

The Soundtrack of Politics

A Case Study of Anashid in Hamas and Hizbullah

Carin Berg

Akademisk avhandling för filosofie doktorsexamen i Freds- och Utvecklingsforskning vid institutionen för Globala Studier, Göteborgs Universitet, som, med vederbörligt tillstånd av Samhällsvetenskapliga fakultetsnämnden läggs fram för offentlig granskning fredagen den 9 juni 2017, klockan 13.15 i sal 326, Annedalsseminariet, Campus Linné, Seminariegatan 1A, Göteborg.

SCHOOL OF GLOBAL STUDIES



Carin Berg (2017): *The Soundtrack of Politics. A Case Study of Anashid in Hamas and Hizbullah*. PhD dissertation in Peace and Development Research, School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg (P.O. Box 700, 405 30 Gothenburg, Sweden).

Language: English, with a summary in Swedish

ISBN: 978-91-629-0169-1 (Print)

ISBN: 978-91-629-0170-7 (PDF)

<http://hdl.handle.net/2077/52195>

Abstract

Music is commonly used as a tool in political organizations in general. Due to religious norms and interpretations, Islamist organizations use anashid as the main musical genre for political aims. By exploring how anashid is used in Hamas and Hizbullah, two major political players in the Middle East, this thesis adds to the sparse academic analysis about the role of anashid and its relation to Islamist organizations. By merging the academic fields of politics, music, and Islam, the study makes sense of anashid theoretically in organizations. Of central importance is how music is used intentionally and collectively with the aim of influencing peoples' behavior and mindset, as well as how the interpretation of music goes beyond primary intentions.

The thesis is based on long term field work inside Hamas and Hizbullah. Through observations and interviews with supporters and leaders, the thesis inquires the political function of anashid in different settings of the two organizations and how informants give meaning to anashid. On the basis of these data, the thesis shows that anashid is the main soundtrack of politics in Hamas and Hizbullah. It implies that anashid serves the function of delivering the political messages of the organizations while simultaneously aiming for maintaining religious values. Hence, anashid embraces the unique function of serving as a core messenger of the organizations' ideology and goals. Moreover, the thesis reveals that integrating the political and religious through anashid creates an overlap of its usage in the organizational and the private domains of Hamas and Hizbullah. Hence, through anashid, the distinction between the private and the public becomes blurred.

The thesis concludes that anashid functions in a politically powerful way in Hamas and Hizbullah, mainly collectively. Anashid possess influence on peoples' emotions in order to frame identities in a collective manner through the political activities it initiates.

Keywords: Hamas, Hizbullah, anashid, music, politics, Islam, organizations, political tool.

Berg, C. (2012). Tunes of religious Resistance? Understanding Hamas Music in a Conflict Context. *Contemporary Islam*, 6(3), 297-314. Doi: 10.1007/s11562-012-0220-0

Berg, C. (2013). 'Music' as a Political Force in Islamist Organisations. In P. Simon & T. Szabo (Eds.), *Music. Social Impacts, Health Benefits and Perspectives*. New York: Nova Publisher.

Berg, C. (Under Review). Anashid in the Crossroads between the Organizational and the Private. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*.

Berg, C. (Under Review). Collective Identity by Impassioned Ideology. Mainstream and Jihadi Anashid in Hizbollah. *The Middle East Journal*.