




The Ghost Warriors: Inside Israel's Undercover War Against Suicide Terrorism

Samuel M. Katz

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The untold story of Ya'mas, the secret special forces team that infiltrated the Palestinians during the Second Intifada.

It was the deadliest terror campaign ever mounted against a nation in modern times: the al-Aqsa, or Second, Intifada. This is the untold story of how Israel fought back with an elite force of undercover operatives, drawn from the nation's diverse backgrounds and ethnicities—and united in their ability to walk among the enemy as no one else dared.

Beginning in late 2000, as black smoke rose from burning tires and rioters threw rocks in the streets, Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and Arafat's Palestinian Authority embarked on a strategy of sending their terrorists to slip undetected into Israel's towns and cities to set the country ablaze, unleashing suicide attacks at bus stops, discos, pizzerias—wherever people gathered.

But Israel fielded some of the most capable and cunning special operations forces in the world. The Ya'mas, Israel National Police Border Guard undercover counterterrorists special operations units became Israel's eyes-on-target response. Launched on intelligence provided by the Shin Bet, indigenous Arabic-speaking Dovrim, or "Speakers," operating in the West Bank, Jerusalem, and Gaza infiltrated the treacherous confines where the terrorists lived hidden in plain sight, and set the stage for the intrepid tactical specialists who often found themselves under fire and outnumbered in their effort to apprehend those responsible for the carnage inside Israel. This is their compelling true story: a tale of daring and deception that could happen only in the powder keg of the modern Middle East.

INCLUDES PHOTOGRAPHS AND A MAP

The Ghost Warriors: Inside Israel's Undercover War Against Suicide Terrorism Details

Date : Published February 9th 2016 by Berkley

ISBN :

Author : Samuel M. Katz

Format : Kindle Edition 320 pages

Genre : History, Cultural, Israel, War, Military Fiction, Politics, Nonfiction

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Robert says

Every time I think there is an elite, there evolves an elite of an elite. And from them come another elite. This is depressing as I pursued a "well-rounded" strategy for so long. I want to find the thing that motivates me to perform as well as these forces do.

Amazing all the way around.

Matthew says

A riveting read on the Ya'mas, Israel's elite undercover border police forces which operated deep into East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza Strip during the Second Intifada. As the author spent a great deal of time with the men of the Ya'mas and has great respect for the tireless and relentless work that they do, this has a noticeably pro-Israel tone. Nevertheless, the level of detail of the Ya'mas' operational achievements and tactics, as well as shedding a light on the humans behind the balaclavas (a diverse mixture of Druze, Bedouins, immigrants from the USSR and Israeli Jews), make this a unique read. The book also reads like a thriller, which made it hard to put down at times. Highly recommended to those interested in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Jsavett1 says

Learned a lot about an unsung part of the IDF. The stories of each operation and battle were tremendously compelling. The book obviously takes an admiring view of the IDF, but unlike some others I've read, Katz manages not to view into hagiography. It's important to note, however, that this is NOT a book about the Middle East situation in general or even Israeli policy in particular. It's specifically about the Ya'mas, the National Police Border Guard, and their methodology and history of fighting terrorism.

James C says

Disclaimer: I put this (audio)book down about a quarter of the way in. The topic itself is interesting, how the Israeli security and special forces units work under cover in Palestinian areas and even within terrorist organizations. Some of these Israeli security organizations have units that train and speak in Arabic, and go to great lengths to blend in to specific local communities.

What I found off-putting was that the author wasted a lot of time painting hagiographic portraits of the members of these special units, especially particular individuals who (readers would soon find) were killed in the line of duty. Yes, these guys are badass and what they do is impressive, but (IMHO) the focus was too much on the men themselves rather than on the tactics and situations that they deal with.

Cherise Wolas says

Actually, the book is about 380 pages, not 320.

A fascinating look at the undercover units in Israel during the two intifadas. While politics is clearly part of this, the focus was on the men and the operations, and I found it intriguing and educational.

Randy Johnson says

I'm pretty sure there's a better book buried in here somewhere. It's much shorter and comprehensibly organized.
