The positions and beliefs adopted by the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) on aspects of the Palestinian issue, particularly in the 1980s and 1990s, are of major interest and significance. This essay aims to provide insights into the MB’s perceptions of Palestine and its role in the struggle against Zionism and for a just solution to the Palestinian issue.

For the MB, the Palestinian issue is central. They see Palestine as sacred land, the birthplace of Islam, and the rightful homeland of the Palestinian people. The MB’s stance is rooted in their understanding of the Quran and the hadith, which they interpret to support their views on Palestine.

The MB believes that the Palestinians have a divine mandate to resist Israeli occupation and to work towards the restoration of their land and rights. They consider the struggle for Palestine to be a jihad, a holy war, and a duty of all Muslims.

The MB’s support for Palestine stems from their belief in the prophetic claim that Jerusalem-Palestine is one ‘Islamic land’ and that the conflict with Israel is a religious war. They believe that the conflict with Israel is a battle for the soul of Islam and the preservation of Islamic identity.

The MB regards Palestine as a source of Islamic identity and as a symbol of Islamic solidarity. They see the Palestinian struggle as a struggle against oppression and a struggle for justice.

The MB has been involved in various forms of activism in support of Palestine, including demonstrations, protests, and legal challenges. They have also provided financial support to Palestinians, with the aim of helping them resist Israeli occupation.

The MB believes that the Palestinian leadership, particularly the PLO, has failed to represent the interests of the Palestinian people. They see the PLO as a foreign and Arab-dominated organization that has failed to bring about a just solution to the Palestinian issue.

The MB’s views on the PLO are complex. They accept the establishment of a Palestinian state, but only as a step toward full liberation. They believe that the PLO must be transformed into a truly representative body that reflects the will of the Palestinian people.

The MB’s stance on the PLO is not static. They have changed their position on the PLO over time, reflecting the evolution of their views on the Palestinian issue.

In conclusion, the MB’s perceptions of Palestine and its role in the struggle against Zionism and for a just solution to the Palestinian issue are deeply rooted in their Islamic faith and their understanding of the Quran and the hadith. They see the struggle for Palestine as a religious war and a duty of all Muslims, and they remain committed to working towards a just solution that respects the rights of the Palestinian people.
mean that the MB accepts the Israeli idea of the ‘Jordanian option’ for the Palestinians. It totally rejects it. Through Islamizing the Palestinian issue, the distinction between Palestinians and Jordanians, and that between Palestine and Jordan are dissolved.

Summarizing these issues in a personal interview, Dr. Isaac Farhan, one of the leading figures of the MB and the former Secretary-General of the Islamic Action Front Party, starkly expressed the contrasting view of the MB of Palestine:

“We consider the Palestinian issue a basic and key issue for three reasons. First, on the ideological side, the defence of Palestine is defence of the Islamic ideology. Second, on the national side (umma), the Israeli existence inside the nation’s body divides and destroys the nation. Third, as homeland (watan), Palestine is an Arab and Islamic land and the homeland must not be surrendered.”

The MB’s perceptions of the Palestinian issue were based on an ideology deriving from purely religious views, but as Jamil Abu Bakir, MB spokesman, in a personal interview pointed out, although the Palestinian issue was a ‘holy cause’, the MB wanted to avoid conflict with the Jordanian government, even though it opposed the peace process and possible consequences such as economic and cultural cooperation between Jordan and Israel. It can be said that the MB, despite its ideological view, has always avoided collision with the government, even with all the ‘U-turns’ the government has chosen, in so far as the Palestinian issue is concerned. This clearly indicates the pragmatic nature of the movement’s political behaviour, as well as its ability to strike a balance between its ideological stands on the one side and all variables on the regional and Jordanian political arena on the other.

Notes
1. For more details, see the MB memorandum to the Palestine National Council (PNC) held in Amman in 1984; the election programme of the MB candidates in the parliamentary elections in 1989; and the speeches of the MB members in the Parliament. See, for example, the minutes of the Jordanian Parliaments in 1984, 1985, 1986, 1992 and 1993. See also the political statement of the MB statement entitled ‘Why the MB rejects Madrid conference and rejects the bilateral and multilateral negotiations with our Jewish enemy’, 1992.
5. The Election Programme of the MB, op.cit, pp 24-25.

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ANNOUNCEMENT

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The British Journal of Middle East Studies (BJMES), one of the leading academic journals on the Middle East, is seeking additional submissions. The new Editorial team would like to increase the number of manuscripts being proposed for inclusion in his twice-yearly refereed journal. A full range of Middle Eastern topics are covered in each issue. We are looking for submissions on subjects from medieval Islam to modern politics, political economy and international relations. Literature, political philosophy and theology submissions are welcome. We have added a new section called ‘Notes and Queries’ for short, 500-1000 word discussions of particular points or issues.

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