



THE MOSHE DAYAN CENTER FOR MIDDLE EASTERN AND AFRICAN STUDIES

ALLIANCE CENTER FOR IRANIAN STUDIES



BeeHive

Middle East Social Media

Editors: Dr. Harel Chorev, Smadar Shaul

Volume 7, Issue 1, January 2019

Table of Contents

“The People Want to Topple the Regime:” Protests in Sudan against the Bashir Regime 3

Civil War? The rift between Fatah and Hamas, as seen on social media 6

“Spiritual Betrothals”: Iranian Women Engaged to Casualties of War 10

From the Editors

The Doron Halpern Middle East Network Analysis Desk is happy to present the January issue of Beehive. The issue begins with a discussion of the mass demonstrations being held across Sudan in protest of the Omar al-Bashir regime. Beginning in December 2018, the protests are considered to represent the most serious threat that his 30-year rule has faced. Next, we survey online discourse surrounding the ongoing feud between the Fatah and Hamas movements, which has been characterized by public disputes between supporters of the respective movements. The tension is causing public concern about the possibility of further deterioration into civil war. The final article presents an extraordinary phenomenon that has been occurring in Iran for several years: young Iranian women who announce that they are betrothed to Iranian soldiers killed in the Iran-Iraq war or in Iran's more recent military campaigns in Syria and Iraq. Opponents of the regime consider this a side-effect of the ethos of sacrifice nurtured by the Islamic Republic.

Enjoy!

“The People Want to Topple the Regime:” Protests in Sudan against the Bashir Regime

Dr. Haim Koren¹ and Adam Hoffman

In mid-December 2018, mass demonstrations began in many cities in Sudan, protesting against the autocratic regime of Omar al-Bashir, who has ruled the country for three decades. The Sudanese authorities are using force to suppress the protests, but have not succeeded to date. The protests have also expanded online, and many users are sharing pictures and videos of demonstrators which call for the overthrow of the regime and the continuation of the mass protests. It appears that the public discourse on social networks unifies many protesters against the regime, helps spread the protests to additional cities across the country and generates expressions of solidarity from abroad. Although Bashir is still in power, the mass demonstrations seem to pose a threat to the stability of his regime, for the first time in nearly 30 years.

Omar al-Bashir came to power in Sudan after leading a military coup in 1989, assisted in large part by the support he received from the Islamist politician Hassan al-Turabi, who died in 2016. Turabi had led the Islamization of the political system in Sudan and the adoption of Shari’a in the country in the 1970s. The background for Bashir’s ascent to power includes decades of civil war, beginning in 1955, between Arab-Muslim citizens in the hegemonic northern part of the country and citizens in southern Sudan, mostly Christian Africans of animist origin, who were marginalized and disadvantaged. The internecine strife, which continued after the ascent of Bashir, resulted in the deaths of more than two million people, injured three million more, and created four million refugees. The war ended only in 2005, and has left an indelible mark on Sudanese society since then.²

Since Bashir took power, there have been periodic protests against his regime. In 2011, the protests began to increase, and have included strikes by university students and doctors, as



Picture 1: Graffiti with a picture of Bashir and the caption “Leave,” from [Twitter](#).

well as protests against price hikes. Amgad Fareid Eltayeb, a Sudanese doctor and human rights activist, described the situation well when he claimed that the political struggle against Bashir's dictatorial Islamic regime "never ceased [even for] one day."³ However, despite the protests, it appeared that the regime would remain stable. After all, Bashir has managed to remain in power longer than any other Arab ruler in the region, and the opposition has never been able to significantly challenge his rule.⁴ However, it seems that this trend began to shift when mass demonstrations erupted in several Sudanese cities in December 2018. The demonstrations began on December 19 in Atbara and spread to other cities and towns in Sudan including Gedarif, Wad Madani, Port Sudan, Dongola, El-Obeid, El-Fasher, Khartoum and Omdurman. The protests were largely coordinated and organized using social media, with Sudanese activists calling on users to demonstrate against the regime using hashtags in Arabic and English. These hashtags included "cities of Sudan are rising up" (#مدن_السودان_تنتفض), "Sudan revolts" (#السودان_ينتفض), #SudanProtests, #SudanUprisings, #Sudan_revolution and #Sudan_Revolts. These hashtags were shared by so many users that they became trending on Twitter, which attracted additional attention and heightened awareness, in Sudan and abroad, of the protests against Bashir.

Ostensibly, the demonstrations were sparked by economic issues, following the Bashir regime's decision to triple the price of bread. However, they soon turned into a direct protest against the regime itself, under the slogan "The people want to topple the regime,"⁵ which Arabic-language discourse identifies with the Arab Spring uprising of 2010-11 in Tunisia, Egypt and other countries in the Middle East and North Africa.

Numerous tweets and videos with this slogan were shared online and received thousands of views.⁶ Demonstrators explicitly called for removing Bashir from power using the slogan "*Tasgut Bass*," or "Just go" in Sudanese Arabic slang, which Sudanese activists adopted as a trending hashtag (#تسقط_بس). Many of the tweets shared with this tag showed images from demonstrations in various locations in Sudan, as well as clashes between demonstrators and Sudanese security forces.⁷ One post that was liked and retweeted several hundred times showed "*Tasgut Bass*" spelled out by empty teargas canisters that Sudanese police had fired at the demonstrators.⁸ Another Tweet showing a graffiti with a picture of Bashir and the caption "Leave" (see picture 1, above) was described as "[the] Sudanese Revolution in one picture."⁹ Outside of Sudan, the protests also received expressions of solidarity. For example, a group of Sudanese refugees in France demonstrated against the backdrop of the Eiffel Tower,¹⁰ and videos were shared of supporters demonstrating in London.¹¹ Tawakkol Karman, a human rights activist of Yemenite origin and the Nobel Peace Prize laureate for 2011, shared pictures of the demonstrations on her Twitter account (see picture 2, below), and expressed support for the

demonstrators' demand to overthrow the regime of Bashir that she called "corrupt, failed and tyrannical."¹²

The Sudanese regime has been violently suppressing the demonstrations . According to Human Rights Watch, the Sudanese security forces have used live fire, rubber bullets and tear gas against demonstrators, and have arrested hundreds of people including journalists, doctors, academics and members of opposition parties.¹³ These reports were confirmed by a video shared on Facebook showing Sudanese security forces firing at unarmed protesters.¹⁴ In addition to using physical force, in late December the regime decided to block social media applications, including Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp. As a result, these applications can only be accessed from Sudan via a virtual private network (VPN) connection.¹⁵

Two characteristics of the mass demonstrations in Sudan are reminiscent of the Arab Spring protests that erupted against the autocratic regimes in the Middle East. First, the size and strength of the demonstrations, which are being held at multiple locations across the country and reach all levels of the population, using the slogan "The people want to topple the regime," which for many – both scholars and activists from the Middle East – signifies the revolutionary spirit that accompanied the Arab Spring. Second is the extensive use of social media to coordinate demonstrations, and to increase awareness of the events in Sudan around the world. Since the Arab Spring, many autocratic regimes in the Middle East and elsewhere have learned to limit the potential inherent in social networking for the political organization of opposition or protest movements, but the current network discourse in Sudan shows that online platforms remain efficient tools for these purposes.

As of this writing, Bashir still rules in Sudan, and has even gone on official visits to Qatar¹⁶ and Egypt.¹⁷ The visits are seemingly intended to show that everything in Sudan is "business as usual," and he may also hope to gain support from the Qatari and Egyptian regimes for his continued rule. However, the mass demonstrations are have continued and are growing in numbers and in strength. They thus present the most significant challenge that Bashir's regime has faced in its long years of rule.



Picture 2: Tweet by 2011 Nobel Peace Prize laureate Tawakkol Karmen, supporting the protests in Sudan, from [Twitter](#).

Civil War? The rift between Fatah and Hamas, as seen on social media

Dr. Michael Barak

The announcement by Palestinian Authority (PA) President Mahmoud Abbas last December that he was dissolving the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), and the subsequent declaration by Hamas that his presidency is illegitimate, have together significantly heightened the tempestuous discourse between the Fatah movement and the Hamas movement. This tension has also been reflected in online spaces. In addition to the quarrels between the movements, the network discourse reveals that Palestinian civilians in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank are increasingly resentful of the movements' lack of willingness and indeed their ability to achieve national unity, along with a serious fear that the situation will deteriorate into bloody conflict.

In October 2017, Fatah and Hamas signed a reconciliation agreement, a decade after Hamas took control of the Gaza Strip. Despite the agreement, relations between the two sides remained tense and were accompanied by mutual suspicion. The sanctions that Abbas continues to impose on Hamas, in order to buttress the PA's governmental authority in the Gaza Strip, contribute to this tension. Thus, the PA has not transferred salaries to government officials in the Gaza Strip, and has reduced the payments for electricity that it ordered in April 2017. The tension peaked with the order to dissolve the PLC, in which Hamas holds two-thirds of the seats. For its part, Hamas expressed its protest by taking a number of steps. These included the arrest of several hundred Fatah members in the Gaza Strip (parallel to the arrest of Hamas members in the West Bank by the PA), their objection to marking the 54th anniversary of the establishment of Fatah, and their denial of Abbas' legitimacy as president

The rift between the movements has found widespread expression on social media. For example, Mahmoud al-Habash, religious advisor to Abbas, posted on Twitter that Hamas has "hijacked" the Gaza Strip, and caused many young people "to flee the reality created by Hamas."¹⁸ Hussein al-Sheikh, another senior Fatah official, accused Hamas of promoting the "Deal of the Century" (the peace plan that President Trump intends to propose to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict), of causing the failure of the reconciliation agreement, for perpetuating the separation between the West Bank and Gaza, and of intending to establish an Islamic emirate. Al-Sheikh stressed that the PA is working to protect Fatah members in the Gaza Strip from oppression by Hamas. In light of this, and because of other provocations by Hamas, al-Sheikh claimed that the Fatah Central Committee had decided to halt contacts with Hamas, and warned that Egypt's efforts to achieve reconciliation were doomed to failure.¹⁹ In addition, there were obvious efforts by Fatah members to influence residents of the Gaza Strip to launch civil disobedience that would lead to toppling Hamas in Gaza. Al-Habash, for example, called on

residents of the Gaza Strip to take to the street and confront the “coup by the Muslim Brotherhood” in Gaza.²⁰

Palestinian users from the West Bank and Palestinian diaspora also harshly criticized Hamas and called for a change of government in Gaza. Wael Mousa, a prominent Palestinian activist on social media with approximately 100,000 followers on Facebook, regularly uploads videos opposing Hamas. For example, he has referred to it as a terrorist organization that strives to undermine the



Picture 3: Cartoon uploaded by Fatah members disparaging Hamas supporters for their treatment of Fatah members in Gaza, with the headline, “The gall of Hamas,” from [Facebook](#).

PA in Ramallah and Palestinian national unity.²¹ In another video, Mousa describes Hamas as a mafia organization that steals millions of dollars each year, thanks to its trade in electricity and fuel, the cigarette taxes it collects, and aid money received from other countries like Qatar that, he claims, is channeled to benefit of Hamas members instead being used for the welfare of Gaza’s residents. In one post, Mousa stressed that the situation is unbearable, and suggested that Gazans be resourceful, and foment a civil uprising against the Hamas leadership.²²

Other users pointed to the fickle nature of Hamas. For example, some contrasted the opposition of Mahmoud al-Zahar, a senior Hamas official and hardline pro-Iranian figure, to the 2002 ceasefire with Israel with his support for the ceasefire with Israel last August on the grounds that it was a national, religious and moral duty.²³ Others wondered about Hamas’ achievements, as in this rhetorical question: “What has Hamas achieved that benefits the Palestinian cause, has it liberated even a bit of land? Has it contributed to the educational system? Of course not.” Saudi users, who also joined the criticism, accused Hamas members of living “a pleasant life in palaces” while citizens of the Gaza Strip hunger for bread, and of ignoring the good of their homeland and welfare of its citizens.²⁴

On the other hand, supporters of Hamas criticized the conduct of Mahmoud Abbas. Palestinian residents of Gaza stressed that the dissolution of the PLC deepens the destruction of the Palestinian governmental system, intensifies the division and internal rift, and separates the West Bank from Gaza.²⁵ A Palestinian, now living in Qatar, called dissolving the PLC a political crime, and said that nothing should be done that might turn the PA into “a one-man state.”²⁶ Others accused Abbas of treason, repeating the well-known claims made by Hamas and its supporters opposing cooperation with Israeli security forces, and accused him of spinning plans to foment civil disobedience in Gaza that would lead to the overthrow of Hamas’ rule.²⁷ A Palestinian from Gaza said that Abu Mazen’s harsh words reflected confusion and defeat, and signify that his regime is drawing to a close.²⁸ Another user from Gaza noted that halting salary payment is the main reason for the problems and the failure to achieve reconciliation, a dangerous reality that affects children and eventually serves the occupation.²⁹ They launched these tags: “The salary is a right,” “One who withholds salaries is a spy,” and “Abu Mazen has lost his worthiness.”³⁰

In addition to the strident voices, other voices – including those of senior movement members and residents of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip – expressed a desire to stop the endless clashes between the movements, and instead to seek national unity. For example Munir al-Jaghub, head of Fatah’s information bureau, wrote on his Facebook page that he is determined to put an end to the bad relations between the movements. “To honor the martyrs, prisoners and wounded, and protect our nation’s honor in the eyes of the world: Enough, enough!! If Hamas and Fatah are considered traitors what will be left of our people?” He stressed that this trend serves the occupation.³¹ Hassam Badran, a Hamas spokesperson in the West Bank, expressed support for this position in a message he sent to al-Jaghub (see picture 4).³²

Palestinian users in Ramallah and Gaza welcomed these positions but some claimed that implementation will prove impossible.³³ A user from Hebron stressed that both movements are engaged in ego wars and power struggles while ignoring the will of



Picture 4: Post by the head of Fatah’s information bureau documenting his correspondence with a Hamas spokesperson, in which both publically express their willing to put mutual accusations aside, from [Facebook](#).

the ordinary citizen, and should instead devote resources to eradicating the plague of corruption. In his view, the solution lies in the establishment of a neutral committee that will work for unity, with representatives from the people, or in setting the date for presidential and PLC elections, supervised by the people.³⁴ Mohsen al-Afrangi, a senior media personality in Gaza, noted that the situation is explosive, “not because of the stopped salary [payments] or broken cameras, but rather because of the level of hostility, hatred, incitement, and ever-growing disease in society.” Users agreed with his remarks and warned against descent into Palestinian civil war.³⁵

The online discourse gives voice to the cavernous chasm between Fatah and Hamas, and is indicative of the deep fault line in Palestinian society. On the one hand, it is evident that the PA is making an effort to incite the Gaza Strip by encouraging its residents to use civil disobedience against the Hamas leadership, and that Abu Mazen is determined before the end of his term as PA president to “go all the way” and establish the PA’s status as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians. On the other hand, Hamas supporters express unwillingness to relinquish control over the Gaza Strip, and give Abu Mazen responsibility for the fate of the residents of the Gaza Strip. Residents of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, who are aware of how firmly both sides are entrenched in their positions, used the discourse to reveal a mood of deep concern that the continuation of this trend will lead to a civil war that will only play into the hands of Israel.

“Spiritual Betrothals”: Iranian Women Engaged to Casualties of War

Dr. Raz Zimmt

In recent weeks, Iranian social networks have published reports about Iranian women, some of them members of the Basij (Revolutionary Guards Popular Militia), who have announced their engagement to Iranian soldiers who were killed in the Iran-Iraq war or in Iran’s more recent military campaigns in Syria and Iraq. The testimonies on this issue have provoked a wide-ranging discourse attesting to the intensity of the public’s sensitivity to the issue of the fallen and its centrality in the Iranian collective consciousness.

In early November 2018, discussion of this phenomenon began in response to a tweet by journalist Behnam Gholipour, editor of the opposition website Digarban. Using his personal account, Gholipour claimed that for several years now, “Hezbollah women” [meaning very pious women who identify with the Iranian regime] visit the military section of the Behesht Zahra cemetery in southern Tehran, and choose one of the fallen soldiers buried there with whom to establish a “heavenly connection,” meaning to become engaged to him.³⁶

Within a short time, additional evidence supporting Gholipour’s claim began to appear on social networking sites. On Twitter, an Iranian woman shared a picture of an Iranian fighter whom she referred to as “my martyr.” She asked if there were other women who had developed “friendships” with martyrs, and encouraged them to share their pictures online. In response, dozens of women shared pictures and details of their “beloved martyrs.”³⁷ Approximately a month



Picture 5: Iranian women in a military cemetery, from [Twitter](#).

later, Mehran Mohammadi, a user who identified himself as a political activist from Isfahan, tweeted about a chance encounter with a young woman in a military cemetery. When he asked her what her relationship was to the soldier on whose grave she sat, the woman answered that he is her fiancé. He was surprised by her answer, and said that the deceased had not been engaged. In response, she explained that she belongs to a group of Basiji women who become engaged to martyrs in order to maintain a “spiritual relationship” with them.³⁸

Publication of these testimonies led to stormy discussion on Iranian social media. Most users expressed shock and dismay, and some even cast doubt on the reliability of the reports. Many contended that the women who become engaged to fallen soldiers are mentally ill and suffering from necrophilia, fetishism, and other forms of deviant behavior.³⁹ Others shared mocking responses including, for example, ones relating to the ability of these women to become impregnated by their deceased lovers. One user cynically asked if, as a Muslim man, he would be permitted to marry four female fallen soldiers, and then benefit from the support provided by the Iranian Martyr Foundation, which assists the families of war casualties.⁴⁰ Even those users who felt some identification with the pain of women who testified of their special relationship with the fallen, expressed reservations about their behavior, claiming that it is disrespectful of the dead and inconsistent with the principles of Islam. One such user claimed that there are better ways to memorialize the fallen, and the behavior of these women makes the matter seem ridiculous.⁴¹

Among users who identify with opposition to the Iranian regime, this phenomena was presented as an expression of the moral and ethical crisis faced by the Islamic Republic under the leadership of religious hardliners. One response noted that this was the result of the Islamic Republic's policy of promoting a culture that "loves death" and sacrifices millions of innocent lives for its sake.⁴² Another user complained that Iran is gradually becoming a psychiatric hospital for its millions of citizens.⁴³ Several people equated this extreme phenomena with "sexual jihad" that was previously attributed to ISIS fighters who forced themselves sexually on female captives.⁴⁴

In response to the pictures of Iranian martyrs uploaded by Iranian women who attested to their special relationships with them, several other users uploaded pictures of Iranian citizens, male and female, who were killed in confrontations with the security forces during the demonstrations and riots that erupted in Iran during summer 2009. Those pictured included Neda Soltan, a young woman who was killed by shots fired by security forces and became a prominent symbol of the "Green movement".⁴⁵ In this way, users expressed their position that the victims of political oppression killed by the Iranian regime are also worthy of being considered martyrs.

Public interest in the phenomenon was so significant that even official representatives of the regime found it necessary to respond. Head of the Basij women's organization Minou Aslani strongly criticized the phenomena, while claiming she had never encountered it on a personal level. In an interview with the ILNA news agency, Aslani described the women who become engaged to fallen soldiers as deluded, irrational and suffering from mental illness that requires psychological treatment. She emphasized that the culture of martyrdom and sacrifice as

positive but that there is no connection between the martyrs and their “fiancées” and that this phenomenon is unworthy and irrational.⁴⁶ A member of the Majlis (Iranian parliament) Social Affairs Committee, Zahra Saei described the phenomena as dangerous, and called on the authorities to combat it. She noted that it is illogical for a woman to become engaged to a deceased man, and that as a member of the bereaved family she considers it a desecration of the fallen soldiers’ dignity. The culture of sacrifice is indeed a sacred value that is well-defined by Islam, and spreading deviant ideas about engagement to fallen soldiers holds them up to ridicule, continued Saei.⁴⁷

A tweet by Mohsen Rezaei, who served as commander of the Revolutionary Guards in the Iran-Iraq war, set off another stormy public debate related to fallen Iranian soldiers. On the 32nd anniversary of the Karbala-4 offensive, which was supposed to have conquered the Iraqi city of Basra but ended with the Iranians defeated after only one day of fighting and thousands of Iranian soldiers dead, Rezaei claimed that the operation had been designed only to deceive the enemy. This claim was severely criticized by users who considered it disrespectful of the dead and wounded in Karbala-4.⁴⁸

Although it seems that the phenomenon of Iranian women being engaged to martyrs is extremely limited, its widespread echoes on social media is evidence of the tremendous public sensitivity towards the issue of war casualties by both the Iranian government, which invests extensive effort in memorializing the fallen,⁴⁹ and by the general public. This sensitivity, together with the influence of online social media on public discourse creates an opportunity for the regime to nurture an ethos of self-sacrifice as part of its effort to unify the public around shared national symbols, and foster collective consciousness. However, social networking services also provide a fertile ground for revealing and encouraging extreme trends? phenomena that are ostensible side effects of that ethos, ones that do not serve the regime, and can be used by the opposition to attack it and demonstrate the extremity of its positions.

¹ Dr. Haim Koren is a former Israeli ambassador to South Sudan and Egypt, and currently a lecturer at the Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya (IDC).

² Haim Koren, "[Pathways of Sudan](#)," *Ifriqiya*, Volume 2, Issue 10, 23 February 2017 [Hebrew].

³ Amgad Fareid Eltayeb, "[Understanding the Travail of Change in Sudan](#)," *Sudan Seen*, December 22, 2018. Last accessed 23 January 2019.

-
- ⁴ Haim Koren, "Sudan: Bashir Weathers the Storm", *Tel Aviv Notes*, Volume 12, Number 16, October 10, 2018.
- ⁵ [@MohamedHnid](#), Twitter.com, December 23, 2018. Last accessed 23 January 2019; [@kaka_khalifa](#), Twitter.com, December 23, 2018. Last accessed 23 January 2019.
- ⁶ [@Mohamed_Satti](#), Twitter.com, December 25, 2018. Last accessed 23 January 2019.
- ⁷ [@wafaa_abdo](#), Twitter.com, January 19, 2019. Last accessed 23 January 2019.
- ⁸ [@RealRameyDawoud](#), Twitter.com, January 20, 2019. Last accessed 23 January 2019.
- ⁹ [@SudaneseCulture](#), Twitter.com, January 20, 2019. Last accessed 23 January 2019.
- ¹⁰ [@Winiomer](#), Twitter.com, January 20, 2019. Last accessed 23 January 2019.
- ¹¹ [@shay_n3na3](#), Twitter.com, January 19, 2019. Last accessed 23 January 2019.
- ¹² [@TawakkolKarman](#), Twitter.com, January 20, 2019. Last accessed 23 January 2019.
- ¹³ "[Sudan: Security Forces Killing, Detaining Protesters](#)", Human Rights Watch, January 7, 2019. Last accessed 23 January 2019.
- ¹⁴ [السوداني الشريفي](#), Facebook.com, December 20, 2018. Last accessed 23 January 2019.
- ¹⁵ Yousef Saba and Nafisa Elthahir, "[Sudan restricts social media access to counter protest movement](#)", *Reuters*, January 2, 2019. Last accessed 23 January 2019.
- ¹⁶ "[Sudan's Bashir to travel to Qatar amid protests](#)", *France 24*, January 21, 2019. Last accessed 23 January 2019.
- ¹⁷ "[Sudan's Bashir to visit Egypt as more protests planned](#)", *Al-Arabiya*, January 26, 2019. Last accessed 30 January 2019.
- ¹⁸ [@DAIhabbash](#). Twitter.com, 18 January 2019. Last accessed 20 January 2018.
- ¹⁹ [@rawateb.pal](#). Facebook.com, 2 January 2019. Last accessed 20 January 2018.
- ²⁰ [@DAIhabbash](#). Twitter.com, 7 January 2019; [@dr.mahmoudalhabbash](#). Facebook.com, 19 January 2019. Last accessed 20 January 2018.
- ²¹ [@wael.seba](#). Facebook.com, 16 December 2018; [@Zayna Bezzabet](#). Youtube.com, 16 December 2018. Last accessed 20 January 2018.
- ²² [@wael.seba](#). Facebook.com, 18 January 2019.; [@Zayna Bezzabet](#). Youtube.com, 18 January 2019. Last accessed 20 January 2018.
- ²³ [@jalayituh.amal](#). Facebook.com, 20 January 2019. Last accessed 20 January 2018.
- ²⁴ [@mosa_abumarzook](#). Twitter.com, 8 January 2019. Last accessed 20 January 2018.
- ²⁵ [@mattabat0](#) Facebook.com, 26 December 2018. Last accessed 20 January 2018.
- ²⁶ [@M.H.AIAila](#). Facebook.com, 28 December 2018. Last accessed 20 January 2018.
- ²⁷ [@DrHamami](#). Twitter.com, 31 December, 2018. Last accessed 20 January 2018.
- ²⁸ [@M.H.AIAila](#). Facebook.com, 1 January, 2019. Last accessed 20 January 2018.
- ²⁹ [@100003988218486](#). Facebook.com, 6 January 2019. Last accessed 20 January 2018.
- ³⁰ قاطع الرواتب جاسوس; #محمود_عباس_فاقد_للاهلية#
- ³¹ [@100004559626345](#). Facebook.com, 11 January 2019. Last accessed 20 January 2018.
- ³² [@100004559626345](#). Facebook.com, 12 January 2019. Last accessed 20 January 2018.
- ³³ [@100004559626345](#). Facebook.com, 11 January 2019. Last accessed 20 January 2018.
- ³⁴ [@mattabat0](#). Facebook.com, 26 December 2018.; [@100003988218486](#). Facebook.com, 6 January, 2019. Last accessed 20 January 2019.
- ³⁵ [@malefranji](#). Facebook.com, 7 January 2019. Last accessed 20 January 2018.
- ³⁶ [@beehnam](#), Twitter.com, 2 November 2018. Last accessed 3 January 2019.
- ³⁷ [@maraljanam](#), Twitter.com, 16 November 2018. Last accessed 3 January 2019.
- ³⁸ [@madar1348](#), Twitter.com, 21 December 2018. Last accessed 3 January 2019.
- ³⁹ [@Elesa_oland](#), Twitter.com, 24 December 2018. Last accessed 3 January 2019.

-
- ⁴⁰ [@Babak in Exile](#), Twitter.com, 27 December 2018. Last accessed 3 January 2019.
- ⁴¹ [@mahdiyyarian](#), Twitter.com, 16 November 2018. Last accessed 3 January 2019.
- ⁴² [@Toranj182](#), Twitter.com, 4 November 2018. Last accessed 3 January 2019.
- ⁴³ [@Alaki_Khosh](#), Twitter.com, 2 November 2018. Last accessed 3 January 2019.
- ⁴⁴ [@ebrahim_khani](#), Twitter.com, 21 December 2018. Last accessed 3 January 2019.
- ⁴⁵ [@gandomgoun](#), Twitter.com, 23 December 2018. Last accessed 3 January 2019.
- ⁴⁶ "Claims of engagement to martyrs are delusive, depressive and psychiatric", ILNA, 24 December 2018.
- ⁴⁷ "Member of the (parliamentary) Social Affairs Committee Cautions Heeding the Alarm Sounded", ISNA, 1 January 2019.
- ⁴⁸ "[Operation Karbala-4 was not a military deception: General Soleimani](#)", *Tehran Times*, 31 December 2018.
- ⁴⁹ For more on this context, see Raz Zimmt, [Online Monuments: Commemorating Iranian Deaths during the Campaign in Syria](#)" *Beehive*, volume 4, issue 6, June 2016.