

Sample Abstract

WHY FIGHT?

Examining Self-Interested versus Communally-Oriented Motivations in
Palestinian Resistance and Rebellion

by

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ABSTRACT

Why do individuals participate in weak-against-strong resistance, terror or insurgency? Drawing on rational choice theory, many claim that individuals join insurgent organizations for self-interested reasons, seeking status, money, protection, or rewards in the afterlife. Another line of research, largely ethnographic and social network based, suggests that prospective fighters are driven by social identity — they join out of an allegiance to communal values, norms of reciprocity, and an orientation towards process rather than outcome.

This project tested these two lines of argument against each other by directly linking values orientations in a refugee camp to *professed willingness to participate* in resistance or rebellion in two different contexts. Professed willingness to participate in resistance, and especially in violent rebellion, is positively correlated with communal orientation and negatively correlated with self-enhancement values. The strength of correlation grows negatively for self-enhancement and positively for communal orientations-as anticipated sacrifice increases. Results are discussed.

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