This book is a thematic collection of articles by this author, a recognized authority on contemporary Israeli–Palestinian relations, providing a retrospective on the development of the tension between nascent Palestinian nationalism as articulated by the PLO and Islam as incorporated by Hamas. It illuminates the dynamics of a rapidly changing situation, plotting the development of this volatile region.

The death of Arafat and the rise of the comparatively moderate Abu Mazen provided the final impetus for the dramatic rise of Hamas in Palestinian politics. Hamas strengthened permanently in the grassroots by dispensing welfare to the poor, criticizing the corrupt Palestinian Authority, and providing religious solace for the misery of life. Its stunning victory over the veteran PLO in the 2006 elections has made the matter all the more pertinent. Difficult days lie ahead for those behind international attempts to bring peace to Palestine.

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