting power and international legitimacy to their worst enemies:

Everything we have acquired over nearly 100 years of Zionism in the Land of Israel is being undone before our eyes. And this is not the achievement of our enemies, but rather the Jews are undermining our rights and security in our homeland with their own hands...We have imposed terrorist organizations upon ourselves and have rebuilt the image of the arch-murderer who had already been eliminated in the world...who on one hand ostensibly signs a peace agreement with us, and on the other...declares morning and night that without a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital, there will never be peace with Israel.[[43]](#footnote-45)

The halachic problems with the DOP, along with its underlying moral flaws, led Goren to an unequivocal conclusion:

The covenant the government has made with the head of the PLO terrorist organization blatantly contradicts the Torah of Moses our teacher...Every Torah-observant Jew is obligated to protest and demonstrate against these serious violations of the Torah of Israel by the Government of Israel.[[44]](#footnote-46)

Thus Goren vehemently opposed the agreement, uses religious practices that preserves the conflict and even strengthens it insisting on accepted religious principles that constitute a pretext for peace, foremost the sanctity of the land, while making the sanctity of the people and human life a means to that end. He demonized the Palestinian and Israeli Arab other to uphold boundaries and distance between communities; and denying legitimacy to the government and its actions in the peace process. Despite his willingness to sometimes bend the principle of the land’s sanctity, he saw the DOP as the surrender of holy and strategically important territories, undermining Jewish law and Israel’s Jewish and Zionist resilience in exchange for dubious verbal promises.

***The Islamic Movement in Israel: Between Recognition and Segregation***

Israeli Arabs’ encounters with those of the Territories after 1967 revived Muslim Brotherhood (MB)-inspired ideas promoted by young graduates of religious study centers in the Territories. This led to the Islamic Movement (IM)’s founding in Israel in 1971. After a brief initial phase of terrorist acts and consequent arrests, the movement shifted its focus to extensive religious, community, and municipal-level political activities. IM’s goal is to establish “a society of Muslim believers in Islam as the source of strength and the future...[and] a modern society but one that has values based on ideology.”[[45]](#footnote-47) It is also to help the Arab community care for its own needs which Israel does not sufficiently provide. IM’s continued existence has always been challenging as an Islamic movement, in an area that was once part of the Muslim world, in a country under Jewish-majority rule. Differing views on how to square ideology with reality created a rift within it into two factions in 1996 over whether to participate in Knesset elections. Both factions[[46]](#footnote-48) see Israel as an illegitimate Jewish nation-state because Judaism is a religion, not a nation, Israel cannot rule over Palestine because the holy relation between the Children and the Land of Israel expired after the acceptance of Islam there, and Palestinian territory is both part of *Dār al-Islām* and *waqf* land. However, they differ on how they should act on these principles in practice and, hence, have taken different views on the DOP.[[47]](#footnote-49)

Shaykh Abdullah Nimer Darwish

Shaykh Abdullah Nimer Darwish (born Kafr Qasim 1948, died 2017) was an IM founder and its head until the 1996 split, when he became the leader of the Southern Faction. This is the more moderate of the two factions and is active in national politics through the United Arab List. Darwish and his students view the *sharīʿa* as pragmatically adaptable to complex realities:

Islamic jurisprudence has flexibility... Islam is built on principles suitable for situations of peace and war, strength, and weakness...We will not behave as if we live in the awaited era of the *Mahdī*, but rather live in our time, in accordance with the forces and powers that influence the management of the world.[[48]](#footnote-50)

The Southern Faction recognizes that Muslim citizens of Israel are a weak minority and acts accordingly. It distinguishes between the religious-historical right of the Jews over the Land of Israel which, in their view, does not exist, and the *de facto* rights resulting from reality. Since Israel exists and Muslims live within it, Israel and its Jewish character must be recognized as facts and Muslims must operate within it by all means to achieve the supreme Islamic goals: Preserving the identity and faith of Muslims and improving their lives. Darwish has stated that “I have no conflict...neither religious nor national, with upholding the law...Precisely because we are a minority we have an interest, because who will protect the minority if not the law?”[[49]](#footnote-51) It is important to emphasize that this recognition is limited solely to within the Green Line, since beyond it, in the words of Darwish, “it is an occupation that must be eliminated...Therefore, I understand the Palestinians...who rebel in every way.”[[50]](#footnote-52) Thus, a certain recognition of the state allows for discussing agreements it makes.

Darwish publicly expressed support for the DOP on various occasions, emphasizing that it should lead to the establishment of a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital because it is in the best interests of the Palestinian people in current conditions:

The rules of Islamic jurisprudence are divided into the fixed principles of faith (*aḥkām thābita*) and legal rulings subject to interpretation (*aḥkām ijtihādiya*) ... Is the Palestinian issue part of the principles of faith?... Faith, humanity, and homeland are presented before us. For the sake of faith, there is a willingness to sacrifice human life and for the sake of human wholeness, security, and stability, the homeland may accommodate more than one people.[[51]](#footnote-53)

His main argument was that compromise is necessary to preserve human life: “The entire Land of Israel, like Palestine from the River to the Sea, will bring both peoples to the battlefield. Whoever wants peace must cast dreams aside and compromise.”[[52]](#footnote-54) Although all of Palestine is considered *waqf*, it is preferable for part of it to be under Islamic rule rather than all of it under Jewish rule. In such a situation, neither side will have all their wishes granted, but enough for peace:

God has decreed that the two peoples live together. The Jews have an independent state, the Palestinians too are entitled to a state...Between the two neighboring states, there will be a peace agreement and, after all the suffering, I believe that both sides will respect the agreement.[[53]](#footnote-55)

Darwish is aware that important *muftī*s in the Muslim World oppose his views, which contradict the accepted view of the *sharīʿa*. This accepted view is based on Q8:61 (“And if they incline to peace, then incline to it [also] and rely upon Allah”)[[54]](#footnote-56) and on the peace treaties Muhammad made with Quraysh in al-Hudaybiya and subsequently with other tribes indicating that a peace agreement with the enemy is permissible as long as the Muslim ruler finds it beneficial. In Darwish’s view, the ultimate say regarding matters of the Palestinians and the Arab citizens of Israel rests with them alone, since they see the realities there clearly and face any direct consequences. In his opinion, the benefit of the agreement for Palestinians is clear since they are in an inferior position and since it gives them a certain autonomy and international recognition.[[55]](#footnote-57) This approach is redolent of the relatively new *fiqh al-aqalliyāt* (jurisprudence of the minorities) developed by Shaykh al-Qaradawi’s school, which deals with special laws tailored to Muslim minorities in democratic countries. Darwish and his successors in the Southern Faction believe that even concerning Arab citizens of Israel and Palestinians there is great permissible flexibility to depart from the accepted rulings to achieve the *maqāṣid al-sharīʿa* (the intentions of the *sharīʿa*).[[56]](#footnote-58)

The third rationale Darwish presents is groundbreaking: A principled moral position is that “cultural dialogue is the approach of the strong”[[57]](#footnote-59) and this is germane to the Palestinian struggle. Moreover, he seeks “a religious dialogue that contributes to true peace between Palestinians and Israelis”[[58]](#footnote-60) to prevent Islam being perceived as an obstacle to peace, when it is a religion of peace and tolerance toward the other.[[59]](#footnote-61) Darwish summed up his various efforts for peace and interreligious dialogue with these words: “The name of God is peace. So what, I won’t support the name of God?”[[60]](#footnote-62)

Despite his pragmatism and statements about the importance of peace as a religious value, Darwish and his successors in the Southern Faction still demand a “just and fair” peace that includes the partition of Jerusalem, the right of return, and self-determination, meaning a Palestinian state alongside Israel for of all its citizens.[[61]](#footnote-63) Most Israelis oppose these demands as red lines. Neither has Darwish abandoned his dream of an Islamic Caliphate that will rule over the entire Fertile Crescent, emphasizing to his Jewish interviewer: “You think you’re the strong one in the Middle East? I am the strong one. I have a billion Muslims, all believing like me...in the Muslim ocean, you are a minority.”[[62]](#footnote-64)

Like Amital, Darwish exploits religious ambiguity to promote values that justify the peace process on a religious basis, emphasizing human life over the sanctity of the land. On the other hand, he does so while looking to the interests of his community, expresses understanding toward radical and extreme factions, maintains a vision of future complete victory, and waives none of those demands that for many in the Jewish public constitute existential threats. His statements seem to harbor suspicion and distrust toward Israel’s intentions. It is impossible to achieve reconciliation when such publicly expressed suspicions raised on non-pacific religious worldviews are sustained. Yet, despite the significant shortcomings in his position, Darwish’s main contribution to peace remains intact, making it — according to his complex perception of this concept — a sacred religious value.

Shaykh Raed Salah

The militant Northern Faction, outlawed in 2015, is led by Shaykh Raed Salah (born 1958, Umm al-Fahm). This faction seeks to build an “independent society” (*al-mujtamaʿ al-iʿtiṣāmī* ) completely separate from the Zionist entity to protect the Muslim faith. He denies the Jewish and Israeli connection with Jerusalem and the Temple Mount, which has led to his arrest several times for incitement. For the Northern Faction, even *de facto* recognition of Israel is illegitimate because between the IM and Israel, there is “a conflict over very existence and not a conflict over borders.”[[63]](#footnote-65) The Northern Faction does not see Israel as a current threat, is confident that the Jewish state will disappear, and that an Islamic Caliphate will rule from the River to the Sea: “We say to all the oppressors: Learn from those who preceded you in the past. Many oppressors have tried to expel us from our land. The oppressors dissipated, while we remained steadfast in our place.”[[64]](#footnote-66)

Given this dogmatic position, the Northern Faction rejects any discussion on the DOP. Israel, which is in *Dār al-Ḥarb* (the territory of war), is an illegitimate entity, so Arab Israelis or Palestinians have no right to rework the *sharīʿa* due to Israel’s influence. That would recognize its existence and even incorporate it as a factor in Islamic legal thought. Thus, the DOP has no basis and those identifying with Salah’s movement have actively opposed it as a “false peace [*al-salām al-zāʾif*]” “treason,” and a “second *nakba*.”[[65]](#footnote-67) Salah himself participated in a large protest in Gaza in September 1993 and was also conspicuously absent from the Arab Israeli delegation welcoming Arafat into Gaza in July 1994.[[66]](#footnote-68)

Salah’s main argument against the DOP was drawn from the position of Shaykh Qaradawi, the unofficial spiritual leader of the MB: There was no “inclination towards peace” from Israel and no interest (*masliḥa*) for the Palestinians in it; rather the opposite:

If Oslo succeeds, it will be the final nail in the coffin of the Palestinian cause. The changes and concessions are always in favor of the Israeli side, at the expense of the Palestinian side in a position of weakness...Oslo is...surrender and not peace.[[67]](#footnote-69)

In such a situation, the DOP cannot be equated with al-Hudaybiya and so is unacceptable, even if the issue of recognizing Israel had not existed.[[68]](#footnote-70)

Salah also argued that there was a threat to religious, national, and Arab identities thus blurring boundaries between them and Israel. After obtaining Palestinian autonomy, Arab Israelis might feel that the conflict has ended, their hostility toward the Zionist establishment decrease, and since the Oslo Accords did not address their plight, they might seek solutions to their problems through integration into Israeli society,..[[69]](#footnote-71)

Salah firmly adheres to all principles from an Islamic perspective that hinders peace, chief among them the sanctity of the land, and emphasizes the importance of communities remaining separate. He entirely rejects the existence of Israel and, in his actions to protect Al-Aqsa, fiercely demonizes the Jews. He is undoubtedly an exemplar of the use of religion to exacerbate conflict.

***Hamas: Is Oslo Deception or Realism?***

Shaykh Ahmed Yassin

Under Israeli rule after 1967, the MB branch in the Gaza Strip developed a broad infrastructure of religious and community aid organizations. With the outbreak of the First Intifada in early December 1987, its leaders established an independent military organization affiliated with the MB, called Ḥarakat al-Muqāwama al-Islāmiya (Hamas; the Islamic Resistance Movement). It grew to become a rival to the secular-nationalist PLO and Fatah and inscribed *jihād* on its Covenant : “From the viewpoint of the Islamic Resistance Movement, nationalism (*al-waṭaniya*) is part of the religious creed” [[70]](#footnote-72). For Hamas, the liberation of Palestine is the first necessary step toward the Islamization of the entire Arab world.[[71]](#footnote-73) The head of the organization was Shaykh Ahmed Ismail Yassin (born Al-Jura 1936, died Gaza 2004), assassinated by Israel after the deadly attacks his organization carried out during the Second Intifada. He was a senior MB figure in the Strip, a charismatic preacher and well-versed in the Qurʾān, despite being a near-blind quadriplegic and lacking formal religious education. Yassin was in an Israeli prison from 1991 to 1997 but even from there continued to chart the organization’s path and publish opinions and religious rulings, with popular support for him growing.[[72]](#footnote-74)

Hamas consistently opposed any negotiation with Israel because it deemed its very existence illegitimate and any discussion with it *de facto* recognition of it. When the Oslo Accord were published, Hamas issued an official statement condemning the “treacherous knife”[[73]](#footnote-75) with which the PLO had stabbed the nation in the back. Hamas had numerous reasons for rejecting Oslo, which threatened its standing among Palestinians leading a movement based on armed struggle against the Zionist occupation.

Among the prominent objections in the organization’s statements and articles were: That the timing of the agreement significantly weakened the Palestinian side; that how it was promulgated was secretive and unbecoming; that its ambiguous phrasing could be interpreted to the Palestinians’ detriment; that its terms signaled a willingness to renounce *jihād* and act against those engaged in it; that it fueled internal disputes and turning the PLO into an Israeli agent against other Palestinians; that it deferred discussion of core issues such as Jerusalem and the settlements, effectively recognizing the current situation; that the envisioned Palestinian autonomous entity would lack true sovereignty; and that this entity would be almost entirely economic dependent on Israel.[[74]](#footnote-76) In short, “the agreement is simply another form of occupation...the Zionist entity offers us only crumbs”[[75]](#footnote-77) intended primarily to achieve security for Israel.

Beyond this, Hamas deemed the DOP invalid for its simple betrayal of Islamic principles. In an official statement, it stated that “[w]e believe that Palestine is a holy land” and that no Palestinian had the right to relinquish an inch of *waqf* land. Therefore, “a curse shall befall whoever neglects it and hands it over as a gift to the [Jewish] enemies of humanity.”[[76]](#footnote-78) From the *sharīʿa* perspective, the legal status of Palestine derives from the way to liberate it: “*Jihād* is the way to victory.”[[77]](#footnote-79) The DOP does not meet *sharīʿa* conditions for peace agreements because it is part of a permanent process, includes recognition of Israel and its rights to Palestinian territory, and gives no clear advantages to the Palestinians. Therefore, comparisons with the Treaty of Al-Hudaybiya are invalid. Additionally, Hamas saw the DOP as departing from the Islamist worldview that sees Israel as a foreign implant doomed to perish and instead grants it further life to prolong the suffering of the Palestinians.

After about a year of assessing the new reality, Hamas unleashed a wave of deadly attacks inside Israel aimed at undermining the peace process and the nascent Palestinian Authority (PA). However, the organization was careful to say that it did not entirely reject peace. Between 1993 and 1996 and even beyond, Yassin and other senior figures have declared their readiness for a long-term *hudna*, subject to several conditions: Israel removes the settlements and withdraws to 1967 lines; it recognizes an independent, sovereign Palestinian state with East Jerusalem, including Al-Aqsa, as its capital; it compensates Palestinian exiles and their descendants irrespective of the right of return; and it immediately releases all prisoners.

For Hamas, *hudna* is part of the concept of *jihād*, as its purpose is to gain strength to wage the next stage of *jihād*: “The term *hudna*...expresses the continuity of the conflict...*hudna* is political and military action linked to an assessment of the situation...and to the supreme interests of the [Muslim] nation.” [[78]](#footnote-80) And in contrast to the Oslo Accords, a *hudna* as proposed by Hamas “does not appear in *Shari’a* history in the context of surrender.”[[79]](#footnote-81) This is not about moderation or a desire to resolve the existential conflict with Israel, but rather an adoption of a theory of phasing, as evidenced in Hamas’s conditions, ones which Israel would find very difficult to agree to due to the threat they pose to its security and character.[[80]](#footnote-82)

Despite Hamas’s vehement opposition to the Oslo Process and religious rejection of an unjust ruler who derives authority from the enemy, the message of Yassin and the Political Bureau remained one of Palestinian unity. Since “[t]he Zionist enemy is the root and basis of all the suffering of our people,”[[81]](#footnote-83) Hamas would not grant the enemy’s wish to weaken the Palestinian struggle through fratricidal conflict.[[82]](#footnote-84) Hamas’s complex stance toward the PLO and the Oslo Process was reflected in the issue of the elections for the Palestinian Legislative Council held in January 1996. Yassin and other leaders of the military and political wings repeatedly stated that Hamas would not participate in elections, seen as a referendum on the Oslo Process, nor take part in institutions arising from agreements Hamas rejected. However, Yassin did say the elections could gain the movement significant power to protect its values and institutions, force the PLO to address its positions, and allow it to promote its worldview as the main opposition. Ultimately, Hamas did not officially participate in the elections. Given that significant electoral achievements were not guaranteed and the Council’s powers in Arafat’s shadow were limited, the organization saw no need to join a “system they hoped to replace for the sake of coexistence with a state they hoped to destroy”[[83]](#footnote-85) and thereby abandon non-recognition of Israel. However, the organization was active in arenas of “Palestinian public interest” such as local elections, labor committees, and student unions, in order to consolidate its power separately from that of the PA.[[84]](#footnote-86)

Yassin’s words summed up Hamas’s position: “Peace is the demand of every human being...We want peace more than anyone else in the world”[[85]](#footnote-87) but only a peace that is fair and just, meaning the obliteration of Israel an Islamic Palestinian state raised upon its ruins. The DOP far from aided this goal and even jeopardized Hamas’s *raison d’être*. Despite its insistence on preserving Palestinian unity, Hamas refused to recognize the new reality and take part in it. By employing religious principles that inflamed the situation and sanctified conflict, its view persisted that the only path to peace is *jihād* for an independent Muslim Palestinian state where Jews would enjoy religious freedom as *ahl al-dhimma*. Meanwhile, it used terror to successfully undermine the agreement.

Shaykh ʿImad al-Falouji

Shaykh ʿImad Abd al-Hamid al-Falouji (born 1963, Jabalya) was a senior Hamas member and co-founder of the organization’s military wing, a member of the Palestinian parliament, Minister of Communications, and adviser to Arafat. After the arrest of Shaykh Yassin and the Hamas leadership during the First Intifada, al-Falouji became a prominent figure in reforming Hamas, though he too was imprisoned from 1991 to 1994. During his incarceration, al-Falouji publicly expressed claims widely shared in Hamas circles against the DOP. However, a rift between him and Hamas’s political bureau soon emerged that would lead to him leaving the movement.[[86]](#footnote-88)

His time in prison cultivated independent thinking in him. His primary commitment was to the importance of dialogue between Palestinian society’s various streams. Al-Falouji saw intra-Palestinian solidarity as integral to the struggle against Israel since he saw Israel’s long-standing strategy – even in the Oslo Process – as fomenting division and infighting within Palestinian society. He wrote a book on the concept of dialogue in Islam in this regard and established the Adam Center for Intercultural Dialogue.[[87]](#footnote-89) His second commitment was to transform Hamas into an adaptable movement in the political arena. Al-Falouji foresaw the peace process progressing and Hamas’s popularity likely to suffer consequently, so argued that coordination with the PLO was critical and even for a separate political wing retaining Hamas’s ideology but also operating in and influencing decision-making circles. He argued that “religiosity does not contradict engagement in politics...and a non-extremist political practice in its implementation.”[[88]](#footnote-90) This approach guided al-Falouji thenceforth.[[89]](#footnote-91)

With the publication of the DOP, Hamas refused to recognize this “betrayal” or to take part in the continuation of the negotiations and the development of the PA. Nevertheless, al-Falouji, as a senior Hamas member, created a line of communication with Arafat shortly after the latter returned to Gaza. At the end of 1995, al-Falouji was appointed head of the Palestinian Dialogue Office of the Palestinian National Council, which gained wider mass legitimacy then the PA[[90]](#footnote-92) and mediated between Hamas and the PLO. In November 1995, leaflets were distributed throughout Gaza declaring that al-Falouji had been expelled from Hamas due to his aberrant political activity. This prompted al-Falouji to run in the Legislative Council elections in January 1996. Once elected, he worked to create an Islamic bloc that would promote ideas in the spirit of the movement he came from. In March 1996, he was surprisingly appointed Minister of Communications and stated that Shaykh Yassin, when he had visited him, had expressed support for his appointment and promotion of dialogue. Even during his ministerial tenure, al-Falouji continued to mediate between Hamas and the PA. He described himself as “a prominent representative of the ideology of the Islamic movement, even if not a representative of Hamas.”[[91]](#footnote-93) He served as minister until 2002 then as Arafat’s adviser until the latter’s death in 2004.[[92]](#footnote-94)

How did these roles align with al-Falouji’s Islamist ideology? Firstly, his basic stance toward the DOP was more nuanced than Hamas’s wholesale rejection of it. He did not view the DOP as a peace agreement and so, despite opposing it, did not see recognizing its reality as a retreat from Hamas’s basic principles. Moreover, he saw significant advantages deriving from it like the return of the exiles from Tunisia as a prelude to the return of all refugees. He quotes Arafat saying: “If the DOP did not lead to any result other than the return of the leadership and thousands of Palestinians to their homeland, this would be enough for us...This is the beginning of the return of all refugees”[[93]](#footnote-95) and so the beginning of the liberation of the homeland. Al-Falouji stated: “The Authority’s aspiration is to liberate all of Palestine, and much [was achieved in Oslo] on the way to liberating the entire territory.”[[94]](#footnote-96) He further argued: “The Palestinian state began to take root in the land, and the wheel cannot be turned back.”[[95]](#footnote-97) He also averred that “the leaders of the Zionist enemy recognized [us] and, in my opinion, this is the most important thing we achieved.”[[96]](#footnote-98) He felt it would have been better to refer discussion of the Oslo Process to prominent religious scholars who understand that in complex situations and certain contexts, the *sharīʿa* allows variant rulings for the sake of Muslim interests. He saw this in parallel with the continuation of the struggle: “As long as there is occupied Arab land, and this enemy exists...we have not yet reached a peace agreement with Israel...and I personally do not think we will reach a peace agreement.”[[97]](#footnote-99)

Accordingly, al-Falouji believed that Islamic activity in the political arena was important, through means appropriate to the current stage of the struggle to bridge reality and the vision. This would help Hamas mitigate the damage Oslo caused it, strengthen Islam among the public, serve as a meaningful opposition enforcing true democracy, preserve Hamas’s power and positions, and gain international legitimacy for it. Finally, in line with the principles of cooperation and dialogue that guided al-Falouji, he argued that such activity would also contribute to Palestinian society that would benefit from the diverse capabilities existing among all groups of the Palestinian people.”[[98]](#footnote-100)

Al-Falouji also engaged in interfaith dialogue and participated in several conferences that brought together rabbis and imams in the hope that religious leaders would resolve religious conflicts. In his words, there is no conflict between religions, rather a political conflict against the occupation and it is the duty of religious leaders to work against extremism and to support politicians striving for peace.[[99]](#footnote-101) Despite his optimism in this regard, al-Falouji is a complex character and not fully open. He neither categorically disavowed acts of terror nor expressed support for the Oslo Process. Although he saw the DOP as invalid from the outset, he thought it must be accepted once it existed. The positive points he saw in the process are those that would be a disaster for Israel. The process for him was beginning along a path, both through ongoing negotiation and armed to the a complete Palestinian state. He argued that one must act to preserve Palestinian unity in the struggle against the occupation and to strengthen Hamas. Al-Falouji proffers a surprising moderation for a senior Hamas figure, but it is insufficiently substantial. It is rather a pragmatic, sober political vision still ultimately aiming for complete victory.

**Summary and Conclusions**

The DOP was the beginning of a process that sought an end to conflict via interim agreements between political elites based on liberal paradigms and material incentives that would lead to future popular reconciliation. Despite religion playing a significant role in identity conflicts in general, religious leaders were not at the negotiating table, and those that were, did not consider the religious barriers to peace, despite or perhaps because of their intensity and prevalence. One of the recurring conclusions in many studies[[100]](#footnote-102) on the Oslo Process is that this mismatch between the nature of the conflict and the attempted path to resolving it was a key factor in its failure. Although religious leaders did not participate in the process, they did express their opinions on its outcome. This study surveyed the religious law and value-based opinions of six religious leaders: Rabbi Amital, Shaykh Darwish, and Shaykh al-Falouji – an Israeli Jew, an Israeli Arab, and a Palestinian respectively — who supported the DOP – and Rabbi Goren, Shaykh Salah, and Shaykh Yassin — an Israeli Jew, an Israeli Arab, and a Palestinian, respectively — who opposed it. The research shows that, on both sides of the divide, religious leaders took realities into account. However, those opposed to the DOP unsurprisingly clung to their uncompromisingly dichotomous ideologies of communal superiority, those who expressed support for it interpreted the same realities more pragmatically and were open to compromise and complexity. Those opposed inevitably emphasized those accepted religious principles that hinder peace and utilized religion’s social influence to further sanctify land and nation over human life, to emphasize the alienation between societies, to delegitimize those engaged in the peace process, to encourage active efforts to hinder or end it, and, in general, to inflame conflict and undermine peace. Those expressing support for the DOP used religious ambiguities to justify their reinterpretations to prioritize alternative values and conflict resolution, however temporary. This study has shown how important these religious ambiguities are in this regard, especially in squaring theology with reality, allowing moderate religious leaders to justify their views to the masses.

Nevertheless, this study has saliently shown that even those religious leaders who supported the DOP used religious methods to preserve and even inflame conflict rather than create religious reconciliation, hindering the reconciliation process on their side. The atmosphere of suspicion and distrust, alongside the implicit or explicit aspirations for long-term, zero-sum victories despite temporary compromises, are substantial weaknesses here, especially in Darwish and al-Falouji. The discourse of these three religious leaders have a lot in common, and based primarily on realism. It seems they internally accepted the secular and pragmatic nature of the DOP and, despite their religiosity that could have been harnessed for peace, as Darwish partially expressed it, [[101]](#footnote-103) they judged the agreement on its own terms concerning community interests, achievements, control, borders, security, sovereignty, resources, and so on. This produced a flawed and insufficiently spiritual discourse to further the peace and reconciliation process, including interfaith harmony.

However, in the complex reality of societies mired for decades in existential identity conflict, with salient religious barriers to peace and the danger of their delegitimization by radical preachers, moderate religious leaders cannot suddenly conjure up a religious basis for supporting a peace process and the concessions and compromises included in it very easily. Reliance on practical justifications is their only possible route to gradually establish their position and prove that the values of religion and sanctity do not contradict those of peace and reconciliation. Perhaps future a better management of such political peace agreements, backed from the outset by the broadest possible religious support, will lead to concerted and sincere interim educational efforts in both communities to prove that.

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1. See Hirschfeld, *Oslo: A Formula for Peace*, pp. 277, 279; Karsh, *The Oslo War,* pp. 7–26. For more on the DOP, see: Shillon, *The Agony of the Left*, pp. 15, 41–44; Peres, *The New Middle East*, pp. 73–92; Maoz and Russett, “The Democratic Peace,” p. 25; Feldman, “Economic Peace: Theory vs. Reality”, p. 17; Rynhold, “The Failure of the Oslo Process”, pp. 2–26. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Abu-Nimer, *Dialogue, Conflict Resolution, and Change*, pp. 11–13; Bar-Tal and Raviv, *The Comfort Zone of a Society in Conflict*, pp. 13–109; Bar-Tal, Raviv, and Abramowitz, *In the Eye of the Beholder*, pp. 23–120; Gopin, *Holy War, Holy Peace*, pp. 3–6, 58–90; Handelman, *Conflict and Peacemaking in Israel-Palestine*, pp. 3–24; Smock, *Religious Contributions to Peacemaking*, pp. xvi–xix; Bar-Tal, “From Intractable Conflict through Conflict Resolution to Reconciliation”, pp. 351–65; Kelman, “The Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process and Its Vicissitudes”, pp. 287–303; Melchior, “Establishing a Religious Peace”, pp. 1–9; Scheffler, “Interreligious Dialogue and Peacebuilding”, pp. 173–87; Waxman, “Identity Matters”, pp. 133–56. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Smock, *Religious Contributions to Peacemaking*, pp. xvi–xix; Bar-Tal, “From Intractable Conflict”, pp. 351–65; Fox, “Towards a Dynamic Theory of Ethno-Religious Conflict”, pp. 431–63; Landau, “Healing the Holy Land”, pp. 3–12; Melchior, “Establishing a Religious Peace”, pp. 1–9; Scheffler, “Interreligious Dialogue and Peacebuilding”, pp. 173–87; Waxman, “Identity Matters”, pp. 133–56. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred*; Eisen, *The Peace and Violence of Judaism*; Nardin, *The Ethics of War and Peace*. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. For further reading, see: Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred*; Ashmore, Jussim, and Wilder, *Social Identity, Intergroup Conflict, and Conflict Reduction*, pp. 17–41, 187–212; Funk and Said, *Islam and Peacemaking in the Middle East*; Gopin, *Holy War, Holy* *Peace*; Reiter, *War, Peace and International Relations in Contemporary Islam*; Abu-Nimer, “Religion, Dialogue, and Non-Violent Actions in Palestinian-Israeli Conflict“, pp. 491–511; Hancock and Weiss, “Prospect Theory and the Failure to Sell the Oslo Accords“, pp. 427–52; Frisch, “Nationalizing a Universal Text”, pp. 321–36; Frisch and Sandler, “Religion, State, and the International System in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict”, pp. 77–96; Kelman, “The Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process and Its Vicissitudes”; Khan, “How Religious Leadership Can Help Bring Peace and Justice to the Middle East”, pp. 51–55; Liebman, “Jewish Identity, Israeli Society and the Peace Process”, pp. 6–8; Melchior, “Establishing a Religious Peace”, pp. 1–9; Paz, “The Position of Radical Islamic Movements Towards Jews and Zionism Today”, pp. 46–65; Reiter, “Religion as an Obstacle to Compromise in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict”, pp. 294–324; Rosen, “Religion, Identity and Mideast Peace”, pp. 55–59; Scheffler, “Interreligious Dialogue and Peacebuilding”, pp. 173–87. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Deuteronomy 7:2; Nachmanides Hassagot (on Maimonides, Sefer Hamitzvot), 4; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah* *– Melachim uMilhamoteyhem* (Kings and Wars*)*, 5:12, 7:4,15, *Avodah Zarah* (Idolatry)10:4-6; Joseph Karo, *Shulchan Aruch*, Orach Chaim 329:6; Joseph Babad*, Minchat Chinuch* 425; Avraham Yeshaya Karelitz, *Chazon Ish*, on Eruvin 114a. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Badir, “Iḥlāl al-Salām fi-l Arḍ al-Muqaddasa” (“Achieving Peace in the Holy Land”); Reiter, “All of Palestine is Holy Muslim Waqf Land”, pp. 173–97. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Mellamed, *Pniney Halacha - Collected Writings on the People and the Land.* [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Bartal, “Reading the Qur’an”, pp. 392–408; Reiter, “All of Palestine is Holy Muslim Waqf Land”, pp. 173–97; Shemer, “Sheikh Yusuf Al-Qaradawi on the Theological Dimension of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict”. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. *Talmud*, Sanhedrin 74a, Yoma 85a; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah - Yesodei ha-Torah* (“Foundations of the Torah”)5:1, Shabbat 2:3; Joseph Karo, *Shulchan Aruch*, Orach Chaim 329:1. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. The Treaty of Al-Hudaybiya justifies a long-term peace agreement made from a position of inferiority, with some terms unfavorable to Muslims but significant other benefits to the Muslims. Many have interpreted it as a ruse always meant to be later abrogated. The agreement was mentioned by Arafat in this vein in a controversial 1994 Johannesburg speech: See https://he.wikisource.org/wiki/%D7%A0%D7%90%D7%95%D7%9D\_%D7%99%D7%95%D7%94%D7%A0%D7%A1%D7%91%D7%95%D7%A8%D7%92\_(%D7%99%D7%90%D7%A1%D7%A8\_%D7%A2%D7%A8%D7%A4%D7%90%D7%AA). There are other precedents for Muhammad and his successors making peace treaties with idolaters: See Hererah and Karsel, *Jihad -* *Between Law and Practice*, pp. 94–97; Khadduri, *War and Peace in the Law of Islam*, pp. 51–133; Reiter, *War, Peace and International Relations in Contemporary Islam*, pp. 14–57; Al-Qaradawi, *Fiqh al-Jihād* (Jurisprudence of *Jihād*); Adlan, “Fatāwī al-Shayikh Ibn Bāz ʿan al-Taṭbīʿ” (“Ibn Baz’s Fatwas on Normalization”); Badir, “Iḥlāl al-Salām fi-l Arḍ al-Muqaddasa”; Jackson, “Jihad and the Modern World”, pp. 1–26; Kelsay, “On Fighting as an Individual Duty”, pp. 374–83; Polka, “Centrists Vs. Salafists on the Concept of Peace”, pp. 10–25. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Hererah and Karsel, *Jihad –* *Between Law and Practice*, pp. 86–91, 96, 171–90; Khadduri, *War and Peace in the Law of Islam*, pp. 51–133; Reiter, *War, Peace and International Relations in Contemporary Islam*, pp. 29–57, 108–23; Al-Qaradawi*, Fiqh al-Jihad*; Sarsour, “Filasṭīn bayn al-Ḥaqīqa wal-Waḥm” (“Palestine Between Reality and Illusion), Kul al-Arab, 7 October 2013; Badir, “Iḥlāl al-Salām fi-l Arḍ al-Muqaddasa” (“Achieving Peace in the Holy Land”); Adlan, “Fatāwī al-Shayikh Ibn Bāz ʿan al-Taṭbīʿ”; Jackson, “Jihad and the Modern World”, pp. 1–26; Kelsay, “On Fighting as An Individual Duty”, pp. 374–83; Polka, “Centrists Vs. Salafists on the Concept of Peace”, pp. 10–25. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Shillon, *The Agony of the Left*, pp. 260-269, 286; Hancock and Weiss, “Prospect Theory”, pp. 427–52; Hassassian, “Why Did Oslo Fail?”, pp. 114–32; Kelman, “The Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process”, pp. 287–303; Smooha, “The Implications of the Transition to Peace for Israeli Society”, pp. 26–45. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Reichner, *Be’emunato* (“In his Faith”), pp. 5–35, 50–70, 175–210, 223–45. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Amital, *Ve’haaretz natan li’Bnei Adam*, p. 149; Amital, “The Religious Meaning of Israel”. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Reichner, *Be’emunato, p. 197.* [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. The meeting was on September 22, 1993. Reichner, *Be’emunato*, pp. 193–207. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Amital, “There is Hope for the Zionist Settlement in Judea and Samaria”, p. 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
19. Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah* Zemanim: *Hanukah u-Megillah* (Times: [Hanukkah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hanukkah%22%20%5Co%20%22Hanukkah) and Purim), 4:14.  [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
20. Amital, “There is Hope for the Zionist Settlement in Judea and Samaria”, pp. 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
21. Reichner, *Be’emunato*, p. 204 [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
22. Amital, “There is Hope for the Zionist Settlement in Judea and Samaria”, p. 45. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
23. Amital, “There is Hope for the Zionist Settlement in Judea and Samaria.” , p. 45. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
24. Reichner, *Be’emunato,* p. 203. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
25. Amital, “The Religious Meaning of Israel”. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
26. “Minister Rabbi Yehuda Amital - Speeches“, pp. 3–14, 93; Inbari, *Messianic Religious Zionism*, pp. 75–79; Reichner, *Be’emunato*, pp. 143–74; Bazak, *VeHay Bahem*; Inbari, “When Prophecy Fails?”, pp. 303–25. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
27. Reichner, *Be’emunato*, p. 145. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
28. Amital, “A Political Message or an Educational Message.” [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
29. Amital, “To Heed the Cry of a Child.” [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
30. Amital, “To Heed the Cry of a Child.” [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
31. Bazak, *VeHay Bahem*, pp. 56–58. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
32. Goren, *With Might and Power*, pp. 21–114; Mishlov, *In the Eye of the Storm*, pp. 4–12; Hollander, “Dual Loyalty to Halakha and State and Its Solution,” pp. v–vii. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
33. Goren, *Har HaBayit: Meshiv Milchama*, p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
34. Quotes from Sima Kadmon, “I Believe I Have Divine Supervision,” *Maariv* December 24, 1993, p. 6. Mishlov, *In the Eye of the Storm*, pp. 68–116; Mishlov, “Rabbi Shlomo Goren’s Zionist Outlook,” pp. 81–106; Hollander, “Dual Loyalty to Halakha and State,” pp. v–xxxiv. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
35. Goren, *Torat HaMedina*, pp. 130–39, 152–58; Goren, “The Holy Land and Saving Life”, pp. 11–22; “Halakhic Responsa of Rabbi Shlomo Goren,” pp. 58–60, 68–70. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
36. Goren, “Between a Peace Agreement and True Peace,” pp. 144–47; Goren, *Torat HaMedina*, pp. 130–39, 152–58. Interestingly, despite this, Rabbi Goren supported peace with Syria in exchange for parts of the Golan Heights which, in his view, were not part of the Land of Israel, subject to stringent security guarantees, in order to remove the main security threat Israel faced in its early days. For more on this, see Goren, “Between Judea, Samaria and the Golan from a Halakhic Perspective,” *HaTzofeh*, April 26, 1991, p. 4; Mishlov, *In the Eye of the Storm*, pp. 114–16; Mishlov, “Rabbi Goren’s Position on Transferring Territories for Peace”, pp. 254–55. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
37. “Halachic Issues Related to the Peace Process”, p. 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
38. Goren, *Torat HaMedinah*, p. 134. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
39. Goren, “Between a Peace Agreement and True Peace,” p. 147; Goren, “The Holy Land and Saving Lives”, p. 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
40. “Halachic Issues Related to the Peace Process”, p. 26. Also “Rabbi Shlomo Goren - Articles: Does a Palestinian People with National Rights Exist?”, pp. 1–10; Goren, *Torat HaMedinah*, pp. 150–58. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
41. “Halachic Responsa of Rabbi Shlomo Goren,” pp. 53–58. Also “Halachic Responsa of Rabbi Shlomo Goren,” p. 70. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
42. “Halachic Responsa of Rabbi Shlomo Goren”, p. 70. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
43. “Halachic Issues Related to the Peace Process”, p. 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
44. “Halachic Issues Related to the Peace Process”, pp. 50–51. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
45. A quotation from Ibrahim Sarsour in “Al-Janūbiya Turājuʿ Ḥisābāt-ahā wa Tuḥaqquq fī Natāʾij al-Fashl” (The Southern [Faction] Reviews Its Accounts and Investigates the Results of Failure)”. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
46. To facilitate discussion, I use the terms “Southern Faction” and “Northern Faction” henceforth, because the described division was one of the reasons that led to the later official split. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
47. Ali, *Religious Fundamentalism as Ideology and Practice*, pp. 18–21; Darwish, *Islam is the Solution*, pp. 117–35; Hatina and Al-Atawneh, *Muslims in the Jewish State*, pp. 18–24; Rudnitzky, *The Arab Minority in Israel*, pp. 64–80; Aburiya, “Concrete Religiosity vs. Abstract Religiosity”, pp. 684–86; Ali, “The Islamic Movement’s Coping with the Minority Status”, pp. 62–78; Ali, “The Islamic Movement in Israel: Between Religion, Nationalism and Modernity”, pp. 132–64; Kedar, “The Future Vision of the Islamic Movement”, pp. 117–23; Mustafa and Ghanem, “The Islamic Movement in Israel - Political Islam in a Jewish State”, pp. 49–60; Rekhess, “The Islamization of the Arab Identity in Israel”, pp. 63–73; Sarsour, “The Islamic Movement and the State”, pp. 242–49; Darwish, “Mustaqbal al-Umma wa-Nahdatu-ha bayn al-Ḥukūma wa-l-Ḥaraka (The Future of the *Umma* and its Renaissance between Government and Movement)”, *Ṣawt al-Ḥaqq wa-l-Ḥurīya*, 31.12.1993, p. 10; “Min Huwa Darwīsh, Muʾassis al-Ḥaraka al-Islāmiya bi-l-Dākhil al-Filasṭīnī (Who is Darwish, The Founder of the Islamic Movement in the Palestinian Interior?)”, *Al-Jazeera*, January 12, 2017, https://bit.ly/3Cq3KCi; Awwad, “ Rāʾid Ṣalāḥ, Muqāwamī fi-l-Dākhil (Raed Salah, A Resistant in the Interior)”, *Al-Jazeera*, May 13, 2010, https://bit.ly/2VATff4. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
48. Badir, “Wujūdu-nā fi-l-Barlamān al-Ṣiḥyūnī wa-Taḥālufu-nā fī-l-Qāʾima al-Mushtarika” (Our Presence in the Zionist Parliament and Our Alliance in the Joint List). [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
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99. A”l-Ṣirāʿ al-Qāʾim fī-l-Minṭaqa Asāsu-hu Siyāsī wa Laysa Dīnī” (The Existing Conflict in the Region is Fundamentally Political Not Religious), *Real Media,* November 18, 2016, https://katzr.net/02f47c; Walter Ruby, “Imams, Rabbis Deplore Calls to Eliminate Israel”, *Jerusalem Post*, March 23, 2006, https://www.jpost.com/jewish-world/jewish-news/imams-rabbis-deplore-calls-to-eliminate-israel; “Meeting in Spain, Imams and Rabbis Pledge to Defuse Religious Tensions”, *Daily Bulletin*, 22.3.2006, https://www.jta.org/archive/meeting-in-spain-imams-and-rabbis-pledge-to-defuse-religious-tensions; Toi Staff, “Hamas-linked imam, Israel chief rabbi unite in call for peace”, *Times of Israel*, November 19, 2016, https://www.timesofisrael.com/hamas-linked-imam-israel-chief-rabbi-unite-in-call-for-peace/; Tapper, “Hamas Pacifists and Settler Islamophiles”, pp. 56–58, https://www.proquest.com/docview/212315174?accountid=14483&forcedol=true. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
100. See footnote 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
101. See footnote 62. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)