

The Political Impact of Islamic Fundamentalist Bloc on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

by

Jaeun Park

Department of Political Science
Duke University

Date: _____

Approved:

Christopher Gelpi, Supervisor

Albert F. Eldridge

Timur Kuran

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in the Department of
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2010

ABSTRACT

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Abstract

This study investigates the interaction between political influences of Islamic fundamentalist parties and the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts. The author selects four salient actors, based on five characteristics of contemporary Islamic fundamentalist groups: the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, the Palestinian Hamas, the Lebanese Hezbollah, and the Iranian conservatives. With evidences of intertwined supports among them, the author analyzes the cooperative bloc between a state and non-state groups. After Iranian conservatives came to power, Iran's political supports enhanced influences of Hezbollah and Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, and then helped Hamas seize power finally. Their radical foreign policies intend to end Israeli occupation in the Palestinian territories. The theoretical model generates two predictions about strategies of the bloc. First, high political influence in each government is expected to worsen the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts. Second, due to Israel's strong military power, the expected strategy of the bloc is a symbolic war that more rhetoric and less Israeli casualties. Using cross-tabulation model, the author finds that the attack numbers are alone increased along with the high political influences, during the given period between 2000 and 2009. Their strong political power and secure cooperative bloc impede democratizing and promoting peace in the Middle East.

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1. Introduction

From the end of the 1980s, the Middle East has a slightly lower incidence of civil conflict than Africa and Asia (Gleditsch et al. 2002; Eriksson and Wallensteen 2004; and Sorli et al. 2005). Yet, of religious civil wars from 1940 to 2000, incumbent governments and rebels who identified with Islam were involved in 81 percent (Toft 2007). In addition, according to terrorism data of National Counterterrorism Center, Muslim majority region holds 78 percent of all attacks and 81 percent of all casualties across the whole world in 2009. More importantly, 48 percent of terrorism perpetrators characterizes themselves as Islamic fundamentalists or extremists.¹

There have been a number of attempts to explain why the Middle East has experienced much incident than other regions. The most prominent claim in political science field is about democratic peace theory. Less democratized Middle Eastern states have more fought a war against each other due to lacks of common norms that build trust and respect, and constrain attacks (Russett 1993; Mansfield and Snyder 1995, Maoz 1998; and Oneal and Russett 1999). Possible explanations for less-democratized Middle East have been divided three distinct groups. Firstly, modernization theorists argue that once socio-economic requisites reach certain levels, democracy follows as a natural

¹ This Muslim majority region is a set of 20 Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) countries, and 3 more South Asian countries, including Somalia, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Iraq, Pakistan, Iran, Algeria, Egypt, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Jordan, India, Israel and Palestinian occupied territories. Of total 10,999 terrorism incidents, 8,598 attacks occurred in countries where Muslim population of 50% and above. The region holds 38,411 people killed or injured of total 47,635 casualties, and moreover, attacks done by only Islamic fundamentalists or extremists reach 5,283 incidents, taking almost half the total.

consequence of economic development (Lipset 1959; North 1991; Lake 1992; and Barro 1999). Economic growth can help countries establish strong political, administrative and legal institutions by reducing people's grievances against the government and undermining the ability of rebels to attract new recruits (Collier and Hoeffler 2002; Collier, Hoeffler and Soderbom 2008). However, it could not explain less democratization in rich Gulf States with oil wealth. Rather, some scholars claim that oil and other natural resources are the resource curses, because some oil-producing states experience slower economic growth (Sachs and Warner 1995), and even develop authoritarian political systems and economies with low diversity in order to sustain personal possession of natural sources (Beblawi and Luciani 1987). In other words, abundant natural resources, notably oil, not only impede democracy in the Middle East (Luciani 1994; Ross 2001a and 2008; Collier and Hoeffler 2002; Jensen and Wantchekon 2004; and Herb 2005); but also tend to have more frequent civil wars (Fearon and Laitin 2003; Collier and Hoeffler 2004; and Toft 2007). The last group advocates that Islam itself is responsible for making the Middle East the world's authoritarian stronghold (Huntington 1991), and for much conflict in the region (Fish 2002; and Norris and Inglehart 2004). While Middle Eastern captures least Polity IV scores except for Israel, Lebanon, and Turkey, some revisit their regimes and classify several Islamic countries into democracy like Iran, which at least tend to accept procedural democracy (Evans 1995; and Henry and Springborg 2001). Others argue that secular political Islam demonstrates democratization of Middle Eastern and Muslim-majority states (Kalyvas 2000 and 2003; and Nasr 2005). Approximately one-quarter of the world's nation states, 47 countries, have over half the population adhere at least nominally to the faith of Islam.

Among those Islamic countries, 33 states (including the Palestinian Authority) held multi-party elections in varying forms: a presidential election, a parliamentary election under constitutional monarchy, or an indirect presidential election by legislatures (Goldsmith 2007).

In this light, instead of Islam itself, another factor is responsible for much conflict in the Middle East. I assert that the rise of a radical movement, namely, Islamic fundamentalism drives the region in murky circumstances. This study defines Islamic fundamentalism as a multifaceted movement to establish an Islamic nation based on the *Sharia*, a religious law. Above all, enemies must be deported from the Holy Land so as to Islamize Muslim territories. To end foreign occupation in Muslim territories is the most critical goal of contemporary Islamic fundamentalism, and that is currently Israeli occupation in reference to occupied Palestinian territories. Their enemies, the West and Israel, are easily clarified due to historical experiences from during imperialism, and since the birth of Israel in 1948. In order to achieve the goal, three practical strategies have been adopted: armed resistances, socioeconomic movements, and political participations. I choose four prominent actors of Israel's neighboring states, who not only actively participate in elections of each government, but also engage in violent jihad and socioeconomic programs. Other fundamental groups are satisfying some features, but only four involve in regular electoral process, which enables to measure their political power supported by their public. The four are following: Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, Palestinian Hamas, Lebanese Hezbollah, and Iranian Conservatives. Each qualifies necessary features of Islamic fundamentalist organizations. Those actors are united in a cooperative bloc, which provide intertwined supports in financial, military, and political

manner. The bloc empowers each other not only to hold controlling power at home, but also to gain regional hegemony against Israel and its allies.

Despite anticipations for democratization, their participations in elections threaten regional peace, specifically the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts. High electoral supports for Islamic fundamentalist parties indicate an agreement on their radical foreign policies against Israel. In other words, imposing violent jihad on Israel is presented as assisting Hamas with varying methods. However, one preexisting study (Kurzman and Naqvi 2009, 2010) argues that Islamic parties do not have significant effects on civil conflicts. Their data on Islamic party participation and performance in parliamentary elections of 50 countries matter little for subsequent violence in general. Nonetheless, I have an interest in more specific issue of more radical Islamic fundamentalist parties than their collection, and a specific regional war, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, unlike their focus on a general link between election results and conflicts.

Even though the bloc aspires to impose military resistances against Israel, members cannot rush into military operations. The bloc might recognize Israel's traditional military capability and alleged nuclear power. It is also conscious of low possibility to win an extensive war between the bloc and Israel. Therefore, its supports for Hamas include military aid, but the bloc might not impose excessively damages, which lead Israel to retaliate immediately. Rather, a rhetoric war is preferred to a physical war, and meanwhile, its armed conflict appears to cause not significant Israeli casualties. This symbolic war gives a chance for the bloc to win reputation as well as to evade direct military reprisals from Israel. Moreover, multifaceted interconnections between a state actor and non-state actors benefit from adopting an enlarged strategy, such as irregular

and unexpected guerilla wars done by transnational actors. A symbolic war and a guerilla war allow the bloc to reduce risk of triggering an all-out war with Israel and its western allies.

Empirical tests are conducted to examine above predictions and hypotheses whether a high political influence of Islamic fundamentalism might increase a degree of the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts. A dataset contains political influences of four parties in terms of public supports and seat shares and the extent of the conflicts in terms of attacks and casualties since the 2000 Intifada when UN Office regularly records the conflicts. To examine whether a degree of political influences affects the conflict, electoral results are re-categorized into low or high influence group based on the 50 percent threshold, and conflict results are into low, moderate, or high intensity group. Statistical results stress that attack numbers increase when the parties win elections, but not casualty numbers. This analysis suggests that Islamic fundamentalist parties have a great interest and influence in the conflict, but use a unique strategy of more rhetoric and less critical damage. This emphasizes the Tibi's (2008) arguments: Islamic fundamental movements embracing both ballots and bullets cannot be democratic due to their failure of building trust. Even though their military power is one determinant of electoral victories, Muslims under ruling of given groups also need civil societies, which are necessary conditions for civic organizations and democracy (Putnam 1993). As Blaydes and Lo (2008) assert, political transition is occurred when regime liberalizers who prefer democracy to exclusionary polity meet civil social elites who honor democratic principles. However, the rise of the strategic interaction between regime liberalizer and civil society elite

appears impossible, unless members of the Islamic fundamentalist bloc lose their secure positions in each government. Therefore, the bloc sustains the status quo.

This paper proceeds in three parts. First, I begin with a brief history of Arab-Israeli relationships and the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts. Then, I provide a description of five features that contemporary Islamic fundamentalists have, and introduce four actors of this study. Second, I present the bloc between a state and non-states to confront Israel effectively, and support evidences of cooperative activities among them. Also, I suggest a strategy of symbolic war reducing risk of an intensive war with Israel. Finally, the last section explains how I test my hypotheses during the period from 2000 to 2009. Analyses support theoretic models of the bloc's cooperative connections and symbolic war. Its political influences impair democratization and regional peace in the Middle East.

2. Reframing Islamic Fundamentalism

2.1. A Brief History of Arab-Israeli Relationships

Before the 1917 Balfour Declaration calling Palestine a Jewish National State, the Arab world only resisted the Western invaders. However, the United Nations issued a resolution partitioning Palestine into a Jewish state, Arab states begun long armed conflicts against Israel. On May 14, 1948, Jews unilaterally proclaimed an independent country in Palestine. Immediately, the combined Arab forces from Egypt, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon invaded Palestine to drive the Israeli into the Mediterranean Sea, but rather Israel expanded its territories to 80 percent of Palestine. To recover their loss, the Egyptian president Gamal Nasser, who overtly dedicated to Israel's destruction, had attempted to damage Israeli economy by denying access of Israeli ships to the Suez Canal in 1956. However, they faced a bitter result that Israel temporarily conquered the whole of Sinai and Gaza. In early June 1967, although armies of Egypt, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon prepared to assault Israel, the combined force was defeated within only six days by Israeli preemptive attacks, and even Israeli forces had seized the Sinai Peninsula, the West Bank, Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights. On October 6, 1973, Yom Kippur, the most solemn religious fast of the Jewish year, the Egyptian president Sadat and the Syrian president Assad jointly launched a raid on Israel. Again, Israel broadened its territories and established frontiers of Israel and occupied territories along the coast of southern Lebanon, southwestern Syria, western Jordan, and Egypt's Sinai Peninsula.¹

¹ Charles K. Rowley and Jennis Taylor, "The Israel and Palestine land settlement problem, 1948–2005: An analytical history," *Public Choice* (2006): 78-81.

Particularly, this war is remarked as an international proxy war between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. The UN brokered cease-fire led by the U.S. prevented the Soviet Union from intervening militarily and influencing in the Middle East, by rushing participants into an agreement only in three weeks. At that time, the U.S. realized geopolitical gravity of the Middle East region. Later that same year, in order to negotiate a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Geneva Conference was held by the U.S., the Soviet Union, and the UN secretary General on December 1973. Although no agreement was reached at Geneva, this conference set favorable environments for the first peace treaty between Israel and an Arab state. The Egyptian president Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Manachem Begin signed the Camp David Accords, which led directly to the 1979 Israeli-Egypt Peace Treaty. Agreeing on cooperation to create peace between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), Jordan became the second Arab country to normalize relations with Israel in 1994.

From the late 1980 and onward, diplomatic attempts to normalize relations with Israel had stabilized security anxieties, but Arab-Israeli conflict has shifted from a large-scale regional conflict to specific local wars. Rather, Israeli-Palestinian conflicts have spurred with the first Intifada, and gone through more lethal phases. Before the first Intifada, the PLO appeared to lead Palestinian nationalism against Israeli occupation. The organization, composed of varying ideological, political and military groups, was established by the Arab League in response to the Arab defeat in Yom Kippur war. It allied with Syria, and continued armed conflicts against Israel in southern Lebanon, when Jordanian King Hussein deported the PLO from his territories during Black September of 1970. To eliminate the PLO, which was accused of the assassination attempt on Israeli

ambassador to London, Israel intervened in the 1982 Lebanese Civil war. Before the ceasefire agreement in 1983, Israeli operation Peace for Galilee was launched on southern Lebanon, and it developed into the 1982 First Lebanon War, which resulted in driving out the PLO from Lebanon. During the first Intifada, the PLO took advantage of the uprising, and enhanced its presence in the occupied territories, though the uprising was not initiated by the PLO, but Palestinian refugees. On 8 December 1987, traffic incident at the Erez Crossing killed four refugees, and consequently the First Intifada, a Palestinian uprising, began from the Jabalia refugee camp. For organized Intifada activism, the United National Leadership of the Uprising (UNLU) consisted of the four PLO parties.² However, most of the UNLU leaders were arrested, and the Intifada lost its cohesive force.

After failures of the 1991 Madrid Conference and subsequent negotiation in Washington, and deterioration of the economic and human right conditions in Palestine, the rise of a radical Islamic fundamentalist escalated challenges to the PLO. Political division and violence within the Palestinian community had been intensified, and especially the rivalry was growing between the PLO factions and Islamic fundamentalist organizations, Hamas. The fact of the matter was that Israel had enabled the development of Islamic fundamental organizations to divide Palestinians before the first Intifada, and those groups became fatal threats to not only the PLO but also Israel. Therefore, Israel initiated peace process with the PLO that approved it as the only legitimate Palestinian representative, and guaranteed direct or partial Palestinian Authority (PA) in West Bank

² Fatah, the PFLP (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine), the DFLP (Democratic Front for Liberation of Palestine), and the PPP (Palestinian People's Party).

and Gaza Strip. Hamas accused the Fatah of recognizing the state of Israel, proclaiming an independence of Palestinian state in the occupied territories, and renouncing violent resistances. While the Fatah was formed to complete liberation of Palestine according to Article 12 of the Fatah Constitution³, it abandoned the original goal. As the 1993 Oslo Accord was reached, the over six-year uprising was ended, but resulted in more than a thousand Palestinian and a hundred Israeli deaths. Yet the accord did not accommodate the Palestinian's expectations, and rather Israel surrounded Palestinian areas with Israeli-controlled territories and crossings. As Palestinian's complains increased, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, PA chairman Yasser Arafat, and the U.S. President Bill Clinton discussed terms of peace process, and negotiated a final status settlement to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict at Camp David again on July 2000. Four obstacles to achieving an agreement were territory, Jerusalem and the Temple Mount, Palestinian refugees and the right of return, and Israeli security concerns. During the Camp David II summit meeting, the Second Intifada, also known as the al-Aqsa Intifada was arose on September 2000, after Ariel Sharon, the leader of Israeli conservative Likud party, visited the Temple Mount in the company of a thousand armed guards. Al-Aqsa mosque is located at the Temple Mount in the Old City of Jerusalem, and Israeli government generally bans prayer by non-Muslims visitors in order to keep the status quo.⁴ Therefore, Palestinian people considered his visit and his remark on Israeli annexation of East Jerusalem, as

³ Ariel Center for Policy Research (ACPR), [The Fateh Constitution](http://www.acpr.org.il/resources/fatehconstitution.html), <<http://www.acpr.org.il/resources/fatehconstitution.html>>.

⁴ The Temple Mount is the Noble Sanctuary in the Muslim tradition, where have the al-Aqsa Mosque, and the Dome of the Rock, which is believed the third holiest spot of the ascension of the Prophet Muhammad to heaven on a winged horse. On the other hand, one of the holiest sites of Jews, the Wailing Wall, is adjacent to the Temple Mount. Thus, this site has used to be a reason for bloody clashed between Muslims and Jews in Jerusalem.

disregard for Muslims and Islam. Immediately, the second Intifada has lasted and estimates of Palestinian and Israeli casualties are respectively 47,000 and 7,700 before the Cast Lead Operation.⁵

After the 2006 PA election, also known as the most democratic election in the Middle East, Hamas outperformed its secular rival, Fatah, and constituted the majority in the Palestinian government. Fatah, the largest party in the PLO factions, has criticized the Hamas-led government for its financial inability to pay salaries for employees and its status of terrorist organization. Although both sides reached a deal to end factional warfare and a ceasefire with Israel in the early 2008, sectarian fighting and armed confrontation against Israel erupted soon after a few months. This internal conflict between Hamas and Fatah will be treated more detailed on later section of Hamas. Meanwhile, Israeli forces unleashed a military operation Summer Rains to recover the captured soldier, Corporal Gilad Shalit. During June 2006, heavy aerial and ground bombardments on social infrastructures in Gaza killed hundreds of Palestinians, and Israel reinforced economic sanctions and blockade on checkpoints to Hamas-governing Gaza. On June 19, 2008, the Egyptian government achieved to begin a six-month ceasefire between Hamas and Israel under an agreed end of rocket fire, artillery build up and a lifting of the blockade. Despite this truce, Israeli forces and Hamas militants continuously carried on fire squad, Qassam rockets and mortar shells each other, though the number of attacks by both sides was obviously less than other periods. On December, Khaled Meshaal, the Hamas leader, declared no renewal of a ceasefire with Israel, and

⁵ Joel Beinin and Lisa Hajjar, "Palestine, Israel and the Arab-Israeli conflict: A Primer," Middle East Research & Information Project (2009): 9-12.

then promptly fired rockets against Israel. In response to rocket attacks at Israel, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) launched massive air strikes on Gaza, and this Operation Cast Lead smashed smuggling tunnels providing not only weapons, but also food and medicine. With international pressures on truce, UN called to Hamas and Israel for a ceasefire agreement, but both leaderships decisively refused to armistice. However, the Gaza War ended after Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert announced a unilateral ceasefire on January 2009. Then, Hamas also declared its own ceasefire. Even though the Gaza blockade has been maintained along the Egyptian-Gaza border, this fragile peace has remained between Hamas and Israel.

In the historical context, each Islamic fundamentalism actor has evolved unique perspectives on social and political events under its own circumstances. In meantime, Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, which has continuously reinforced since the 1967 Six-Day War, awakened Islamic fundamentalists to the needs of systematic movement on political and social reform throughout the Arab world (Davidson 2002). Although two Intifadas did not liberate the Palestinian occupied territories, it plainly signaled that the status quo was untenable. Therefore, Hamas and other fundamentalists have poured efforts not only in struggling against Israel, but also in supporting Hamas in various manners.

2.2. The Extended Definition of Islamic fundamentalism

With regard to traditional notions of Islamic fundamentalism, Islamic fundamentalism is a religious movement returning to Islamic principles. In order to

reconstruct its contemporary definition, however, additional four features are required to delineate its current activities. Five characteristics are divided into two objectives and three methods. Two goals are to eliminate external and internal enemies of Muslim and Islam, and restoration of Muslim societies (*ummah*) based on the Sharia. Islamic fundamentalists believe that internal traitors should be punished for misleading people and communities to westernization and modernization. External enemies also should be expelled from the Muslim territory, and the holy land for the Islamized Palestine state. Therefore, illegal Zionism regime, and its supporters and protectors, the U.S. and Western allies should disappear from the Middle East. Means to punish enemies are all considered as jihad. Violent jihad drives out external enemies from the Holy Land; and political jihad restores contaminated Muslim nation. In particular, political attempts to participate in elections directly contribute secure foundations to adopt radical foreign policies based on Islamic fundamentalism. While Islamic parties have relative to their starting point liberalized their stances significantly, still some parties remain revolutionary platforms favored the implementation of the Sharia, jihad, and opposition to Israel (Kurzman and Naqvi 2010: 57).

Most scholars depict an essential feature of Islamic fundamentalism as a religious movement returning to the fundamentals of Islam, especially the canonical law, *Sharia*. The *Sharia* is derived from those two primary sources, the Quran and the Sunna, and four secondary sources also provide general guidelines on Muslim lives.⁶ The *Quran* is the

⁶ Four secondary sources are as follows. *Ijma* (consensus of the *ummah*, the Muslim communities), *Qiyas* (analogical reasoning to solve a new problem), *Ijtihad* (interpretation to make a legal decision.), and *Maslaha* (public interest, a requirement for

Islamic sacred book, believed as words of Allah given to Muhammad by the archangel Gabriel. On the other hand, the *Sunna* (tradition) comprises the Prophet Mohammed's teaching and practice, and represents an example of the manner in which the Quranic principles should be put into practice.⁷ The law governs almost every major topic in the sphere of religion and daily life, private and public, personal and political, of Muslims. Particularly, Islamic fundamentalists believe that the Sharia not only regulates standards for political activities in ummah, but also vests sole legitimate means of state rule for Islamic authority (Dekmejian 1985). More significantly, Islamic polity, *Shura*, must compete with all other ideological systems and other religious ideologies because Islam is an absolute ideological system in light of Islamic fundamentalism (Alam 2007:32). In order to realize Islamization with the Sharia and the Sunna, both Western intruders and false Muslims must be purged (Davidson 2002: 12-13). Throughout the period of Western imperial intrusion in the twentieth century, the Muslim world had watched non-Muslim influences, which eroded their religion, culture, values, economy and even polity. By penetrating into political and social activism of every individual, Islamic fundamentalist can wipe away remnants of Western imperialism and erroneous information on Islam by renegade Muslims. Therefore, abolishing all secular laws and social borrowings from the West enables to rebuild the Islamic nation on securing cultural, social, and political bases (Lewis 2003).

legal actions). Oliver Roy and Antoine Sfeir, [The Columbia World Dictionary of Islamism](#) (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007): 322-324.

⁷ Anwar Alam, [Religion and State: Egypt, Iran, and Saudi Arabia](#) (New Delhi: Gyan Sagar Publications, 1998): 27-30.

Three strategies are adopted to achieve the above goals. As Olivier Roy points out (1994), contemporary Islamic fundamentalist movements simultaneously involve in three behaviors: political participation in elections; social or economic reinvestment in Muslim community; and the formation of small groups—either ultra-orthodox religious movements or terrorist groups. Three are not completely exclusive, but mutually facilitate to achieve goals. First strategy is using violent jihad to punish enemies and intruders. Challenges to false religious and political authority are inevitable to repair damages from westernized Muslim world. Islamic fundamentalist leaders advocate the duty of *jihad* (holy war) and soldiers of Allah in defense of Islam. Faithful Muslims must band together in groups for the holy struggle to implement Islam (Esposito 1984). Quran permits use of violent jihad as only defensive action to preserve the will of Allah, or as religious sanctions on the enemies of Allah.⁸ However, urgent circumstances, caused by state repression, economic breakdown, or defeat by non-Muslim foes, change passive and non-radical Muslims toward aggressive fundamentalists (Dekmejian 1985). As a result, the spectrum of jihad has currently appeared to broaden its range from protective responses to actual preemptive attacks against imminent crises.⁹ From this perspective, even terrorism activities are justified as either protective or preemptive attacks on enemies against Allah.¹⁰ Also, those radical Muslims believe the use of violence is self-

⁸ Amritha Venkatraman, "Religious Basis for Islamic Terrorism: The Quran and Its Interpretations," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* (March 2007).

⁹ Twelver Islam, the largest Shiite sect, includes jihad in seven pillars. In addition to *jihad* and *walayah* (guardianship), general five pillars are testifying *shahadah* (profession of faith), performing *salah* (prayer) five times a day, giving the *zakah* (charity), *sawm* (fasting) during 40-day Ramadan, and making a *hajj* (pilgrimage) to Mecca.

¹⁰ National Counterterrorism Center defines terrorism activities as deliberate or reckless attacks, conducted by groups or individuals acting on political motivation, on civilians/non-combatants or their property.

defensive action as a natural response to foreign intruders in their own territories. In general, territorial disputes are more likely to become more intense violent conflicts than other types of issues, and participants in the disputes are unwilling to avoid additional fighting once a war has begun.¹¹ As other participants in territorial disputes, some Arab states and groups have a propensity of hostility in this confrontation, and justify their use of violence as self-defense to Israeli invasion. For instance, Lebanese Hezbollah experienced Israeli occupation of Beirut and southern Lebanon; and Palestinian Hamas is now under the Israeli occupation since 1948. Their charter and manifesto declares that any colonialist entity or foreign power on their land is definitely expelled even by using their militant wings, targeting foreign occupation, especially Israel. Even though Iran and Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood have not directly undergone Israeli occupation in their own territories, they also recognize the importance of Palestine as a symbol of Islam and geopolitically strategic place in Arab-Israel conflicts. Therefore, Islamic fundamentalist groups justify their violent activities as self-defensive responses toward illegal intruders to Muslim territories. Moreover, for fundamental Muslims, armed conflict is perceived as the only possible and effective way to end Israeli occupation and liberate Muslim territories. From their radical perspectives, peaceful resolutions with Israel produce nothing helpful to promote peace in the Middle East, and worsen circumstances for Muslims. Specifically, the Hamas Charter articulates that an individual obligation of jihad must be continued against Israeli invasions, instead of futile peace talks. Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, which once banned using violence, announced that foreign military

¹¹ Barbara F. Walter, "Explaining the indivisibility of territory," Paper prepared for delivery at the 2000 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association. (August 2007).

assault or occupation must be terminated by jihad if it is necessary to liberate oppressed people. In the light of fundamental groups, the use of violence does not matter of violation of international laws, but rather underlies the logic of religious jihad to enemies of Allah.

Second strategy is cultural jihad, which covers every arena of the whole Muslim societies. This social movement it has focused on socioeconomic redistribution, based on Islamic economics, which plays a pivotal role in satisfying public needs of poor Muslims. Although other secular Muslim states also establish Islamic economics, this study more focuses on a tactical behavior to attain political goal. For instance, its socioeconomic program alters temporary supports into abiding cohesion to fundamentalists. Islamic economics order conforms to Islamic scripture and traditions (Kuran 1997). Economic principles, derived from the Quran and the Sunna, justify implementing systems of banking, taxation, income redistribution, and finance.¹² Two main concepts constitute Islamic economics that zakah (giving charity) and gharar (interest-free banking system). Zakah, a centralized redistribution system, is found not only in Christianity or Catholic sects (Iannaccone 1992) and Judaism sects (Berman 2000), but also in Islamic denominations. Preexisting literatures propose the club model of voluntary religious groups, which functions as efficient providers of local public goods in the absence of government provision such as Hamas, Hezbollah, Taliban and Jewish Underground (Berman 2002, Berman and Iannaccone 2005; and Berman and Laitin 2008). Given Bayat's claim (2005) that the social movement helps build solidarity in closed political

¹² Laurence R. Iannaccone, "Introduction to the economics of religion," Journal of Economic Literature (1998): 1446.

setting, the socioeconomic role of religious organizations would secure Muslim communities. For example, Shiites of southern Lebanon and Palestinians of the Gaza Strip are left behind economic systems and social infrastructures. Neither public authority nor private sectors efficiently provide necessary infrastructure and public service. Performing important social, political, and psychological functions, Islamic fundamentalists and its purveyors have filled consequent vacuum in socioeconomic development and socialization (Dekmejian 1985; Deeb 1992; and Esposito 1997). Considering that economic inequality incites people below poverty to rebel against dominant political power (Russett 1964), Islamic fundamentalism alleviates causes of popular uprisings by distributing principle commodities, public goods, and jobs. Needless to say, individuals cluster around communities offering social properties, and beneficiaries cast votes to them in reward for its socioeconomic programs. People who satisfy with public goods from religious organization are likely to support their policies. For instance, whereas the U.S. and other western governments accuse Hezbollah and Hamas of foreign terrorist organizations, they have currently metamorphosed to political parties as well as socioeconomic providers. This behavior is an intertwined phase with the third strategy.

The last strategy is political jihad to enlarge political influences. After Islamic Revolution of Iran ended authoritarian rule by the shah and implemented procedural democracy, this movement became apparent in political arena. From the Algerian Islamic movement in 1989, Islamic fundamentalists had come close to taking power through mass mobilization and the ballot box also in Morocco, Libya, and Yemen. In particular, the newly liberalized political environments in Egypt, Jordan, and Kuwait had brought

significant Islamist gains in parliamentary elections in 1990s. Even the militant Hezbollah has acquired a strong legislative presence since Lebanon's 1992 elections. In the West Bank and Gaza, the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) was fighting a determined challenge from Hamas for control of the Palestinian masses.¹³ This political movement claims that Islamic fundamentalism is the only solution for the Arab defeats by Israel, the failure to achieve balanced socioeconomic development, the pervasiveness of political oppression, and the disorienting psycho-cultural impact of Westernization.¹⁴ Political participations in institutions are realized as culture of resistance by Hamas¹⁵, political jihad by Hezbollah, and peaceful jihad doctrine by Muslim Brotherhood.¹⁶ In other words, political gains and growing influences prove the ability of Islamic fundamentalism to mobilize mass support for radical campaign against Israel (Nasr 2005). Interconnected strategies cover from violent jihad to economic, political, and even socio-cultural approaches. Multifaceted transformation enables Islamic fundamentalism to effectively penetrate into societies under their control. The ultimate goal is surely to re-Islamize contaminated Islamic community by western influences.

¹³ R. Hrair Dekmejian, Islam in Revolution: Fundamentalism in the Arab World (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1985).

¹⁴ A Nizar Hamzeh, "Lebanon's Hizbullah: from Islamic revolution to parliamentary accommodation," Third World Quarterly (1993): 321.

¹⁵ Ethan Bronner, "Hamas Shifts From Rockets to Culture War," The New York Times 23 July 2009.

¹⁶ Marwan Bishara, "Islam can not always be blamed," 19 January 2010, Ikhwan Web, <<http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=22699>>.

2.3. Prominent Islamic fundamentalist Organizations

According to the redefined features in a previous section, four actors are categorized into Islamic fundamentalism organizations in this paper: Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, Lebanese Hezbollah, Palestinian Hamas, and Iranian Conservatives. Four define themselves as those who are highly ritualistic, intolerant of deviation, and practicing norms unprecedented in their fundamentalism.¹⁷ Those radical movements are self-identified as political parties with militant wings intending to confrontation against Israel and pro-Western secular Arab nations. The birth and development of four prominent actors are deeply intertwined with Israel. Since the inception of Israel, they have been hostile against Israel as a religious enemy, a Zionism invader, and powerful military rival in the Middle East region. Other states and organizations are also considered as Islamic fundamentalist actors, but three more criteria must be met to be Islamic fundamentalists in this study. First, only political parties of neighboring states of Israeli occupied territories are taken into account. Geopolitical and regional concerns on the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts make border-sharing countries do directly reflect their preferences. Five countries, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and the Palestinian Authority (PA), share borders with Israel.

Next, only states where regularly hold elections are possible actors. The purpose of this study is to demonstrate political influence of fundamental Muslims on the conflict. Election results effectively reflect the public choice and opinion toward Islamic fundamentalist actors. Also, electoral outcomes allow objectively measuring political

¹⁷ Eli Berman and David D. Laitin, Religion, Terrorism and Public Goods, NBER working paper (Cambridge: National Bureau of Economic Research, 2008): 5.

influences of those actors. While few Muslim states qualify western-style democracy, Islamic governance *Shura* and western-style elections have been adopted. The Quran mentions Shura as serious and effective “participation with others in making a decision” and “rule in a matter [of common concern] comes out of consultation among themselves.”¹⁸ From secular democracies to constitutional monarchies, a range of Shura differs, but this study regards all Muslim-majority states, adopting Shura as elections. Above five territories are ruled by one version of Shura, but only Egypt, Lebanon, and the PA meet the second criteria, a regular election. In addition, Iran is on the list despite its geographical distance from Israeli territories, because its tremendous direct and indirect influence over the Palestinian issues. Specifically, active and incessant supports from Iranian conservatives are lifelines thrown to all other resistance groups against Israel, such as Hamas and Hezbollah. Details of its fundamentalist features will be dealt with in a following section. Due to its huge presence at the Palestinian territories, Iran is one player of this study.

Jordan is a constitutional monarchy with bicameral national assembly, which the Chamber of Deputies regularly holds elections for 80 members representing 12 constituencies. However, Jordanian King Abdullah II exerts considerable power to pass laws, to appoint Prime Ministers, Senators and even members of Chamber of Deputies. Moreover, while the parliament plays an important role, most parties even do not declare their candidates. After the Political Parties Law of 1992, ideological parties have been licensed, and Islamic Action Front (IAF), a political wing of Jordanian Muslims

¹⁸ Quran 42:38 quoted from Fathi Osman, Islam in a Modern State: Democracy and the Concept of Shura (Washington, D.C.: The Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding of Georgetown University).

Brotherhood, could be a party of Jordanian politics. Now over 30 Jordanian licensed parties exist, but the members of the IAF alone take seats as a party, despite only 5.5 percent of seats in the 2007 parliamentary election.¹⁹ Unlike Egyptian Brotherhood, it stands liberal and secular for democracy, pluralism, tolerance of other religions, and women's rights compared to other branches of the Brotherhood. Furthermore, it has opposed use of violence and extreme revolutionary movements, such as al-Qaeda and Hezbollah. It has not recognized Israel-Jordan ties, and supports Palestinian refugees in Jordan. Thus, the IAF, which is regarded as the only Islamic fundamentalist actor in Jordan, cannot be a player in this study.

The Syrian Arab Republic is legally constituted as a single-party state led by Baath Party. Elections results of Syria cannot effectively reflect the public choice and opinion toward Islamic fundamentalism actors. Therefore, Syria is excluded from the independent political actors henceforth in this study. In actual, Syria shares almost features of Islamic fundamentalist actors. Many academic attempts argue connections among Syria, Iran, Hezbollah, and Hamas. Although it does not directly call for jihad against Israel, it has never had normal economic or diplomatic relations, maintained hostile foreign policy against Israel, and allegedly allowed arms shipment from Iran to Lebanese Hezbollah and Palestinian Hamas. France detached parts of historic Syrian territories for the creation of separate mandates in Palestine, Lebanon, and Jordan, and therefore, Syria believes that its presence and support in Lebanon and Palestine is a fulfillment of an historical right crucial to its own political stability. To date, Syria has

¹⁹ Ziad Majed, Building Democracy in Jordan: Women's Political Participation, Political Party Life and Democratic Elections (Stockholm: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance and Arab NGO Network for Development, 2005).

strived to struggle for liberation of Palestine from Zionist imperialism, and for a pan-Arab unification. Iran also needs the cooperation with Syria in order to fight effectively against common enemies.²⁰ However, this study focuses on political impact of Islamic fundamentalist groups on Israeli-Palestinian conflicts. It might appear to ignore influence of Islamic fundamentalist actors in non-democratic states, but a single-party state Syria is not included from a list of Islamic fundamentalist actors in this paper.

Lastly, secular Fatah is disqualified the necessary features. Critically, Fatah shifted from initial radical approaches of liberating Jerusalem to secular and liberal policies that accommodate Israel as another state in Palestinian land. Unlike fundamentalist view that any attempt to peace talks is useless, the only legitimate party of the PA, Fatah, has begun cooperating with Israel and the West on the 1993 Oslo Accords. Ideological and intellectual foundations of the Islamic fundamentalist movement directly oppose this secularism. This study defines secularism as liberal views toward contemporary western style order and the West itself. Unlike secular ideologies, prominent Islamic scholars such as Ayatollah Khomeini, Sayyid Qutb, and Mawlana Mawdudi, view Islam as an inherently all-encompassing, total way of life with specific guidance for the political, economic, and social realms.²¹ From their fundamentalist perspective, Sharia is non-negotiable social order and indivisible prescription for human life is to be lived, and hostile to the idea that people should be free to make their own

²⁰ Ely Karmon, "Iran-Syria-Hizballah-Hamas A Coalition against Nature Why Does it Work?," The Proteus Monograph Series (US Army War College, 2008) 14.

²¹ Bahram Rajaei, "Deciphering Iran: The Political Evolution of the Islamic Republic and U.S. Foreign Policy After September 11," Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East (2004).

laws irrespective of scriptural or ideological dictates.²² Not only do secular actors not use bold strategy against to liberate Muslim society, but also adopt friendly policies to the external enemies, West and Israel. For Islamic fundamentalists, secular groups are internal enemies who behave cowardly toward defending Islam, and help enemies to operate effectively. While Fatah also occasionally criticizes Israel, it has been basically stick to Israeli-Palestinian peace talks when preconditions are met. As a result, other fundamentalist groups and Hamas have identified Fatah as emissary of Israel and the West. Therefore, Fatah and secular actors are excluded in this paper due to disagreements on internal and external enemies, and their passive resistance to enemies.

While this paper limits itself to the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, Hezbollah, Hamas, and Iranian conservatives, whose targets are obvious, and strategies are relatively well-documented, other Islamic fundamentalists share those five features. Detail descriptions of those four actors are followed.

2.3.1. Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas

The Muslim Brotherhood is the oldest and largest Islamic political group in the world, as well as the first modern radical religious movement in Islam.²³ A charismatic preacher, and the first political Islamist of the twentieth century, Hassan al-Banna, and

²² The definition of Sharia by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Republic of Turkey as well as its first president is quoted from Andrew C. McCarthy, "Turkey turns," National Review 5 July 2010.

²³ Mitchell (1969) and Armstrong (2000) provide clear accounts of the history of the Muslim Brotherhood, quoted in Berman and Laitin (2008)

six laborers, established the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt in 1928. He declared the revival of Islamic state based on Quran and Sharia by jihad against western or secular regimes. Unlike other organizations, the Brotherhood expanded its society with practical actions that raised money and built a mosque, two schools, and a social club, such as charities, trade unions, sports programs, and even owned factories (Berman 2009: 123-124). These public activities played an important role in rapidly attracting millions of Egyptians into contact with the organization and its ideology. Demonstrating its ability to deliver on promises of social and economic change to the Egyptian population, the Brotherhood linked the Islamic message to the real and practical activities, not just a set of abstract ideas debated by intellectuals and group leaders (Munson 2001). From the late 1930s, the Muslim Brotherhood was not only the most active and popular organizations at home, but also the largest Islamic group with two million members in neighboring states.

Fearing the Muslim Brotherhood, Egyptian government issued orders banning political participations in elections, imprisoning much of leadership, and dissolving the organization. At last, government agents assassinated al-Banna, in revenge on assassination of the Prime Minister. Sayyid Qutb succeeded to major ideologue, and call for Islamic revolution and the holy war against both Western Christian imperialism and Muslim westernizers.²⁴ In 1952, the Free Officers Movement of young army officers, overthrew King Farouk I, and established a republic in a military coup d'état. Muslim Brotherhood expected changes with the Nasser administration, which overthrew a pro-Western monarchy, but he returned to repress for its ideology. During the era of Nasser, a

²⁴ John L. Esposito, Islam and Politics (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1984).

cultural conflict between secularism, and authoritarianism following the military coup were the key context for the radicalization of the Muslim Brotherhood (Robert 1988; Kepel 1993; Esposito 2000; and Moaddel 2002). Since the failure of assassination attempt Nasser in 1954, it has been designated as an illegal organization, and therefore deprived of political freedom and right to participate in elections. The assassination of Sadat in 1981 for Israel-Egypt peace treaty, combined with the Iranian Revolution of 1979 encouraged Islamic fundamental activities against the Egyptian government, and Zionism impairing divine moral and political heritages.

In October 2007, the former chairman, Mohammed Akef stated that the Muslim Brotherhood vigorously opposed the idea of recognizing Israel and will remove a Zionist entity occupying holy Arab and Islamic lands if no matter how long it takes.²⁵ According to the current chairman, Mohammed Badie, the Muslim Brotherhood reaffirmed main goal of comprehensive modification, which deals with all kinds of corruption through reform and change. He was also mentioned cooperation with all powers of the nation and those with high spirits who are sincere to their religion and nation.²⁶ While the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and Iran do not have strong organization ties, his remark showed possibility of alliance with Iran over Sunni and Shiite factions. Historically, the ancient Egyptian Dynasty was established by Fatimid Caliphate, who was an offshoot of the Shiite Ishmaelite movement in the tenth century. Therefore Egyptians more receptive and

²⁵ Jonathan Dahoah-Halevi, "The Muslim Brotherhood: A Moderate Islamic Alternative to al-Qaeda or a Partner in Global Jihad?," Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs (November 2007).

²⁶ Marwan Bishara, "Letter from the MB New Chairman Mohammed Badie," 16 January 2010, Ikhwan Web, <<http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=22665&ref=search.php>>.

positively disposed toward Shiism and Iran that other Sunni Arabs²⁷, but contemporary Egyptian policies and Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak feel anxieties about a surge of Shiism in Egyptian and other Sunni Arab territories. Despite government's concern on Shiite and Iran, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood has opened the door to a deeper relationship with them, and moreover strengthened ties with Sunni group, Hamas.

Hamas, Islamic Resistance Movement, was founded by Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, an active Palestinian member of the Muslim Brotherhood in 1988 during the first Intifada. Immediately, Yassin followed the new branch procedure: build an organizational base of social service provision and wait patiently for political opportunities. Israeli occupational government and foreign aid providers left him lots of service provision opportunities: Gaza had a tremendous unfilled demand for new mosques, schools, clinics, youth groups, and the like. The Brotherhood managed to supplement local charitable giving by soliciting funding from Muslims abroad, especially after the oil crises of the 1970s initiated a flood of oil revenue from the world's economies into the Persian Gulf (Berman 2009: 129).

The 1988 Hamas Charter apparently declares its nationalist position and its goal that to build the Islamic Republic of Palestine by religious, ethnical, political, and military movements.²⁸ When a peace process and a secular Palestinian state were debated by Israel and the PLO in Oslo in 1993, Hamas turned to terrorist activities as the true

²⁷ Mehdi Khalaji, "Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood and Iran," 2009 February 12, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, <<http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC05.php?CID=3014>>.

²⁸ "Hamas Charter (1988)," The Jerusalem Fund, 17 February 2009 <<http://www.thejerusalemfund.org/www.thejerusalemfund.org/carryover/documents/charter.html>>.

nationalist strategies. Launching mortar shells, Qassam rockets, and suicide bombing attacks against Israel, Hamas represented anti-Semitism and violent movement during the second Al-Aqsa intifada of 2000. Moreover, as economic conditions on the West Bank and in Gaza worsened, Hamas seized political opportunities. Hamas enhanced their reputation by criticizing corrupt Fatah for collaborating with the occupiers, thriving a social service provision program, and conducting lethal acts of terrorism. Its honest and brave images led Hamas to outgrow its rival Fatah party, and came to a ruling party in Palestinian Authority. As a consequence of Hamas' electoral victory, Israel, the U.S. and Europe cut off the international aid, and the PA was unable to pay civil servants' salaries. However, Hamas can now aspire to win the reconstruction and to make further political gains at the expense of Fatah, and adopt terrorism in order to achieve its political goals (Berman 2009: 131-132).

Al-Banna and the Muslim Brotherhood played a crucial role in the birth of Hamas. From the early 1950s, the Muslim Brotherhood was the most important and popular organization in the Arab world and especially in the occupied Palestinian territories. At first, Yasser Arafat and co-founders of the Fatah were close to the Muslim Brotherhood, but ideological and political struggle during the late 1950s estranged them. Fatah politically called for a secular nation-state, while the Muslim Brotherhood called for one great theocratic Muslim state by rejecting nationality.²⁹ Branches of the Muslim Brotherhood had focused on establishing social service network because al-Banna's agendas are personal ethical conflict, personal piety and the eventual establishment of a

²⁹ Iftah Zilberman, "HAMAS: Apocalypse Now," The Jerusalem Post 28 December 1990.

local Islamic government, not violent armed conflicts. In the wake of the 1987 first Intifada, however, Muslim Brotherhood felt that Palestinian public needs for armed protests, and therefore launched the newborn organization for two strategic advantages. First, if a new organization successfully struggles against Israel, this new Palestinian wing could introduce the Muslim Brotherhood as world-famous Islamic fundamentalism group at home and abroad. Even if it fails, the organization could prevent Muslim Brotherhood from Israel's direct reprisals.

Article 2 of the 1998 Hamas covenant defines Hamas as a dependency of the Brotherhood: "The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, is one of the wings of the Muslim Brotherhood in Palestine." The dependence on the Muslim Brotherhood continues to date, and particularly in the case of moral leadership. Hamas itself has no authoritative religious leaders, and therefore depends on a number of non-Palestinian religious persons who reside abroad. One of them is Sheik Yusuf al-Qaradawi, an Egyptian paramount source of the Islamic rulings of Islamic law that have governed the Hamas use of suicide bombings.³⁰ Iran also fills ideological vacuum with radical movements toward Israel and the most fundamentals of Islam beyond the sectarian difference. Shiite Iran's support has obviously convinced Hamas that the issue of Shiite is far less important, when especially other Sunni states, like Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia, decreased or stopped financial aid to Hamas and Gaza.

Although Hamas began its history as an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas disagreed on that ritualistic behaviors had a higher priority than the liberation of

³⁰ Martin Kramer, "Hamas: Glocal Islamism," Iran, Hezbollah, Hamas and the Global Jihad (Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 2007).

Palestine, nor Fatah's secular way and peace process with Israel. The Hamas Charter clarifies objectives and behaviors to establish Islamic Palestinian nation. According to Article 11 of the Hamas Charter, Palestinian territory is possession of the Islam, and thus cannot be abandoned even a piece of parts. Also, blasphemy or threat toward Palestine is considered same toward the whole Islam world, because Palestine and Islam are essential elements of Palestine. Contrary to other secular Arab states, Hamas movement arose in unusual conditions of Israeli occupation, and therefore the only solution is jihad to eliminate external enemies, Israel and the West, and destroy internal enemies, secular Arab governments and Fatah. As Article 13 and 15 assert, Hamas regards all kinds of peace solutions as wastes of time and an exercise in futility, for instance of the 1991 Madrid Conference, the 1993 Oslo Accords, and Israel-Jordan Treaty of Peace. Also, the Jihad is an individual obligation for every Muslim revolutionary to liberate Palestine, and Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, Hamas' military wing, will continue to attack Israeli forces and civilians in the name of the jihad.

In January 2006, as Hamas came to a ruling party in Palestinian chamber, violent and non-violent conflicts arose with its rival Fatah party. The U.S., EU, and Israel boycotted and suspended aid to the new Hamas-led government, and finally Hamas faced internal and external pressure. Once harsh financial sanctions forced Hamas to recognize Israel's right to exist and acknowledge a two-state solution, it again retreated the agreement, and accused Fatah of involvement in an assassination attempt on the Palestinian Prime Minister. Although the Palestinian unity government began on May, one month after, Hamas' declaration of northern Gaza as a closed military area culminated the tensions with Fatah. Elected Hamas officials were ousted from the

Palestinian Authority government in the West Bank and replaced by rival Fatah members, and meanwhile, Israel immediately imposed economic sanctions on the Gaza Strip. In the meantime, the Gaza war began on December 2008, as the end of six-month Egyptian-brokered ceasefire. Israeli Operation Cast Lead and Palestinian attacks resulted in respective casualties of 7,518 Palestinians and 540 Israelis. On January 17 2009, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert announced a unilateral ceasefire, without an agreement with Hamas, but has maintained blockade of the Gaza borders.

On the one hand, Hamas was ideologically inspired by Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, and on the other hand, military strategically was impressed by Shiite revivalism not only in Iran but also particularly among the Hezbollah. Palestinian fundamentalism grew at the confluence of Lebanese Shiite militancy and heightened Sunni activism radiating from Egypt in the aftermath of Sadat's assassination. The Shiite bloody guerrilla jihad against the Israeli forces in Lebanon stood as an example of jihad in the name of Allah.³¹

2.3.2. Hezbollah and Iranian Conservatives

Hezbollah, the party of Allah³², was created in 1985 by Sheikh Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah and eleven other Shiite clerics. After the 1982 Lebanese Civil War, this Shiite group ideologically amalgamated with the Shiite Islam, and established this

³¹ R. Hrair Dekmejian, Islam in Revolution: Fundamentalism in the Arab World (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1985).

³² The meaning of Hezbollah is known, as written in Quran 5 : 57, "the company of Allah, in actual, they are winners."

Shiite Lebanese Islamic political and military organization. Two Lebanese Civil Wars and wars against Israel enlarged its military capacity. Decisively Hezbollah ended Israeli occupation in southern Lebanon where shares borders with Israel in 2000, and led to victory the 2006 war against Israel. On the other hand, its political participations have long been maintained since 1992 parliamentary election and even produced several cabinet members.

As a seminary student, inspired from Ayatollah Khomeini and the Iranian Revolution of 1979, Fadlallah stressed the loyalty to the transnational Shiite movement. Also, Iran has been a patron of Hezbollah, and closely bound since the birth of Hezbollah. During Israel's operation in 1982, Peace in Galilee operation, Iran first involved militarily in the Lebanon, and sent 2,500 Revolutionary Guard to assist in confronting Israel. 1,500 guards stayed on the camp of Beqaa valley in the midst of the Shiite population, and unite disparate Shiite groups under one organizational umbrella called Hezbollah.³³ The 1982 war was a rallying point for recruitment and an instrument for training in the military techniques and methods of the Revolutionary Guards, and indoctrinating their followers with the concepts of the Islamic revolution.³⁴ Like Iran's primary goal, Hezbollah also announced its objective as to terminate foreign occupation, such as by Israel and by the U.S. The 1985 Hezbollah manifesto declares that only an Islamic regime can stop future tentative attempts of imperialistic infiltration onto Lebanon by the Americans, the French and their allies. A recently revised manifesto

³³ Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Iranian complicity in the present Lebanese crisis," The Iranian Threat 15 August 2006.

³⁴ Clinton Bailey, "Lebanon's Shi'is After the 1982 War," Martin Kramer, Shi'ism, Resistance, and Revolution (Colorado: Westview Press, 1987) 220.

reaffirmed that Hezbollah will continue armed confrontations with Israel, despite the UN Security Council Resolution 1701, which called for disarmament of Hezbollah. Also, Hezbollah officials have been escalating their rhetoric, pledging a larger and more potent arsenal of missiles than the 2006 war.³⁵ To enhance military strength is its defensive strategy for protecting Lebanon against the Israeli aggression, and for liberating the Palestinian occupied territories.³⁶

Domestically, Lebanon had been entangled with long civil wars between the Maronite-led Christians and the Muslims in religion, society, and politics since its independence from the French Mandate of Syria in 1943. The civil war lasting from 1958 to 1990 was a multifaceted conflict in Lebanon due to varying reasons religious polarization, demographic imbalance, murky regional environments and so on. The first civil war was triggered since the Lebanese president, Camille Chamoun, tried to illegally extend his presidency. Therefore, Lebanese Muslims discontent with his pro-western policy attempted to overthrow his government in June 1958. Underrepresented Lebanese Muslims aligned with Palestinian guerillas expelled from Jordan, and began attacks against Lebanese Christians and Israel in 1975. Meanwhile, the onset of conflicts with Israel began on December 1968, when Israel destroyed the Beirut airport in reprisal for Palestinian guerillas attack on Israeli airliner in Athens. Israeli officials had believed that many Palestinian terrorists were trained in sanctuaries in southern Lebanon, and therefore created a security area to deter rocket attacks and left behind Israeli-allied Lebanese

³⁵ Mohamad Bazzi, "Council on Foreign Relations," [Expect More Adventurism from Iran](http://www.cfr.org/publication/20064/expect_more_adventurism_from_iran.html), 19 January 2010

<http://www.cfr.org/publication/20064/expect_more_adventurism_from_iran.html>.

³⁶ BBC, "Lebanese Shia group Hezbollah announces new manifesto," [BBC](#) 30 November 2009.

forces, the South Lebanon Army (SLA). As a result of the 1982 Lebanon war, Israel captured Beirut and southern Lebanon until 1985, built the Israeli Security Zone, and drove out Palestinian guerillas from southern Lebanon. The Taif Agreement ended the long civil wars, and attempted to return to political normalcy in Lebanon. To soothe Muslims' angers, it accommodated the demographic shift to a Muslim majority, and politically asserted an equal share of parliamentary seats for Muslims and Christians, respectively. From 1992 onward, Hezbollah has participated in the parliamentary elections, and even held cabinet members. In particular, the 2005 Cedar Revolution, which intended to withdraw Syrian forces, divided the Lebanese politics into two major blocs: March 14 Alliance and March 8 Alliance. The former bloc, led by the Prime Minister Hariri, calls for withdrawal of Syria, and for sovereignty over all Lebanese territories. Opponents against the former built the pro-Syrian March 8 Alliance, which criticizes Hariri bloc for pro-western policies. Shiite Muslims have substantively supported Shiite Hezbollah, a participant of in March 8 Alliance, as their representative because it has long organized mosques, schools and charities in the poor Shiite communities, with generous support from the Iranian Islamist government. As predicted, Hezbollah and its smaller Shiite ally Amal have swept the vote in Lebanon's mainly Shiite areas.³⁷ On the other hand, supports from Iran helped Hezbollah launch rocket attacks on northern Israel in retaliation for an assassination of Hezbollah's leader Sheikh Abbas Musawi. In turn, Israel unleashed the 'Operation Grapes of Wrath' to end Hezbollah's shelling in 1996.³⁸ Incessant attacks and military responses continued even

³⁷ BBC, "Lebanon confirms Hariri election win," BBC 8 Jun 2009.

³⁸ Jeremy M. Sharp et al., "Lebanon: The Israel-Hamas-Hezbollah Conflict," CRS Report for Congress, September 15, 2006.

after Israel retreated from south Lebanon in 2000. In particular, the 2006 Lebanon-Israel war drove Lebanon to fall into ruins, but Hezbollah's victory of this 34-day war made Hezbollah and Hassan Nasrallah, the Secretary General, become a hero of the Muslim world. To this day Hezbollah imitates Iran's hostile policies against Israel and the U.S.

Iran is arguably the largest and formative patron of Hezbollah, and other Islamic fundamentalist groups from the 1979 Iranian Revolution. Pahlavi Shah Dynasty had pursued westernized government, modernized economy, and pro-Western foreign policies, especially close relationships with the U.S. The Pahlavi regime of Iran, with strong ties to the U.S., also maintained close connections with Israel more than three decades from the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948. However, Ayatollah Khomeini and other Shiite clerics strongly condemned Shah's autocratic rule, pro-Western movement, and modernization reform program from the 1963 White Revolution. The Shah arrested Khomeini of high treason against the regime in 1963, and next year, Khomeini was convicted again and eventually was deported to France until the revolution. Consequences of state-led westernization, social dislocation, and moral disturbances, resulted in the rise of Islamic revolutionary movements in Iran and the confrontation between ruling clerics and the state (Arjomand 1984b and Burke 1988). Then, this cultural duality provoked large clerical protests in Iran, and Khomeini succeeded in ousting the Shah from power. The result is the Islamic Republic of Iran. Contrary to the Pahlavi regime, Islamic Iran has inherent animosity toward Zionist Israel. Incumbent Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, delivered a statement that, "The foundation of the Islamic regime is opposition to Israel, and Iran's continuous issue is the obliteration of Israel from the region." Israel is perceived as an emissary of the West,

whose goal is to destroy Islam, and therefore, armed conflict against Israel is a strategic interest on political as well as religious areas. Both public statements and religious officials continually call for not only the destruction of Israel, but also deepening Iranian support of the Palestinian as a central component of its political policies.³⁹

In accordance with its purposes, Iranian revolutionary members had maintained close ties with the Palestinian guerillas during Khomeini's 14-year exile period. The Fatah leader, Yasser Arafat, had dedicated to provide Iranian revolutionary cause with military training and weapons under Arafat's Lebanon-based guerilla network, the PLO. Indeed, the first member of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), which is now the elite military force under whose auspices the country's nuclear program is being managed, were recipients of Arafat's largesse.⁴⁰ Despite the honeymoon with Iran, Arafat aided Saddam Hussein during the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq War. Iranian leaders began to sponsor an offshoot organization of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas, which aimed the destruction of Israel and the replacement with Islamic Palestine. As a result of the Oslo accords, the Fatah became an authority, and then Iran denounced Arafat for the biggest collaborator with Israel and the U.S. In addition, Iran posed threats to peace process with its allies, Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), and Hezbollah, and consequently Iran Sanction Act was imposed from the Clinton administration. Also, Hamas adopted terrorist techniques of Iran-backed Hezbollah, such as car bombs and suicide tactics. More financial and military evidences from Iran will be demonstrated in the next section.

³⁹ Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Iranian activities in support of the Palestinian Intifada," January 2003.

⁴⁰ Jonathan Schanzer, "The Iranian Gambit in Gaza," Commentary (February 2009): 30.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is theocratic states, based on Sharia and a ruling cleric system over society, politics, and even military forces. The Supreme Leader holds the ultimate responsibility for Iranian policy decisions beyond the presidency. Candidates should be qualified by the Guardian Council, and only certified candidates are permitted to run for elections. Iranian elections reflect the balance of power between two generic factions, the Conservatives and the Reformists within the ruling clerics.⁴¹ One is the *Jihadis*, who upholds combative Shiite Islam and becomes popularly known as the conservatives or hard-liners. The other main faction is the *Ijtihad*, who adopts liberal Shiite Islam and is called Islamic pragmatists or reformists. Once the former president Khatami tried to introduce Western culture and liberal democracy to Iran, other hard-liners resisted his attempt to plant modified regime for irrelevant anti-Islamism, and anti-regime. Due to this disagreement, the conservatives appeared to defend the legitimacy of authoritarian practices on the basis of Islam and revolutionary traditions.⁴² In addition to the conservative's patriotism, an external risk, Iran Sanction Act led citizens to select the hard-liners in the 2004 and 2008 parliamentary elections. Therefore, in this context, the representative of extreme conservatives, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad won a landside victory from the 2005 presidential election over Khamati's pragmatic administration. Although the Ijtihad faction refers to relatively liberal than the Jihadis, both factions tried to cooperate closely with the Supreme Leader Khamanei, and the other faction. In actual, the Supreme Leader is responsible for the most critical policies, for example, the nuclear program. The basis of Iranian foreign policies stems from hostilities against Israel and the

⁴¹ Gunes Murat Tezcur, "Struggles in Iranian Elections," in *Political Participation in the Middle East*, 56 (2008).

⁴² Ibid, 64.

U.S. since the Islamic Republic replaced the pro-American and pro-Jewish regime. Therefore, regardless of factions, Iranian politicians have unified to fight common enemies, Israel and the U.S., because they know and defend their corporate interests.⁴³ Since the first term of Ahmadinejad, he has radicalized the relationship with Israeli by the speech mentioning the world without Zionism.⁴⁴ After an ultra conservative Ahmadinejad inaugurated his presidency, Iran has exerted profound impacts on other Islamic fundamentalist groups with its social, financial, political, and military supports.

Still, each power could not afford to achieve its goals without bloodshed so that all need to unite under the same ideology and the shared goal in the historical context and strategic circumstances.

⁴³ Mohsen M. Milani, "Islam in Iran," John L. Esposito, Political Islam: Revolution, Radicalism, or Reform? (London, 1997): 92.

⁴⁴ Nazila Fathi, "Text of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's Speech," The New York Times 30 October 2005.

3. The Islamic Fundamentalist Bloc

3.1. Clash and Convergence of Agendas

Some agendas of Islamic fundamentalist groups conflict with each other, although those participants take root on the same ideology: sectarian difference between Shiite and Sunni; and priority between domestic policies and bloc goals. First, to retain domestic political power takes the same or even higher priority over regional hegemony. Hezbollah and Hamas need more funds to build social infrastructures and sustain up-to-date military equipments. Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood once funded Hamas to build an organizational base of social service program. Iran also has almost provided considerable financial aid and military training since its 1979 Islamic Revolution. As a consequence of their economic supports, Iran and Muslim Brotherhood expect to manipulate their beneficiaries to some extent, but it is hard to presume a direct control or a veto over respective authorities, Hezbollah and Hamas.¹ Each plays major roles in incumbent government, and must reflect public opinion in order to maintain political supports from communities. Even though participants of the bloc have already pledged to support for Hamas to struggle with Israel, radical policies, such as armed struggle against Israel, might repel domestic supports and finally lose their political stance. Thus, this domestic audience cost is a critical concern of actors. Needless to say, Iran and Muslim Brotherhood cannot restrict deviation of Hezbollah and Hamas from the shared objectives. Noting Hezbollah's rapid growing independence from Iran in recent years, it

¹ Karim Sadjadpour, "Iran Supports Hamas, but Hamas Is No Iranian 'Puppet'," Council on Foreign Relations, Bernard Gwertzman (8 January 2009).

is possible that Iran just has operational influence on planning or execution in the conflict. Hezbollah Deputy Secretary General, Naim Kassem was interviewed by Iranian TV *Al-Qawthar* on 15 April 2007: “The religious doctrine which dictates Hezbollah’s actions in general and those relating to the jihad in particular, is based on the rulings of the spiritual leader in Tehran. In order to know what is permitted and forbidden regarding the jihad, we ask for and receive overall permission and only then do we carry out the operation.” Also, given Hezbollah’s political status in Lebanese politics, it might selectively involve in regional issues, if public opinion is irrelevant outside of domestic matters. Indeed, after Israel’s withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 2000, Hezbollah has considerably shifted from a rebellion against Israeli occupation to an ethnic militia and political party (Berman and Laitin 2008). Daily *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* on 17 April 2010 reported that Naim Kassem, Hezbollah Deputy Secretary General, admitted that Iran has benefited from the victories of the resistance in Lebanon, but he considered the claims that Hezbollah is linked to an Iranian system to be merely a provocation attempt.² Reportedly, Iranian Supreme Leader Khamenei decided to diminish Nasrallah’s authority and demoted him from the leader of Hezbollah military wing due to disagreement between with Khamenei regarding the organization of Hezbollah’s military wing.³ It sends mixed signals of their hierarchy that Iran still exercises control of personnel affairs, but on the other hand, disagreement infers possible clashes. Iran sometimes claims that the road to peace in the Middle East must go through Tehran, but that Hamas and Hezbollah are indigenous independent forces, which merely receive moral support from

² Daily *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, "Lebanese Hezbollah official defiant over Scud missiles, discusses dialogue," [BBC Monitoring International Reports](#) 20 April 2010.

³ Jerusalem Post, "Report: Nasrallah Demoted by Khamenei," 13 December 2009.

Iran.⁴ This issue is a tentative risk, but it is not serious threat weakening the ties for the present.

In addition, sectarian difference between Sunni and Shiite may impede building a concrete bloc among them. Sunni Muslim states have traditionally dominated Middle East, but as King Abdullah of Jordan has warned, a broad Shiite revival is currently emerged around a new Shiite crescent stretching from Beirut to Tehran. With regard to the rise of Shiite, two power axes exist in the Middle East: the axis of accommodation, and the axis of resistance.⁵ The first group accommodates Israel, which consists of the West's allies and Sunni traditional Arab states, such as Jordan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia. On the contrary, members of the second bloc, Iran, Syria, Hezbollah and Hamas, fiercely resist a Jewish state and its allies. Sunni Arab states tend to accept the existence of Israel in the Middle East, and therefore Shiite Muslims are highlighted as more radical activities by its opponents. Although neither pan-Shiism nor a unified leadership exists, Shiites felt that they have been discriminated against Sunni due to its minor status. It becomes the driving force that mobilizes Shiites along with Iran, the most significant and the largest Shiite community.⁶ On the other hand, a rise of Shiite Muslims causes demographic tension between Sunni and Shiite, and in turn, generated Sunni anger and anxiety. In the current context, likelihood of sectarian conflict between a Shiite state Iran and Shiite

⁴ Robert Grace and Andrew Mandelbaum, "Understanding the Iran-Hezbollah Connection," The United States Institute of Peace, <<http://www.usip.org/resources/understanding-iran-hezbollah-connection>>.

⁵ Mohamad Bazzi, "Council on Foreign Relations," Expect More Adventurism from Iran, 19 January 2010 <http://www.cfr.org/publication/20064/expect_more_adventurism_from_iran.html>.

⁶ Vali Nasr, "When the Shiites Rise," Foreign Affairs Vol.85 No.4 July/August 2006: 58-60.

Hezbollah; and Sunni-based Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas, cannot be ignored.

Yet, a united alliance over sects is welcome to Iran. The ultimate purpose of Iran is to become a regional supremacy in the Middle East, and even a pan-Islamic power. With regard to its goal, the distinction between Sunni and Shiite does not matter, but rather the divide is a great chance for Iran to expand its influence into Sunni area. On the other hand, Sunni Muslim Brotherhood shares two essential goals with Shiite Iran, while it seems not suitable for this bloc for its nonviolent political strategies and historical hatred between Egypt and Iran. First, adversaries the Brotherhood and Iran define are identical, that is, whoever oppress Muslims. Since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Iran denounces secular authoritarian regimes favorable to Israel and the West.⁷ Playing a pivotal role in Islamic fundamentalist groups, Ayatollah Khomeini espoused a nonsectarian and universalist Islamic revolution aimed at bridging the gap between Sunni and Shiite, and liberating not just Shiite Muslims but all the oppressed at home and abroad. The leaders of Egyptian Brotherhood have also reiterated that sectarian strife among Muslims must be ended and revive fraternity between Shiites and Sunnis. Muslim Brotherhood drew nonsectarian inspiration from the example of Iran.⁸ Second, the Brotherhood and Iran agree on both use of violent jihad toward their enemies and cordial supports for new fundamentalist groups. Initially, Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood prefers political participation, and applies the peaceful jihad only applies on Egyptian

⁷ Andrew Phillips, "Soldiers of God: Religious Insurgencies and the Collapse of International Orders," Paper presented at the 2007 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association.

⁸ John L. Esposito, "Political Islam and Gulf Security," John L. Esposito, Political Islam: Revolution, Radicalism, or Reform? (London, 1997): 54.

counterparts. However, recently the Brotherhood declared a modified stance to armed struggles that should be posed direct foreign military assault or occupation, such as Israeli occupation on Palestinian territories, and past occupation on southern Lebanon.⁹ Both Iran and Muslim Brotherhood have persistently assisted newborn Islamic fundamentalist organizations, Hezbollah and Hamas, with valuable supports for socioeconomic programs, such as healthcare, education, and banking system.

First two concerns might lack long-term cooperation, but short-term advantages seem strategically “win-win” for each other. Members of the bloc have enjoyed expected utilities. For Iran, in addition to its nuclear program, reliable allies, Hamas and Hezbollah, are politically upholding radical policies against Israel and the U.S., and militarily resisting major adversaries with effective guerilla campaigns. As Salehyan (2009: 7-8, 99) points out, transnational military groups can freely organize from Westphalian sovereign space, and therefore undertake cross-border attacks against states, the Leviathan caged by international borders. Non-state actors are possible to conduct effective strategies that cannot be done by a state actor, and simultaneously can reduce chances of counterattacks. In this light, Iran might not only evade direct military conflicts with Israel, but also avoid unexpected consequences. For example, a 49-person Hezbollah military cell in Egypt was accused of smuggling weapons to Hamas, and spreading radical ideology inside Egypt.¹⁰ In general, this kind of military cells is scattered individually, and operates clandestinely, so that to swipe those groups from harbors might

⁹ Marwan Bishara, "Islam can not always be blamed," 19 January 2010, [Ikhwan Web](http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=22699), <<http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=22699>>.

¹⁰ Casey L. Addis et al., "Iran: Regional Perspectives and U.S. Policy," CRS Report for Congress, 2010: 28-29.

be impossible to eradicate and even cause diplomatic clashes. Another example is also about Hezbollah that had been receiving significant military and economic support from the Iranian government as a means of influencing internal Lebanese politics and of continuing to pressure Israel.¹¹ A series of Israeli invasions of Lebanon to oust PLO and Hezbollah, for example, had resulted in numerous casualties of Lebanese civilians as well as militants. The UN interim forces were finally dispatched to confirm Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon and to assist the Lebanese Government in restoring its authority in the area. Cross-border attacks also provoke Israeli retaliation on allies' national territories, but non-state actors' guerillas fight alongside state actors. Because of an intertwined connection with state and non-state actors, a counter action rather might cause complicated circumstances. Considering potential conflicts, Israel and opponent governments might not undertake haste actions against transnational military organizations, although Iranian non-state allies provoke and pressure them with financial and political supports from Iran.

For Hezbollah and Hamas, Iranian stable supports transform them into hospitable providers of public goods, safe, and services, and then into powerful political parties with a ballot box. Financial supports from state donors are invaluable because non-state actors do not have stable incomes from industries, tourism, and selling oil. Considering that Gaza and southern Lebanon are especially poorest in the world, an initial fee, a club fee, or fundraising is not sufficient to appropriate funds for public services. While Hamas has its own financial resources, Israel has blockaded the borders of Gaza to prevent critical

¹¹ Idean Salehyan, Rebel Without Borders: Transnational Insurgencies in World Politics (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009): 113.

goods for redevelopment. Especially, construction materials, such as concrete and pipes, are banned from entering Hamas-ruled Gaza because those are also critical to build smuggling tunnel, underground installations, and Qassam rockets. Also, every step for being a fully developed organization is costly, for example, to recruit personnel, to train them with advanced strategies, and to purchase necessary arsenal and natural sources for rockets. Moreover, Iran's supports for military training and resources enable them to wage transnational wars effectively. An observer said that "Hamas' reckless decision to risk a new confrontation with Israel cannot be understood without taking full measure of Iran's role in nurturing, training, sustaining, financing, and perhaps directing the group's actions."¹² Given the Iranian nuclear program, Israel and the West concern about a possibility of the advent of nuclear-armed fundamentalist groups, because Iran could circulate its enriched nuclear materials. The U.S. describes Iran as the alleged world's most active state sponsor of foreign terrorist organizations, including Hezbollah, Hamas, Palestine Islamic Jihad, and Shiite militant elements in Iraq. U.S. General David Petraeus, who now commands the fronts in both Iraq and Afghanistan, stated that Iranian armed militias are the biggest threats to stability in Iraq, and moreover that Iran has started arming the Taliban.¹³ Moreover, Israel and the U.S. are anxious that Hamas will access Iranian long-range Fajr or Shahab missiles reaching Israel and even eastern Egypt, and that Hezbollah will pile up Iranian-supplied weaponry specifically scud missiles.

¹² Jonathan Schanzer, "The Iranian Gambit in Gaza," Commentary (February 2009 Vol. 127 Issue 2): 29-32.

¹³ Feinstein, Hon. Dianne. Testimony of Hon. Dianne Feinstein. Addressing Iran's Nuclear Ambitions: Hearings before the Federal Financial Management, Government Information, Federal Services, and International Security Subcommittee of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs United States Senate, One Hundred Tenth Congress, Second Session, April 24, 2008. Washington.

Therefore, Israel would use neither traditional nor nuclear power on Iran. Any small strike on Iran will spur these intertwined connections to retaliate against Israeli territory or American forces in Iraq. From this point of view, Iran-backed non-state proxy groups successfully protect Iran from opponents' retaliation.

Nonetheless, the bloc no longer has an interest in a direct or all-out war with Israel because Iran and its allies conjecture that Israel has nuclear weapons. Schelling (1960 and 1966) argues that a reputation for toughness and being aggressive would give the enemy pause and deter potential enemies for using force.¹⁴ Employing hawkish rhetoric to Israel, the Islamic fundamentalist bloc can prevent Israel from the onset of armed conflicts. The bloc does not need to risk opening a new war with Israel, one of the most powerful military forces, if this symbolic war works well. Despite their harsh verbal attacks on Israel, actual armed conflicts are hardly imposed on it. A reputation of Islamic fundamentalists has been built as competent players in the Middle East affairs, and the bloc can be perceived as successful opponent against Israel without a real war.

Reputation theorists argue that this kind of symbolic war enables accumulating a reputation by opposing superpower adversary in general, as Afghanistan Mujahedin and al-Qaeda inflated its own power while fighting against the Soviet Union and the U.S. respectively (Shannon and Dennis 2007). Hezbollah's truck bomb killed 241 U.S. Marines and has been credited to defeat the U.S. army in Lebanon for truck bomb killed 241 U.S. Marines in 1983. Hamas also gained fame as a rampant terrorist group by

¹⁴ Thomas C. Schelling, The Strategy of Conflict (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960); quoted from "The Strategy of Conflict" Mark J. C. Crescenzi, "Reputation and Interstate Conflict," American Journal of Political Science (2007): 382-396.

adopting the same strategy, suicide bombing on Israel, such as the Netanya Bombing during a Passover of 2002. As Samuel Huntington claims that the Afghan campaign “gave a tremendous boost to Islamic self-confidence and power¹⁵,” the Islamic fundamentalist bloc has also sought to take a credit for the desired action of an adversary as infamous actor through brutal challenges to Israel. Therefore, the conflict is probably aspected as a symbolic war without huge casualties, which prevents from making Israel furious to take the gloves off. Thus, for the present, it is hard to succeed in breaking this bloc.

3.2. Evidences of Cooperative Activities

There are evidences of mutual ideological, financial, diplomatic, and even military aid among four actors of this study. In particular, a state actor, Iran, maintains economic supporting Hezbollah and Hamas, although Iranian government does not declare the amount how much spent on each of its allies. As early as U.S.-sponsored peace negotiations in 1992, Iran steadily increased its support for Hamas, not for Fatah, which is recognized as the legitimate Palestinian party by Israel and the West. Arafat complained that Iran had provided some \$30 million to the rival group, Hamas. The Lebanese magazine Al-Shira also reported that Iran had been doling out some \$10

¹⁵ Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilization and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996): 246; quoted from Vaughn P. Shannon and Michael Dennis, "Militant Islam and the Futile Fight for Reputation," *Security Studies* (2007): 305.

million a year to Hamas in funds from oil sales.¹⁶ According to the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) Command Yoav Galant, Iran is helping Hamas upgrade its military capabilities, and Hamas militants are sending activists to Syria, Lebanon, and Iran. Iran's attempts also have been continued to smuggle weapons. In 2002, the Israel Navy captured the *Karin-A* in the Red Sea, which was shipping some 50 tons of arms believed was heading for Gaza.¹⁷ From the crew's interrogation the ship purchased and manned by the PA, and equipped with weapons by Iran and Hezbollah. In particular, Israeli sources suggested that the shipment was the work of Imad Mughniyeh, Hezbollah's operations chief, who coordinated closely with the Iranians. Experts admitted that many weapons on board were manufactured in Iran, but identifying markings were carefully obscured to conceal Iran's involvement.¹⁸ A Hamas spokesman conclusively acknowledged Iran's offer to train members of Palestinian security, including Hamas operatives. Also, the Israel Navy intercepted another ship carrying hundreds of tons of Iranian weapons intended for Hezbollah, and a vessel detained off Cyprus was carrying Iranian weapons to Gaza. In recent months, Egyptian government has jointly prevented the ship from crossing the Suez, and the IDF pours efforts to combat the smuggling of arms to both Hezbollah and Hamas militants.¹⁹ At least 50 percent of Hamas' current operating budget of about \$10 million a year comes from people in Saudi Arabia in September 2003.²⁰ President Bush

¹⁶ Jonathan Schanzer, "The Iranian Gambit in Gaza," Commentary (February 2009 Vol. 127 Issue 2): 29-32.

¹⁷ BBC, "Israelis 'seize Iran arms ship'," BBC 4 November 2009.

¹⁸ Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Iranian activities in support of the Palestinian Intifada," January 2003.

¹⁹ Matthew Clark, "Egypt slams Iran's Hamas, Hezbollah connection," The Christian Science Monitor 28 January 2009.

²⁰ Don Van Natta Jr. and Timothy L. O'Brien, "Flow of Saudis' Cash to Hamas Is Scrutinized," The New York Times 17 September 2003.

succeeded in stopping public and private assistance since the early 1990s, but the Saudi cutoff provided Iran with an opportunity to increase Iranian hold in the occupied land. Iranian funding increased over the next two years while Hamas continued to fill the void left by Arafat and the Palestinian Authority. According to an article on the website of al-Jazeera, "Iran is known to have given \$120 million to Hamas" over the past three years. Despite Iran's internal economic crisis, and even increased economic and military supports after Hamas lost sponsors from Persian Gulf states in 2006. Although estimates of financial assistance to Hamas vary, there is a consensus that the sum is significant. Canadian Secret Intelligence Service cites that Iran transfers somewhere between 3 million to 18 million dollars a year to Hamas.²¹ Iran has been funding Hamas operations: manufacturing rockets, and smuggling weapons overland into the West Bank from Jordan, by sea in waterproof barrels dropped off the Gaza shore by ships launched from Syrian and Lebanon and underground through the Rafah tunnels on the Egyptian border.²²

Hezbollah also appears to cooperate with Iran as early as the terrorist attack on the Buenos Aires Jewish Community Building in Argentina on July 18, 1994. The Israeli government determined that the attack was perpetrated by Hezbollah, with the support of the leaders of Iranian government. Israel has also claimed for years that Hezbollah and Iran were responsible for a deadly assault on the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires on

²¹ Matthew Levitt, "The Real Connection between Iran and Hamas," 12 January 2009, Counterterrorism Blog, 15 November 2009 <http://counterterrorismblog.org/2009/01/the_real_connection_between_ir.php>.

²² Matthew Levitt, "Hamas's Hidden Economy," Washington Institute for Near East Policy 3 July 2007.

March 17, 1992, in which 29 were murdered and some 300 wounded.²³ Iran views Hezbollah as its spearhead in the battle against Israel, and as it mentioned above, on a TV interview in April 2007, Hezbollah Deputy Secretary-General proved that suicide bombings, terrorist attacks and even artillery barrages against Israeli civilians all receive prior approval from the Ayatollahs in Tehran.²⁴ The geographic location of Lebanon coupled with its political situation easily enables Iran to ship weaponry, with Syrian acquiescence, to Hezbollah units operation on Israel's border against IDF troops. In 1996, three Iranian trucks loaded with arms were intercepted by Turkish authorities on their way to Lebanon via Turkey and Syria; and thirty Iranian planes loaded with ammunition, anti-tank missiles, and long range rockets were subsequently transferred to Hezbollah forces in south Lebanon.²⁵ Hezbollah also sends some cadres for expert training in Iran and possibly Syria, which is alleged to jointly coordinate Hezbollah's current role and political future. According to the U.S. government, Iran uses its Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) to train Hezbollah operatives in Lebanon and Iran. Reportedly, Iran certainly provided the Hezbollah with military good and services worth 25 to 50 million dollars in real-world terms a year.²⁶ On August 2009, for example, an Iranian civilian plane headed to Armenia was carrying a shipment of sophisticated fuses from the IRGC to Hezbollah. According to Israeli intelligence estimates, Hezbollah has about 20,000 rockets of all ranges, a bit more than they had before the war in 2006. Also,

²³ Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Hizbullah and Iran behind Buenos Aires Bombings," 26 October 2006.

²⁴ Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Behind the Headlines: Hizbullah leader declares: We get our orders from Teheran," 22 April 2007.

²⁵ Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Iran and Hizbullah," 12 February 1997.

²⁶ Anthony H. Cordesman, Iran's Support of the Hezbollah in Lebanon (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), 15 July 2006).

former U.S. Treasury official Matthew Levitt noted that as of November 2006, the Hezbollah Construction Company, *Jihad Al Binah*, had earmarked 450 million dollars from Iran for reconstruction south of the Litani River.²⁷ Iran's supports for Lebanon had been continued in 2007. "Iran cannot live in stability and peace when others are being targeted by aggressors" Hussam Khoshnevis, the local Iranian official representing the reconstruction drive. He added, "We cannot stand back and watch. There was an urgent need for us to be present here and act quickly to help the Lebanese people get back to normality."²⁸ As of July 2007, Iran rebuilt 200 schools, 150 mosques, 30 clinics and 25 bridges. The official budget for in 2007 was about 120 million dollars and the key priority was repairing the national road network of 510 km. Hezbollah was handed out cash to people with war-damaged homes within days of the ceasefire in August 2007. According the Israeli government, Iran funded Hezbollah at a level of approximately 80 million dollars per year, which was increased in 1997 to 100 million dollars, and currently up to annual 200 million dollars. According to the pan-Arabic daily *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, IRGC sources indicated that as of December 2007, Iran's annual budget stands at even 400 million dollars to help Hezbollah compensate for the losses during the war with Israeli in 2006.²⁹ Aside from Iran's annual infusion to Hezbollah, Iran has both invested and donated upwards of 300 million dollars to reconstruct post-war southern Lebanon, such as rebuilding schools, mosques, clinics, road and bridges at a cost of least

²⁷ Matthew Levitt, "Shutting Hizballah's 'Construction Jihad,'" Washington Institute for Near East Policy 20 February 2007.

²⁸ Kitty Logan, "Iran rebuilds Lebanon to boost Hezbollah," Telegraph 30 July 2007.

²⁹ Jerusalem Post, "Report: Nasrallah Demoted by Khamenei," 13 December 2009.

\$120 million.³⁰

Recently, Iran acknowledged its supports for Hamas and Hezbollah, which were alleged from the Clinton administration. Iran's Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani decisively admitted its supports for Hezbollah and Hamas to help them defend their countries' territories.³¹ Moreover, the deputy leader of Hezbollah states full support for Hamas, although not mentions how or given details of such support.³² In another gesture of support for Palestinians, Nasrallah once directly called upon the Palestinians to rekindle the jihad against Israel, resume the suicide bombings and even the Intifada during Ramadan in 1997.³³ In an effort to humiliate Arafat and disrupt the Oslo process, Hamas had inaugurated a wave of suicide bombings inside Israel in 1994. Hamas adopted suicide bombings as a result of Hezbollah training, which had used car bombs as an effective terror weapon in Lebanon in the 1980s. Mohammed Hafez of the U.S. Institute of Peace says that when Israel deported 415 Hamas activists to Lebanon in 1992, these Palestinian exiles received support and training from Hezbollah. In the words of Michael Horowitz, a scholar at the University of Pennsylvania, "Hezbollah was the hub from which suicide tactics spread to the Palestinians and other groups."³⁴

³⁰ Matthew Levitt and Jake Lipton, "Dangerous Partners: Targeting the Iran-Hizbullah Alliance," Washington Institute for Near East Policy 31 July 2007; and Kitty Logan, "Iran Rebuilds Lebanon to Boost Hizbullah," Daily Telegraph 31 July 2007.

³¹ BBC Monitoring International Reports, "Speaker says Iran supports Hezbollah, Hamas.," BBC 4 December 2009.

³² Anna Fifield, "Hezbollah confirms broad aid for Hamas," The Financial Times 12 May 2009.

³³ Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Iran and Hezbollah," 12 February 1997.

³⁴ Jonathan Schanzer, "The Iranian Gambit in Gaza," Commentary (February 2009 Vol. 127 Issue 2): 29-32.

The Muslim Brotherhood has long argued that unity with Shiites was necessary for the sake of jihad against the corrupt rulers and the West. From its early beginnings, Muslim Brotherhood raised the slogan of “Muslim unity is the way to restore Islamic pride.” In 1985, Umar Telmesani, the leader of the Brotherhood, claimed the convergence of Shiism and Sunnism is now an urgent task in order to comply with Islam’s mission of inviting all Muslims to establish strong ties. Another example of more open cooperation between the Brotherhood and Iran was that Iranians agreed to unilaterally release the Egyptian prisoners of war who fought against Iran, at the request of Muslim Brotherhood leader Shaikh Muhammad Ghazzali in 1988.³⁵ More recently, Muslim Brotherhood rhetorically supports Iran, suffering from international pressures on Iran’s nuclear program. Supreme Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood, Muhammed Mahdi Akef, declared he has no problem with the spread of Shiite Islam in the region and the development of Iranian nuclear technology, saying, “Iran has the right to a nuclear bomb like India, Pakistan, Israel and America.” Also, he said in an interview with Mehr News Agency on January 28, 2007: “Khomeini’s idea especially with regard to the Palestinian issue, is the continuation of the Muslim Brotherhood’s attitude toward fighting occupation.”³⁶ While Cairo has warned that Iran’s intention to expand its sphere of influence in the Middle East, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood has provided religious backing for Iran’s moves in the Middle East and its assistance of Hamas. As a part of supports for resistance groups to foreign occupation, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood gave full public backing

³⁵ Mehdi Khalaji, "Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood and Iran," Washington Institute for Near East Policy 12 February 2009

³⁶ Zvi Bar'el, "The Muslim Brotherhood - Iran's brothers-in-arms?," The Haaretz 31 December 2008.

to Hezbollah during the Second Lebanon War in 2006.³⁷ Needless to say, Hamas was established wholehearted supports from the Egyptian Brotherhood.

Considerable evidences indicate that Iran has supported Hamas and Hezbollah, distributing military training programs, weapons, financial aid and diplomatic supports. The bloc's animosity toward Israel sets a goal to gain regional power over Israel and its allies, and therefore it stresses military connections. Needless to say, to liberate Jerusalem or to reclaim the occupied territory takes priority over other issues, and this objective paves the way for rearranging the regional order.

3.3. The Occupied Palestinian Territories

The major objective of Islamic fundamentalist bloc is to end foreign occupation in all Muslim territories. In contemporary context, that is Israeli occupation in the Palestine. In other words, the main goal is to liberate Palestinian territories from Israeli occupation by helping Hamas strive against Israel. For three reasons, four participants concentrate on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

First of all, the occupied Palestinian territories are ideologically important places. Parts of the Holy Land are the places the Quran narratives took place, and endowments from Muslim and Palestinian ancestors for the Islamized state of Palestine. On the 1992 conference on intifada, participants, Hamas, Hezbollah, an Iranian delegation, and the Iranian revolutionary guards in Lebanon and Syria, agreed that the Islamized Palestine

³⁷ Dore Gold, "Introduction," Iran, Hezbollah, Hamas and the Global Jihad (Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 2007).

state should be established on the occupied territories, and coexistence must be finished even by military resistances. Iranian parliament termed the intifada as a manifestation of the Palestinian people's willingness of a united front against Israel, and therefore the Muslim world must mobilize all political, material and spiritual resources to achieve this goal.³⁸

Next, especially for Iran, Palestinian issues give geographical and ethnical excuses to justify Iran's interferences in Palestinian and Arab affairs. Iran's attention on liberating Palestine can appeal to the Arab masses, and break the sectarian barrier by cooperating with Sunni movement.³⁹ Provided that Iran is neither an Arab-majority state, nor located on the Arabian Peninsula or the Syrian Desert, Egypt and Saudi Arabia have been reluctant to Iranian ascendancy in traditional Arab states. Moreover, sectarian violence is another issue for Sunni-dominated states, in case of an increase of Shiite movement at home and abroad. Iran identifies its own strategic interests with the broader struggle to liberate Jerusalem from Jewish and Zionist regime. For example, Quds Force, an elite unit of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), is responsible for Iranian military operations, and for training Iran-allied paramilitary groups and terrorist activities worldwide throughout the region.⁴⁰ Repeatedly, Iranian officers highlighted their devotion to the Palestinian issue. In December 2001, Iranian Ambassador to Syria Sheikh al-Islam stated that, "Iran's policy focuses on the liberation of Palestinian land, which

³⁸ BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, "Fourth international conference on the intifadah held in Lebanon," BBC 16 December 1992.

³⁹ Gawdat Bahgat, "Egypt and Iran: The 30-Year Estrangement," Middle East Policy (Winter 2009): 49-50.

⁴⁰ Casey L. Addis et al., "Iran: Regional Perspectives and U.S. Policy," CRS Report for Congress, 2010: 35.; and Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Iranian complicity in the present Lebanese crisis," 15 August 2006.

was taken from Islam.” The Palestinian issue is therefore an Islamic issue. Sheikh Kharoubi, the speaker of the Iranian parliament, stated in October 2001 that, “Iran has always done its best to defend the right of the Palestinian people and will always stand by them.” One of the leaders of the IRGC, Dou-Alkader, stated in June 2002 that, “Palestine is the focus of inspiration for all Muslims, and Israel is a cancerous tumor that must be destroyed.” Moreover, the IRGC statement released in April 2002 said that, “The hearts of the members of the Revolutionary Guards are today filled with hatred and animosity toward the Zionist murderers and their supporters, and are ready for the leader’s order to sacrifice their fortunes and souls to defend the Palestinians.”⁴¹ Denouncing Israeli occupation and affirming Palestinian rights to resist the Israeli occupation, Iran has emerged an important stakeholder in both Palestinian and Arab affairs.

Lastly, Palestine might be political and military foothold to effective confrontation against a Jewish state. Gaza is a testing ground for Iranian bloc to evaluate their political and military powers whether gain regional hegemony over Israel and traditional Middle Eastern powers. In order to combat enemies, each fundamentalist organization must be in power to facilitate mobilization of trained personnel and financial supports. Fueled by victories of Iranian conservatives, members of Iranian network have actively worked against the secular regimes, by rejecting any compromise with Israel.⁴² Hamas’ takeover of Gaza Strip was an important achievement for Iran, when it comes to Iranian social, financial, and military assists have promoted members of this bloc to

⁴¹ Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Iranian activities in support of the Palestinian Intifada," January 2003.

⁴² Ahmad S. Mousalli, "Islamist perspectives of regime political response," Arab Studies Quarterly (1996).

succeed in being majority or powerful leaders as well. For Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas stimulates the possibility of controlling over territories that other branches of the Brotherhood in the neighboring countries have never achieved. For other Islamic fundamentalist movements everywhere, a sanctuary and a base camp might be provided in the Hamas-ruled Gaza. Before Hamas, Sudanese Muslim Brotherhood almost seized power under the leadership of the charismatic leader Hasan at-Turabi. He opened the gates of Sudan to the most radical Islamists: Osama bin Laden spent a few years there, and Hamas also opened an office. Sudan became a transit point for the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, for representatives of the Hezbollah, and the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. The rise of Hamas to power has offered an opportunity of locus for the radical Islamist networking.⁴³

For above reasons, Islamic fundamentalist bloc regards Palestine as tactically important place. Next chapter explores how the bloc approaches to the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts with a ballot box.

⁴³ Martin Kramer, "Hamas: Glocal Islamism," *Iran, Hezbollah, Hamas and the Global Jihad* (Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 2007): 56

4. Political Influences on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

4.1. Political Cooperation in Elections

Islamic fundamentalists have put emphasis on political jihad, even though violent resistance is still important strategy. Political participation is critical because taking control of the state will allow for the spread of Islam in a society corrupted by Western values (Roy 1994). Current elections across the Islamic world are at least partially free, although some fundamentalists were anti-democratic, and elections are not always free and fair elections (Kurzman and Naqvi 2009: Appendix 2). By providing public goods and social services, a remarkable increase in public supports leads fundamentalists to majority in the parliament and cabinet members. In reality, the victories of Iranian conservatives in 2004 and following elections have empowered Hezbollah, Hamas, and Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood with legitimate political background from domestic base.

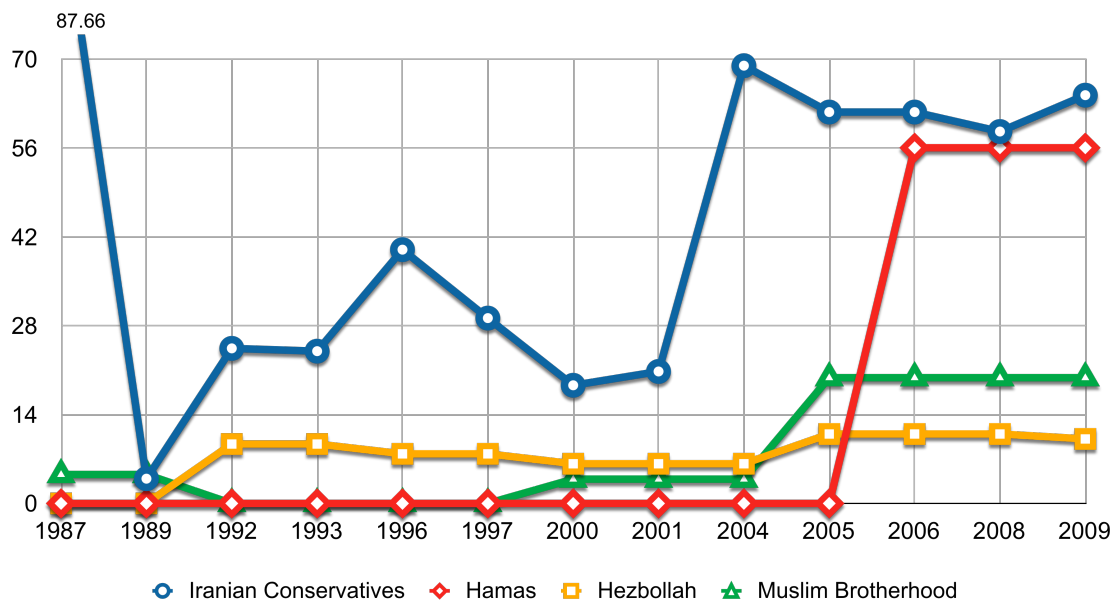


Figure 1: Influences of Islamic fundamentalist parties in elections

As seen in Figure 1, while curves of influence fluctuate before 2004, it has tended stably high in public supports for Islamic fundamentalism and seat shares in each legislature since 2004 Iranian election. Firstly, Iran raised its conservative influence over half, and then following elections in Lebanon, Egypt, and Palestine, have demonstrated relatively higher in political power than prior to 2004. Also, a sequence of electoral results implies the radicalization from Iran, then Hezbollah and Muslim Brotherhood, to Hamas finally.

First of all, with a landslide victory in the 2004 election, Iranian conservatives seized power in the parliament, when Iran faced with external crises that increased liberal movements and international pressures on the Iranian nuclear program. As the reformist president Khatami tried to introduce Western culture and liberal democracy, other hard-liners resisted his attempt that appeared patriots who defend the Islam and revolutionary traditions.¹ In addition to the conservative's patriotism, continuous economic sanctions imposed by the U.S. and the West led citizens to select fundamentalists in the 2004 and 2008 parliamentary elections. Consequently, public chose an ultra conservative, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, over Khamati's pragmatic administration in the 2005 presidential election. Ahmadinejad's fundamental view and verbal attacks on Israel were frequently delivered. In 2005, firstly, his speech declared the world without Zionism.² At the 18th anniversary of the death of Ayatollah Khomeini in 2007, Ahmadinejad launched another verbal attack. "The countdown button for destruction of the Zionist regime has

¹ Gunes Murat Tezcur, "Struggles in Iranian Elections," in *Political Participation in the Middle East*, 64 (2008).

² Nazila Fathi, "Text of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's Speech," [The New York Times](#) 30 October 2005.

been pushed by the hands of the children of Hezbollah,” he said, adding, “God willing, in the near future we will witness the destruction of this regime, thanks to the endeavors of all Palestinian and Lebanese fighters.”³ Currently, Ahmadinejad said that the Israeli raid on the Gaza-bound flotilla sounded the death knell of the Zionist regime at the annual commemoration of Khomeini’s death.⁴ Ayatollah Khamenei also blasted Israel’s attacks as a mistake that showed how barbaric Zionists are.⁵ As a patron of the anti-American, anti-Israel, and pan-Islamic rhetoric, he and conservative leaders have enthusiastically supported other Islamic fundamentalist groups. As for revolutionary Shiite movement, Iran is the only state to have taken power by way of a true Islamic revolution. On the one hand, Iran has identified with Islamic fundamentalism and used it as an instrument for gaining regional power. On the other hand, its strategy highlights formulating united Shiite Islam, even though the multiplicity of Shiite groups reflects local particularities in Lebanon, Afghanistan, or Iraq (Roy 1994: 2). The Secretary of State for Defense of the United Kingdom, Liam Fox, also reported that Iranian politicians told him in May 2009: “Hezbollah and Hamas are part of our defense policy against Israel. Hamas is not part of the Palestinian problem. Hamas is the foreign-policy wing of Iran in Israel.”⁶ After Iranian conservatives regained political power in 2004, they strive for accelerating political cooperation in the bloc.

³ Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Iranian President Ahmadinejad: Countdown to the destruction of Israel," 4 June 2007.

⁴ "Ahmadinejad: Flotilla raid death knell for 'Zionist regime'," The Jerusalem Post 8 June 2010.

⁵ Nasser Karimi, Associated Press, "Iranian president blasts Israel for flotilla attack at Ayatollah Khomeini anniversary," The Christian Science Monitor 4 June 2010.

⁶ Arutz Sheva Israel News, "Iran: Hamas is our Foreign Policy Wing in Israel," 14 May 2009.

Accordingly, Shiite Hezbollah has received more supports from Iranian conservatives that opened the door to enhance political influences in Lebanese politics. People in southern Lebanon suffered from Lebanon's fragile government, which had not effectively expelled the PLO forces, nor fought against Israeli incursions. Since the 1958 and 1975 civil wars, Lebanese crises have included the growing economic inequality, a corrupted government, and several Israeli invasions. Lebanese people have casted their votes on Hezbollah, which affords to protect with economic, political and military power. Between 1982 and 1987, Iran spent more than a hundred million dollars annually on hospitals, mosques, schools and charitable organizations affiliated with Hezbollah. With significant financial support from Iran, Hezbollah has become more adept at building grassroots support by providing free and heavily discounted social services that the U.S. that pledged around one billion dollars to support Lebanon's reconstruction.⁷ Socioeconomic program and reconstruction have taken place across Lebanon is not only solely humanitarian, but also Iran's aspiration to bolster Hezbollah and to increase Tehran's direct influence by seizing the chance to win popular approval in this political race. Indeed, Iran's supports were determinants to expand Hezbollah's influence especially in the poor Shiite districts. Meanwhile, Iran has long supported Hezbollah to win in Lebanese politics. When Hezbollah came to power, either pragmatic or conservative Iranian president congratulated Hezbollah on its election performance. In the 1992 parliamentary election, when Hezbollah-Amal alliance won 22 of 23 seats, Iran's pragmatic president, Rafsanjani, expressed the hope that new Lebanese parliament would be able to play an effective role in repairing the damage caused by years of civil

⁷ Mehdi Khalaji, "Shutting Hizballah's 'Construction Jihad'," 2007 February 20, [The Washington Institute for Near East Policy](#).

war, and in the fight against the attacks of the Zionist regime. He underlined Iran's continuing support for the Lebanese people in their struggle against Israeli-occupying regime in southern Lebanon. At the meeting with Iranian president, Iranian Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Secretary-General of the Hezbollah, Nasrallah did first submit a report on Lebanon's parliamentary elections and on the latest developments in the region.⁸ After Hezbollah earned stable public support, political leaders pay their attentions on the Arab-Israeli politics in order to galvanize Muslim public opinion and obtain moral leadership through solidarity with the Palestinian cause.⁹ Regardless of sects, Hezbollah expresses the ability and desirability of Shiite armed groups to tactically ally themselves with Sunni militants.

In the same context, the Muslim Brotherhood emphasizes on expelling common enemy Israel, not on a far lower sectarian conflict.¹⁰ From the early 1980s Egyptian Brotherhood entered electoral politics and a few of members voted into offices, but it has encountered constant objections by presidents and government. Despite partial running for fear of president Hosni Mubarak and government suppression, independents of Muslim Brotherhood increased seats in the legislature fivefold from 17 to 88, in the 2005 Egyptian election. Muslim Brotherhood has supported attempts of Islamic fundamentalist groups to exercise power by joining political processes in their countries, and Hamas

⁸ BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, "Rafsanjani congratulates Lebanese Hezbollah leader on election performance," BBC 13 October 1992.

⁹ Robert Grace and Andrew Mandelbaum, "Understanding the Iran-Hezbollah Connection," United States Institute of Peace, 19 January 2010
<<http://www.usip.org/resources/understanding-iran-hezbollah-connection>>.

¹⁰ Douglas Farah, "Hamas, Hezbollah-And the Muslim Brotherhood?," 14 May 2009, Counterterrorism Blog, 23 March 2010
<http://counterterrorismblog.org/2009/05/hamas_hezbollah-and_the_muslim.php>.

achieved this political goal at last. Hamas' takeover of Gaza Strip was the region's first example of the Muslim Brotherhood's governmental control of a contiguous territory and its population.¹¹ At the same time, it has provided various resistance movements against foreign occupation, such as Hamas, Hezbollah, the Islamist Iraqi resistance groups.¹²

Finally, Hamas has controlled over the Gaza Strip. Like southern Lebanon, neither governments nor markets perform effectively in the Gaza Strip. In addition to energetic resistance against Israel, its social program satisfies upset Palestinians with valuable local public goods and service.¹³ Given that Hamas suffers from budget deficits, another sponsor might back it up, paying salaries for individuals and investing in new facilities. Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood was mainly offered Hamas a broad network of mosques, schools, hospitals, charities, trade unions, and even factories. Now Iran and Hezbollah are jointly supporting for Hamas. As early as Ramadan in 1997, Nasrallah urged Palestinians to execute their leaders, claiming that Fatah and PLO betrayed Palestine and Jerusalem.¹⁴ On the other hand, Hamas' anti-corruption image was apparently successful alternative for widespread corruption of Fatah. From this time, Fatah continued to lose ground to Hamas in the court of Palestinian public opinion. The death of Yasser Arafat in 2004, combined with powerless PLO, dramatically changed the Palestinian political landscape. Violence between Palestinians and Israelis despite peace initiatives, ineffective governance, and an elusive political solution to the Israeli-

¹¹ Moshe Yaalon, "Iran's Race for Regional Supremacy," Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs 2008: 8.

¹² Marwan Bishara, "Islam can not always be blamed," 19 January 2010, Ikhwan Web, <<http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=22699>>.

¹³ Eli Berman and David D. Laitin, Religion, Terrorism and Public Goods, NBER working paper (Cambridge: National Bureau of Economic Research, 2008): 1.

¹⁴ Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Iran and Hezbollah," 12 February 1997.

Palestinian conflict prompted Palestinians to opt for change.¹⁵ Palestinians had sought more confident aegis shielding from the armed conflicts with Israelis and effective government solving economic difficulties. Financial supports given from three preceding sponsors do enhance capacity of Hamas for playing a role of public officers instead of Fatah. Increased reputation of Hamas leads Gaza people to be bound with a Hamas state, which distributes public goods, and therefore Hamas can consolidate Islamic fundamentalism over the Gaza Strip. In reality, funded by donations from the Muslims world and Iran, Hamas has promised 52 million dollars in emergency relief, including 1,300 dollars for a death in the family, 650 dollars for an injury, 5,200 dollars for a destroyed house and 2,600 dollars for a damaged house.¹⁶ Promptly, the Gaza Reconstruction Headquarters was established in Tehran after the 22-day war between Israel and Hamas. Iranian vice president Ali Saeedlou said that the organization plans to “build 1,000 houses, 10 schools and five mosques, and reconstruct 500 shops, a hospital and a university.”¹⁷ Meanwhile, Iran sent a cargo plane filled with 50 tons of relief assistance to Egypt to be sent on to Gaza, and a ship carrying 2,000 tons of medicine, food and clothing to Palestinians in Gaza. The vessel, however, was intercepted and forced by the Israeli Navy to change route toward an Egyptian port, Ahmas Navabi, head of the humanitarian aid group sponsoring the ship, reported on Iran’s state television. Currently, the Israeli Navy unleashed a military operation Sea Breeze, attacking an aid flotilla heading to Gaza on the international waters of the Mediterranean Sea on 31 May

¹⁵ Aaron D. Pina, "Palestinian Elections," CRS Report for Congress, February 9, 2006.

¹⁶ Associated Press, "Hamas declares victory, Control over Gaza Strip," Fox News 23 January 2009.

¹⁷ Damien McElroy, "Iran vows to pay for Gaza aid as children return to UN schools," Telegraph 24 January 2009.

2010.¹⁸ Fearing of Iran's goal to ensure that its ally Hamas retains influence in Gaza, Israel refused a huge reconstructions program from Iran and direct transfer to Hamas. Gaza people have become more hostile to Israel, and have no choice but to rely on Hamas, which solely contributes social goods, and its allies Iran, Hezbollah, Egyptian Brotherhood, under the circumstance.

Political ties among Islamic fundamentalist groups consolidate the bloc at home and abroad. The rise of the bloc empowered each organization to gain grassroots supports and expand political influences. With *financial* aid from other members of the bloc, Hamas and Hezbollah could afford a *social* role of an economic provider to serve public goods and social services. Beneficiaries from those socioeconomic programs by Hamas and Hezbollah give them political supports, and in turn they might attain more *political* gains in parliament. Other two fundamentalist groups could increase their political influences: Iranian conservatives by overcoming external crisis, economic sanctions on its nuclear program; and Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood by experiencing internal crisis, government suppression on activities. At last, four prominent actors adamantly commit to oppose an Israeli state with political and *military* means. This bloc intends to diminish or demolish Israeli power in Palestine and the Middle East. Thus, all supports aim at the conflict between Israel and Palestine. The following section indicates how the influence of Islamic fundamentalist bloc impacts on Israeli-Palestinian conflicts.

¹⁸ Glenn Kessler, "Israel gives its account of raid on aid ship headed for Gaza," The Washington Post 4 June 2010.

4.2. Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

As seen in section 2.1, after the birth of Israel in 1948, Arab states had allied and fought against Israel to restore Palestinian territories. With historical hostility against Israel, Jewish culture and religion are extremely incompatible with Islam. Every filed of Jews conflicts with Muslims. As Israel expanded its territories into Arab states, Muslims exploded with anger. Arab-Israeli conflicts have long continued, and now focused on Israeli-Palestinian conflicts. Some Muslim majority states believe that Palestine is stolen by Israel. In particular, Iran has not recognized Israel as a nation, but illegal Zionist regime. Therefore, Iran decided to help Palestinian Hamas strive for their right to restore land against Israel. Not only this ideological reason, but also more practical objectives exist. Non-Arabic Iran could take part in Arab affairs and expand Shiite influences in Sunni dominant areas. Supporting Khomeini's claim of to liberate all oppressed people, Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood also asserts to end foreign occupation in Middle East. Even though the Brotherhood removed reference of jihad from the platform, its new president, Mohammed Badie known as a conservative figure, argues ideological outreach and necessity of violent jihad. Ideological hostility toward Judaism and Jews justify the use of violence by Islamic fundamentalist groups.

Moreover, historical experiences of Western imperialism and Israeli occupations makes Muslims hostile Israel and its Western allies, who possibly begin to destroy Islamic culture, values, traditions and even nation. Hezbollah underwent several wars with Israel from the 1982 Lebanon war, and therefore hostile relations have not been terminated. Hamas stipulates in its Charter that Jihad is an individual obligation to liberate Palestine, and should be continued to attack Israeli forces and civilians. It views

the peace process as abandonment of a religious right of Islamic territories, and as wastes of time because all peace solutions have not brought peace. Regardless of agreements between some Arab states and Israel, those four groups have also continued to oppose normalization of relation. The only possible way for fundamentalists to establish peace in Middle East is to drive out Israel from Palestinian territories by using violence in the name of Allah. Iran, Muslim Brotherhood, and Hezbollah have reasons to use violence in order to liberate Palestine from Israeli occupation, to consolidate Islamic fundamentalist bloc against Israel, and to prevent further expansion of Israeli influences in the Middle East.

In the meantime, Israel also uses violence to end armed conflicts and terrorist attacks against Israeli territories and its residents. Occasionally, Israel unleashes military operations when it views situations as imminent threats. However, fundamentalist groups understand those responses as preventive attacks without sufficient evidences, so that justify their use of violence as self-defense. They believe that using militant ways do not matter, and therefore their parties politically support radical strategies and armed conflicts to Israel.

This section examines how empirically political influences of Islamic fundamentalist parties have affected the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts in terms of attacks and casualties. As the parties gain political power in each legislature enough to cooperate with other groups at the governmental level, they baldly voice radical strategies against Israel, and adopt favorable policies to Hamas. Due to increased political and military supports for Hamas, the conflicts yield more casualties and attacks. These arguments are stated explicitly in the following three hypotheses:

H₁ = If public supports for Islamic fundamentalist parties are high, Israeli casualties of the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts increase.

H₂ = If public supports for Islamic fundamentalist parties are high, Palestinian casualties of the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts increase.

H₃ = If public supports for Islamic fundamentalist parties are high, the total number of attacks by Israelis and Palestinian increases.

This hypothesis establishes the expected quantitative relation between the political influences and the conflicts. The next section details the data, variables, method and analysis of the relation.

4.2.1. Data and Analysis

A cross tabulation and a chi-square test are used to verify the above hypotheses. One of original objectives of the model was to figure out which factor has greater explanatory power among four fundamental actors. However, while negative binomial regression tests were conducted, multicollinearity problems occurred and dropped some independent variables. Therefore, instead of regression tests, a cross tabulation with chi-square test was adopted, which is the best option at that time. Cross tabulation shows association of an independent variable in rows and a dependent variable in columns, and chi-square tests are required to assess the goodness of fit between observed results and theories, even though it did not show a critical factor determining the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts. When chi-square value is high, and p value is lower than 0.05, this hypothesis will not statistically rejected. Both independent and dependent variables are re-categorized to arrange in tabular form.

The data contain observations from the 2000 Intifada to 2009. Three independent variables and four dependent variables are set. Independent variables follow: Israeli, Palestinian casualties, and the total number of attacks done by both Israel and Palestine. Total number of Palestinian and Israeli casualties monthly counts injured and killed due to both direct conflict and internal violence in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and Israeli territories. Casualties and incidents datasets, ranging from the 2000 second Intifada to 2009, are retrieved from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs occupied Palestinian territory (UN OCHA oPt). Original datasets on the conflicts span the years 1987 through January 2010, and Israeli human right organization, B'TSELEM, and Palestine Red Crescent Society provided casualties and attacks pre-second Intifada. However, numbers of injured people are missing prior to the second Intifada, and electoral outcomes do not cover 2010, so in effect the datasets only contain data after the second Intifada to December 2009. Variables from raw data of the conflicts, *attack*, *isrtotal*, and *paltotal*, are manipulated to *attack3*, *isrtotal3*, and *paltotal3*. Frequency of casualties and incidents are divided by around 33 percent. The measure has the range of 0 (low intensity), 1 (moderate intensity) to 2 (high intensity). Actual range of *attack3*, *isrtotal3*, and *paltotal3*, are 0 to 191, 9 to 6953, and 0 to 783, respectively.

Respective rates of public support and seat shares for the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas, Hezbollah, and the Iranian conservatives are dependent variables. Two types of elections are included that parliamentary and presidential election. The dataset assumes that political parties hold same influences from the previous elections and the forthcoming one, because there is no survey on public supports for those four parties inter-elections periods. A degree of popularity of Islamic fundamentalism is calculated by

the proportion of seats in case of parliamentary elections on the one hand, and by the percent of votes in case of presidential elections on the other hand. Then, to examine whether a degree of public supports or seat shares affects the conflict, electoral results are dichotomized to 0 and 1. The processed variables are *dummb* (a dummy of Muslim Brotherhood), *dumhms* (a dummy of Hamas), *dumhzb* (a dummy of Hezbollah), and *dumirc* (a dummy of Iranian conservatives). Each indicates that political majority or high influences in a legislature, when each takes the value of 1. Influence is coded as 1, only if rates of public support and seat share meet a 50 percent threshold or higher. Reaching an absolute majority theoretically means no opponents for passing legislations to allocate budget or resources to the conflict with Israel. Otherwise, a rate of public support or seat share is coded as 0, which shows low influence on passing bills or making critical decisions. Hezbollah is an exception, however, because seat allotment of Lebanese legislature is split into Muslims and Christians evenly, based on the 1989 Taif agreement. Among 64 seats Muslim factions have, for 27 seats are assigned to Shiites. According to the Taif agreement for equal representation of Muslims and Christians, Hezbollah's opinion will be reflected to a decision of the whole parliament, if Hezbollah gain a large part of Shiite factions. Therefore, Hezbollah's influence is coded as 1, when it wins the half of 27 seats (14 seats).

Predictions of statistical results are following. The column of low influence (value is 0 of independent variables) might maintain descending numbers of attacks and casualties. The other column of high influence (value is 1 of independent variables) might show an ascending flow of numbers. That is, numbers will increase from top to bottom, in each column coded as 1, because higher political influence causes more violent

conflict in terms of attack numbers and casualties. On the other hand, numbers will decrease from top to bottom in columns coded as 0, due to lower influences making conflicts less violent. Test means that fundamental parties expand their political influences, and as a result conflicts become more violent in terms of attack numbers and casualties. The results of the analyses are reported in Table 1. 2. and 3. H₁ and H₂ do not demonstrate a specific pattern matching the above predictions. H₃ only complies with this rule, and values of chi-square are zero, all lower than 5 percent: If public supports for Islamic fundamentalism are high, the total number of attacks by Israelis and Palestinian increases. That is to say, this hypothesis can be accepted as a significant hypothesis, and only has an explanatory power for the model.

Islamic fundamentalist parties do have an influence on the number of incidents done by Israelis and Palestinians. High public supports and political influences of Islamic fundamentalist parties might worsen the conflicts, because they believe that peace talks does not establish peace, but to use of violence is more likely to bring forward peace in the Middle East. As seen in Figure 2, total attack numbers after 2005 are high in general, when it compares with attack numbers prior to 2005. Specifically, 2005 is the year when

Table 1: Summary of tabulation of attack3 by 4 party variables

attack3		DUMMB		DUMHMS		DUMHZB		DUMIRC		Total
		0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	
0	freq	26	0	26	0	25	1	19	7	26
	%	41.94	0.00	41.27	0.00	39.06	2.08	47.50	9.72	23.21
1	freq	32	7	32	7	30	9	21	18	39
	%	51.61	14.00	50.79	14.29	46.88	18.75	52.50	25.00	34.82
2	freq	4	43	5	42	9	38	0	47	47
	%	6.45	86.00	7.94	85.71	14.06	79.17	0.00	65.28	41.96
Total		62	50	63	49	64	48	40	72	112
		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100
Chi ² (2) / Pr		73.9506 / 0.000		70.5049 / 0.000		50.0917 / 0.000		47.5043 / 0.000		

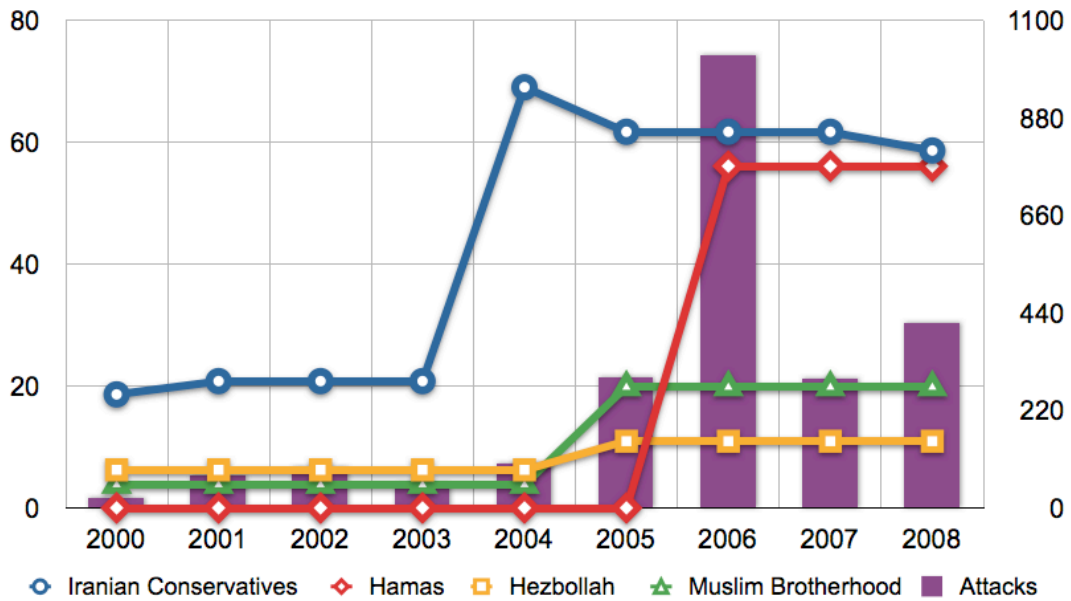


Figure 2: Political influences and the number of attacks since the second Intifada

four parties take higher supports and expand their political influences. This fact possibly reflects their hostility toward Israel. Kurzman and Naqvi (2010) show decreasing trends of implementation of sharia, hostility toward Israel, and mention of jihad. However, Iran, Hezbollah, and Hamas have not dropped the radical stances from their platforms or manifestos. The new president of Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood is known as a radical stance toward Israel, although it dropped jihad from the charter. Thus, when the parties gain more political influences, the attacks on Palestine and Israel tend to increase because of their hostility toward Israel and Israel’s fear to them.

In the meantime, the result upholds multifaceted cooperation within the Islamic fundamentalist bloc: political supports one another are intertwined with military conflicts. After Iranian conservatives gained high public supports in the 2004 election, socioeconomic and financial aid would increase to help other fundamental groups build reputation as alternatives for incumbent majority in each legislature. Indeed, poor Muslim

Table 2: Summary of tabulation of paltotal3 by 4 party variables

paltotal3		DUMMB		DUMHMS		DUMHZB		DUMIRC		total
		0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	
0	freq	18	18	19	17	20	16	6	30	36
	%	29.03	36.00	30.16	34.69	31.25	33.33	15.00	41.67	32.14
1	freq	17	21	17	21	17	21	14	24	38
	%	27.42	42.00	26.98	42.86	26.56	43.75	35.00	33.33	33.93
2	freq	27	11	27	11	27	11	20	18	38
	%	43.55	22.00	42.86	22.45	42.19	22.92	50.00	25.00	33.93
total		62	50	63	49	64	48	40	72	112
		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100
Chi ² (2) / Pr		5.9404 / 0.051		5.6066 / 0.061		5.4274 / 0.066		10.4468 / 0.005		

Table 3: Summary of tabulation of isrtotal3 by 4 party variables

isrtotal3		DUMMB		DUMHMS		DUMHZB		DUMIRC		total
		0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	
0	freq	11	20	11	20	15	16	6	25	31
	%	17.74	40.00	17.46	40.82	23.44	33.33	15.00	34.72	27.68
1	freq	19	24	19	24	18	25	4	39	43
	%	30.65	48.00	30.16	48.98	28.12	52.08	10.00	54.17	38.39
2	freq	32	6	33	5	31	7	30	8	38
	%	51.61	12.00	52.38	10.20	48.44	14.58	75.00	11.11	33.93
total		62	50	63	49	64	48	40	72	112
		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100
Chi ² (2) / Pr		19.9268 / 0.000		22.4263 / 0.000		14.3366 / 0.001		47.6144 / 0.000		

societies have been rearranged in social infrastructures ran by the groups. Public supports for political wings increased, and their radical movement against Israel is fueled by a ballot box. The likelihood is empirically supported by Figure 2 that supports for political fundamentalism beginning from Iran, flowed out through Hezbollah and Egyptian Brotherhood, reached Hamas. Iran has enjoyed strategic benefits from those transnational actors, and meanwhile, Hezbollah and Hamas have benefited from substantial supports its allies with financial, social, political and even military supports. Further relationship between Iran and Muslim Brotherhood is expected, with regard to their role of influential leaders encouraging political and violent jihad against any foreign interventions in the Middle East. The dynamics of cooperating among Islamic fundamentalist organizations

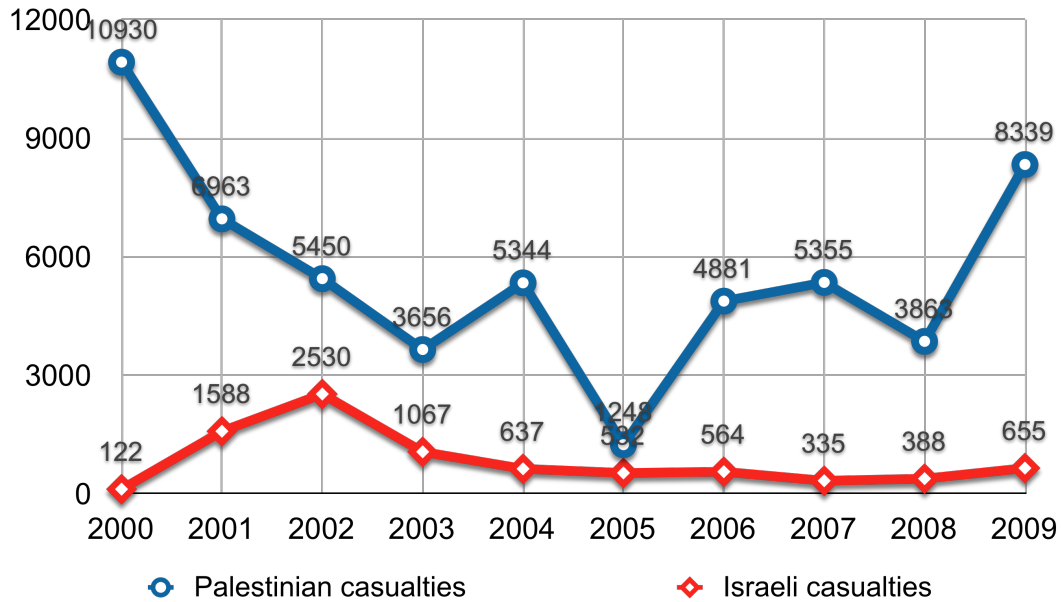


Figure 3: Casualties of Palestinian and Israeli People, 2000 - 2009

may accelerate close relationships in political and military ties.

First two hypotheses are rejected because of insignificant results. However, those are also noteworthy that Islamic fundamentalist bloc has not significantly affected frequency of both casualties. Despite an increase in incident numbers, there is no specific relation between political influence and casualties. In case of casualties, they are consistent with relatively higher dead and injured Palestinian people than Israeli side, regardless of political influences. It possibly appears that powerful Israeli military forces have damaged to Palestinian people. Palestinian casualties are always far more than Israelis, other than the least number of Palestinian casualties in 2005 (1248). This fact allows supporting the assumption of a symbolic war that the bloc interests in wars without actual casualties. By launching rockets on buildings not Israeli citizens, Palestinian Hamas and the bloc attempt to gain a reputation for violent players will help pause and deter Israel for using force (Schelling 1960). The data might indicate that the

cooperation prefers to a symbolic war lacking of real damages. Attacks with low casualties are conducted on purpose in order to gain reputations, and simultaneously to minimize retaliations from Israel and its allies. By opposing Israel, Hezbollah and Hamas could accumulate a reputation as competent players in the relation with Israel. Without a real war, Iran and Egyptian Brotherhood are perceived as threatening players in regional affairs. Rhetoric war brings regional credibility, underscores Tehran's reach, and displays its power in international relations. For instance, young Iranian people sign up for martyrdom operations and call for jihad against Israel, as a part of Iran's hateful rhetoric toward Israel. However, no war has been waged so that those behaviors are considered as just symbolic strategies. Instead, the best for Iran is to simply sit on the sidelines, and benefits from enmity towards Israel when Iran's radical ideology resonates the loudest in the region.¹⁹ The reason why the bloc conducts void wars is that the purpose of attacks is to hold a solid stance on the Palestine issue, and not to make Israel upset with mortal damages. Rather, Iran and its allies want to inflict injuries on Jerusalem without any larger strategic purpose. From this point of view, a highly aggressive war is not Iran's preference, but a symbolic war, such as firing rockets to sky, or a proxy war through transnational actors. It might reflect Iran's fear to a direct war with Israel for some reasons. Israel's absolute military power, an alleged nuclear power, is one possible reason, and its solid alliance with the U.S. and Europe is the other reason. Thus, the attacks without serious Israeli casualties are intentionally conducted to prevent opening another war with Israel, and at the same time to escape from humiliating damages. In

¹⁹ Karim Sadjadpour, "Iran Supports Hamas, but Hamas Is No Iranian 'Puppet'," Council on Foreign Relations, Bernard Gwertzman (8 January 2009).

addition, vigorous resistances whether ineffective impacts or not will burnish activist image of the bloc throughout the Arab world.

High political influences of Islamic fundamentalist parties prevent the region from democratizing to a great extent, although they are legitimate leaders elected by democratic choice. It casts doubts on preexisting democratic peace theory arguing that democratic transition in the Middle East is likely to decrease conflicts. The strategy of embracing ballots and bullets at the same time (Tibi 2008) is likely to produce more regional instabilities. Rather, it is an obstacle to build civil societies, which are necessary conditions for civic organizations and democracy (Putnam 1993). Nonetheless, members of the bloc alone serve as a strong leader in absence of powerful government, and therefore public supports for Islamic fundamentalist parties persist for now. Actual transition to democracy might not occur, unless an active interaction between regime liberalizers and civil social elites (Przeworski 1991; Kalyvas 2000; and Blaydes and Lo 2008). Their strong political power and secure cooperative bloc have limited an emergence of regime liberalizers, and therefore an opportunity for change toward democracy is also blocked. Until the destabilizing power of Islamic fundamentalism lasts, democratizing and promoting peace cannot be established under the status quo.

5. Conclusion

This paper studies the interaction between the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts and political influences of the Islamic fundamentalist bloc, focusing on electoral outcomes. Theoretical model suggests two predictions. First, higher political influences yield more incidents. This is supported by cross tabulation tests on the dataset of the conflicts and elections. Second, due to alleged Israel's nuclear weapons capabilities, the bloc conducts a symbolic war, depicted as high attacks, but few damages on Israel. Continual rhetoric blasts allow the bloc to gain reputation as the sole actual resistant force against Israel. In the meantime, low casualties of Israeli people prevent opening another war with Israel. This pattern of conflicts reflects a specific strategy for killing two birds with one stone.

Two implications follow. First, the Islamic fundamentalist bloc takes military advantages of an asymmetric structure between a state and non-state actors. Iran has enjoyed strategic benefits from its transnational proxies: Hezbollah and Hamas have benefited from substantial supports with financial, social, political and even military supports. Iran and Muslim Brotherhood play a role of formative leaders in encouraging political and violent jihad against any foreign interventions in the Middle East. The dynamics of cooperation improve close ties among the bloc in political and military spheres. Second, democratic transition is hardly realized at least under those four governments. Given the current state of the bloc, Islamic fundamentalist parties sustain their political influences as a ruling party. Despite the long Israeli hegemony with military dominance, as the parties and militant groups rise, the Middle East is undergoing profound changes. Israel and its allies concern violent cooperation provoking regional

instability and domestic turmoil. Regardless of regional instability, the bloc will further try to produce an opportunity to decisively underpin Islamic fundamentalism over the alliance of Israel, secular Muslim powers, and the U.S.

I invite scholars to develop this approach, although much additional work remains to conclude the relation the bloc and the conflict in terms of casualties. At first, considering more intervening variables improves explanations more reasonable, for instance, building damages. Not only casualties, but also property damages or numbers of Qassam rockets and mortar shells fired must be taken into account of the degree of the conflicts. Although attacks might kill few people, Israeli economy could be paralyzed due to damaged facilities. These additional indicators precisely distinguish whether or not the Islamic fundamentalist bloc does have influence on the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts. Supplementary variables for election results will improve the electoral dataset regarding boycott, abstentions, and net gains. In case of Muslim Brotherhood, incumbent president, Hosni Mubarak had tried to boycott their independent candidates. On the contrary, incumbent Iranian president and the Supreme Leader were alleged to manipulate results outcomes. If those intervening variables related to the conflicts and elections are involved in the dataset, it can provide more specific explanations with detailed conditions for this model. A short political history of the Palestinian Authority also hinders a complete electoral dataset. More critically, the model presents the conflict asymmetrically. This study only explores that four Islamic fundamentalist parties elect governments, and Palestinians and Israelis attack each other. However, obviously the problem associated with this assumption simplifies Israeli political influences. Issue concerning Israeli influences precludes a more accurate reflection of the conflicts. This research does not

include Israeli political influences on the conflicts so that it remains a passive player in the analysis. Additional hypotheses are required to develop this model: as radical Israeli political influences expand, they incite the Islamic fundamentalist bloc, and accordingly increase attacks and casualties. Given previous military operations, which Israel unleashed as preemptive attacks, further research on the above hypothesis will be helpful to provide a broader understanding of the dynamic interaction between Islamic political environment and the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts. Until above issues are solved with a definitive test, this argument is only one possible explanation for the relation between the Islamic fundamentalist bloc and the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts.

Appendix

Appendix 1. Casualties of Israeli and Palestinian people

Table 4: Israeli and Palestinian casualties from second Intifada to 2009

Event (yyyy/mm/dd)	Palestine			Israel		
	Death	Injured	Total	Death	Injured	Total
1987/12/09 – 12/31	22	-	22	0	-	0
1988	295	-	295	8	-	8
1989	288	-	288	20	-	20
1990	136	-	136	17	-	17
1991	98	-	98	14	-	14
1992	136	-	136	19	-	19
1993/01/01 – 09/13	133	-	133	22	-	22
09/14 – 1993/12/31	34	-	34	14	-	14
1994	114	-	114	58	-	58
1995	43	-	43	16	-	16
1996	71	-	71	41	-	41
1997	19	-	19	29	-	29
1998	22	-	22	9	-	9
1999	9	-	9	2	-	2
1999/01/01 – 09/28	16	-	16	2	-	2
2000/10	141	5984	6125	8	0	8
2000/11	123	3838	3961	19	79	98
2000/12	63	781	844	11	5	16
2001/01	20	471	491	7	60	67
2001/02	23	598	621	13	29	42
2001/03	39	927	966	8	108	116
2001/04	40	715	755	6	73	79
2001/05	57	932	989	19	205	224
2001/06	24	319	343	28	122	150
2001/07	49	394	443	11	20	31
2001/08	45	502	547	30	169	199
2001/09	69	657	726	13	129	142
2001/10	91	407	498	14	73	87
2001/11	48	160	208	14	110	124
2001/12	72	304	376	39	288	327
2002/01	39	330	369	17	255	272

2002/02	99	429	528	30	48	78
2002/03	234	870	1104	130	653	783
2002/04	245	523	768	39	164	203
2002/05	52	181	233	27	188	215
2002/06	64	299	363	57	194	251
2002/07	43	374	417	30	157	187
2002/08	51	186	237	16	68	84
2002/09	56	353	409	14	82	96
2002/10	65	388	453	22	105	127
2002/11	54	264	318	43	176	219
2002/12	66	185	251	5	10	15
2003/01	66	292	358	30	127	157
2003/02	79	244	323	8	2	10
2003/03	95	379	474	23	104	127
2003/04	66	303	369	10	90	100
2003/05	61	239	300	14	104	118
2003/06	68	367	435	30	111	141
2003/07	9	34	43	3	3	6
2003/08	30	191	221	29	140	169
2003/09	37	226	263	21	91	112
2003/10	63	289	352	30	67	97
2003/11	35	106	141	5	4	9
2003/12	55	322	377	6	15	21
2004/01	32	168	200	16	64	80
2004/02	55	437	492	11	62	73
2004/03	92	417	509	19	16	35
2004/04	61	346	407	3	7	10
2004/05	133	543	676	19	21	40
2004/06	33	345	378	7	14	21
2004/07	65	231	296	4	56	60
2004/08	56	364	420	17	118	135
2004/09	70	570	640	6	51	57
2004/10	190	716	906	6	51	57
2004/11	50	129	179	1	27	28
2004/12	49	192	241	39	2	41
2005/01	59	82	141	11	49	60
2005/02	14	44	58	5	65	70

2005/03	6	63	69	0	21	21
2005/04	6	113	119	1	15	16
2005/05	15	41	56	1	18	19
2005/06	9	124	133	4	22	26
2005/07	27	169	196	7	106	113
2005/08	15	45	60	0	13	13
2005/09	38	132	170	1	26	27
2005/10	23	44	67	9	44	53
2005/11	15	55	70	1	18	19
2005/12	28	81	109	8	87	95
2006/01	17	89	106	0	59	59
2006/02	31	194	225	1	44	45
2006/03	23	245	268	7	79	86
2006/04	32	289	321	6	90	96
2006/05	38	310	348	1	21	22
2006/06	53	270	323	5	36	41
2006/07	194	842	1036	5	75	80
2006/08	89	321	410	2	14	16
2006/09	44	269	313	2	34	36
2006/10	93	466	559	0	22	22
2006/11	153	527	680	4	45	49
2006/12	44	248	292	0	12	12
2007/01	68	265	333	3	12	15
2007/02	61	546	607	1	35	36
2007/03	25	257	282	0	15	15
2007/04	36	213	249	0	22	22
2007/05	133	614	747	2	30	32
2007/06	233	1028	1261	0	19	19
2007/07	44	141	185	1	7	8
2007/08	59	280	339	0	56	56
2007/09	49	298	347	1	87	88
2007/10	61	274	335	2	13	15
2007/11	40	307	347	1	6	7
2007/12	77	246	323	2	20	22
2008/01	98	360	458	1	20	21
2008/02	81	224	305	2	35	37
2008/03	123	377	500	11	54	65

2008/04	78	226	304	8	30	38
2008/05	48	251	299	2	33	35
2008/06	44	212	256	1	24	25
2008/07	21	288	309	4	57	61
2008/08	25	267	292	0	7	7
2008/09	24	210	234	0	41	41
2008/10	8	130	138	1	27	28
2008/11	17	123	140	0	21	21
2008/12	411	217	628	0	9	9
2009/01	1443	5510	6953	13	518	531
2009/02	26	114	140	0	4	4
2009/03	18	112	130	2	4	6
2009/04	11	152	163	1	5	6
2009/05	29	120	149	0	7	7
2009/06	21	124	145	0	14	14
2009/07	27	79	106	0	10	10
2009/08	48	64	112	0	5	5
2009/09	14	149	163	0	21	21
2009/10	20	115	135	0	27	27
2009/11	7	63	70	0	9	9
2009/12	14	59	73	1	14	15
2010/01	13	70	83	0	7	7

NOTE: Injured people were not recorded prior to the second Intifada.

Appendix 2. Public Supports and Seat Shares of Islamic Fundamentalism

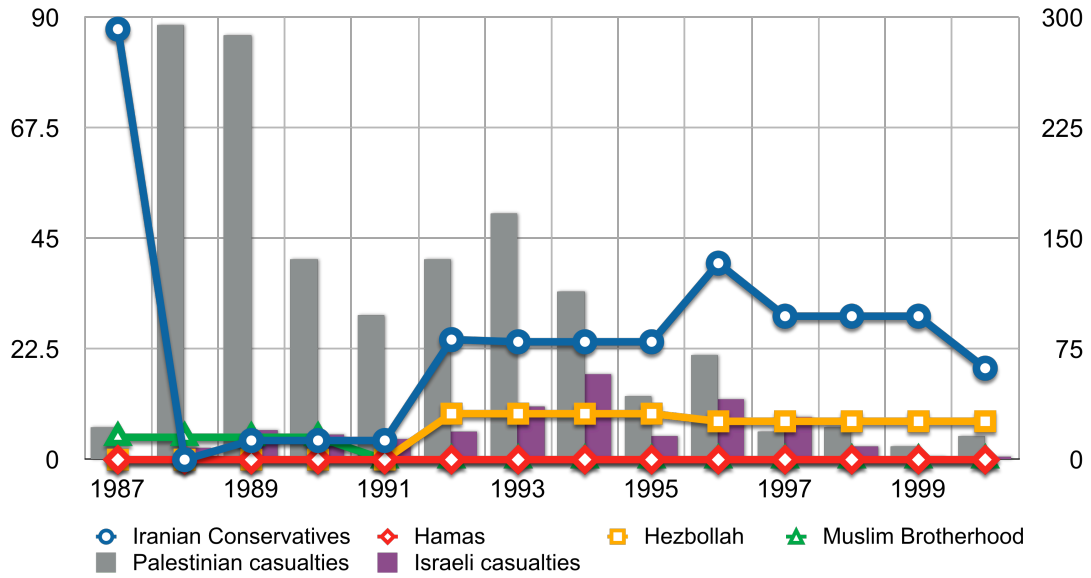


Figure 4: Public supports and seat shares of Islamic fundamentalist parties, 1987 - 2000

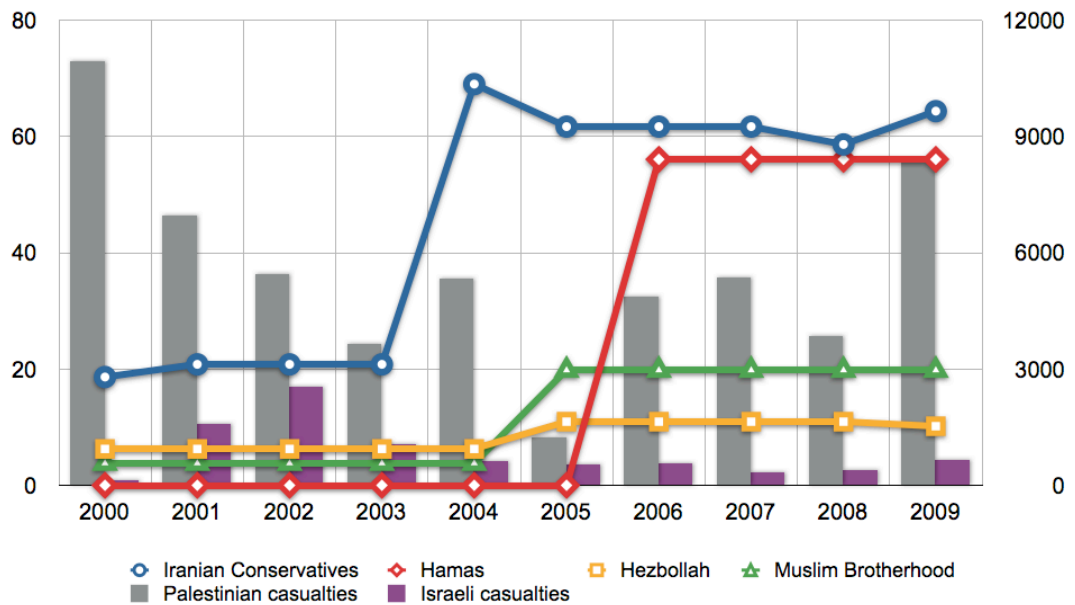


Figure 5: Public supports and seat shares of Islamic fundamentalist parties, 2000 - 2009

Appendix 3. Electoral Results in Egypt, Palestine, Iran, Lebanon, and Iraq

Egypt

Table 5: Summary of Egyptian parliamentary election on 6 April 1987

	Parties and coalitions	Percentage	Seats
Conservatives	Alliance (Socialist Labor Party, al-Ahrar party, and Muslim Brotherhood)	13.67	56
	Independents as members of Alliance		4
Others	National Democratic Party (NDP)	77	308
	Independents supported NDP		30
	New Wafd Party	8.2	36
	Independents	1.13	5
Total		100	439

Table 6: Summary of Egyptian parliamentary election on December 2000

	Parties and coalitions	Percentage	Seats
Conservatives	Independents of the Muslim Brotherhood	8.37	17
Others	National Democratic Party (NDP)	79.87	353
	New Wafd Party	1.58	7
	Coalition Party	1.36	6
	Nasserite Party	0.68	3
	Independents not the Muslim Brotherhood	7.91	35
	Others	0.22	1
Total	Ten members were appointed by president	100	454

Table 7: Summary of Egyptian presidential election on 7 September 2005

Candidates	Parties and coalitions	Percentage	Votes
Hosni Mubarak	National Democratic Party	88.6	6,316,714
Ayman Nour	Tomorrow Party	7.3	540,405
Numan Gomaa	New Wafd Party	2.8	201,891
Total		100	7,059,010

Table 8: Summary of Egyptian parliamentary elections on 7 November and 9 December 2005

	Parties and coalitions	Percentage	Seats
Conservatives	Independents of the Muslim Brotherhood	19.4	88
Others	National Democratic Party	68.5	311
	New Wafd Party	1.3	6
	Progressive National Unionist Party	0.4	2
	Tomorrow Party	0.2	1
	Independents	4.6	24
	Unelected members	2.2	10
	Arab Democratic Nasserist Party/Liberal Party	0	0
	Still in contest		12
Total		100	454

Table 9: Summary of Egyptian Shura Council elections on 11 June and 18 June 2007

	Parties and coalitions	Percentage	Seats
Others	National Democratic Party	95.45	84
	Independents	3.41	3
	National Progressive Unionist Party	1.14	1
Total		100	88

Palestine

Table 10: Summary of Palestinian presidential election on 9 January 2005

Candidates	Parties and coalitions	Percentage	Votes
Mahmoud Abbas	Fatah	62.52	501,448
Mustafa Barghouti	Independent	19.48	156,227
Taysir Khald	Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP)	3.35	26,848
Abdel Halim al-Ashqar	Independent	2.76	22,171
Bassam al-Salhi	Palestinian People's Party	2.67	21,429
Sayyid Barakah	Independent	1.3	10,406
Abdel Karim Shubeir	Independent	0.71	5,717
Invalid Ballots		7.21	57,831
Total		100	802,077

Table 11: Summary of Palestinian parliamentary election on 25 January 2006

	Parties and coalitions	Percentage	Seats
Conservatives	Hamas (Islamic Resistance Movement)	56.06	74
Others	Fatah	34.09	45
	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine	2.26	3
	The Alternative (Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Palestinian People's Party, Palestine Democratic Union, Independents)	1.52	2
	Independent Palestine (Palestinian National Initiative, Independents)	1.52	2
	Third Way	1.52	2
	Independents	3.03	4
	Other (less than 1% of votes, and 0 seat)	0	0
Total		100	132

Iran

Table 12: Summary of Iranian presidential election on 16 August 1985

	Candidates	Percentage	Votes
Reformist	Mahmoud Kashani	9.85	1,402,370
Conservative	Ali Khamenei	85.67	12,203,870
	Habibollah Asgar-Owladi	1.99	283,341
Others	Invalid ballots	2.49	354,993
Total		100	14,244,574

Table 13: Summary of Iranian presidential election on 28 July 1989

	Candidates	Percentage	Votes
Reformist	Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani	94.5	15,550,528
Conservative	Abbas Sheibani	3.9	635,165
Others	Invalid ballots	1.6	266,984
Total		100	16,452,677

Table 14: Summary of Iranian presidential election in 1993

	Candidates	Percentage	Votes
Reformist	Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani	62.9	10,566,499
	Abdollah Jasbi	8.9	1,498,084
Conservative	Ahmad Tavakkoli	24.0	4,026,789
Centrist	Rajabali Taheri	2.3	387,655
Total		100	16,796,787

Table 15: Summary of Iranian parliamentary elections on 8 March and 19 April 1996

	Parties and coalitions	Percentage	Seats
Reformist	Servants of Iran's Construction	29.09	80
Conservative	Combatant Clergy Association	40	110
Others	Others	21.09	58
Minority Religion	Armenians	1.82	2
	Chaldean and Assyrian Catholic		1
	Jewish		1
	Zoroastrian		1
Total	Twenty two remain until the 1997	100	275

Table 16: Summary of Iranian presidential election on 22 May 1997

	Candidates	Percentage	Votes
Reformist	Mohammed Khatami	69.09	20,138,784
Conservative	Ali Akbar Nateq-Nouri	24.01	7,000,000
	Mohammed Mohammadi Reyshahri	2.55	744,000
	Reza Zavarei	2.65	772,000
Total		100	29,145,745

Table 17: Summary of Iranian parliamentary elections on 10 February and 23 May 2000

	Percentage	Seats
Reformist	65.17	189
Conservative	18.62	54
Independent	14.48	42
Minority Religion	1.73	5
Total (total votes: 38,726,386)	100	290

Table 18: Summary of Iranian presidential election on 8 June 2001

	Candidates	Percentage
Reformist	Mohammed Khatami	78.30
	Abdollah Jasbi	0.90
Conservative	Ahmad Tavakkoli	15.90
	Other conservative candidates (Ali Shamkhani, Hassan Ghafourifard, Mansour Razavi, Shahabeddin Sadr, Ali Fallahian)	4.00
Independent	Mahmoud Kashani	0.90
Total	Total votes: 27,665,549	100

Table 19: Summary of Iranian parliamentary election on 20 February 2004

	Percentage	Seats
Reformist	16.88	39
Conservative	67.53	156
Independent	13.43	31
Minority Religion	2.16	5
Total	100	231

Table 20: Summary of Iranian presidential elections on 17 and 24 June 2005

	Candidates	Percentage		Votes	
		1st	2nd	1st	2nd
Conservative	Mahmoud Ahmadinejad	19.43	61.69	5,711,696	17,284,782
Reformist	Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani	21.10	35.93	6,211,937	10,046,701
Others	Mehdi Karrubi	17.40	0	5,070,114	-
	Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf	13.90	0	4,083,951	-
	Mostafa Moin	13.70	0	4,095,827	-
	Ali Larijani	5.90	0	1,713,810	-
	Mohsen Mehr Alizade	4.40	0	1,288,640	-
	Invalid ballots	4.17	2.38	1,224,882	663,770
Total		100	100	2,940,085,700	2,799,525,300

Table 21: Summary of Iranian parliamentary elections on 14 March 2008

	Parties and coalitions	Percentage		Seats		
				1st	2nd	Total
Conservative	Unified Principalists Front	58.61	40.34	90	27	117
	Broad Principalists Coalition		18.27	42	11	53
Reformist		15.87			31	15
Others	Independents	23.79			40	29
Minority Religion		1.73			5	
Total	Turnout: 60%	100		208	82	290

Table 22: Summary of Iranian presidential elections on June 2009

	Candidates	Percentage	Votes
Reformist	Mir-Hossein Mousavi	33.75	13,216,411
	Mehdi Karroubi	0.85	333,635
Conservative	Mahmoud Ahmadinejad	62.63	24,527,516
	Mohsen Rezaee	1.73	678,240
Others	Invalid ballots	1.05	409,389
Total	Turnout: 85	100	39,165,191

Lebanon

Table 23: Summary of Hezbollah's seat shares in elections, 1992 - 2009

	Percentage	Seats
1992	9.38	12
1996	7.81	10
2000	6.25	8
2005	10.94	14
2009	10.16	13

Table 24: Summary of Lebanese parliamentary elections on 29 May and 20 June 2005

		Parties and coalitions	Percentage	Seats
Conservative	Resistance and Development Bloc	Amal Movement	27.34	15
		Hezbollah		14
		Syrian Social Nationalist Party		2
		Others		4
Others	March 14 Alliance (Hariri alliance)	Future Movement	56.25	36
		Progressive Socialist Party		16
		Lebanese Forces		6
		Qornet Shehwan Gathering (Phalangist or Kataeb Party, Independents)		6
		Tripoli Bloc (Independents, Democratic Renewal, Democratic Left)		5
		Independents		3
	Change and Reform Bloc	Free Patriotic Movement	16.41	14
		Skaff Bloc		5
		Murr Bloc		2
Total			100	128

Table 25: Summary of Lebanese parliamentary election on 7 June 2009

		Parties and coalitions	Percentage	Seats
Conservative	Resistance and Development Bloc	Free Patriotic Movement	44.53	18
		Hezbollah		13
		Amal Movement		13
		Marada Movement		3
		Lebanese Democratic Party		3
		Armenian Revolutionary Federation		2
		Syrian Social Nationalist Party		2
		Ba'ath Party		2
Others	March 14 Alliance (Hariri alliance)	Movement of the Future	47.65	28
		March 14 Independents		11
		Lebanese Forces		8
		Kataeb Party		5
		Hunchak Party		2
		Islamic Group		1
		Ramgavar Party		1
		Democratic Left Movement		1
		National Liberal Party		1
	Independents	Progressive Socialist Party	7.82	10
Total			100	128

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