

ABSTRACT

From Violence to Voting:
Toward an Islamist Theory of Moderation

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Moderation theory posits that inclusion in the political process will lead extremist parties to abandon violence and play by the rules of the political game. Despite voluminous literature on the subject, relatively little has been written about moderation theory as it relates to Islamist parties. Where Islam and moderation theory are discussed, several prominent scholars contend that Islam and liberal democracy—the hoped-for endpoint of moderation—are not compatible, thus disregarding the prospects of moderation in Muslim majority countries. Others affirm the applicability of moderation theory to Islamism but only in specific instances, particularly where the Islamist groups in question do not support well-organized and well-armed militias.

This dissertation contends that both of these points of view are flawed in examining the prospects of moderation among Islamist groups. Using three of the most well-known Islamist groups, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and the Palestinian Hamas, as case studies, this dissertation argues that despite developing in three different contexts, with differing ideological starting points, and

different impediments to moderation, all three organizations—even Hamas and Hezbollah with their strong military components—have shown signs of moderating and can continue to do so.

The protests movements which swept through many Arab Muslim nations in the spring of 2011 demanding reform, if not regime change, present both a challenge and an opportunity for these groups and others like them throughout the Muslim world. Once relegated to the opposition, these groups now have the opportunity to govern. This dissertation seeks to analyze the prospects that Islamists will govern responsibly. Examining both the level of openness in the states in which these movements operate as well as the trajectory of the groups themselves, these case studies shed light on the prospects for and impediments to moderation as well as trends which might help predict the chances of moderation for other Islamist groups in the region.

From Violence to Voting:
Toward an Islamist Theory of Moderation

by

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PREFACE

In April, 2010 when I passed my comprehensive exams and was given the blessing of my committee to go forth and write, I had no idea that less than a year later, this topic, as interesting as it was then, would become like Frankenstein—coming alive and making me reconsider everything I had written previously. In his column in the *New York Times* on March 30, 2011, Thomas Friedman proclaimed, “Welcome to the Middle East of 2011! You want the truth about it? You can’t handle the truth. The truth is that it’s a dangerous, violent, hope-filled and potentially hugely positive or explosive mess—fraught with moral and political ambiguities.” Truer words have perhaps never been spoken.

It is quite daunting to see one’s dissertation come to life on the streets of a foreign capital. As protests unfolded in Cairo’s Tahrir Square, I was forced to take a step back from making revisions to chapter two, which deals with Egypt and the Muslim Brotherhood, knowing full well that anything I wrote at the end of January would likely be hopelessly out of date by the middle of February. Indeed, once I came back to chapter two’s revisions, I realized that the final few pages, written just before Christmas 2010 were no longer current. Questions of Hosni Mubarak’s participation in the presidential election in September 2011 or whether his son, Gamal, would run in his place have been rendered moot by the events of late January and early February. A new set of questions emerged in their place, questions I have attempted to answer in such a dynamic situation as this, but I have no illusions about the permanence of these answers. They will soon be as outdated as what I had previously written.

While somewhat maddening in its immediacy and ever-changing nature, writing this dissertation in the midst of revolution has also been undeniably fun. Even half a world away, I still feel as if I am an active participant in what may well be the most earth shattering historical event in the Middle East since the end of the Ottoman Empire. I hope, more than anything, that these pages provide insight into the nature of Islamism, the nature of moderation, and the prospects for peaceful coexistence between the two. The situation is neither as bleak as some think, nor as rosy as others believe. It is, I would argue, too early to make such judgments, and I will not attempt to do so here. I only wish to examine the past so we might be able to better understand the present and more accurately forecast the future.

Before I get to such prognostication, I have a few words on transliteration. Transliterating Arabic to English is an imprecise science at best, and I certainly do not claim to have all of the answers for doing so. However, I will attempt to be as consistent as possible in my transliterations. Transliterated words in direct quotations will be preserved in their original form. I have eliminated all diacritical marks except for an opening single quotation mark for the Arabic letter *‘ayn* (ع) and a closing single quotation mark for the hamza (ء). I have also eliminated the “h” sometimes transliterated at the end of words which end with *ta marbuta* (ة). Regional pronunciation differences have been preserved. For example, the letter *jiim* (ج) is pronounced as a hard “g” in the Egyptian dialect, and Egyptian proper names will reflect this difference. The spelling of an individual’s name will conform to the preferences of that person, if known, and all other proper nouns will maintain their commonly Anglicized forms (eg. Mecca rather than Makkah).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Writing a dissertation is a bit of a paradoxical undertaking. On the one hand, it is an intensely solitary experience. The writer is left to his or her own devices to stay on schedule, on task, and on topic. On the other hand, the process requires numerous proofreaders, fact checkers, and cheerleaders if the author's sanity is to remain remotely intact. It will be my task now to find the appropriate—and adequate—words to express my thanks to those who have helped me down this path.

My dissertation committee has been incredibly supportive throughout this long, strange trip. Charles McDaniel has been a wonderful mentor throughout my time at Baylor, and his hard work as my chair, despite his busy schedule, is deeply appreciated. Jerold Waltman's calming presence and keen intellect have been very useful to me throughout this process. Bill Mitchell and Robyn Driskell have had the unenviable task of trying to create order from chaos, and they have gone above and beyond to help all of us whenever we have needed it. Daniel Payne is one of my favorite professors, and I am deeply grateful that he agreed to pinch hit for me on short notice. Finally, Charles Kimball has allowed me to play the "friends with my father" card about as far as I can. I thank him for that and for agreeing, despite his busy schedule, to provide my dissertation a bit of an orange flavor.

Several scholars, friends, and colleagues have provided assistance and counsel on the pages that follow. Meghan Holder has been my editor-in-chief throughout this process, providing a number of thoughtful revisions to each chapter as well as encouragement on the days when writing seemed a chore. I could not have done this

without her. Dr. Michael Thompson at Oklahoma State University offered to read this dissertation and provide his comments as well, and for that, among many other things, he has my deepest appreciation. Jared Vaughn volunteered his considerable talents as a proofreader and graciously let me off easy with only the promise of crab legs and beer as his fee. Any errors which stubbornly remain after these many revisions are my fault alone.

My colleagues at the J.M. Dawson Institute of Church-State Studies have been a constant source of commiseration, encouragement, amusement, and friendship. Meredith Holladay has been a fellow pilgrim on this road from the beginning. It is an honor to finish this journey with her. Jennifer Kent and Jon Mizuta have been wonderful sounding boards for helping me clarify various aspects of this dissertation. I can only hope I have been as helpful to them as they have been to me. Mandi Mizuta, Brenda Norton, and Jason Hines have been wonderful additions to our merry band of scholars, and I am proud to count them as friends. Finally, Suzanne Sellers has the monumental task of keeping track of everyone's records, questions, and complaints and does so with a smile on her face. I thank her for her hard work.

My cheering section as I have undertaken this task has been large and widely dispersed. My parents are now, as they have ever been, the head of my cheering section. Their faith in me has always been solid, even when I was standing on shaky ground. I love them more than I can possibly say. My circle of friends, though small in number, is as supportive as I could ever hope for. As an only child, I have the luxury of choosing my "siblings" from among my friends, and Danielle Hanson, Jennifer Miller, and

Meghan Holder are as close to me as sisters, and I appreciate their friendship, their love, and their encouragement more than anything.

It is quite difficult to put into words how much Danielle's friendship means to me. After all, a friendship that spans nearly two decades is difficult to sum up in only a few sentences. Few people in my life know me as well as she does. I love her and the whole Moore clan which has always made me feel like part of the family more than words can adequately express. Jennifer is one of the most intelligent, capable, compassionate women I have ever had the pleasure of knowing. She has seen me at my best and at my worst and still puts up with me. Meghan Holder is my kindred spirit. Only with her can I have a conversation that segues effortlessly from the concept of original sin in Islam to the happenings on the latest episode of *Glee*. She is truly a blessing to me, not just for her work on this dissertation, but for her wonderful attitude, her wicked sense of humor, and her generous spirit.

One of the kindest things Meghan has ever done for me was introducing me to Calvary Baptist Church. The people of Calvary have been such a blessing in my life, always quick to offer encouragement or a sympathetic ear when needed or to celebrate the milestones which have come along this journey. I am particularly thankful for Jim and Julie Coston, Tom and Jan Purdy, Sam and Leslie Smith, Tim and Sheila Smith, Todd and Meghan Becker, Jonathan and Carrie Tran and all of the Young Professionals Sunday School class, Emily Snider and the Calvary choir, Bethany Bear, Nathan Porter, Wayne Holder, Jon Singletary, Tiffany Love, and Mallory Herridge. They have all been the family of God for me in this place, and I love them all deeply for it. "I thank my God in all my remembrance of you" (Philippians 1:3).

I have had many wonderful teachers and professors over the years, but my high school speech and debate coach, Michael Patterson continues to be the person from whom I have learned the most. He helped me find my voice, then taught me how to use it. MEP fostered my love of words and my appreciation for the power of language. Writing this dissertation was made easier because of the things I learned from him. He is a wonderful teacher, an amazing man, and he has had a greater impact on his students' lives that even he probably knows. And yes, MEP. *Now*, you can call me doctor.

To Meghan Fields Holder, my editor-in-chief, harshest critic, and biggest cheerleader—I could not have done this without you. *Shukran gazilan, ya sadiqati.*

“Who can say if I’ve been changed for the better? I do believe I have been changed for the better, and...because I knew you, I have been changed for good.”

and

To my church family at Calvary Baptist Church:
Thank you for being the family of God for me in Waco, Texas.
Thank you for your love, your care, your kinship, and your hopes.
I have learned from you and received from you.
By the Grace of God, I hope that I have given to you,
even if in small measure compared to what I have been given.

CHAPTER ONE

Islam, Democracy, and Moderation

In a speech at the Tahrir Square campus of the American University in Cairo in June 2005, then-Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice acknowledged the chasm between the United States' highest ideals and the realities of its foreign policy in the Middle East: "For 60 years, my country, the United States, pursued stability at the expense of democracy in this region, here in the Middle East, and we achieved neither."¹ Six years later, the campus at which she spoke those words would become Ground Zero for protests in downtown Cairo which demanded reform, government transparency, and an end to the Egyptian police state.² The overthrow of the Mubarak regime in February 2011 has received much more attention than the Jasmine Revolution in Tunisia which preceded it.

The prominence of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt is one reason for the increased interest in the events which unfolded during the two and a half week-long protest at Tahrir Square. Fear of a theocratic takeover of the Egyptian government permeated the analysis of many in the West and provided Hosni Mubarak with an excuse for his continued lack of democratic reforms. This perceived threat perpetuated a long-

¹ "Rice Calls for Mid-East Democracy," *BBC*, June 20, 2005, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/4109902.stm> (accessed 17 May 2011).

² The old campus of the American University in Cairo is located on Tahrir Square and was damaged during the protests of January and February. It was also broken into by state security services whose snipers took up positions on the rooftops. See "Egypt Revolt Poses a Test for American University," *Associated Press*, May 15, 2011, http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5jlvrdlXdvMZZ_gxc5BI0kTZV8llw?docId=229a6e7fee8b4f7a92b7c4741189ee6c (accessed 18 May 2011)

standing concern among many foreign policy elites that Islamists would use democratic means to usher in a decidedly undemocratic form of government. This argument is often supported by the untested hypothesis that Islam has defeated liberal democracy where the two have interacted.

Moderation theory posits that inclusion in the political process will lead extremist parties to abandon violence and accept peaceful participation in electoral politics.

Despite voluminous literature on the subject, relatively little has been written about moderation theory as it relates to Islamist parties. Where Islam and moderation theory are discussed, several prominent scholars contend that Islam and liberal democracy—the hoped-for endpoint of moderation—are not compatible, thus disregarding the prospects of moderation in Muslim majority countries. Others affirm the applicability of moderation theory to Islamism but only in specific instances, particularly where the Islamist groups in question do not support well-organized and well-armed militias. This dissertation contends that both of these points of view are flawed in examining the prospects of moderation among Islamist groups. Using three of the most well-known Islamist groups, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and the Palestinian Hamas, as case studies, this dissertation argues that despite developing in different contexts, with differing ideological starting points, and different impediments to moderation, all three organizations—even Hamas and Hezbollah with their active militias—have shown signs of moderating and can continue to do so.

The protests movements which swept through many Arab nations in the spring of 2011 demanding reform, if not regime change, present both a challenge and an opportunity for Islamist groups throughout the Muslim world. Though many of these

groups were once relegated to the opposition, they now have the opportunity to govern. This dissertation seeks to analyze the prospects that Islamists will support a turn away from authoritarianism and toward something more democratic. Examining both the level of openness in the states in which these movements operate as well as the trajectory of the groups themselves, these case studies shed light on the prospects for and impediments to moderation as well as trends which might help predict the chances of moderation for other Islamist groups in the region.

This dissertation seeks to develop a more nuanced understanding of Islamist parties and their prospects for moderation by examining the structural barriers to the emergence of opposition movements as well as the characteristics of the parties in question. The structural elements which play a part in the ability of Islamist movements to both organize and participate in the political process include the level of openness in society at large and the level of difficulty opposition parties encounter in attempting to participate in the political process. The attributes of the Islamist movements studied include identifying the date of the transition of each group from social movement to political party, the level of religious rigidity within each party, and the desire of these movements to work within the existing political system rather than seek to undermine it. Finally, the level of commitment to moderation in each case is measured based upon each party's willingness to accept peaceful participation in elections, forego reliance on a militia, and embrace democratic ideals.

Moving Toward an Arab Spring

The protests sweeping across the Middle East have electrified the region and created anxiety among the foreign policy elites in the United States and elsewhere in the

West. Demands for democratization in the Middle East have presented the West with what was once considered a nightmare scenario: the possibility that Islamists could ascend to positions of power. As Shadi Hamid noted in an essay in a 2011 issue of *Foreign Affairs* dedicated to breaking down the “Arab Spring,”

For decades, U.S. policy toward the Middle East has been paralyzed by “the Islamist dilemma”—how can the United States promote democracy in the region without risking bringing Islamists to power? Now, it seems, the United States no longer has a choice.³

In the past, when faced with the choice between democracy and secular regimes in the Middle East, the United States has chosen secular regimes, regardless of how undemocratic and repressive they might be. This preference for authoritarianism over democracy because of fears that democracy would include religiously oriented parties has concerned Western foreign policy in the Middle East since at least the early 1990s when Western attempts to derail popular elections in Algeria sparked a civil war.

In 1988, after a long conflict, Algerians demanded—and received—a new constitution, and preparations began for the first free elections in the country’s history.⁴ In June 1990 elections, the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) gained control of almost all of the local councils in the three largest cities in Algeria and won 55 percent of the vote nationwide. In the first round of national elections which took place a year and a half later, the FIS won 188 of 430 parliamentary seats, while the ruling National Liberation Front (FLN) only captured 15 seats. Prior to the second round of voting, the interim government instigated a campaign of widespread repression against the FIS, including mass arrests of its leadership. The repression culminated with the interim government

³ Shadi Hamid, “The Rise of the Islamists,” *Foreign Affairs* 90, no. 3(2011): 40.

⁴ Noah Feldman, *After Jihad: America and the Struggle for Islamic Democracy* (New York: Farrar Straus and Giroux, 2003), 3.

declaring a state of emergency in February 1992, and the FIS was formally dissolved on March 4, 1992.⁵ As protests began around the country, the Algerian government stepped up repression against opposition movements, particularly the FIS. In retaliation, a more violent Islamist group, the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) began a campaign of brutal attacks against government officials, setting off a new wave of internecine conflict.⁶

In a speech at Meridian House three months later, then-Assistant Secretary of State Edward Djerejian infamously explained “While we believe in the principle of ‘one person, one vote,’ we do not support ‘one person, one vote, one time.’”⁷ While Djerejian was not directly referencing the events which had unfolded in Algeria three months prior, the Arab world took his comments as tacit approval of the Algerian regime’s short-circuiting of the democratic process.⁸ Alfred Stepan argues that the Algerian election crisis was the first of several high-profile instances where the United States placed support of authoritarian regimes over support for the democratic process, falling into what he calls the “Islamic free elections trap,” which feeds on the fear that “allowing free elections in Islamic countries would bring to power governments that would use these democratic freedoms to destroy democracy itself.”⁹

⁵ Frederic Volpi, *Islam and Democracy: The Failure of Dialogue in Algeria* (London: Pluto Press, 2003), 48 ff; Michael Willis, *The Islamist Challenge in Algeria: A Political History* (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 257.

⁶ Volpi, 62, 67.

⁷ Edward P. Djerejian, “The U.S. and the Middle East in a Changing World,” June 2 1992, http://www.disam.dsca.mil/pubs/Vol%2014_4/Djerejian.pdf (accessed 21 January 2011).

⁸ Djerejian admitted as much himself in his memoir, *Danger and Opportunity: An American Ambassador’s Journey Through the Middle East* (New York: Threshold, 2008), 22.

⁹ Alfred C. Stepan, “Religion, Democracy, and the ‘Twin Tolerations,’” *Journal of Democracy* 11, no. 4 (2000): 48.

In an October 2002 message entitled “To the Americans,” Osama bin Laden offered this sarcastic rejoinder to the Algerian debacle:

When the Islamic party in Algeria wanted to practice democracy and they won the election, you [the United States] unleashed your collaborators in the Algerian army on them, and attacked them with tanks and guns, imprisoned them and tortured them—a new lesson from the “American book of democracy.”¹⁰

While the subversion of democracy has given ammunition to radicals like bin Laden, it has had other consequences as well. Harvard law professor Noah Feldman observes, “America’s willingness to give tacit approval to the suppression of democracy, when presented with a defense against fundamentalism, emboldened autocrats in the Muslim world; wily about their survival, the autocrats jailed and executed democracy advocates.”¹¹

All over the Middle East, Islamists have emerged as credible rivals—and now, potential successors—to ruling parties, but the United States and her allies in the region have historically been and continue to be concerned about what this might mean for the prospects of democracy in places where Islamism is popular. A number of commentators on democratic theory have questioned whether Islam—not to mention Islamism—might be compatible with democracy. Francis Fukuyama, in his 1992 book *The End of History and the Last Man*, argued that “Islam has indeed defeated liberal democracy in many parts of the Islamic world, posing a grave threat to liberal practices even in countries where it has not achieved political power directly.”¹² Samuel Huntington concurs with

¹⁰ Osama bin Laden, *Messages to the World: The Statements of Osama bin Laden*, ed. Bruce Lawrence, trans. James Howarth (London: Verso, 2005), 169.

¹¹ Feldman, 19.

¹² Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1992), 45.

this assessment, further indicting Islam as a religion incompatible with democratic institutions:

To the extent that government legitimacy and policy flow from religious doctrine and religious expertise, Islamic concepts of politics differ from and contradict the premises of democratic politics....Liberalization in Islamic countries thus enhanced the power of important social and political movements whose commitment to democracy was questionable.¹³

It should be noted that the reality of the situation in the Middle East is not quite as Fukuyama and Huntington have portrayed it.

For one, the assertion that Islam has defeated liberal democracy in the Middle East is a largely untested one. The biggest threat to liberal democracy in the region has not been Islam, but authoritarian regimes that stifle democracy when allowing opposition parties to operate unfettered would encroach on their power. Second, the notion that liberalization has brought power to organizations whose commitment to democracy is questionable has also never been tested. Khalil al-Anani, a former visiting scholar at the Brookings Institution argues “the ‘one man-one vote-one time’ hypothesis has not been tested in any democratic setting, but rather under despotic or revolutionary conditions.”¹⁴ For Islamist groups to have an opportunity to succeed or fail in a liberal democracy, they must first exist within a liberal democracy.

Even Muslims who study democratic theory question the ability of Islamist movements to fully democratize. Vali Nasr distinguishes between Islamists and what he calls Muslim Democrats:

¹³ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993), 307, 309.

¹⁴ Khalil al-Anani, *Working Paper No. 4: The Myth of Excluding Moderate Islamists in the Arab World* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2010), 11.

Islamists view democracy not as something deeply legitimate, but at best as a tool or tactic that may be useful in gaining the power to build an Islamic state. Muslim Democrats, by contrast, do not seek to enshrine Islam in politics, though they do wish to harness its potential to help them win votes.¹⁵

While Nasr distinguishes Islamists from other political actors within Islam, the argument that Islam can produce movements which actively support democratization is one supported by other scholars. Anthony Shadid, the Middle East correspondent for first for the Associated Press, then the *Washington Post*, discussed the chances for the emergence of democratic movements in the region in his book, *Legacy of the Prophet*, noting that during his time in the Middle East, “I saw a compelling search for identity, a reinterpretation of Islam and *the emergence of democratic movements*.”¹⁶ Asef Bayat also rebuts the notion espoused by Huntington, Fukuyama, and others that Islam is inherently undemocratic:

The question is not whether Islam is or is not compatible with democracy or, by extension, modernity, but rather under what conditions Muslims can *make* them compatible. Nothing intrinsic to Islam—or, for that matter, to any other religion—makes it *inherently* democratic or undemocratic.¹⁷

Assuming then that Islam is not inherently un-democratic, the next step is understanding why and how certain Islamist parties which are considered radical could be brought under the umbrella of liberal democracy.¹⁸

¹⁵ Vali Nasr, “The Rise of ‘Muslim Democracy,’” *Journal of Democracy* 16, no. 2 (2005): 13-4.

¹⁶ Anthony Shadid, *Legacy of the Prophet: Despots, Democrats, and the New Politics of Islam* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2002), 252. Emphasis added.

¹⁷ Asef Bayat, *Making Islam Democratic: Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 4. Emphasis added.

¹⁸ Other arguments for the coexistence of Islam and democracy include Feldman’s *After Jihad*, John L. Esposito and John O. Voll, *Islam and Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996) and the authors who contributed to *Democracy Without Democrats? The Renewal of Politics in the Muslim World*, ed. Ghassan Salamé (London: I.B. Tauris, 1994).

Moderation theory, a sub-field of democratic theory, argues that if extremist parties are incorporated into the electoral process and made accountable to the whole electorate, they will be forced to play by the rules of the democratic game. Much of the literature on moderation theory centers on post-Soviet societies in Europe, while very little has been written about the application of moderation theory in the Muslim world. Carrie Rosefsky Wickham's study on the *Wasat* party in Egypt explores the emergence of a moderate off-shoot of the Muslim Brotherhood in the mid-1990s.¹⁹ Güneş Murat Tezcür of Loyola University of Chicago contends that moderation theory can be used to explain the behavior of parties such as the Reform Front in Iran and the Justice and Development Party (JDP) in Turkey. However, Tezcür also argues that "not all electoral Islamist groups are faced with a trade-off between organizational survival and pursuit of revolutionary goals. Some states lack the capacity to dismantle their grassroots and militias." Citing Hamas and Hezbollah specifically, Tezcür concludes, "Consequently, the moderation theory does not predict that these organizations will eventually be domesticated and evolve."²⁰

Finally, Jillian Schwedler's comparison of the Islamic Action Front (IAF) in Jordan and the *Islah* party in Yemen highlights the difficulties of exploring the moderation or lack thereof among Islamist parties in a vacuum.²¹ Schwedler articulates moderation theory as the "inclusion-moderation hypothesis" because the catalyst for

¹⁹Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, "The Path to Moderation: Strategy and Learning in Egypt's Wasat Party," *Comparative Politics* 36, no. 2 (2002): 205-228. *Wasat* means "center" in Arabic.

²⁰ Güneş Murat Tezcür, "The Moderation Theory Revisited: The Case of Islamist Political Actors," *Party Politics* 16, no. 1 (2009): 74-5.

²¹ Jillian Schwedler, *Faith in Moderation: Islamist Parties in Jordan and Yemen* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

moderation of extremist parties is their inclusion in the political process.²² She also argues that “groups lacking a history of using political violence against a regime cannot necessarily be counted among those who have moderated as a result of their inclusion.”²³ This challenges Tezcür’s analysis of Islamism and moderation theory because the Reform Front and the JDP were never particularly extreme in the first place. However, groups like Hamas and Hezbollah, among others, have been violent for all or part of their history, yet they have become accepted political actors. These two arguments—that Islamist groups with highly organized military wings are less prone to moderate and that inclusion is a prerequisite to moderation—are debatable. With that in mind, moderation theory must be re-examined before it can be used satisfactorily as an explanatory tool for political behavior among Islamist parties in the Middle East.

The lack of analysis on moderation theory and radical Islamist groups only serves to nurture fears that rather than democratize, these groups would attempt to create rigid Islamic states much as the Taliban did in Afghanistan following the Soviet withdrawal in 1989. While it is true that the short-term effects of allowing Islamist groups to participate in elections may produce results that lead to more conservatism and restrictions on personal freedoms, scholars of moderation theory such as Nancy Bermeo and Ignacio Sanchez-Cuenca argue that moderation may not lead directly to democratization, rather that political actors may weigh the costs and benefits of moderation and take action only

²² Schwedler unpacks the notion of the “inclusion-moderation hypothesis” in pages 11-18 of *Faith in Moderation*.

²³ Ibid., 16.

when moderation becomes advantageous.²⁴ It will be the task of this dissertation to determine in which contexts radicalization may give way to moderation.

Defining Islamism

Before going any further, a better understanding of the phenomenon of “Islamism” is needed. Language has often proven itself to be quite finite, even when infinite nuance plagues certain words. This is certainly the case in attempting to understand “Islamism.” To their credit, most scholars of religious movements recognize this dilemma. Bruce Lawrence prefaces his examination of various trends within Islam with this warning: “All blanket words such as revivalism, reformism, or fundamentalism are arbitrary invocations of the English language; they do not, and cannot, describe the varying degrees of Islamic loyalty and protest.”²⁵ Like many other scholars, Lawrence attempts to explain the resurgence in religiously motivated social activism as fundamentalism.

While fundamentalism harkens back to an earlier time, it is also a modern movement. Martin Marty and Scott Appleby, the editors of the Fundamentalism Project, argue that “fundamentalists do not simply reaffirm the old doctrine; they subtly lift them from their required context, embellish and institutionalize them, and employ them as ideological weapons against a hostile world.”²⁶ Lawrence agrees with this assessment,

²⁴ Nancy Bermeo, “Myths of Moderation: Confrontation and Conflict during Democratic Transitions,” *Comparative Politics* 29, no. 3 (1997): 305-322; Ignacio Sanchez-Cuenca, “Party Moderation and Politicians’ Ideological Rigidity,” *Party Politics* 10, no. 3 (2004): 325-342.

²⁵ Bruce B. Lawrence, *Shattering the Myth: Islam Beyond the Violence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 40.

²⁶ Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, “Conclusion: An Interim Report on a Hypothetical Family,” in *Fundamentalisms Observed*, ed. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 826.

stating that fundamentalism has “historical antecedents, but no ideological precedent.... Though the antecedents of fundamentalism are varied and distant...fundamentalism as a religious ideology is very recent.”²⁷

In *Strong Religion*, which draws upon the conclusions of the Fundamentalism Project, Scott Appleby, Gabriel Almond, and Emmanuel Sivan explore the differences between what they consider to be “pure” and syncretic fundamentalist movements. They define fundamentalism as “a discernable pattern of religious militance by which self-styled ‘true believers’ attempt to arrest the erosion of religious identity, fortify the borders of the religious community, and create viable alternatives to secular institutions and behaviors.”²⁸ Fundamentalism, according to the authors, is a reaction against the marginalization of religion: “This defense of religion is the *sine qua non* of fundamentalism; without it, a movement may not properly be labeled fundamentalist.”²⁹ However, Appleby, Almond, and Sivan ignore the underlying issues which motivate “religious” activism.

They attempt to deal with this problem by dividing fundamentalist movements into two categories: pure fundamentalism and syncretic fundamentalism. Pure fundamentalist movements place the defense of religion first, while syncretic fundamentalist movements place cultural, ethnic, and national concerns at the same level as or above religious concerns. In short, pure fundamentalism involves itself in politics

²⁷ Bruce B. Lawrence, *Defenders of God: The Fundamentalist Revolt Against the Modern Age* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1989), 100-1.

²⁸ Gabriel A. Almond, R. Scott Appleby, and Emmanuel Sivan, *Strong Religion: The Rise of Fundamentalisms Around the World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 93-4.

because of religion, and syncretic fundamentalism brings religion into the political arena.³⁰

This chicken and egg debate over whether politics or religion should take precedence in these matters is not a new development. What is instructive in the discussion in *Strong Religion*, however, is the explanation of which groups should be placed in which category and why, because it is in this categorization that one can most clearly see the problems with placing too much emphasis on religion. Among the groups listed as pure fundamentalist movements is Hamas, one of the primary subjects of the present study. According to the authors, Hamas was created as a reaction against the lax beliefs and practices of Palestinian Muslims which was exacerbated by influence of the Israeli occupation.³¹

While there is certainly a strong element of religion to Hamas' ideology, the movement was primarily founded to mobilize Palestinians during the first *Intifada* in the late 1980s. Furthermore, any religious conflict Hamas may have with Israel is grounded in a territorial dispute rather than on purely religious grounds. To Hamas, as to most Palestinians, the Jews of Israel took their land from them, and they would like it back. Also at play are numerous issues related to freedom of movement, economic duress, and lack of political representation, not to mention the military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip which has been in place since 1967. Placing Hamas in the category of syncretic fundamentalism would have been more appropriate, because any real understanding of Hamas must include an appreciation for the grievances shared by secular and religious Palestinians alike.

³⁰ Ibid., 110.

³¹ Ibid., 108.

This flaw in the understanding of “fundamentalism” has been commented on by many who study these types of groups. In his study of al Qaeda, Jason Burke argues that religious rhetoric does not necessarily equal religious motivation:

Just because a lack of graduate employment, decent housing, social mobility, food, etc. is explained by an individual by reference to a religion does not make it a religious grievance. It remains a political grievance articulated with reference to a particular religious worldview.³²

Likewise, Ziad Abu-Amr, who has studied the phenomenon among the Palestinians understands Islamic fundamentalism as a political movement which uses Islam to justify political decisions and to gain power.³³

Perhaps the most compelling explanation of groups such as Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood comes from Mark Juergensmeyer. Juergensmeyer argues that “fundamentalism” has no political meaning; it suggests only religious reasons for activism and does not take into account political or socio-economic concerns.³⁴ Juergensmeyer suggests instead the idea of religious nationalism, which he argues is better suited to explain these movements: “By characterizing the activists in this study as religious nationalists, I mean to suggest that they are individuals with both religious and political interests.” He further explains religious nationalism as

the attempt to link religion and the nation-state. This is a new development in the history of nationalism, and it immediately raises the question of whether it is possible: whether what we in the West think of as a modern nation—a unified,

³² Jason Burke, *Al-Qaeda: Casting a Shadow of Terror* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2003), 25.

³³ Ziad Abu-Amr, “Critical Issues in Arab Islamic Fundamentalism,” in *Religion, Ethnicity, and Self-Identity: Nations in Turmoil*, ed. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1997), 46.

³⁴ Mark Juergensmeyer, *The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 5-6.

democratically controlled system of economic and political administration—can in fact be accommodated within religion.³⁵

Nader Hashemi has also commented on the differences between fundamentalism and religious nationalism: “What fundamentalist groups seek to do is bring God down from heaven and place religion at the center of social and political debate... The need to ‘defend Islam,’ a common refrain of Muslim fundamentalists, indicates a sincere belief that their faith is under assault.” However, Hashemi notes that “a large part of the political agenda of the secular nationalists and socialists has been adopted by the Islamists and is now an integral part of their political platform. In this sense, the term ‘religious nationalist’ is a more apt description of these social movements.”³⁶

While Lawrence might protest the mixing of religious devotion and nationalist sentiment as he considers nationalism to be the nemesis of fundamentalism, this appears to be the best general framework for understanding groups that express political, ethnic, economic, social, or territorial protests using religious language.³⁷ However, the term “religious nationalism” is far from precise. After all, any number of religions could have their own type (or types) of religious nationalism; more specificity is needed.

Islamism is one potential way to define a specific brand of Islamic religious nationalism. Islamism as a phenomenon traces its history back to the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and the Jamaat-i Islami in Pakistan.³⁸ Hasan al-Banna, the founder

³⁵ Ibid., 6, 40.

³⁶ Nader Hashemi, *Islam, Secularism, and Liberal Democracy: Toward a Democratic Theory for Muslim Societies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 42, 63.

³⁷ Lawrence, *Defenders of God*, 83.

³⁸ Olivier Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam*, trans. Carol Volk (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), 35.

of the Muslim Brotherhood, described Islamism from the perspective of those who espouse it as an ideology:

We believe that Islam is an all-embracing concept which regulates every aspect of life, adjudicating on everyone its concerns and prescribing for it a solid and rigorous order. It does not stand helpless before life's problems, nor the steps one must take to improve mankind.³⁹

Conversely, Asef Bayat defines Islamism, in more value-neutral terms. He argues that Islamism is an ideology which “imagined Islam as a complete divine system with a superior political model, cultural code, legal structure, and economic arrangement—in short, a system that responded to all human problems.”⁴⁰

Despite the importance of Islamism as a factor in understanding political movements in the Middle East, it is a term which is subject to as much criticism and debate as the concept of fundamentalism. The options for a definition of Islamism range from the overly broad to the overly biased. Former CIA analyst Graham Fuller defines Islamism as an ideology which “believes that Islam has something important to say about how politics and society should be ordered in the contemporary Muslim World” and which “seeks to implement this idea in some fashion.”⁴¹ By his own admission, Fuller's definition is quite broad—too broad, in fact, since this definition could be applied to virtually any Muslim who feels his or her faith is important in shaping an individual's worldview and influencing the social and political choices he or she makes.

While Fuller's definition of Islamism is overly broad, others have defined Islamism in ways that suggest very specific, generally unfavorable, things about the

³⁹ Hasan al-Banna, *Five Tracts of Hasan al-Banna: A Selection from the “Majmu'at Rasa'il al-Imam al-Shahid Hasan al-Banna,”* ed. and trans. Charles Wendell (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 46.

⁴⁰ Bayat, 7.

⁴¹ Graham E. Fuller, *The Future of Political Islam* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), xi.

concept. Peter Demant argues that “Islamism combines the anti-modernism one sees in all stripes of fundamentalism with a critique of imperialism which sounds like Marxism without class analysis.”⁴² This definition combines so many other elements that are themselves controversial that it would take quite a feat of semantic gymnastics to untangle exactly what Demant means by Islamism. One of Islamism’s most vocal critics, Daniel Pipes, likewise unfavorably compares Islamism with vanquished ideologies from the past which are now widely reviled: “Islamism is an ideology that demands man’s complete adherence to the sacred law of Islam....It is imbued with a deep antagonism toward non-Muslims and has a particular hostility toward the West.” Comparing Islamism to Marxism-Leninism and fascism, Pipes states, “It is an Islamic-flavored version of totalitarianism.”⁴³ Pipes’ comparisons suggest a certain degree of violence which one might expect to find in all Islamist movements, though this is not always the case. Pipes’ obvious biases against Islamism prevent him from being able to provide any sort of value-neutral definition of the term.

If Fuller’s definition of Islamism is too broad, and Demant and Pipes’ definitions are too narrow and restricted, then Olivier Roy and James Piscatori have succeeded in defining Islamism in a more measured way. Like many scholars, Roy uses “Islamism” and “political Islam” interchangeably, defining Islamists in *The Failure of Political Islam* as those who “consider that the society will be Islamized only through social and political

⁴² Peter R. Demant, *Islam vs. Islamism: The Dilemma of the Muslim World* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2006), 177.

⁴³ Daniel Pipes, “Distinguishing Between Islam and Islamism,” *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, June 30, 1998, <http://www.danielpipes.org/954/distinguishing-between-islam-and-islamism> (accessed 25 April 2010).

action: it is necessary to leave the mosque.”⁴⁴ The two most important aspects of Islamism—that social and political activism and a desire to make Islam a focal point of society—are embodied in this definition. James Piscatori’s definition is perhaps the clearest explication of the goals of Islamists: “Islamists are Muslims who are committed to political action to implement what they regard as an Islamic agenda.”⁴⁵ While this definition excludes social activism, it is an easily understandable definition of a phenomenon which is anything but easy to understand.

It is clear from the various approaches of previous scholarship that defining Islamism that this is a delicate task. However, the urgency of this task is evident when one considers the various locales where “Islamist” groups have become or are becoming key players in the social and political life of the nation. Recently, several scholars came together to explore the problems with defining Islamism, whether the term could be redeemed in scholarship, and if so, how that might be accomplished. The result was *Islamism: Contested Perspectives on Political Islam*, and the authors who contributed to this project were divided over whether Islamism should remain a part of public discourse.

Half of the authors argue that despite the problems associated with defining Islamism, it remains the best available term to describe the phenomenon it seeks to explain. The rest of these authors maintain that because of critics such as Pipes, Islamism has become synonymous with violence and is thus irredeemable. Daniel Varisco argues:

We should beware of ideological frameworks that introduce new –isms as euphemisms. Otherwise we are forced to deal with monstrous tabloid creations

⁴⁴ Roy, 36.

⁴⁵ James Piscatori, *Islam, Islamism, and the Electoral Principle in the Middle East* (Leiden: ISIM, 2000), 2, quoted in Donald K. Emmerson, “Inclusive Islamism: The Utility of Diversity,” in *Islamism: Contested Perspectives on Political Islam*, ed. Richard C. Martin and Abbas Barzegar (Stanford University Press, 2010), 27.

such as *Islamofascism*. . . Islamism is a term we should abandon not just because it is inappropriately conceived, but because it is harmful to the ongoing public perception of Muslims.⁴⁶

While Varisco's concerns about using "Islamism" as a political weapon are not without merit, it is the responsibility of those who study this phenomenon to be clear as to what we mean by "Islamism" and to work more diligently to explain the concept. Donald Emmerson's stance on this necessity to clarify the meaning of Islamism is particularly instructive: "A broader notion of Islamism allows the naming to occur: nonviolent political Islamists and social, economic, cultural, and evangelical Islamists can be acknowledged alongside the far scarcer, violently political kind." Emmerson advocates "Islamism with adjectives" as a way to qualify the type of Islamism to which one refers.⁴⁷

One way that those who study Islamism can differentiate between the more and less violent types of Islamist groups is by labeling violent Islamist groups "jihadist" groups instead. This is, admittedly, fraught with its own problems of definition, as jihadism and the broader Islamic concept of *jihad* should not be considered one and the same. Farhad Khosrokhavar defines a jihadist group as "any group, small or large, for which violence is the sole credible strategy to achieve Islamic ends."⁴⁸ These groups adhere to a perversion of the historical understanding of *jihad*.

Western writers often emphasize the idea of the "greater" and "lesser" *jihad*—the greater being a struggle with self, the lesser being the outward struggle against

⁴⁶ Daniel M. Varisco, "Inventing Islamism: The Violence of Rhetoric," in *Islamism: Contested Perspectives on Political Islam*, ed. Richard C. Martin and Abbas Barzegar (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), 43, 45.

⁴⁷ Emmerson, 31.

⁴⁸ Farhad Khosrokhavar, *Inside Jihadism: Understanding Jihadi Movements* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm, 2008), 1.

aggression.⁴⁹ This approach, however, is contrary to the fact that Islamic scholarship by and large only refers to *jihad* as warfare.⁵⁰ This should not be taken as an indication that *jihad* is unnecessarily violent. In fact, the classical understanding of *jihad* includes a declaration of war by a recognized representative of the *umma*, a cause which is recognized as critically important to the *umma*, announcement of the terms for resolution prior to the commencement of hostilities, respect for non-combatant immunity, respect for the dead (including enemy dead), and restrictions on the types of weapons which are allowable. In many ways, this conception of war is not unlike the just war theory of the Christian tradition.⁵¹

Some of the most influential Islamist thinkers have also regarded *jihad* as something to be approached with the proper degree of caution. Hassan al-Banna believed that because *jihad* was the most noble of goals, the means of waging *jihad* must also be noble. To that end, he believed that *jihad* should include justice toward the enemy, no instigation of hostilities, and no stealing, plundering, or mutilation. He also opposed the killing of women, children, old men, monks, and other non-combatants.⁵² Even the man regarded as the ideological father of radical Islamist and jihadist movements placed restrictions on what could and could not be done when fighting a *jihad*. In his commentary on the ninth *sura* of the Qur'an, Sayyid Qutb argued that targeting noncombatants and defiling the dead are the practices of barbarians and have no place in

⁴⁹ An example of this argument can be found in John L. Esposito, *Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 28.

⁵⁰ David Cook, *Understanding Jihad* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 39ff.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁵² Al-Banna, 153-4.

jihad. He also argued in *This Religion of Islam* that crops and livestock should be left unharmed.⁵³

The constraints one expects to find in *jihad* are notably absent in jihadism. In *Journey of the Jihadist*, Fawaz Gerges points out that “the primary goal of modern jihadism is and always has been the destruction of the atheist political and social order at home and its replacement with an authentic Islamic state.”⁵⁴ Jarret Brachman argues that jihadism “refers to the peripheral current of extremist Islamic though whose adherents demand the use of violence in order to oust non-Islamic influence from traditionally Muslim lands en route to establishing true Islamic governance in accordance with *Shari‘a*, or God’s law.”⁵⁵

These two definitions hint at what Khosrokhavar explicitly states: “Jihadism indulges in extreme violence.”⁵⁶ He goes on to explain how jihadist ideology understands core Islamic concepts, like *tawhid* or the oneness of God.⁵⁷ Much of jihadist ideology was influenced by the writings of Sayyid Qutb, whose beliefs will be explained later in this dissertation. Jihadism is essentially a form of *takfiri* Islam. *Takfir* is taken from the same root in Arabic which gives us the word “infidel” and literally means “to label one an infidel.” *Takfiri* Islam sees Islam as under attack because of the

⁵³ Sayyid Qutb, *Surah 9: Al-Tawbah* vol. 8 of *In the Shade of the Qur'an*, ed. and trans. Adil Salahi (Leicestershire, UK: The Islamic Foundation, 2003), 312 and Sayyid Qutb, *This Religion of Islam* (Palo Alto, CA: Al-Manar Press, 1967), 91.

⁵⁴ Fawaz A. Gerges, *Journey of the Jihadist: Inside Muslim Militancy* (Orlando: Harcourt, 2006), 3-4.

⁵⁵ Jarret M. Brachman, *Global Jihadism: Theory and Practice* (London: Routledge, 2009), 4.

⁵⁶ Khosrokhavar, 1.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 19ff.

encroachment of *jahiliyya*.⁵⁸ The only way to fight this encroachment is with *jihad* (not always justly waged) against all those who have been labeled infidels—including other Muslims.

For the purposes of this dissertation, Islamism should be understood as any movement which believes that Islam ought to be *the* vehicle for political and social change in society. Jihadism is a movement designed to rid the world of all un-Islamic influences, primarily by force. Even with these terms thoroughly explained, it is still important to understand how they are related, if they are related at all. One way to understand this relationship is that jihadism is a subset of Islamism. Unfortunately, this does very little to disabuse people of the notion that Islamism is not inherently violent. Another way to illustrate this relationship would be a Venn diagram. This method would show the overlap between Islamism and jihadism while still demonstrating the differences between them as well. However, it does not explain the degree to which Islamism and jihadism may or may not share similar concerns. One final illustration offers the best explanation of the relationship between Islamism and jihadism. If Islamist groups are placed along a continuum with completely nonviolent activists on one end and extremely violent jihadists on the other, it becomes possible to place Islamist groups somewhere along this continuum between nonviolence and nihilism. It is also possible for scholars to move a group's placement along this continuum as the group's ideology and tactics change.

⁵⁸ *Jahiliyya* most commonly refers to the pre-Islamic epoch in the Arabian Peninsula, a time when people were ignorant of Allah's call. It has been reinterpreted by Islamists to point to the un-Godliness present in modern society.

If, as this dissertation suggests, Islamists have become politically active, and in doing so can possibly moderate when included in the political process, then a firm understanding of the nature of these Islamist movements as parties and what political theory says about democratization and moderation is necessary. Giovanni Sartori defines parties as “an instrument, an agency, for representing the people by expressing their demands....A party is any political group identified by an official label that present at elections, and is capable of placing through elections (free or nonfree), candidates for public office.”⁵⁹

Maurice Duverger’s classic *Political Parties: Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State* explores the conditions surrounding the structure of parties—including their organization, membership, and leadership, as well as the organization of party systems.⁶⁰ Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan define parties as “alliances in conflicts over policies and value commitments within the larger body politic.” They argue that parties serve an expressive and an instrumental function. On the one hand, they use rhetoric to turn differences in social and cultural understandings into calls for action, and on the other hand, they force political leaders to compromise and prioritize policy agendas. Parties must succeed at both if they hope to succeed in advancing their interests.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Giovanni Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 27, 63.

⁶⁰ Maurice Duverger, *Political Parties: Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State*, trans. Barbara and Robert North (New York: John Wiley, 1954).

⁶¹ Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan, “Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments: An Introduction,” in *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives*, ed. Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan (New York: Free Press, 1967), 5.

Lipset and Rokkan laid out four thresholds which stand in the way of opposition parties' ability to take action: legitimation—recognition of the right to stand in opposition to the existing regime; incorporation—the chance for supporters of a movement to participate in choosing representatives; representation—the ability of new political parties to run in elections; and majority power—the presence of checks and balances to prevent a small cadre of political elites from controlling the political structures of a country. Rokkan states that the lower the thresholds become, the easier it is for opposition parties to emerge.⁶²

While these authors have contributed a great deal to the understanding of party systems, they focus primarily on Western European parties and their development over the last two centuries. This is precisely the argument that Richard Gunther and Larry Diamond made in a 2003 article in *Party Politics*. New parties, they concluded, have been formed in times of great technological and sociological change and have come of age in a time when mass media has played a key role in the dissemination of political messages—a phenomenon with which older parties did not have to contend.⁶³ They suggest a new typology for understanding and analyzing parties. Their typology is based on three criteria:

- Organization: how deeply entrenched a party is within society
- Program: the ideological platform (political philosophy, nationalism, or religion), how pragmatic the party is, and the character of the party's constituencies
- Strategy: committed to pluralism and democracy or stridently anti-system⁶⁴

⁶² Ibid., 27; Stein Rokkan, *Citizens Elections Parties: Approaches to the Comparative Study of the Processes of Development* (New York: David McKay, 1970), 82.

⁶³ Richard Gunther and Larry Diamond, "Species of Political Parties: A New Typology," *Party Politics* 9, no. 2 (2003): 168.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 171.

Of particular interest to this dissertation is Gunther and Diamond's discussion of religiously oriented mass-based parties.

A mass-based party is one that has a large membership base which is active in society between elections and involved in religious organizations, unions, and syndicates among other institutions. This participation is designed to support the party's platform and allow for its dissemination.⁶⁵ Gunther and Diamond describe two variants of the religious mass-based party. Both are based on a set of religious principles which direct the party's ideology. The first, the denominationally-based party is more accepting of other viewpoints and able to work well with other groups that may or may not share its religious values.⁶⁶ The second variant of the religious mass-based party is the fundamentalist party. A religious fundamentalist party is defined by Gunther and Diamond as one that "seeks to reorganize state and society around a strict reading of religious doctrinal practices" and which allows little to no debate over the proper way to interpret scripture and religious norms. Fundamentalist parties also impose a strict understanding of scripture on their followers and may be "hierarchical, undemocratic and even absolutist, and members are disciplined and devoted."⁶⁷

Anti-system parties are of particular interest for this dissertation because of the nature and history of Islamist parties. Sartori explains that "a party can be defined as being anti-system whenever it undermines the legitimacy of the regime it opposes." He further says that anti-system parties are not necessarily revolutionary, but that the

⁶⁵ Ibid., 178.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 182.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 182-3.

opposite is always true—revolutionary parties are inherently anti-system.⁶⁸ This definition has been echoed by others who have studied parties and their prospects for democratization, including Tezcür who defines anti-system parties as “organizations that oppose the regime on principle and consider several aspects of the ruling regime as illegitimate.”⁶⁹

Anti-system parties may occasionally turn to morally questionable tactics as a method to communicate their message. This blurs the line between political party and terrorist group, a distinction which Leonard Weinberg explores. Weinberg argues that like anti-system parties, “terrorist groups emerge in situations where alienated and highly motivated elites confront the indifference of the population they hope to lead in challenging those in positions of power.”⁷⁰ Weinberg further argues that “it is possible for a terrorist group to undergo a strategic shift, conclude its violent operations, and reconstitute itself as a political party, which then participates in the democratic electoral process.”⁷¹ Duverger explored this phenomenon as well, though he was likely not thinking of terrorist groups: “The extremist party is therefore reduced to the alternative of either taking part in government and deviating from its doctrine or else breaking up the alliance.”⁷²

⁶⁸ Sartori, 133.

⁶⁹ Tezcür, 70-1.

⁷⁰ Leonard Weinberg, “Turning to Terror: The Conditions Under Which Political Parties Turn to Terrorist Activities,” *Comparative Politics* 23, no. 4 (July 1991): 427.

⁷¹ Ibid., 430. The similarities and differences between political parties and terrorist groups are further explored in Leonard Weinberg and Ami Pedazhur, *Political Parties and Terrorist Groups* (London: Routledge, 2008).

⁷² Duverger, 335.

Some scholars of world events in the latter half of the 20th century have noted an increase in the number of extremist parties which have gained some political recognition. This began as the Cold War came to an end, and post-Soviet states started the process of democratization. In *The Third Wave*, Samuel Huntington argues that democratic reforms have been taking place around the world for the last several decades:

If popular election of the top decision makers is the essence of democracy, then the critical point in the process of democratization is the replacement of a government that was not chosen this way by one that was selected in a free, open, and fair election....It involves bringing about the end of the nondemocratic regime, the inauguration of the democratic regime, and the consolidation of the democratic system.⁷³

What Huntington and others call democracy, Robert Dahl has labeled “polyarchy,” which he defines as “a set of political institutions that, taken together, distinguish modern representative democracy from all other political systems.” He goes on to explain that polyarchy is a “system of political control in which the highest officials in the government of the state are induced to modify their conduct so as to win elections in political competition with other candidates.”⁷⁴

According to Dahl, polyarchy has two distinguishing characteristics: citizenship for most, if not all, of the adult population and the right to oppose government officials through elections. Polyarchy is also defined by its institutions, among them that the ability to make policy decisions is given to elected officials; that elections should be conducted frequently and in an equitable fashion; that there be universal or near-universal suffrage; that citizens have the right to run for elected office; that citizens have the right to free expression, including the right to express opposition to elected officials without

⁷³ Huntington, 9.

⁷⁴ Robert A. Dahl, *Democracy and Its Critics* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), 218-9.

fear of retribution; that the press should be free and a venue for the dissemination of alternate sources of information; and that citizens should be able to form autonomous associations including political organizations.⁷⁵ Dahl, like Huntington, saw in the latter half of the twentieth century an increase in incidences of the conditions which give rise to the creation of new democracies.⁷⁶

Huntington identified five patterns of democratization in third wave countries: (1) cyclical, in which democracy becomes ineffectual and is overthrown by a military regime which cannot cope with economic and political problems and is replaced by democratic opposition; (2) second try democratization, in which authoritarian regimes are replaced by weak democratic movements which are unable to stand up to authoritarian opposition before strengthening into a durable democratic movement; (3) interrupted democracy, in which sustained democracy is interrupted by a crisis of some sort during which an authoritarian government comes to power but cannot sustain itself, allowing democracy to reemerge; (4) direct transition, in which a nation-state changes from an authoritarian regime to a stable democratic system; and (5) decolonization, in which democratic countries impose democratic institutions on colonies which, upon independence retain those democratic ideals.⁷⁷

One of the most important debates going on among democratic theorists today is the ability of religion and liberal democracy to co-exist. Alfred Stepan, when discussing what he calls the “twin tolerations” of religion and democracy, argues that Dahl’s eight characteristics of polyarchy are necessary but not sufficient for the emergence of

⁷⁵ Ibid, 220-1.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 312.

⁷⁷ Huntington, 41ff.

democracy. He further argues that religion is not a hindrance to democracy, provided that religious parties understand and abide by the rules of the democratic game:

Democracy is a system of conflict regulation that allows open competition over the values and goals that citizens want to advance. In the strict democratic sense, this means that as long as groups do not use violence, do not violate the rights of the democratic gain, *all* groups are granted the right to advance their interests, both in civil society and in political society.⁷⁸

Hashemi agrees, stating that “politics involves conflict.” He goes on to suggest, as Stepan did, that democracy provides a venue for the peaceful regulation of conflict, but that “often forgotten, however, in democratic theory is that in many long-standing liberal democracies the major source of conflict for a long period of time was the place of religion in society.”⁷⁹ Hashemi also argues that reconsidering the place of religion within democratic theory could open the door to a reconsideration of the compatibility of Islam and democracy:

Democratic theorists need to reexamine the role of religion in the social construction and development of liberal democracy. Doing so requires a rethinking of the concept of secularism more broadly, but this is especially required in the context of advancing a democratic theory for Muslim societies today.⁸⁰

The role of religion in democratic societies is not the only conflict which must be dealt with in the modern world. Nationalism, especially in emerging democracies, has also proven to be a source of conflict. In his book examining the problems faced by ethnically and nationally heterogeneous emerging democracies, Jack Snyder argues that the 1990s were “a decade of both democratization and chronic nationalist conflict....Rocky transitions to democracy often give rise to warlike nationalism and

⁷⁸ Stepan, 39.

⁷⁹ Hashemi, 26.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 173.

violent ethnic conflicts....The earliest phases of democratization have triggered some of the world's bloodiest nationalist struggles.”⁸¹ Former CENTCOM commander Tony Zinni also recognized these problems, noting that the end of the Cold War—the same historic event which Huntington and others saw as the primary trigger for the third wave of democratization—created a situation for which few policy makers were prepared. He observed, “But now that the bi-polar containment was off, the threats had broken loose...When the East-West struggle died, the third world came out fighting...but in unexpected ways.”⁸²

In the Middle East, the twin forces of religion and nationalism made for an explosive combination in the latter years of the twentieth century. Sectarian strife, religious revolutions in the political sphere, and violence against both the established secular regimes and perceived occupiers created a scenario which seemed to prove that observers such as Samuel Huntington were correct when they observed a “clash of civilizations.” However, Snyder offers an alternative, suggesting, “Most of the globe’s recent strife is not due to ancient cultural hatreds.” In some cases, the conflicts were recent, and in others, the conflicts were brief and interrupted by long periods of calm. It was, in fact, the introduction of partisan electoral politics that created a more entrenched national or ethnic consciousness.⁸³ Snyder cautions against thinking that democratization is a quick or easy solution, arguing instead that

nations are not simply freed or awakened by democratization; they are formed by the experiences they undergo during that process. The type of political

⁸¹ Jack Snyder, *From Voting to Violence: Democratization and Nationalist Conflict* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000), 15-6.

⁸² Tom Clancy with General Tony Zinni (Ret.) and Tony Koltz, *Battle Ready* (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 2004), 176-7.

⁸³ Snyder, 18-9.

experiences, institutions, and leadership that prevails during the initial phases of democratization can be decisive for the formation of national identity.⁸⁴

If nationalism and religion are forces which can create violent conflict within society, then attempting to moderate those forces is of paramount concern for democratic theorists. Dahl cautions that “we should not overestimate the virtue of policy elites....The freer they are from public scrutiny and public judgment, it seems, the more likely they are to be corrupted—not necessarily in a venal way—by the familiar temptations of power.”⁸⁵ Huntington calls the moderation one expects to see from parties in a more transparent system the “democratic bargain,” which he defines as

the trade-off between participation and moderation....The scope of participation was broadened and more political figures and groups gained the opportunity to compete for power and win power on the implicit or explicit understanding that they would be moderate in their tactics and policies.⁸⁶

Duverger and others who have discussed anti-system and extremist parties would agree with this assessment. It would be folly, however, to see the process of moderation as a linear one.

Indeed, some would argue that moderation does not necessarily have to precede democracy, but that moderation and democratization can occur simultaneously. Nancy Bermeo argues

Moderation is not a prerequisite for the construction of democracy; the parameters of tolerable mobilization are broader than we originally anticipated. In many cases, democratization seems to have preceded alongside weighty and even popular challenges....The existence of extremist groups is not an insurmountable obstacle for democratic forces.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Ibid., 36.

⁸⁵ Dahl, 338.

⁸⁶ Huntington, 169.

⁸⁷ Bermeo, 314, 316.

Ignacio Sanchez-Cuenca agrees with this assessment, adding that parties may also face internal crises when faced with the prospect of moderation: “Moderation generates a trade-off between gains in policy and losses in ideological principles....A party may under certain circumstances remain in opposition for a long time if the payoff of moderation is not attractive enough.”⁸⁸

Another problem with moderation theory in a Middle Eastern context is that moderation theory assumes a level of democratization and openness within a political culture. As noted above, it is unfair to charge Islam with defeating liberal democracy because there has been so little interaction between these two forces. What exists in much of the Middle East is not democracy, but some form of authoritarianism. Larry Diamond calls these regimes “hybrid regimes,” which may include some democratic institutions and even hold elections, but still concentrate power in the hands of one party or person.⁸⁹ Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way isolate one form of hybrid regime, which they call “competitive authoritarianism.” In a competitive authoritarian regime, the features of modern democracy exist, but are co-opted by the government, creating an unlevel playing field between the regime and its opposition.⁹⁰ Many regimes in the Middle East would be considered competitive authoritarian regimes, rather than democracies. This challenges a key assumption of what Schwedler calls the “inclusion-moderation hypothesis” because authoritarian regimes, even nominally competitive ones, limit the ability of opposition groups to organize and function within society, excluding

⁸⁸ Sanchez-Cuenca, 326.

⁸⁹ Larry Diamond, “Thinking About Hybrid Regimes,” *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 2 (2002): 21-35.

⁹⁰ Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, “The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism,” *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 2 (2002): 53.

them from the political process.⁹¹ Yet, even in this restrictive environment, some groups have emerged as moderate voices in opposition to their governments.

Schwedler offers a possible explanation for the emergence of moderate Islamist parties in oppressive regimes as a result of political learning, defined by Nancy Bermeo as “the process through which people modify their political beliefs and tactics as a result of severe crises, frustrations, and dramatic changes.”⁹² Wickham suggests that political learning and strategic considerations, rather than inclusion in the political landscape, explain the moderation of the *Wasat* party in the mid-1990s.⁹³ Schwedler argues that political learning must be considered alongside inclusion to explain how and why groups moderate.⁹⁴ This combination will give us a clearer understanding of the prospects of moderation in Islamist groups.

In a working paper for the Saban Center at the Brookings Institution, Khalil al-Anani defines Islamist moderation as “the extent to which movements accept peaceful political participation, do not rely on militias, and accept the values of democracy and its various components, such as freedom, tolerance, and equality, irrespective of religion, ethnicity, or gender.”⁹⁵ Anani also addresses the myths used to exclude moderate Islamists from political participation. The common thread that unites the four myths he explores is that Islamism is viewed as more suspect than existing regimes, however undemocratic, and stereotyped as illiberal even though Islamism has seldom had the

⁹¹ Schwedler, 18.

⁹² Ibid., 14; Nancy Bermeo, “Democracy and the Lessons of Dictatorship,” *Comparative Politics* 24, no. 3 (1992): 274.

⁹³ Wickham, 217-20.

⁹⁴ Schwedler, 13-4.

⁹⁵ al-Anani, 1.

opportunity to interact with other ideologies in an open political environment.⁹⁶ Vali Nasr argues that rather than barring religious parties from participating, they ought to be allowed to participate: “Regular competitive elections have both pushed religious parties toward pragmatism and pulled other parties into more diligent efforts to represent Muslim values. The net effect is to reward moderation.”⁹⁷

Carrie Rosefsky Wickham has done extensive research on the relationship between the Egyptian regime and the Islamist parties that oppose it. She observes, “Islamist ideological moderation was an outcome of both strategic calculation and political learning, much as comparative theory would predict.”⁹⁸ Wickham also argues that

the perfunctory dismissal of all Islamist agendas as undemocratic obscures significant variation in Islamists’ understanding of the content and meaning of *Shari’a* rule and diverts attention away from recent Islamist efforts to incorporate such ideas as pluralism, tolerance, and human rights in a *Shari’a* framework.⁹⁹

This process of incorporation has been called “post-Islamism” by Asef Bayat, who defines it as a sense among former Islamists that Islamism as an ideology has not been able to deliver on its promises. Post-Islamism is “also a project, a conscious attempt to conceptualize and strategize the rationale and modalities of transcending Islamism in social, political, and intellectual domains....It represents an endeavor to fuse religiosity and rights, faith and freedom, Islam and liberty.”¹⁰⁰ Though Tezcür’s study on Islamism and moderation theory focuses mainly on Turkey and Iran, he also argues that “a similar

⁹⁶ Ibid., 10-13.

⁹⁷ Nasr, 19.

⁹⁸ Wickham, 223.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 207.

¹⁰⁰ Bayat, 10-1.

process through which Islamists develop democratic credentials can also be seen in such different contexts as Egypt and Indonesia.”¹⁰¹ One well-publicized example of an Islamist party which suggests that moderation theory can work is Egypt’s *Wasat* (Center in Arabic) party.

Wasat’s genesis dates from the 1970s when the Muslim Brotherhood’s “Middle Generation” were university students who participated in Islamic associations on campus. In these associations, students gained the training and ideology necessary to make the Brotherhood marketable to the broader public. “Such experience,” Wickham says, “left an indelible mark, as the young Islamic leaders gained both self-confidence and political skill and sophistication.”¹⁰² Some of the Middle Generation, disenfranchised by the Brotherhood’s older leadership who were leery of too much involvement in the political arena, broke away in the mid-1990s to create the *Wasat* party, which claimed it was committed to a platform based on Islam and advocated pluralism, including women and Coptic Christians in its alliance, and wished to open Islamic law to *ijtihad* (independent reasoning).¹⁰³

The *Wasat* party has faced similar roadblocks to its participation in the Egyptian parliament as have other opposition parties. Its response to such repression, according to Wickham, is notable:

On the face of it, the formation of the Wasat party under conditions of increased repression is surprising, not only because the incentives for moderation created by democratization elsewhere were absent but because repression might more logically trigger Islamist radicalization. Yet Egypt demonstrates that increased

¹⁰¹ Tezcür, 83.

¹⁰² Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *Mobilizing Islam: Religion, Activism, and Political Change in Egypt* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 115 ff.

¹⁰³ David L. Phillips, *From Bullets to Ballots: Violent Muslim Movements in Transition* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2009), 15.

repression can sometimes induce ideological moderation as “rational” opposition actors moderate their agendas not only to seize new political opportunities but also to evade new political constraints.¹⁰⁴

Jeroen Gunning has also observed this impulse toward moderation in Hamas, even before it officially began participating in elections. He argues that Hamas “has scaled down expectations regarding one of its core goals, the creation of an Islamic state, and it has increasingly sought to find a pragmatic way out of its absolutist insistence on the liberation of all of Palestine.”¹⁰⁵ Gunning went even further, provocatively stating that the “[i]nclusion of Hamas at the nation level is furthermore pivotal to the securing of democracy in Palestine.”¹⁰⁶ This conclusion is certainly promising enough, geo-strategically speaking, that it requires further examination.

Case Selection and Methodology

The importance of gaining a better understanding of the Muslim Brotherhood has taken on a more urgent tone since President Hosni Mubarak was forced to step down in February 2011. The Brotherhood has been a fixture in Egyptian society for over 80 years and has, at various times, moderated or resorted to violence in its relationship to the Egyptian government, depending on its relationship with the regime, whether a monarchy, a military dictatorship, or a strong one-party autocracy. More recently, despite an increasingly closed political culture in Egypt, the Brotherhood has continued to moderate, in spite of what moderation theory might predict. As Egypt moves forward in the post-Mubarak era, the Brotherhood will become an even greater presence in

¹⁰⁴ Wickham, “The Path to Moderation,” 213.

¹⁰⁵ Jeroen Gunning, “Peace with Hamas? The Transforming Potential of Political Participation,” *International Affairs* 80, no. 2 (2004), 252-3.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 254.

Egyptian electoral politics. In fact, aside from the remnants of Mubarak's National Democratic Party (NDP), the Brotherhood is likely the strongest party operating in Egypt today.¹⁰⁷ The implications not only for Egypt's domestic politics but also for its relationships with other nations make a deeper understanding of the Brotherhood a necessity.

Despite years of electoral participation, Hezbollah still often finds itself at odds either with other factions within the Lebanese government or with Israel. While Hezbollah generally interacts peacefully with other factions of the Lebanese government, it still occasionally engages in violent conflict with those factions, and was implicated in the assassination of Rafiq Hariri in 2005, along with its closest foreign ally, Syria.¹⁰⁸ The influence of outside actors such as Syria, Iran, and Israel on Hezbollah is another factor which moderation theory does not necessarily take in to account, yet it is crucial in understanding the political behavior of Hezbollah. The unrest Syria is currently experiencing could also factor into the future prospects of moderation in Hezbollah.

Likewise, the influence of regional actors also impacts the behavior of Hamas. First formed in the late-1980s during the Intifada, Hamas recently became the majority party in Palestinian politics, a fact that was worrisome to both Israel and the United States. Because of its relatively short electoral history, Hamas should predictably be the least moderate of the three groups examined here. However, that does not mean that it cannot show signs of moderation, though this is not a certainty. As with Hezbollah,

¹⁰⁷ This is true in part because Mubarak's restrictions on the creation of new opposition parties, particularly secular parties, set up a *de facto* two-party system with the Brotherhood as the only viable opposition to the NDP. See Jason Brownlee, "The Decline of Pluralism in Mubarak's Egypt," *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 4 (2002): 12.

¹⁰⁸ Nicholas Blanford explores the ramifications of the Hariri assassination in *Killing Mr. Lebanon: The Assassination of Rafik Hariri and its Impact on the Middle East* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2006)

Hamas' political behavior is influenced by its adversarial relationship with Israel. Given the frequent rhetorical use of the Arab-Israeli conflict to engender anti-American sentiment among Islamist and jihadist groups, it is vital to better understand how Hamas thinks and what its ideological framework is.

The three case studies examined in this dissertation represent three of the most well-known and often discussed Islamist groups operating in the world today. Furthermore, they all challenge some aspect of moderation theory, classically understood. If moderation theory is considered a subset of democratic theory, then it first must be stated that none of these groups exist in an open, democratic system. To measure the openness, or lack thereof, of each regime, this dissertation will use Freedom House's annual reports which measure the political rights and civil liberties of each nation around the world. To better clarify the type of political system, I will also use Lipset and Rokkan's four thresholds of political participation which can be used to evaluate the level of difficulty opposition movements have in expressing their grievances in a given political system. The changes in these thresholds over time are also suggestive of changes in each group's behavior.

An understanding of the type of party each case exemplifies must begin with a determination of when each group became a party. The Muslim Brotherhood, Hezbollah, and Hamas were all birthed as social movements. It was not until later in their histories that they became recognizable political parties as defined by Sartori. The timing of the transition from mere social movement to political party is significant in each case. Using Gunther and Diamond's new typology, I will determine which type of party each group has become. While all three are undoubtedly religious mass-based parties in this

typology, it remains to be seen whether they would be better classified as religious fundamentalist parties or denominationally-based parties. A discussion of whether these case studies constitute “anti-system” parties is also instructive as all of them could have been classified as anti-system at various points in their histories, but this may not be the case for one or more of them today. Finally, the level of moderation of each case study will be measured using Khalil al-Anani’s definition of Islamist moderation which sets three benchmarks for moderation: peaceful political participation, little to no reliance on militias, and acceptance of democratic values such as freedom, tolerance, and equality.

Each of these cases presents its own unique challenge to the presuppositions of moderation theory. An historical analysis of the evolution of each group also disproves several deeply entrenched stereotypes not only of these groups but of Islamism as well. Examining these cases will provide a variety of contexts in which Islamist groups have shown signs of moderation and present the challenges faced in each instance fully moderate. This process is important to understand not only because of what it says about moderation theory, but also because of what it says about Islamism and how it behaves in the political arena.

Whatever fate befalls Islamist groups, it is important to remember that moderation and democratization succeed when they are indigenous phenomena driven by the desire of a party’s constituents rather than imposed by outside forces. In the *Arab Bulletin* in 1917, T.E. Lawrence offered what he called the “27 Articles,” pieces of advice for those who might follow in his footsteps and assist the Arabs in their revolt against Ottoman Rule. One of the most prescient suggestions offered by Lawrence addressed this conundrum for outsiders:

Do not try to do too much with your own hands. Better the Arabs do it tolerably than that you do it perfectly. It is their war, and you are there to help them, not to win it for them. Actually, also, under the very odd conditions of Arabia, your practiced work will not be as good as, perhaps, you think it is.¹⁰⁹

Both parts of this piece of advice are significant. Whether in war or in political development, it is best to let those who live in the nation-state actually make the substantive decisions; and in the Middle East, it is best to avoid imposing Western attitudes toward democratic governance on indigenous populations. The legacy of colonialism has left many in the region with a deep-seated mistrust of the West.

It would be folly to expect any of these groups to fully moderate overnight. However, as Benjamin Barber reminds us, “Democracy’s most important virtue is, in fact, patience.”¹¹⁰ If moderation theory is applicable to the Muslim Brotherhood, Hezbollah, and Hamas, then patience and restraint must be exercised, even if some of the actions of these groups are reason for short-term concern. However, if moderation theory or any corollary thereof, does not suggest that these groups will moderate, then patience is no virtue at all. However, one must never presume that Islamism automatically assumes a Taliban-like theocracy. To do so creates a situation such as Algeria in the early 1990s when democracy was subverted due to the fear of an Islamist victory. A deeper understanding of moderation theory as it relates to Islamist parties will provide an opportunity to better differentiate between real threat and mere shadow.

¹⁰⁹ *The Essential T.E. Lawrence*, ed. David Garnett (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1951), 139.

¹¹⁰ Benjamin R. Barber, *Fear’s Empire: War, Terrorism, and Democracy* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2003), 190

CHAPTER TWO

The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt

On January 25, 2011 Egyptians began taking to the streets *en masse* to protest three decades of authoritarian rule under Hosni Mubarak. At protests in Cairo, Suez, Alexandria, and other Egyptian cities, members of a variety of opposition movements shouted slogans demanding regime change in demonstrations that experts say were the biggest mass protests in Egypt since the 1977 bread riots.¹ Absent from the earliest protests, or at least absent from center stage, was the Muslim Brotherhood. While many of its members participated in various rallies, the Brotherhood itself did not officially participate, even as several of its highest ranking officials, including spokesman Essam el-Erian, were detained by Egyptian security forces.²

In the midst of these protests, Egyptians and other interested observers kept one eye on Washington, D.C., anticipating the official response of the United States. That response was tepid, at best, as American officials walked a fine line between defense of basic civil liberties and support for its strongest Arab ally. As Shadi Hamid of the Brookings Doha Center argued in a column posted on *The Atlantic*'s website the day the protests began, an end to the Mubarak regime could lead to the rise of a decidedly more un-American regime which would likely include the Muslim Brotherhood, the largest and

¹ Kristen Chick, "Energized by Tunisia, Egypt protesters surge onto streets in 'Day of Wrath,'" *Christian Science Monitor*, January 25, 2011, <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2011/0125/Energized-by-Tunisia-Egypt-protesters-surge-onto-streets-in-Day-of-Wrath> (accessed 28 January 2011).

² "Egypt arrests Muslim Brotherhood leaders," *Reuters*, January 27, 2011, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/01/28/us-egypt-arrests-idUSTRE70R0BW20110128> (accessed 28 January 2011).

best organized opposition movement in Egypt. Hamid noted, “The U.S. is—at least in the short term—stuck.”³ It remains to be seen exactly how stuck the United States will be as events unfold in Egypt. Now that Hosni Mubarak has been successfully deposed and Egypt is moving forward with constitutional changes and the hopes of a more open democratic electoral process, the necessity of understanding the Brotherhood’s attitude toward political participation is more important than ever before. As the only opposition force in Egypt which has had the opportunity to organize, the Brotherhood looks to be a big winner in any elections held in Egypt in the near future. The ramifications of such an electoral victory are of great consequence, not only to Egypt, but also to United States foreign policy, the Israeli relationship with Egypt, and the region at large.

Despite a long history of peaceful opposition in Egypt, the Brotherhood is still looked upon with a great deal of suspicion.⁴ As with the FIS in Algeria, many people fear that the Muslim Brotherhood might use elections to gain power, then create its own authoritarian government hostile to the United States and her allies, most notably Israel. However, in recent years, the Brotherhood has openly called for democracy, free press, the right to assemble, and solidarity with Egypt’s Coptic Christian minority. What is most interesting about the Brotherhood’s calls for reform and more openness from the government is that its moderation has not come during a period of increasing

³ Shadi Hamid, “After Tunisia: Obama’s Impossible Dilemma in Egypt,” *The Atlantic*, January 25, 2011, <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2011/01/after-tunisia-obamas-impossible-dilemma-in-egypt/70123/> (accessed 28 January 2011).

⁴ This is particularly true in the United States where few people understand the history and trajectory of the movement. See, for example, “Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood Lurks as a Long-Term Threat to Freedom,” *The Heritage Foundation*, February 8, 2011, <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Reports/2011/02/Egypt-Muslim-Brotherhood-Lurks-as-a-Long-Term-Threat-to-Freedom> (accessed 1 March 2011) and Leslie H. Gelb, “Beware Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood,” *The Daily Beast*, January 29, 2011, <http://www.thedailybeast.com/blogs-and-stories/2011-01-29/beware-egypts-muslim-brotherhood> (accessed 1 March 2011).

democratization as moderation theory would suggest. Egyptian society has become more closed with both the political rights and civil liberties of Egyptian citizens being severely curtailed. Not surprisingly, these restrictions on individual freedoms have been accompanied by barriers to participation that opposition movements have found difficult to penetrate. However, the Brotherhood's exclusion from the political process—often through violent, or at least confrontational, means—has not led it to back to extremism as one might assume, but rather to a higher degree of moderation.

The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt is the oldest Islamist organization in the world. It has seen Egypt transition from monarchy to military dictatorship and now to something altogether new. The Brotherhood's relationship with the ruling regime has been occasionally accommodating but often confrontational, with the regime taking action to curtail the Brotherhood's activities when it perceived the Brotherhood to be a threat to its power. Indeed, as John Bradley acknowledges, "It has to be said categorically that the Muslim Brotherhood, especially grassroots members who joined from deep conviction, have suffered and suffered atrociously and often with great fortitude, at the hands of the regime."⁵

The Brotherhood was once violently opposed to the Egyptian regime, and its anti-system orientation at that time led to mass imprisonment and torture at the hands of the regime. Upon their release from prison, the Brothers chose a less violent path and committed themselves to preaching and teaching. This change in orientation has not guaranteed that the regime would respond in a similarly peaceful manner. Even so, the Brotherhood has remained a relatively moderate force within Islamism despite its

⁵ John R. Bradley, *Inside Egypt: The Land of the Pharaohs on the Brink of a Revolution* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 56.

suffering at the hands of the regime. The Brotherhood also displays many traits associated with denominationally-based, rather than religious fundamentalist parties. It cooperates with other opposition parties whose platforms it may not agree with, and it led a movement to reform the professional syndicates in Egypt to make them more transparent, which benefited all of the members of those syndicates, regardless of ideological or religious orientation. The Muslim Brotherhood has successfully participated in elections and long ago gave up its paramilitary activities. It remains to be seen, however, whether the Brotherhood's promises of reform and liberalization will translate into real action.

Scholarship and the Muslim Brotherhood

In the introduction to his book, *The Society of Muslim Brothers*, Brynjar Lia noted the dearth of quality historical works regarding the Muslim Brotherhood.⁶ Despite being first published over 40 years ago, Richard Mitchell's account of the genesis of the Brotherhood remains the gold standard by which all others are measured. However, Mitchell spends very few pages describing the life of Hasan al-Banna in a way that would give the reader any insight into the motivations of al-Banna for initially establishing the Brotherhood. Rather, Mitchell's work deals more with the political philosophy of the Brotherhood in the 1940s and 50s.⁷ Other scholarly works of the Brotherhood by Western authors from the 1960s reflect a profound distrust of Islamist ideology, as

⁶ Brynjar Lia, *The Society of Muslim Brothers in Egypt: The Rise of an Islamic Mass Movement, 1928-1942* (Reading, UK: Garnet Publishing, 1998), 1.

⁷ Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of Muslim Brothers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969).

evidenced by the tone of Christina Phelps Harris' *Nationalism and Revolution in Egypt*.⁸ Lia's more recent account provides a more balanced examination of the Brotherhood's early years, though he focuses on the social and religious roots of the Brotherhood and generally leaves its political activities aside.

While secondary sources offer mixed returns, translations of al-Banna's memoirs as well as some of his more important writings offer the reader greater insight into what drove him to turn toward Islamic activism.⁹ Others have written biographies of al-Banna, though the quality of these accounts is mixed. Generally, Western biographers have presented balanced accounts of his life.¹⁰ Arab biographers tend to be overly sympathetic, if not downright laudatory, and their level of academic rigor leaves much to be desired.¹¹ If accounts of foundations of the Brotherhood are sparse, the situation is even bleaker when one looks for narratives on the Brotherhood's leadership after al-Banna. There is only one account of the man who would succeed al-Banna as Supreme Leader of the Brotherhood, and it was only recently published.¹² When this period is covered by historians at all, the focus is almost solely on Sayyid Qutb, but even then

⁸ Christina Phelps Harris, *Nationalism and Revolution in Egypt: The Role of the Muslim Brotherhood* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Publications, 1964).

⁹ Hasan al-Banna, *The Memoirs of Hasan al-Banna Shaheed*, trans. M.N. Shaikh (Karachi: International Islamic Publishers, 1981) and Hasan al-Banna, *Five Tracts of Hasan al-Banna: A Selection from the "Majmu'at Rasa'il al-Imam al-Shahid Hasan al-Banna"*, ed. and trans. Charles Wendell (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).

¹⁰ See Gudrun Kraemer, *Hasan al-Banna* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2009).

¹¹ For example, Thameen Ushama, *Hasan al-Banna: Vision and Mission* (Kuala Lumpur: A.S. Noordeen, 1995).

¹² Barbara Zollner, *The Muslim Brotherhood: Hasan al-Hudaybi and Ideology* (London: Routledge, 2008).

Western sources that engage Qutb's biography are slim.¹³ As with al-Banna, however, there are a number of very good translations of primary source material from Qutb.¹⁴

Much of the recent scholarship on the Brotherhood has focused on its relationship with the Mubarak regime, attempts by its membership to create more opportunities for political participation, and how it might respond to what appears to be an imminent crisis of legitimacy for the Egyptian regime.¹⁵ This chapter will attempt to synthesize this existing literature to achieve a better understanding of the Brotherhood's response to the social, cultural, and political challenges facing Egypt, the regime's reaction to the Brotherhood's critique of its policies, and how moderation theory may or may not be useful in understanding this relationship.

Hasan al-Banna and the Genesis of the Brotherhood

The political situation in Egypt in the years after World War I deeply influenced Hasan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood. The inter-war period in Egypt was marked by secularism among the intelligentsia, who attacked religious traditionalism and advocated Westernization and women's emancipation. To counter this secular trend, a wave of Islamization began with the founding of the Young Men's Muslim Association

¹³ Two superb biographies of Qutb are Adnan Musallam, *From Secularism to Jihad: Sayyid Qutb and the Foundations of Radical Islamism* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2005) and John Calvert, *Sayyid Qutb and the Origins of Radical Islamism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).

¹⁴ See, for example, Sayyid Qutb, *Milestones*, (Damascus: Dar al-Ilm, n.d.) and Sayyid Qutb, *This Religion of Islam* (Palo Alto, CA: Al-Manar Press, 1967).

¹⁵ Hesham al-Awadi, *In Pursuit of Legitimacy: The Muslim Brothers and Mubarak, 1982-2000* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004); Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *Mobilizing Islam: Religion, Activism, and Political Change in Egypt* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002); Muhammad Zahid, *The Muslim Brotherhood and Egypt's Succession Crisis: The Politics of Liberalization and Reform in the Middle East* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010).

in 1927; the Muslim Brotherhood was established a year later.¹⁶ It was this politically charged environment from which Hasan al-Banna emerged.

Al-Banna was born in 1906 in Mahmudiyya, a small village 90 miles northwest of Cairo.¹⁷ He was deeply religious, even from a young age, and his religious convictions were deeply influential on his development. Indeed, one of al-Banna's biographers observes, "For Hasan al-Banna, the defining aspect of his youth was not school, neither was it politics. It was religion in general and Sufism in particular; the personal ties built on that basis lasted almost throughout his life."¹⁸ While Sufism defined al-Banna's life as a young man, he was also concerned with the matter of Egyptian independence. While a student at the Dar al-'Ulum Teacher Training College in Cairo, al-Banna became involved in protests led by nationalist leader Sa'ad Zaghlul against British occupation.¹⁹ Al-Banna was also active in organizing groups of students from Dar al-'Ulum and al-Azhar, the oldest Islamic university in the world, to spread the message of Islam.²⁰ These two causes—nationalism and Islamic awakening—were at the heart of al-Banna's ideology. According to Christina Phelps Harris, al-Banna believed "that it was the duty of all Egyptian Muslims to be loyal to Egypt, loyal to the idea of pan-Arabism, and loyal to the ideals of Islamic internationalism—in the hope, presumably, that no conflict would ever arise between these three ideals."²¹

¹⁶ Musallam, 6-7.

¹⁷ Harris, 143.

¹⁸ Mitchell, 2; Kraemer, 12.

¹⁹ Musallam, 3; Harris, 144.

²⁰ Mitchell, 4-5.

²¹ Harris, 164.

Al-Banna's assignment to a primary school in Ismailiyya in the Suez Canal Zone after he completed his teacher training only heightened his awareness of British interference in Egyptian affairs. From the beginning, he was active in both the school and the community in Ismailiyya.²² It was in Ismailiyya, where agitation against the British had created a highly politicized environment, that Hasan al-Banna and six friends would establish the Muslim Brotherhood in March 1928. Al-Banna recounted in his memoirs, "We determined on solemn oath that we shall live as brethren, work for the glory of Islam and launch *Jihad* for it."²³

The first three years of the Brotherhood's existence was dedicated to increasing its membership in and around Ismailiyya. The Brotherhood built both boys' and girls' schools in Ismailiyya. Other branches were established along the Suez, and all of them followed the same pattern: a headquarters was established followed by a mosque, school, club, or some other outlet which served the interests of the community.²⁴ Reacting to both the turn away from Islam of Egypt's elite and as British imperialism, al-Banna argued,

[O]ur society was on the path of deterioration and evil was spreading all over. This is happening because we have forgotten our duties towards Allah. It is our duty to launch a movement to prevent the spreading of evil and enforce the law of Islam which is the only means of welfare for the people and the establishment of a good society....An individual cannot carry on this mission alone. A well-organized *Jama'at* of Muslims is needed to fulfill it.²⁵

The Brotherhood was able to further expand its base of operations when al-Banna was

²² Mitchell, 6-7.

²³ Al-Banna, *Memoirs*, 141-2.

²⁴ Mitchell, 9.

²⁵ Al-Banna, *Memoirs*, 176-7. *Jama'at* means organization or association in Arabic.

transferred to Cairo in 1932 where he quickly established the capitol's first branch of the Brotherhood with his younger brother.²⁶

Al-Banna's relocation to Cairo led him to have more direct contact with the political apparatus of the state and for a time, the Brotherhood was supportive of King Farouq, whom it considered to be a pious man. In fact, the fourth General Conference of the Muslim Brotherhood in 1937 celebrated Farouq's ascension to the throne. However, Farouq, like his father King Fu'ad before him, was more partial to benign despotism than liberal democracy, and dissolved parliament or suspended the constitution when it suited his purposes.²⁷ The benign despotism embraced by the Egyptian throne brought about a period of intense politicization during which the dynamics of Egyptian politics began to change.²⁸

The Brotherhood took advantage of this shift and became increasingly political, holding rallies advocating the implementation of *Shari'a*, which caused the Brotherhood's relationship with the king to deteriorate.²⁹ Adding to the politicization of Egypt was the drastically changing demographic reality of the country. Between 1939 and 1947, Cairo's population increased by sixty percent which created a widening disparity between rich and poor, and the Egyptian middle class became highly resentful of the concentration of power in the hands of a few landowners and the king.³⁰ The

²⁶ Mitchell, 10.

²⁷ Ibid., 16; Musallam, 10.

²⁸ Kraemer, 50.

²⁹ Ana Belén Soage and Jorge Fuentelsaz Franganillo, "The Muslim Brothers in Egypt," in *The Muslim Brotherhood: The Organization and Policies of a Global Islamist Movement*, ed. Barry Rubin (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 40.

³⁰ Musallam, 12, 14.

Brotherhood capitalized on this frustration with its provision of social services and in many ways, emerged from World War II stronger than most of the opposition movements in Egypt: its anti-British stance appeal to the nationalists, its religious ideology appealed to the deeply pious Egyptian masses, and its anti-communist stance made the Brotherhood an ally, albeit an uneasy one, of King Farouq which enabled it to operate freely and continue to receive financial support from the monarchy.³¹

Another benefit of the Brotherhood's somewhat cordial relationship with the king was al-Banna's ability to lobby Farouq for the Brotherhood's cause. In a letter to the king, al-Banna urged him to lead Egypt down an Islamic path which was the virtuous way and would act as a mechanism bring about Arab and Islamic unity, which would have been quite a political victory for the Egyptian king.³² Al-Banna advocated sweeping education reform which he saw as the foundation for creating a "virtuous, patriotic spirit and an unwavering moral code."³³ A teacher by training, al-Banna frequently advocated education as the foundation upon which all good societies were built. In a tract entitled "To What Do We Summon Mankind?" he argued, "Every Islamic nation and people pursues its own policy in education and bringing up the men of the future upon whom the life of the new nation will depend."³⁴

Education served not only as a talking point for al-Banna and the Brotherhood in its dealings with King Farouq, but also as an integral part of its mission to Islamize society. One of the first accomplishments of the Brotherhood in Ismailiyya was to

³¹ Soage and Franganillo, 40.

³² Al-Banna, *Five Tracts*, 104-5.

³³ Ibid., 129.

³⁴ Ibid., 90.

establish boys' and girls' schools. This was one of the many steps taken by the Brotherhood to reform society, not through political means but at a grassroots, societal level. The Brotherhood's network of schools, hospitals, businesses, and social service organizations, coupled with the formation of their own militia which fought with other Arab nations in the 1948 war in Palestine allowed the Brotherhood to function, in many ways, as a state-within-a-state. As Lawrence Wright observed, "They acted less as a counter-government than as a counter-society, which was their goal. Their founder, Hasan al-Banna, had refused to think of their organization as a mere political party; it was meant to be a challenge to the entire idea of politics."³⁵ However, this state-within-a-state did not sit well with the prevailing powers in the Egyptian government. If the 1930s were a decade of political mobilization for the Brotherhood, then the 1940s were a decade characterized by repression and confrontation between the regime and the organization.

During the first *minha* of the Muslim Brotherhood, the Brotherhood began to exhibit some anti-system traits as it took steps to undermine the Egyptian monarchy. The first *minha* is believed to have started in 1941, as the regime began a massive crackdown on the Brotherhood's anti-British protests and arrested many key leaders of the movement, including Hasan al-Banna.³⁶ In response to government repression, the Brotherhood formed a paramilitary group known as the "Special Apparatus." The exact date of its inception is unclear, though it appears to have been formed sometime in the early-1940s. During this same period, the Brotherhood began forging new relationships

³⁵ Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11* (New York: Vintage, 2006), 29.

³⁶ Mitchell, 22-3. *Minha* means "persecution" in Arabic.

with members of what would become the Free Officers' movement within the Egyptian military. Al-Banna met with Anwar Sadat for the first time in 1940 and again in 1942 in the hopes of forming an alliance between the Free Officers and the Brotherhood. Al-Banna offered Sadat the services of the Special Apparatus, and the two men discussed their common disdain for British occupation and other forms of foreign influence.³⁷

Meanwhile, the relationship between the Brotherhood and the government continued to deteriorate as Egypt and Great Britain entered into negotiations about Britain's future role in Egypt. These discussions failed to address the concerns of nationalist and anti-colonial elements within Egypt and in 1946, what started as peaceful protests became riots against Egyptian and British forces. Among those arrested by the state security forces during the riots were many Muslim Brothers.³⁸ These clashes galvanized Brotherhood opposition to the regime and engendered sympathy from ordinary Egyptians toward the Brotherhood's cause. Barry Rubin observes, "In the 1940s and early 1950s, organized fundamentalism was larger, more united, and more threatening to the existing system than it has been at any time since."³⁹

The conflict between the monarchy and the Brotherhood reached its climax in the late 1940s. In March 1948, two members of the Special Apparatus assassinated a judge known for handing down harsh prison sentences against members of the Brotherhood. Al-Banna was most likely unaware of the murder plot, and he was quick to condemn the

³⁷ Ibid., 24-5; Kraemer, 71, 74.

³⁸ Mitchell, 49-50.

³⁹ Barry Rubin, *Islamic Fundamentalism in Egyptian Politics*, updated edition (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 10.

act of violence.⁴⁰ A few days later, large weapons cache was found in the home of a Muslim Brother in Ismailiyya.⁴¹ In November 1948, in what came to be known as the “Jeep Affair,” a Jeep loaded with weapons and confidential documents was pulled over by the state security forces and the driver was arrested. The documents found in the Jeep led to the disclosure of the existence of the Special Apparatus.⁴²

On December 8, the government issued an order dissolving the Muslim Brotherhood because of its alleged terrorist activity. On December 28, a student member of the Brotherhood assassinated the Egyptian prime minister in retaliation. In January 1949, a Brother tried to bomb the courthouse where documents related to the Jeep Affair were kept, which led to another wave of mass arrests. Many Brothers reported being tortured while in prison during this time, though almost all of them were in agreement that the torture they endured under Farouq was nothing compared to the torture that was to come under Nasser.⁴³

Despite his denials of culpability in the assassination of the prime minister, Hasan al-Banna was shot on February 12, 1949 outside of the Muslim Brotherhood’s Cairo headquarters in retaliation.⁴⁴ Though it is unclear whether the state was responsible for al-Banna’s death, the king nevertheless anticipated that he would benefit from it. Farouq hoped that al-Banna’s death would be the end of the Muslim Brotherhood. In reality, it only strengthened the resolve of his supporters and possibly led to a greater degree of

⁴⁰ Kraemer, 77.

⁴¹ Soage and Franganillo, 40-1.

⁴² Kraemer, 79.

⁴³ Ibid., 79 ff.

⁴⁴ Mitchell, 71.

radicalization as al-Banna was a leader who understood the necessity of incremental rather than revolutionary change.⁴⁵ Even before al-Banna's death, however, the Brotherhood was forced to survive mostly in secret, aided by sympathizers who kept the underground organization alive.⁴⁶

The relationship between the Egyptian monarchy and the Brotherhood during this time progressed much as one might expect, with accommodation of the Brotherhood and its demands during periods of calm and repression during periods of unrest. Though democratization was nowhere on the horizon, the Brotherhood's actions during this time followed the inclusion-moderation paradigm. When the relationship between King Farouq and the Muslim Brotherhood was more conciliatory, it operated peacefully and avoided criticism of the monarchy. However, as the regime became more responsive to Western overtures, despite the nationalist leanings of many Egyptians, the Brotherhood became more critical, the king more repressive, and the relationship more confrontational. Eventually, with the dissolution of the Brotherhood by Farouq, the relationship between the two had deteriorated to direct violent conflict. The Muslim Brotherhood's relationship with the regime would again repeat the cycle of accommodation and conflict as new leadership of both the Brotherhood and Egypt came to power.

In the first 25 years of its existence, the Muslim Brotherhood never ventured into the realm of electoral politics, and could therefore not be classified as a political party. However, two traits are notable. First, the Brotherhood began to exhibit anti-system

⁴⁵ David L. Phillips, *From Bullets to Ballots: Violent Muslim Movements in Transition* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2009), 8.

⁴⁶ Zollner, 16.

tendencies during the 1940s with the formation of the Special Apparatus. The rationale behind this paramilitary group was to directly confront and attempt to undermine the Egyptian royal family. Second, despite the conflict, the Brotherhood functioned more as a denominationally-based mass party than a religious fundamentalist one. In agreeing to work with the Free Officers, the Brotherhood showed that it was willing to work with groups that held differing ideological viewpoints to accomplish its goals—in this case, the dissolution of the monarchy.

Nasser, the Free Officers, and the Repression of the Brotherhood

After the dust had settled following al-Banna's assassination, Hasan al-Hudaybi was selected to replace him as the leader of the Brotherhood. Hudaybi was a High Court judge in the 1940s, though he kept his ties to the Brotherhood secret because the judiciary was not allowed to join political organizations. He resigned his post to become Supreme Leader of the Brotherhood in 1951.⁴⁷ Despite having been chosen to succeed al-Banna, Hudaybi was not a unanimous choice, and he soon found his leadership ability severely curtailed over issues such as whether to dissolve the Special Apparatus and how active Brotherhood participation should be in anti-British protests.⁴⁸ The divisions among the Muslim Brothers would be capitalized upon by the Free Officers in an attempt to clear the way for a military dictatorship.

Christina Phelps Harris said of the Free Officers, "The coup d'état of the Free Officers marks the greatest event in the history of modern Egypt: the inauguration of the

⁴⁷ Ibid., 22.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 23-4.

Revolution.”⁴⁹ The first official Free Officer cell was not formed until 1949, though the Free Officers had been collaborating for many years before that. All five members of the first cell had relationships with the Muslim Brotherhood that dated back to the early-1940s.⁵⁰ In fact, many of the Free Officers were Muslim Brothers, though none of the executive committee could make such a claim.⁵¹ Despite differing worldviews, the Muslim Brotherhood and the Free Officers shared similar concerns including British meddling in Egyptian affairs and a desire to help impoverished Egyptians and others with no voice in the government.

The support the Brotherhood gave the Free Officers was instrumental in the initial success of the revolution.⁵² On July 28, 1952, five days after the Free Officers coup, Hasan al-Hudaybi wrote a letter on behalf of the Muslim Brotherhood to the newspaper *al-Ahram* in support of the Free Officers.⁵³ In September of that year, two Muslim Brothers were offered posts in the cabinet of General Muhammad Naguib, the first president of Egypt following the coup. However, the Guidance Council of the Brotherhood, correctly fearing this was an invitation for the government to meddle in the Brotherhood’s affairs, told those offered positions that they could accept but doing so would mean leaving the organization.⁵⁴ Shortly thereafter, the Free Officers required all political parties to register and the Brotherhood faced another difficult decision—whether

⁴⁹ Harris, 195-6.

⁵⁰ Zahid, 78.

⁵¹ Harris, 195.

⁵² Albert J. Bergesen, “Sayyid Qutb in historical context,” in *The Sayyid Qutb Reader*, ed. Albert J. Bergesen (New York: Routledge, 2008), 6-7.

⁵³ Zollner, 25.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 27-8.

to register as a political party. The Guidance Council and Hudaybi were divided as to what the wisest course of action would be. The membership supposedly voted to register as a political party, though official accounts differ as to whether this actually happened.⁵⁵

In January 1953, the Free Officers banned all political parties except the Muslim Brotherhood, and General Naguib announced that the transitional government of which he was the leader would be a military dictatorship. Alarmed by this turn of events, the Brotherhood tried to withdraw its registration as a political party, insisting instead that it was merely a religious organization.⁵⁶ Even as the Free Officers were granting special dispensation to the Brotherhood by allowing it to operate as a political party, they were also attempting to limit the power of the Brotherhood: “The officers had no intention of allowing the Brotherhood to express popular demands, which were channeled through a single party whose task was to rally the masses behind the government.”⁵⁷

Relations between the Free Officers and the Muslim Brotherhood deteriorated quickly from there. After Naguib refused Hudaybi’s demands for a new constitution based solely on the Qur’an, the Muslim Brotherhood began working covertly to undermine the Revolutionary Command Committee (RCC), Naguib’s transitional government. In May, Gamal Abdul Nasser, Naguib’s second in command, warned Hudaybi that the Brotherhood would not be allowed to recruit new members from within the army or police force and demanded that existing Brotherhood cells be disbanded immediately. Hudaybi refused, which led to open hostilities between the Brotherhood

⁵⁵ Ibid., 29.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 31; Harris, 213-4.

⁵⁷ Gilles Kepel, *Muslim Extremism in Egypt: The Prophet and Pharaoh*, rev. ed., trans. Jon Rothschild (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 26.

and the RCC.⁵⁸ In an attempt at reconciliation, the Free Officers invited the Muslim Brotherhood to join their national unity front, but Hedaybi declined because joining would have meant giving up control of the Brotherhood to the RCC. This decision made the split between the Free Officers and the Muslim Brotherhood inevitable.⁵⁹

Nasser began to openly support Hedaybi's opposition within the Brotherhood, trying to undermine his leadership from within. Internal divisions in the Brotherhood led to the assassination of the deputy commander of the Special Apparatus who had allied himself with Hedaybi. The assassination gave Hedaybi an excuse to purge his opposition from within the ranks of the Brotherhood. Nasser took advantage of the internal disputes of the Brotherhood and issued an order demanding that it dissolve on January 14, 1954.⁶⁰ Nasser was also working to consolidate his power, attempting, among other things, to depose Naguib as president, a move that was opposed by a majority of Egyptians, including the Muslim Brotherhood.⁶¹ As was the case with Hedaybi, an assassination attempt was the impetus for Nasser's successful purge of his opposition.

On October 26, 1954 a former member of the Special Apparatus tried to assassinate Nasser during a speech in Alexandria. He fired at Nasser eight times, missing on every shot.⁶² The RCC retaliated by burning the Brotherhood's headquarters in Cairo, arresting 20,000 members of the Brotherhood, and permanently banning the

⁵⁸ Zahid, 79.

⁵⁹ Zollner, 31.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 33 ff.

⁶¹ Harris, 219-20.

⁶² Ibid., 221; Zollner, 36.

organization.⁶³ Nasser used the assassination attempt to finally depose Naguib, placing him under house arrest on November 14, citing his alleged complicity in the assassination plot.⁶⁴ As Robert Leiken and Steven Brooke note, Nasser used the assassination attempt for public relations purposes as well: “Nasser, uninjured and unfazed, emerged as a stoic hero, the Brotherhood’s notorious Special Apparatus as the gang that could not shoot straight.”⁶⁵ Nasser’s natural charisma and socialist policies appealed to the Egyptian public and created a cult of personality around him that enabled him to consolidate his power and establish himself as the primary, indeed the only, source of power in the country.⁶⁶

While ordinary Egyptians were in awe of Nasser’s power and personality, not everyone was so willing to support the new government. The Muslim Brotherhood quickly found that Nasser’s regime could be ruthless in combating any potential rival to its power.⁶⁷ The Brotherhood’s first taste of the brutality used by Nasser against his opposition came in December 1954. On December 4, the first verdicts against those responsible for the assassination attempt on Nasser were handed down. Seven Brothers, including Hudaybi, were found guilty and sentenced to death. Hudaybi’s death sentence was commuted to a life sentence, but the other six were executed on December 8. In 1957, many Brothers with shorter sentences were released and Hudaybi was pardoned

⁶³ Kepel, 27; Phillips, 8.

⁶⁴ Harris, 223; Zollner, 36.

⁶⁵ Robert S. Leiken and Steven Brooke, “The Moderate Muslim Brotherhood,” *Foreign Affairs* 86, no. 2 (2007): 109.

⁶⁶ Maye Kassem, *Egyptian Politics: The Dynamics of Authoritarian Rule* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2004), 13.

⁶⁷ Rubin, 15.

because he was aging and in poor health.⁶⁸ However, many members of the Muslim Brotherhood remained in Nasser's prisons. Among them was a man who has arguably become the most influential Islamist writer of all time—Sayyid Qutb.

Qutb was born in 1906, the oldest of five children. His father was active in the National Party, and the Qutb household frequently hosted events promoting Egyptian nationalism when he was young.⁶⁹ He graduated from the Dar al-‘Ulum Teacher's College in 1933 with a degree in education and went to work for the Ministry of Education.⁷⁰ Though Qutb memorized the Qur'an at age 10, he had little interest in a deep pursuit of Islam as a young man. In the 1930s, Qutb began writing about the literary merits of the Qur'an.⁷¹ From the late-1930s to mid-1940s, he wrote many articles about the Qur'an, though his concern was chiefly with its literary merits. He appreciated its artistry and poetic nature, but had little use for its religious message, a stance which drew sharp criticism from Hassan al-Banna and the Muslim Brotherhood. However, Qutb's continued interest in the Qur'an led to the reawakening of his interest in its religious validity as well as a renewed interest in Islam.⁷² Despite the fact that Qutb was becoming increasingly religious, he still viewed Islamic organizations, including the Muslim Brotherhood, as weak and incapable of helping people.⁷³ Along with his increasing religiosity, Qutb also focused on the causes of Egyptian nationalism, anti-

⁶⁸ Zollner, 38-9.

⁶⁹ Bergesen, 3.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Musallam, 56-7.

⁷² Ibid., 60-1.

⁷³ Ibid., 93.

imperialism, and criticism of the Egyptian crown. He roundly criticized Western intervention in Egyptian affairs and what he considered Western suppression of Egyptian nationalist sentiment.⁷⁴

In 1945, Qutb published a literary analysis of the Qur'an, which he credited with reawakening his religious instincts. His focus was also shifting to problems of social justice, and his outspokenness against King Farouq angered the British-backed monarch who threatened Qutb with jail.⁷⁵ Undaunted by threats of imprisonment, Qutb continued to demand that the government pay more attention to the social and economic problems of its citizens. In 1947, he began calling for renewed spiritual leadership for Egypt in addition to appeals for political reform.⁷⁶ One year later, he began writing his first overtly Islamist work entitled *Social Justice in Islam*, which was first published in 1949.⁷⁷

Qutb's attitude toward the West was influenced by his irritation with British interference in Egypt, but those negative attitudes were cemented with a trip to the United States. In 1948, the Ministry of Education sent Qutb on a mission to the U.S. to study the American education system.⁷⁸ His first stops were New York and Washington, D.C. where he took courses to improve his English before embarking on a tour of American colleges to study curriculum development and educational practices. Qutb spent time in Colorado and California, including a lengthy stay at the Colorado Teachers' College

⁷⁴ Bergesen, 3; Musallam, 83-4.

⁷⁵ Bergesen, 3; Musallam, 61.

⁷⁶ Musallam, 71.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 71.

⁷⁸ Bergesen, 3.

(now the University of Northern Colorado) in Greeley. Qutb wrote about his experiences in the Egyptian magazines *al-Risalah* and *al-Kitab*.⁷⁹ Qutb's time in America only served to further convince him that Western society was soulless, superficial, and vulgar. He described crowds of people concerned not about their fellow man but with their own desires.⁸⁰ Peter Demant describes Qutb as "disgusted by Western society's open sexuality, humiliated by its racism, and scandalized with the sympathy for the Zionist cause he encountered everywhere."⁸¹

Qutb joined the Brotherhood in 1951 upon his return from the United States and was recruited to head the propaganda wing of the Brotherhood in 1953 because of his prolific writing on Islam and society. He was responsible for crafting the message of speeches given by Brotherhood members, curriculum for schools, and information for journalists.⁸² The government accused Qutb of helping incite violence against the regime and hiding Brothers after the assassination attempt against Nasser in November 1954. Though not tried with the top Brotherhood leadership for the assassination attempt, Qutb was found guilty of attempting to undermine the government and sentenced to 15 years of hard labor, though he spent much of his time in the prison hospital because of his perpetually frail health.⁸³ While in the infirmary, Qutb witnessed firsthand the brutality with which his fellow prisoners were treated. In 1957 twenty-one Brothers were

⁷⁹ Musallam, 113-4; Bergesen, 3.

⁸⁰ Musallam, 114.

⁸¹ Peter R. Demant, *Islam vs. Islamism: The Dilemma of the Muslim World* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2006), 98.

⁸² Musallam, 145.

⁸³ Ibid, 149-50.

massacred at Liman Tura prison after refusing to report for their work detail. Kepel reports that “Sayyid Qutb was horrified by the barbarism of the camp guards, by the inhumanity with which they had let the wounded die. Various witnesses report that it was then that he lost his last remaining illusions as to the Muslim character of the Nasser regime.”⁸⁴

Qutb fundamentally disagreed with Nasser on the role of Islam in society. Though initially persuaded by the Free Officers’ appeal to Islam, Qutb and the rest of the Muslim Brotherhood soon discovered a great divide between their understanding of Islam in society and Nasser’s. Qutb’s political philosophy was based on what he defined as the “Islamic concept,” a systematic way of thinking, rather than mere belief, which freed men from service to others. He argued that “Islam releases people from this political pressure and presents them its spiritual message, appealing to their reason, it gives them complete freedom to accept or not to accept its beliefs.”⁸⁵ Qutb’s explanation of the Islamic concept focuses on three interrelated concepts: *tawhid* (the oneness of God), *jahiliyyah* (ignorance of God), and *jihad* (fighting in the way of God).

Qutb’s philosophy begins with the notion of *tawhid*, or the absolute oneness of God. According to Qutb, God is separate from all that He created, an independently existing diety whose creation is totally dependent upon Him.⁸⁶ It is from this notion of *tawhid* that it has been said that Islam is not simply monotheism but radical monotheism. Qutb argued that Islam freed the human soul from obedience or submission to any but

⁸⁴ Kepel, 28.

⁸⁵ Qutb, *Milestones*, 61.

⁸⁶ Albert J. Bergesen, “Qutb’s core ideas,” in *The Sayyid Qutb Reader*, ed. Albert J. Bergesen (New York: Routledge, 2008), 15.

God: “No one other than God has authority over it, and no one gives it life or death but God....There is no intermediary or intercessor between it and God. God alone has power, all other are servants who have no power over themselves or others.”⁸⁷

This conception of God and religion leaves little room for Christian notions that one must give to Caesar what is Caesar’s and give to God what is God’s. In his analysis of Qutb’s ideology, Albert Bergesen explains that

in Qutbian Islam, what is Caesar’s is God’s, and to leave it to Caesar is to take it from God....Qutb does not leave some sovereignty to Caesar and some to God. Sovereignty is an attribute of God; to split it amongst other objects of deferral, there by worshipping other deities, is to exist in a state of sociological polytheism, which he captures with the term *jahiliyyah*.⁸⁸

Jahiliyya was defined by Qutb as “one man’s lordship over another....”⁸⁹

According to Qutb, governments, racial division, ideology, and other factors prevent people from realizing the Islamic concept. This ignorance of God is a state of *jahiliyya*. To resist this *jahiliyya*, there must be at least equal force from an Islamically based social movement to counteract the negative influences of *jahiliyya* and realize the Islamic concept.⁹⁰ He argued that *jahiliyya* had seeped into every aspect of society from politics to culture to philosophy—including Islamic society.⁹¹ The only way to fight *jahiliyya*, according to Qutb, is *jihad*.

⁸⁷ Sayyid Qutb, *Social Justice in Islam*, in *Sayyid Qutb and Islamic Activism: A Translation and Critical Analysis of Social Justice in Islam*, ed. and trans. William E. Shepard (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996), 109, 43.

⁸⁸ Bergesen, “Qutb’s core ideas,” 18-9.

⁸⁹ Qutb, *Milestones*, 46.

⁹⁰ Bergesen, “Qutb’s core ideas,” 14.

⁹¹ Qutb, *Milestones*, 20.

Jihad is “about fighting to remove obstacles to the establishment of the Islamic community in the first place.”⁹² Despite contemporary polemics regarding the coercive nature of *jihad*, Qutb argued that “God imposed the duty of *jihad* on the Muslims not so that they might force people to embrace Islam, but rather so that they might erect on earth its righteous, just, and sublime system.”⁹³ While Qutb embraced the Qur’anic injunction that there could be no compulsion in religion (2:256) with regards to individuals, he nevertheless argued, as medieval scholar Ibn Taymiyya had before him, that if the state was not acting in an Islamic manner, then *jihad* was permissible, even though typically *jihad* was confined to non-Muslim actors.⁹⁴

Qutb envisioned a “vanguard,” a small cadre of Muslims who would lead the movement away from *jahiliyya* and toward a more Islamic way of life. He directed many of his books and tracts to them, arguing that it is “necessary from this vanguard to know the landmarks and milestones of the road toward this goal so that they may recognize the starting place, the nature, the responsibilities, and the ultimate purpose of this long journey.”⁹⁵ It was this appeal to a “vanguard” that has led, in part, to Qutb’s popularity among Islamists and jihadists everywhere. A younger generation of Islamists who had previously felt powerless or abused (as the Brotherhood was in prison under Nasser) now

⁹² Bergesen, “Qutb’s core ideas,” 28.

⁹³ Qutb, *This Religion*, 89.

⁹⁴ Bergesen, “Sayyid Qutb in historical context,” 8. Ibn Taymiyya argued that *jihad* was permissible against the Mongols in the 13th century because despite their claims to have embraced Islam, they were still practicing a syncretic blend of Islam and other religions. See David Cook, *Understanding Jihad* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 65 and John L. Esposito, *Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 46.

⁹⁵ Qutb, *Milestones*, 12.

had a blueprint for how to lead people back to Islam. Adnan Musallam, one of Qutb's biographers, commented on his importance to the Islamist resurgence:

Qutb's prison writings in 1954-1965 would become an integral part of the Islamic resurgence in the next forty years. This resurgence would draw its strength from the unmitigated failure of the Arab regimes to build viable societies and from the repeated humiliation of the Arabs in their confrontation with Israel.⁹⁶

Qutb's time in prison was cut short in 1964 when, at the behest of the Iraqi president, he was released, in part because of his continued poor health.⁹⁷ The next year, Qutb and his brother were rearrested in what was a new wave of mass arrests of Muslim Brothers by the Nasser regime. Passages from *Milestones* were read at Qutb's trial in which he was accused of attempting to incite revolution. He was found guilty and executed by hanging August 29, 1966.⁹⁸

The impact of Qutb's life and, perhaps more importantly, his death cannot be overstated. His writings are still influential to Islamists and jihadists who use them to justify all manner of behavior, both peaceful and violent. The Brotherhood still reveres Qutb, a position that can occasionally be a very line for the generally moderate group to walk: "Today, the Brotherhood lionizes Qutb, admittedly a major figure whose views cannot be reduced to *jihad*. But it straddles a barbed fence in embracing Qutb while simultaneously arguing that his violent teachers were 'taken out of context.'"⁹⁹ However, it was Qutb's death which has become a call to arms for jihadists, as Musallam explains: "By eliminating Qutb, the regime intentionally or unintentionally, created a new martyr

⁹⁶ Musallam, 151.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 165.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 169 ff; Bergesen, "Sayyid Qutb in historical context," 4.

⁹⁹ Leiken and Brooke, 113.

for the Islamic resurgence of the past 40 years, whose revolutionary writings became the manifesto for Islamists and jihadists everywhere.”¹⁰⁰

The Qutbian era of the Brotherhood marked the most revolutionary, anti-system period of its history. This was due in large part to the violence used by the Nasser regime—the most brutal incarnation of the Egyptian government—to repress the Brotherhood. Interestingly, this period, particularly the years that the Brotherhood spent in prison also marks a departure from the norm regarding the behavior of parties in oppressive regimes as members of the Brotherhood began discussing the utility of ending their violent confrontation with the Free Officers, regardless of how the Free Officers behaved toward them.

The Political Awakening of the Brotherhood

The death of Nasser in 1970 marked a shift in the Egyptian regime’s policy toward the Brotherhood, but it also signaled a change in the Muslim Brotherhood’s orientation toward the regime as well. Decimated by years in Egyptian jails, John Esposito observes that between 1970 and 1991 “the Muslim Brotherhood rebuilt its organization, self-consciously espousing a policy of moderate reformism under both Anwar Sadat and his success, Hosni Mubarak.”¹⁰¹ This move toward reformism was aided by a network of sympathizers who, while the Brothers were imprisoned, formed a

¹⁰⁰ Musallam, 171.

¹⁰¹ John L. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?* 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 140.

relief society for the families of the incarcerated which allowed the Brotherhood's top leadership, almost all of whom were in jail, to stay connected to the outside world.¹⁰²

Along with their friends and families on the outside, the Brothers were using their time in prison to discuss the direction the Brotherhood ought to take. The debates centered on whether the Brotherhood should follow a more moderate course, which was advocated by General Guide Hasan Hudaybi or a more violent course influenced by the writings of Sayyid Qutb. As a rebuttal to Qutbist ideology, Hudaybi wrote *Preachers, Not Judges*, which advocated a return to the roots of the Brotherhood, which he saw as preaching and social work. These divisions moved from jail cells to the streets in 1971 when Sadat began releasing Brothers from prison. In 1975 a general amnesty was announced, and all remaining Brotherhood prisoners were released.¹⁰³

Sadat's conciliatory stance toward the Brotherhood was one way in which he attempted to craft a public image of himself as a religious man. Portraying himself as the "Believer President," Sadat added religious programming to state television, increased Islamic curriculum in schools, allowed media coverage of him (and the prominent prayer bruise on his forehead) praying at the mosque, and used Islamic rhetoric in his public addresses.¹⁰⁴ In 1976 Sadat allowed the Muslim Brotherhood to begin publishing its own newspapers without restraint, despite the fact that the Brotherhood was still officially banned in Egypt. The Brotherhood was allowed to operate its own publishing houses without restriction until 1981.¹⁰⁵ In addition to allowing the Brotherhood to operate more

¹⁰² Kepel, 29.

¹⁰³ Zollner, 45 ff.

¹⁰⁴ Esposito, 93.

¹⁰⁵ Wickham, *Mobilizing Islam*, 96.

freely, Sadat also encouraged young people in Egypt to become active in Islamic organizations on college campuses. These organizations, called *al-Gama‘at al-Islamiyya*, would produce both a generation of Islamic radicals and a new generation of Brotherhood leadership.¹⁰⁶

The *Gama‘at* became more active during the mid-1970s, winning a majority of the seats in the Egyptian Students’ Union in 1977.¹⁰⁷ In an effort to consolidate his power and rid Egypt of rivals, Sadat allowed the *Gama‘at* to arm itself against leftist rivals on campuses like Marxists and Nasserists. The tacit support of the Sadat regime empowered the *Gama‘at*, which achieved unprecedented success on university campuses around Egypt. According to Lawrence Wright, “Within a mere four years, the Islamic Group completely dominated the campuses, and for the first time in the living memory of most Egyptians, male students stopped trimming their beards and female students donned the veil.”¹⁰⁸ The *Gama‘at* factored into the successful reorganization of the Brotherhood during the 1970s as well. In 1976 Sadat began allowing opposition parties to operate, and the Brotherhood started recruiting new members, including university graduates who had been members of the *Gama‘at*.¹⁰⁹

While Sadat’s policies in the early- to mid-1970s were generally well received by Egyptian Islamists, his decision to participate in peace talks with Israel was roundly criticized by the Brotherhood and more radical groups. David Cook observes that after

¹⁰⁶ Kassem, 142-3.

¹⁰⁷ Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam*, trans. Anthony F. Roberts (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2002), 81. *Al-Gama‘at al-Islamiyya* means “the Islamic group” in Arabic.

¹⁰⁸ Wright, 48.

¹⁰⁹ Soage and Franganillo, 42-3.

the Camp David Accords were signed, “it was comparatively easy for radical Muslims to demonize the Egyptian regime and those who supported it as non-Muslims.”¹¹⁰ Islamists considered Sadat’s desire to make peace with Israel, in the words of John Esposito, “a treasonous act of an unbeliever,” and Sadat did little in the late-1970s to further endear himself to Islamists.¹¹¹ In February 1979, only a few months after signing the Camp David Accords, Sadat called for the separation of religion and the state, which was denounced as an obstacle to establishing an Islamic order. The Brotherhood and others called out Egypt’s “Believer President” for manipulating Islam for his own political purposes.¹¹²

In September 1981, as protests of Sadat’s policies intensified, he demanded the arrests of 1,500 intellectuals and religious and political activists—most of whom were Islamists. He also suspended the Brotherhood’s ability to publish its newspaper, which he had granted five years earlier.¹¹³ Tensions increased over the next several weeks and finally came to a head on October 6, when during a military parade commemorating the Egyptian “victory” in the 1973 War, four gunmen ambushed Sadat’s vehicle in the procession and opened fire. He was shot five times and killed. His assassin, a young Army officer, shouted “I am Khalid Islambouli. I have killed Pharaoh, and I do not fear

¹¹⁰ David Cook, *Understanding Jihad* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 107.

¹¹¹ John L. Esposito, *Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 88.

¹¹² Esposito, *The Islamic Threat*, 94-5.

¹¹³ Kassem, 144.

death!”¹¹⁴ Islambouli was a member of Islamic Jihad, a group founded and influenced by Muhammad Abdul Salam Farag.

Farag wrote a tract called “The Neglected Duty,” which borrowed heavily from a number of Islamist thinkers including Ibn Taymiyya and Sayyid Qutb. However, Farag was much more radical in his approach than Qutb had been. While Qutb saw acceptance of Islam as a choice individuals were free to make, Farag believed people and nations should be forced to adopt Islam.¹¹⁵ Farag cited the failure of religious leaders to urge the people to wage *jihad* against unbelievers and apostates as their “neglected duty.”¹¹⁶ This view is antithetical to the Brotherhood’s ideology, but that would not stop Sadat’s successor, Hosni Mubarak, from accusing it of terrorism and arresting and interrogating its membership during periods of political turmoil in Egypt.

In spite of the violent end to Sadat’s tenure as Egypt’s president, his eleven years in office were critical to the development of the Brotherhood as it began its transition from social movement to political party. Because Sadat relaxed the restrictions on the opposition movements, including the Brotherhood, it was allowed to disseminate its message to a broader audience. It was also able to reorganize after years of imprisonment under Nasser. The discussions that occurred among the Brothers while in jail set the

¹¹⁴ Esposito, *Unholy War*, 89-90. References to Pharaoh by Egyptians—Islamist or otherwise—harken back to the story of the Hebrews under the oppressive rule of Pharaoh in the Old Testament, a story shared by Jews, Christians, and Muslims. The story is related in the Qur’an at 2:47-59.

¹¹⁵ Cook, 107. This is not to suggest that Sayyid Qutb’s belief that there is no compulsion in Islam identifies him as a moderate. Indeed, Qutb’s ideology is quite inconsistent on this point. On the one hand, he argues that there is no compulsion in religion and that individuals are allowed to make up their own minds regarding their eternal security. On the other hand, he admonishes the vanguard to work diligently to create an Islamic order to which all will submit. This is one of many inconsistencies and ambiguities in Qutb’s works that was never thoroughly explained during his lifetime.

¹¹⁶ Muhammad Abdul Salam Faraj, “The Neglected Duty,” in *The Neglected Duty: The Creed of Sadat’s Assassins and Islamic Resurgence in the Middle East*, ed. Johannes J.G. Jansen (New York: Macmillan, 1986), 160-1.

stage for the organization to move away from a radical, anti-system orientation back toward a more peaceful *modus operandi*. However, the division that occurred within the Brotherhood between those who favored this more moderate approach and those who believed that revolution was the only way to inaugurate an Islamic order would also impact the future of the Brotherhood as Mubarak would use the threat of Islamist violence to justify an increasingly closed political system which severely restricted the rights of opposition parties.

Egyptians used to tell this joke about their leaders: “At every fork in the road, Nasser went left, Sadat went right, and Mubarak says, ‘Don’t move.’”¹¹⁷ The punch line of the joke hints at the deep frustration of Egyptians with the Mubarak regime which made little, if any, progress toward a more open and free society, something the Brotherhood and other opposition groups have been advocating for a number of years. At the outset, Mubarak portrayed himself as a friend of democracy and advocated a two-term limit for the presidency. His support for term limits fell by the wayside quickly, as did his support for democracy, as he argued that economic development, rather than democratization, should be Egypt’s top priority.¹¹⁸

The early years of Mubarak’s presidency were marked by toleration of opposition parties because he was trying to alleviate the tensions that resulted from the authoritarian policies of Sadat in the late-1970s and early-1980s.¹¹⁹ The lack of coercion against the Islamists was likely a consequence of Mubarak’s desire to consolidate his power within

¹¹⁷ Bradley, 209.

¹¹⁸ Kassem, 26-7.

¹¹⁹ Al-Awadi, 57.

the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP).¹²⁰ Because of this toleration toward opposition, the Muslim Brotherhood was able to expand in the early-1980s and rebuild its constituency with promises of social change.¹²¹

Among the ways the Brotherhood was able to expand its influence within Egypt was the proliferation of private mosques. By the early-1990s, 40,000 private mosques were operating in Egypt; that figure was more than double what it was in the mid-1970s. These mosques offered a number of services for the community, especially in places where state services were lacking.¹²² The Brotherhood and other organizations capitalized on a wave of increasing religiosity among Egyptians. Between 1975 and 1990, the number of Islamic organizations doubled. In 1994 publishing of religious books increased by 25 percent, and 85 percent of the books sold at the 1995 Cairo Book Fair were Islamic.¹²³

The rise in religious consciousness on the Egyptian street allowed the Brotherhood to expand its influence at a grassroots level without inviting conflict with the Mubarak regime. The Muslim Brotherhood did not seek radical change but “opted for sociopolitical change through a policy of moderation and gradualism which accepted political pluralism and parliamentary democracy, entering into political alliances with secular parties or organizations as well as acknowledging the rights of Coptic

¹²⁰ Kassem, 147.

¹²¹ Al-Awadi, 62.

¹²² Wickham, 97-8; Asef Bayat, *Making Islam Democratic: Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 33.

¹²³ Bayat, 33.

Christians.”¹²⁴ Because Mubarak was so preoccupied with consolidating his own power within the NDP, the Brotherhood had the freedom to complete its evolution into a political party in the early-1980s. Until the 1984 elections, the Brotherhood could not properly be called a political party because it did not participate in elections.¹²⁵ Even though it was not able to run candidates on its own list, the Brotherhood nevertheless established itself as a political actor that must be taken seriously in Egypt. The Brotherhood, which was allowed to participate in the 1984 elections because of its renunciation of violence, joined the Wafd party list and won eight of Wafd’s 58 seats.¹²⁶ Electoral Law 188 (1987) allowed independent candidates to contest elections and gave those independents 10 percent of the seats in parliament. The largest opposition block in the 1987 elections belonged to the Islamic alliance which was led by the Brotherhood and won 36 seats.¹²⁷

One important reason for the success of the Brotherhood in parliamentary elections was their parallel pursuit of what could be described as “politics by other means.” The professional syndicates in Egypt were the primary vehicle through which the Muslim Brotherhood pursued power outside of the political arena. The leaders of the syndicates in the 1980s had come of age as college students in the 1970s. As Carrie Rosefsky Wickham reports, “By the end of the decade, Islamist student leaders controlled the student unions in most faculties at Cairo University, and graduates with Islamic

¹²⁴ Esposito, *The Islamic Threat*, 140.

¹²⁵ See Giovanni Sartori’s definition of political parties, *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 63.

¹²⁶ Bruce K. Rutherford, *Egypt After Mubarak: Liberalism, Islam, and Democracy in the Arab World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 84; Al-Awadi, 8.

¹²⁷ Al-Awadi, 112 ff.

orientations were reaching out to a wider circle of youth in the residential neighborhoods of large cities and provincial towns.”¹²⁸ As these former student leaders entered the workforce and became active in their respective syndicates, “their immediate goals changed. They were now the elected leaders of large, national public institutions, charged with representing the interests of their profession and its members, irrespective of the latter’s religious background and political orientations.”¹²⁹

These syndicates are a vital part of professional life in Egypt as they provide job opportunities, low cost insurance, and loans to new members, as well as representing the interests of the profession.¹³⁰ However, in the early 1980s, the syndicates were riddled with internal problems, including a lack of transparency, factionalism, corruption, and mismanagement of funds.¹³¹ The Brotherhood responded to the dissatisfaction of syndicate members by using its new-found influence in the syndicates as an avenue to address the frustrations of ordinary Egyptians.¹³²

In 1984 the Brotherhood won seven of 25 seats on the executive council of the Doctors’ Syndicate. By 1990 the Brotherhood controlled 20 of the council seats and purposely did not contest the other five to allow other groups an opportunity at representation.¹³³ The Brotherhood won the chairmanship of the Engineers’ Syndicate in

¹²⁸ Wickham, 2.

¹²⁹ Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, “The Path to Moderation: Strategy and Learning in the Formation of Egypt’s Wasat Party,” *Comparative Politics* 36, no. 2 (January 2002): 218.

¹³⁰ Soage and Franganillo, 44.

¹³¹ Zahid, 109.

¹³² Al-Awadi, 89.

¹³³ Wickham, *Mobilizing Islam*, 186.

1985 and controlled 45 of the 61 seats on its executive council by 1987.¹³⁴ In 1986 the Doctors' Syndicate introduced a plan for subsidized health insurance, allowing young doctors the possibility of quality health care at private hospitals for a reasonable price—a plan which other syndicates soon emulated. Under the direction of the Brotherhood, the syndicates also began offering low interest loans and payment plans for purchases of durable goods like household items for recent graduates and the unemployed.¹³⁵

The improvements in the operation of the syndicates under the Brotherhood's leadership did not go unnoticed by the Egyptian public. Geneive Abdo suggests,

By contesting and winning seats on union boards in free and fair elections, the Islamists showed the middle class that democracy was possible, even under the existing authoritarian regime....The syndicates themselves served as a symbol of what the Islamists could accomplish if given enough freedom.¹³⁶

Asef Bayat argues that the Brotherhood's commitment to social mobilization and civil society allowed it to be successful in and out of the political arena during the 1980s and 1990s. Through its network of mosques, schools, clinics, sporting clubs, and organizations for youth and women, the Brotherhood was able to spread its message, becoming "a mass social movement that imbued everyday life with Islamic sensibilities."¹³⁷

This ability to confront the struggles faced by ordinary Egyptians, coupled with the success of the Brotherhood in gaining control of the syndicates, manifested itself clearly in the Brotherhood's response to the 1992 Cairo earthquake. In his study of the

¹³⁴ Zahid, 111.

¹³⁵ Al-Awadi, 97-8; Wickham, *Mobilizing Islam*, 192.

¹³⁶ Geneive Abdo, *No God But God: Egypt and the Triumph of Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 72, 78-9.

¹³⁷ Bayat, 40-1.

relationship between the Muslim Brotherhood and the Mubarak regime, Hesham al-Awadi notes that the Cairo earthquake “was another event that demonstrated to the state not only the extent of the organized power of the Brothers, but also its political implications.”¹³⁸ The October 12 quake injured 12,000 and destroyed or damaged 50,000 buildings in and around Cairo, especially those in the city’s most crowded and impoverished neighborhoods.¹³⁹ The Humanitarian Relief Committee of the Doctors’ Syndicate mobilized immediately, providing makeshift shelters, medical care, and food in the most devastated areas. The Engineers’ Syndicate organized inspection teams to examine the structural integrity of houses and apartment buildings throughout Cairo which inspected 10,000 residences.¹⁴⁰

The syndicates had not only responded well to the crisis, but they did so nearly 48 hours before the government mobilized its own humanitarian and building teams.¹⁴¹ The successes of the Brotherhood in its response to the earthquake were noted both at home and abroad, especially when contrasted with the failures of the regime. Mubarak was particularly upset by what he saw as pandering by the Muslim Brotherhood whose relief tents bore the slogan, “Islam is the solution.”¹⁴² To put an end to the embarrassment of the regime by the Brotherhood, Mubarak ordered all aid to earthquake victims be funneled through state agencies on October 24.¹⁴³

¹³⁸ Al-Awadi, 149.

¹³⁹ Rutherford, 86.

¹⁴⁰ Abdo, 96-7.

¹⁴¹ Kassem, 113.

¹⁴² Al-Awadi, 149-50.

¹⁴³ Rutherford, 86.

The government reacted swiftly and harshly to the Brotherhood's superior response to the earthquake. Angered by the fact that the Brotherhood had humiliated the regime, the government began a campaign to discredit student organizations, suppress Brotherhood activity, and intervene in the elections of the student unions. Faculty clubs at universities were disbanded and faculty who were more sympathetic to the regime was appointed.¹⁴⁴ Law 100 (1993) was passed and stated that syndicate elections were only valid if membership turnout for the vote was 50 percent or better for the first round of elections and 30 percent or better in the second elections. Otherwise, the state could appoint syndicate leadership. Voter turnout for syndicate elections was regularly between eight and twelve percent, and this law was seen as an attempt to circumvent the power of the Muslim Brotherhood.¹⁴⁵

Along with the passage of restrictive laws, the regime also hurled allegations of wrong-doing at the leaders of the syndicates. It alleged financial misconduct of the Engineers' Syndicate and placed it under official custodianship. The same tactics were repeated against the Lawyers' Syndicate.¹⁴⁶ The situation in the syndicates returned to "the bad old days. Within a few years, the unions' money had run out and they were no longer in a position to offer the services provided when the Brothers were at the helm."¹⁴⁷ The regime's crackdown on the Brotherhood in the syndicates continued with the

¹⁴⁴ Al-Awadi, 156-7.

¹⁴⁵ Kassem, 114.

¹⁴⁶ Wickham, *Mobilizing Islam*, 201.

¹⁴⁷ Soage and Frangenillo, 47.

elections of 1995 where 50 people were killed in anti-regime protests, 900 were injured, and 1,000 arrested.¹⁴⁸

The Muslim Brotherhood's actions while in charge of the syndicates in the 1980s and early-1990s suggest that it continued to exhibit characteristics of Gunther and Diamond's denominationally-based party rather than a religious fundamentalist party. While in charge of the syndicates, the Brotherhood offered services and financial assistance to all members of the syndicates, not just those who were members of the Brotherhood. Furthermore, it consciously chose *not* to contest all of the seats on the executive councils of the syndicates so that other groups might have a chance to have representation on the councils. This is the first clear example of the Brotherhood's willingness to accept democratic ideals such as tolerance and openness to opposing viewpoints.

The 1995 elections were considered the most corrupt elections to date under Mubarak. The Interior Ministry actively interfered with election activity at polling places around the country, and the lone Brotherhood representative in the People's Assembly (the lower house of Parliament) was accused of being a member of an illegal party and removed from his seat.¹⁴⁹ The success the Brotherhood had enjoyed in the previous decade had served as a wake-up call to the regime. Electoral success for the Brotherhood did more than shame the regime; it presented a direct challenge to Mubarak's ability to continue his rule. Muhammad Zahid observes that

the government had realized that if the Muslim Brotherhood was allowed to participate in a free and fair election, an overwhelming proportion of the movement's candidates would win seats in the Assembly....In addition, the

¹⁴⁸ Phillips, 17.

¹⁴⁹ Soage and Franganillo, 48; Zahid, 102.

Assembly was due in 1995 to nominate Mubarak for a fourth term as President, and a powerful presence of the movement would obstruct the nomination process.¹⁵⁰

In the aftermath of the arrests which occurred prior to the elections, 95 Muslim Brothers, many of them leaders of the syndicates, were tried in military courts, and those who were convicted were sentenced to three to five years of hard labor.¹⁵¹ These trials and prison sentences confirmed that the regime was not simply concerned with the Brotherhood's electoral success, but with its power within Egyptian society at large.¹⁵²

The 1999 presidential election was widely considered a sham as Mubarak won 94 percent of the vote. This only served to further disenfranchise Egyptians who wanted some sort of democratic reform. The 2000 parliamentary elections were no better. Candidates were allowed to run as independents with no party affiliation, but the elections were neither free nor fair. 500 Brothers were arrested prior to the elections and voters in neighborhoods with a large Brotherhood presence were prevented from casting their ballots.¹⁵³

In the midst of this open confrontation between the Brotherhood and the regime, a younger generation of Brotherhood leadership began looking for a way to increase their ability to participate in parliamentary elections. This group of leaders is generally referred to as the "Middle Generation," a younger, more politically active faction who

¹⁵⁰ Zahid, 174-5. Two-thirds of the members of the People's Assembly were required to nominate the president, according to the Constitution at that time.

¹⁵¹ Al-Awadi, 174-5.

¹⁵² Ibid., 180.

¹⁵³ Phillips, 17-8.

resented the ideological rigidity of the older generation of Brotherhood leadership.¹⁵⁴ This generational split was informed partly by the vastly different experiences of each group. The old guard was shaped by Nasser's mass imprisonment and torture and not at all anxious to get involved in politics to such an extent that they would invite such trauma again. The Middle Generation, on the other hand, came of age during the activist years of the Sadat regime in the *Gama'at* on university campuses.¹⁵⁵ Upon graduating from college, these young leaders of the *Gama'at* became active in the syndicates and a part of a professional class driven more by pragmatism than ideology. Wickham notes that "their behavior shifted, to paraphrase Max Weber, from a politics of principles to a politics of responsibility....[T]he Islamists were forced to negotiate with government authorities and elicit the help of professionals and business leaders who did not share their views."¹⁵⁶

Despite their desire to become more politically active, the Middle Generation nevertheless suffered some of the same indignities of their elders decades earlier. The Middle Generation, which by the 1990s constituted much of the mid-level leadership of the Brotherhood, was decimated by arrests.¹⁵⁷ Despite these setbacks, they still contended that the Brotherhood should form a political party which could give the organization a "platform to spread its message to an otherwise unavailable audience."¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, 41.

¹⁵⁵ Zahid, 93.

¹⁵⁶ Wickham, "The Path to Moderation," 218.

¹⁵⁷ Augustus Richard Norton, "Thwarted Politics: The Case of Egypt's Hizb al-Wasat," in *Remaking Muslim Politics: Pluralism, Contestation, Democratization*, ed. Robert W. Hefner (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 141. *Wasat* means "center" in Arabic.

¹⁵⁸ Leiken and Brooke, 114-5.

The leadership of the Brotherhood was furious at those members of the Middle Generation who broke away to form the *Wasat* party in the mid-1990s. 62 of the 74 founding members of *Wasat* were former members of the Muslim Brotherhood. They applied for legal party status in January 1996 but the application was rejected on the grounds that it was an attempt by the Brotherhood to circumvent the law and get involved in politics. On appeal, the application was again rejected because the party was not unique. This decision was based on the 1970 Party Law which said new parties were allowable only if they met needs not already addressed by an existing party. Further appeals were denied in September 1998 and June 1999.¹⁵⁹

Despite government allegations of Brotherhood subversion, *Wasat* was actually quite different from the Brotherhood on several important ideological points: “Al-Wasat privileged modern democracy over Islamic ‘*shura*,’ embraced pluralism in religion, and welcomed gender mixing and ideological tendencies.”¹⁶⁰ The *Wasat* party was unsuccessful in forging a new path into the political arena in Egypt in part because it was viewed as a threat to the power of the Egyptian regime, and in part due to bad timing. While contemptible, the actions of the Mubarak regime during the mid-1990s toward all varieties of Islamist opposition were colored by the war of attrition being waged between jihadist groups and the government.

Jihadists had been active in Egypt prior to Sadat’s assassination, and it was jihadist ideology that provided the inspiration for his assassins. However, the situation deteriorated in the late-1980s as consecutive interior ministers dealt with Islamists of all

¹⁵⁹ Norton, 141 ff.

¹⁶⁰ Bayat, 175.

stripes in heavy-handed fashion.¹⁶¹ Despite pleas for help, the Brotherhood was not willing to give up its religious legitimacy to help the regime combat radicalism and argued that if it were allowed to operate with fewer restrictions, it could control angry young Islamists, a position which angered Mubarak who saw it an attempt by the Brotherhood to upstage him.¹⁶² In 1990, five members of Egyptian Islamic Jihad, the same group responsible for Sadat's assassination, were arrested for killing the speaker of the People's Assembly.¹⁶³ Two years later, the war of attrition began in earnest as both the *Gama'at*, radicalized by the regime's decision to ban it on university campuses, and Islamic Jihad started using the power bases they had established in impoverished neighborhoods around Cairo and the rest of the country to launch anti-government offensives.¹⁶⁴ Islamic Jihad attempted to assassinate the interior minister in 1993 and Mubarak himself in 1995.¹⁶⁵

The jihadists finally lost their war against the Egyptian government in 1997. On November 18, 58 tourists and four Egyptians were massacred in Luxor by members of the *Gama'at*. The attack completely crippled the Egyptian tourism industry for years and caused Egyptians, who had previously been somewhat sympathetic to the grievances of the jihadists, to change their minds and become intolerant of the violence wrought by these groups. Fawaz Gerges, an observer of jihadist trends, noted, "There is little love

¹⁶¹ Al-Awadi, 117 ff.

¹⁶² Ibid., 112.

¹⁶³ Esposito, *Unholy War*, 91.

¹⁶⁴ Kepel, *Jihad*, 284.

¹⁶⁵ Esposito, *Unholy War*, 91.

lost between pious Muslims and the Soldiers of God.”¹⁶⁶ The Muslim Brotherhood has spoken out against jihadist ideology, rejecting its central tenets, such as the practice of *takfir*, which it views as un-Islamic. The Brotherhood also views jihadists as competitors for the hearts and minds of young Egyptians who are fed up with the slow pace of change in the country, portraying them as “badly misguided people fighting for a relatively good cause.”¹⁶⁷

While jihadism had been defeated at home, its global presence led to the first serious attempt by the United States to influence a change in the Egyptian regime’s stance toward democratization. Beginning in 2001, the U.S. began pressuring Mubarak to actually embrace democracy with the hopes that more open and democratic societies could curtail extremism and prevent another 9/11. Mubarak promised free parliamentary elections in 2005 and was under a great deal of scrutiny from the State Department to deliver on that promise. While the campaigning for the elections was mostly unfettered, the second and third rounds of voting were marred by violence and ballot stuffing.¹⁶⁸ The more notable development of the months preceding the 2005 elections was the “reform initiative” put forth by the Muslim Brotherhood.

Shadi Hamid of the Brookings Doha Center contends, “The Muslim Brotherhood’s 2004 ‘reform initiative’ stands as a landmark in the organization’s

¹⁶⁶ Bayat, 141; Fawaz A. Gerges, *Journey of the Jihadist: Inside Muslim Militancy* (Orlando: Harcourt, 2006), 91. Interestingly, many of those jihadists who have spent the last 15 years in Egyptian jails have likewise begun to reconsider their approach and work toward moderation. Gerges explores this trend in *Journey of the Jihadist*, and Amr Hamzawy and Sarah Grebowski examine the decision of these groups to moderate in “From Violence to Moderation: Al-Jama‘a al-Islamiya and al-Jihad,” Carnegie Paper no. 20, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, April 2010.

¹⁶⁷ Rubin, 36-7.

¹⁶⁸ Rutherford, 167-8.

political evolution, representing an effort to elevate the cause of democracy and bring other political forces around a shared vision for change.”¹⁶⁹ Those members of the Middle Generation who remained with the Brotherhood took the lead in this initiative. Essam al-Errian, one of the most prominent of the younger leadership of the Brotherhood published a book in 2004 which articulated his vision of Islamic democracy—constitutional governance based on four principles: personal freedom, *shura* and political power derived from the people, a ruler who was accountable to the people, and an institutional balance of power.¹⁷⁰

The “reform initiative” stressed the rule of law, arguing that Parliament must only adopt laws that are compatible with *Shari‘a*. Rather than discussing the implementation of *Shari‘a*, the Brotherhood was advocating that man-made laws fit within the framework of *Shari‘a*. This concession was noteworthy to observers of the movement: “Egyptian law is a mix of the French civil code, Islamic law, and some remnants of British law. The Brotherhood’s conception of *Shari‘a* suggests that it is fully prepared to accept this diverse legal tradition so long as it does not directly contradict *Shari‘a*.”¹⁷¹

Other planks of this platform were notable as well. The Brotherhood also wanted to limit the power of the executive branch, turning the presidency into a largely ceremonial position not affiliated with any party and limited to one term.¹⁷² They demanded an end to state intervention in al-Azhar University which had been co-opted by

¹⁶⁹ Shadi Hamid, “The Islamist Response to Repression: Are Mainstream Islamist Groups Radicalizing?” (Doha: Brookings Doha Center, 2010), 2.

¹⁷⁰ Rutherford, 164.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 168-9.

¹⁷² Ibid., 171-2.

Nasser in 1960.¹⁷³ They called for an end to emergency law and any other law which would prevent the people from being free to assemble, own property, or use various forms of media to express their opinions, and argued for a reduction in the role of the state security forces and an expanded role for the police.¹⁷⁴

The Brotherhood advocated gender equality and the inclusion of women in all aspects of Egyptian society, including the right to run for all public offices except President and Grand Imam of al-Azhar. They also acknowledged that Copts were “partners in the nation,” recognizing all Egyptians as equal in terms of citizenship regardless of religion, and guaranteed full freedom of worship, including the right to engage in practices banned for Muslims such as eating pork and drinking alcohol.¹⁷⁵ These reforms paid dividends for the Brotherhood in the 2005 elections where, despite government interference, it won 88 seats, making it the largest opposition group in Parliament.¹⁷⁶

The threat posed by the Brotherhood led the Mubarak regime to continue its attempts to discredit and dissuade the Brotherhood from having any real influence in Egyptian politics:

Since 2006, the Mubarak regime has regularly escalated its campaign against the Brotherhood, arresting thousands of its members and pushing through 34 constitutional amendments, which Amnesty International called “the greatest erosion of human right in 26 years.” For instance, amended Article 5 states that “no political activity shall be exercised or political parties shall be established on the basis of religion,” effectively banning any Islamist activity.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷³ Ibid., 172.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 174.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 174-5.

¹⁷⁶ Phillips, 18.

¹⁷⁷ Hamid, 5.

These constitutional amendments were passed at the same time as the state of emergency which had been in effect since Sadat's assassination was extended and these two legislative decisions effectively prevented the Muslim Brotherhood from participating in the 2007 and 2008 elections.¹⁷⁸ Despite all of these restrictions on their ability to function, the Brotherhood has become a vehicle for protest against the oppressive policies of the Mubarak regime:

As representatives of a large but technically illegal opposition movement, the Islamists protested the continuation of emergency laws, restrictions on political party formation, and human rights violations by security services and police. Over time, their opposition to restrictions on Islamist political organization and expression appears to have metamorphosed into a principled opposition to authoritarian restraints on political freedom more generally.¹⁷⁹

What still remains to be seen is how the Brotherhood and its allies, both Islamist and not, address the rapidly changing political dynamic in Egypt.

January 25 and Beyond

A variety of frustrations spurred Egyptians into Tahrir Square in downtown Cairo in January and February 2011 to protest the policies of the Mubarak regime and demand that Hosni Mubarak step down as president. Economic stagnation, a growing youth population, and irritation with the lack of democratic reforms in Egypt all led to the protests which culminated with Mubarak stepping down. Many of these grievances were not unique to the Mubarak regime. The history of Egypt shows that at various key points, the thresholds to participation of moved some, but Egypt remains a mostly closed system as Lipset and Rokkan's model shows.

¹⁷⁸ Soage and Franganillo, 51-2.

¹⁷⁹ Wickham, "The Path to Moderation," 224.

Table 1 shows the change in the level of difficulty in overcoming each of the four thresholds to the emergence of opposition parties at four key points in Egypt's history. Nasser assumed power and declared himself the president of Egypt in 1954. At this point, the barriers to all four thresholds were high as the Free Officers and the RCC were the only "acceptable" vehicle for expressing demands in Egypt. Lipset and Rokkan classify this as an autocratic regime.¹⁸⁰ In 1976, Sadat began allowing opposition parties to operate more freely, including allowing the Brotherhood to publish its own newspapers. At this stage, the barriers to legitimation and incorporation had lowered some, but the barriers to representation and majority power remained high.¹⁸¹ According to Lipset and Rokkan's typology, Egypt was starting to exhibit the signs of a party system in which power is not completely monopolized by one party.¹⁸²

Table 1. Lipset and Rokkan's Four Thresholds in Egypt

Year	Legitimation	Incorporation	Representation	Majority Power
1954	High	High	High	High
1976	Medium	Medium	High	High
1984	Medium	Medium	Medium	High
2005	Medium	Low	High	High

¹⁸⁰ Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan, "Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments: An Introduction," in *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives*, ed. Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan (New York: Free Press, 1967), 27.

¹⁸¹ Rokkan defines each of these thresholds as follows: The legitimation threshold represents the level of difficulty a group has in gaining recognition of the right to voice disagreement with the regime. The incorporation threshold is the point at which supporters of new movements can participate in the selection of representatives. The representation threshold articulates the level of difficulty new movements have gaining their own representation—that is, whether they can run on their own or if they must rely on alliances with more established parties. Finally, the majority power (or executive power) threshold is representative of the ability of the executive to avoid the scrutiny of the government by circumventing checks and balances. See Stein Rokkan, *Citizens Elections Parties: Approaches to the Comparative Study of the Processes of Development* (New York: David McKay, 1970), 79.

¹⁸² Lipset and Rokkan, 27.

1984 represents the first appearance of Muslim Brotherhood candidates in parliamentary elections. Opposition parties were allowed some latitude to organize and campaign, but voting irregularities authorized by Mubarak and the NDP still prevented electoral success for the opposition and prevented parliament from being able to serve as a check on Mubarak's power. The Egyptian system here was in a transition period toward a more parliamentary system.¹⁸³ In 2005, Mubarak promised more openness in elections, a promise on which he only partially delivered. The barriers to citizens' ability to select their representatives were low, and several parties were granted the right to participate in the elections, but the ability of those parties to successfully gain seats or provide a check to the president's power remained very limited. This state is described by Lipset and Rokkan as one in which non-dominant parties are isolated and their ability to organize restricted, but in which citizens have achieved full suffrage.¹⁸⁴

This type of evaluation of the Egyptian regime demonstrates a perpetual lack of openness in the political system. Certainly, the situation has improved since Nasser's time when the barriers to all four thresholds to the participation of opposition parties in the government were high. However, the consistent application of restrictions on party development throughout the history of modern Egypt has allowed the president to concentrate his power and either avoid the scrutiny of parliament or co-opt parliament so that it would look the other way while he abused his power.

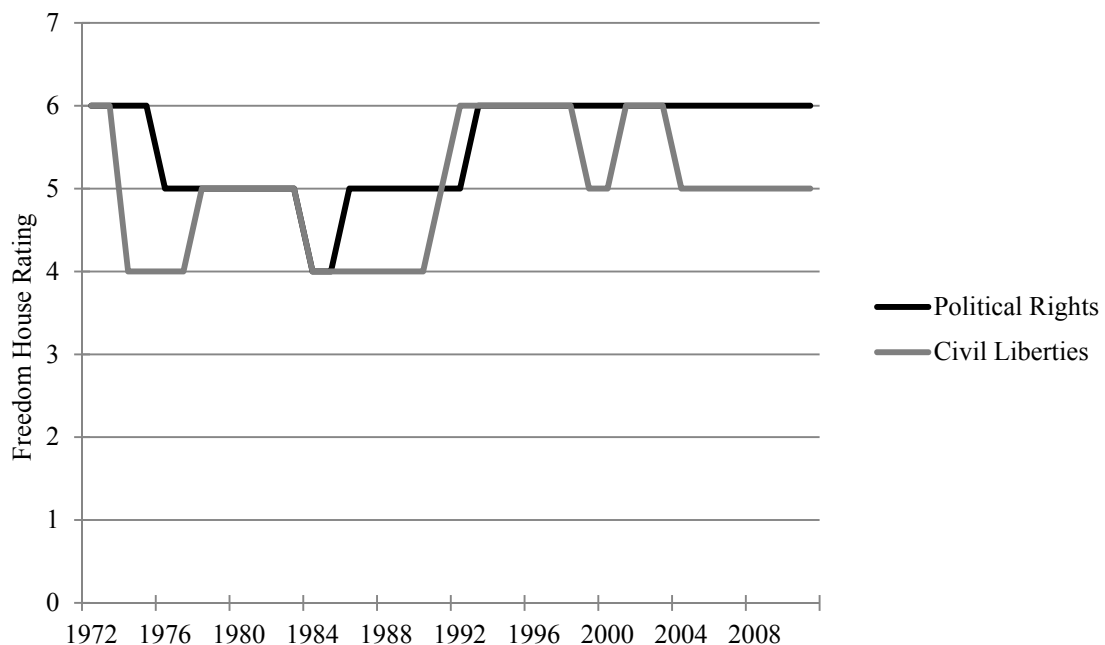
Complaints about a lack of transparency in the government and election fraud have persisted for many years now, and what is remarkable, at least as far as the Brotherhood is concerned, is that rather than become more intransigent in the face of the

¹⁸³ Ibid., 28.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

Mubarak regime's attempts to prevent it from parliamentary participation, it has continued to moderate, in spite of the circumstances. This trend does not fit neatly with the assumptions of moderation theory. While the last decade and a half of the Brotherhood's relationship with the Egyptian regime does not follow the moderation-inclusion paradigm, the twenty years prior to that do bear out the precepts of moderation theory.

Table 2. Political Rights and Civil Liberties in Egypt, 1972-2011¹⁸⁵



As seen in Table 2, during Sadat's time as president, the government relaxed some of its restrictions on both political rights and civil liberties in the mid-1970s, a time when the Brotherhood was allowed to publish its own newspapers, and Islamist student organizations flourished on college campuses throughout the country. Circumstances

¹⁸⁵ The information in Table 2 was taken from the comparative and historical regional data of Freedom House's Freedom in the World survey found at <http://www.freedomhouse.org/File/fiw/historical/FIWallScoreRatingsByRegion1973-2011.xls> (accessed 5 February 2011).

grew slightly more restrictive toward the end of Sadat's rule, as protests broke out over the Camp David Accords, but then grew less restrictive in the first decade of Mubarak's rule when he was more concerned with consolidating his own power within the NDP rather than restricting the political participation of others, and Egypt during this time was considered "partly free" by Freedom House.¹⁸⁶ The timing of increased restrictions on Egyptian political rights and civil liberties is conspicuous.

1993 is the year when both political rights decreased (from a five to a six) and civil liberties also became more restricted as well (from a four in 1992 to a six in 1993). One obvious conclusion that can be drawn from this, particularly where the Brotherhood is concerned, is that the Brotherhood's response to the Cairo earthquake caused a backlash within the regime. The government's anger at the Brotherhood's quick response to the earthquake, especially in comparison to its own, as well as the political retribution meted out on the organization afterwards, in the form of restrictions on the syndicates and amendments to the Constitution that made it more difficult for the Brotherhood to participate in elections were factors in the increasingly repressive tendencies of the Mubarak regime.

From 1993 to the present, the political situation in Egypt has been consistently repressive. Nevertheless, even in the midst of such restrictions on its ability to participate in the political arena, the Brotherhood has continued to stand for elections, and its platforms have continued to become more moderate and open to cooperation with other opposition movements, even those with whom it may not wholly agree. This has

¹⁸⁶ According to Freedom House's methodology, any average score of 3.0 to 5.0 is considered "partly free." An average of 5.5 to 7.0 is considered "not free." See "Freedom in the World Frequently Asked Questions," *Freedom House*, <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=277> (accessed 28 February 2011).

certainly been the case during and after the protests in Tahrir Square, as the Brotherhood was only one of many opposition movements, all working together toward their common goal, which was the end of the Mubarak regime and a commitment for a more open, democratic system of governance in Egypt.

Concluding Remarks

Since it became a recognizable political party in 1984, the Muslim Brotherhood has continued to take a more conciliatory, tolerant approach to its interaction with other groups in Egypt. The Brotherhood continues to typify Gunther and Diamond's denomination-based party much more so than a religious fundamentalist party. While the internal workings of the Brotherhood are more hierarchical and somewhat undemocratic as Gunther and Diamond suggest might be the case of a fundamentalist party, the Brotherhood's interactions with other parties and groups in society have generally been cooperative, even when those other parties have very different ideological orientations.¹⁸⁷ The Brotherhood also continues to eschew anti-system behavior, preferring to attempt to work within the system, rather than attempt to undermine it.¹⁸⁸ Furthermore, since the establishment of an interim government, the Brotherhood has consistently pledged that it

¹⁸⁷ Gunther and Diamond note this trend in their description of the fundamentalist religious party. See Richard Gunther and Larry Diamond, "Species of Political Parties: A New Typology," *Party Politics* 9, no. 2 (2003):183. This behavior was seen during the 1990s when the members of the Middle Generation who formed the Wasat party were censured by the Brotherhood's Guidance Council for their decision to break with the Brotherhood. The younger generation of Brotherhood members has also begun criticizing the leadership in the weeks since the revolution, calling for more transparency and democratic thinking within the organization. See Deborah Amos, "In Egypt, Muslim Brotherhood's Youth Seek Voice," *NPR*, April 5, 2011, <http://www.npr.org/2011/04/05/135128431/in-egypt-muslim-brotherhoods-youth-seek-voice> (accessed 19 May 2011).

¹⁸⁸ This may seem an odd statement based on the events of January and February 2011 when all of Egypt was seemingly swept up in a whirl of anti-system sentiment. However, given the perception that the system was inherently flawed, those gathered in Tahrir Square were simply representing the will of the people to remove from power a corrupt and nepotistic regime.

would not seek the presidency and would only contest half of the seats in parliament.¹⁸⁹

Perhaps the most striking development which gives credence to the Brotherhood's new image as a moderate, reform-minded party is the appointment of Rafiq Habib, a Coptic Christian, as the vice-president of the Brotherhood's political party, the Freedom and Justice Party.¹⁹⁰

While the events of January 25 took many people by surprise, those who have been long-time observers of Egypt have been forecasting something similar to this for several years now. In his 2008 book, *Inside Egypt: The Land of the Pharaohs on the Brink of a Revolution*, John Bradley observed:

More than five decades after the coup, then, Egypt has come full circle. The same grievances that led the people to rebel, and the Free Officers to take advantage of that rebellion to seize power, are now at the root of new street protests and bitterly expressed articles in the emerging opposition media: an end to colonialism and its agents, and the domination of government by exploitative capitalists; an end to the disregard for social justice, and the need for a democratic system of governance that pays more than lip service to the demands of the people....[F]ew can see any meaningful difference between the current regime and the monarchy it ousted five decades ago in the name of liberation of the Egyptian people.¹⁹¹

He also suggested that while the Brotherhood may stand as the most organized opposition movement, and thus the biggest beneficiary of a revolution, it would most likely not be the instigator of such a revolution, a prediction which was proven true in 2011.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁹ While the Brotherhood is not officially sponsoring a candidate in the next presidential election, one of the independent candidates who has announced that he is running, Moneim Abul Fotouh, is a member of the Brotherhood. See Ian Black, "Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood Poised to Prosper in Post-Mubarak New Era, *The Guardian*, May 19, 2011, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/may/19/muslim-brotherhood-poised-prosper-egypt> (accessed 20 May 2011).

¹⁹⁰ Sherif Tarek, "The Muslim Brotherhood Seeks Public Approval to Go Political in Egypt," *Al-Ahram*, May 19, 2011, <http://english.ahram.org.eg/~NewsContent/1/64/11978/Egypt/Politics-/The-Muslim-Brotherhood-seeks-public-approval-to-go.aspx> (accessed 20 May 2011).

¹⁹¹ Bradley, 22-3.

¹⁹² Ibid., 69.

There is, of course, a downside to the organizational advantage the Brotherhood has over all other opposition parties. As noted by Jason Brownlee in 2002, the comparative advantage the Brotherhood has over secular opposition movements is that while it is easy to shut down cafes, newspapers, and other venues where secular opposition might meet to organize, it is much more difficult to shut down every mosque in the country to prevent the Brotherhood from organizing. This led to a *de facto* two-party system in Egypt where the Brotherhood and the NDP competed for the hearts and minds of Egyptians.¹⁹³ This artificially-constructed two-party system continues to cause a dilemma for the interim government in Egypt, led by the Egyptian army, which has been entrusted with overseeing the transition. In late February, the army informed members of the January 25 coalition that it intended to hold parliamentary elections in June, followed by presidential elections to be held two months later. Given the short timeframe presented, many in the opposition worry that they will not have enough time to organize and campaign which will result in members of the Brotherhood or former NDP members gaining the majority of the seats.¹⁹⁴

In spite of these fears, the Brotherhood has shown no signs that it wishes to take over the political process in Egypt. Indeed, it has consciously taken a back seat in many ways during the negotiations over the future of Egypt. In an editorial in the *New York Times* published one day before Mubarak's resignation, Essam el-Errian, the chief spokesman for the Muslim Brotherhood as well as a member of the Guidance Council, offered assurances that the Brotherhood has no hidden or special agenda, saying instead

¹⁹³ Jason Brownlee, "The Decline of Pluralism in Mubarak's Egypt," *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 4 (2002): 12.

¹⁹⁴ "Army Tells Activists Parliamentary Elections Will Be Held in June," *Al-Masry Al-Youm*, February 28, 2011, <http://www.almasryalyoum.com/node/334479> (accessed 28 February 2011).

that “our agenda is that of the Egyptian people, which has been asserted since the beginning of this uprising.”¹⁹⁵ Errian also wrote that the Brotherhood did not wish to take a lead role in the transition, and to that end, would not be nominating a candidate from among its ranks for the presidential election scheduled for later in the year.¹⁹⁶

Errian concluded his op-ed piece with a few words about Islam and democracy:

As our nation heads toward liberty, however, we disagree with the claims that the only options in Egypt are a purely secular, liberal democracy or an authoritarian theocracy. Secular liberal democracy of the American and European variety, with its firm rejection of religion in public life, is not the exclusive model for a legitimate democracy.... We embrace democracy not as a foreign concept that must be reconciled with tradition, but as a set of principles and objectives that are inherently compatible with and reinforce Islamic tenets.¹⁹⁷

Whether or not the world, let alone the citizens of Egypt, takes the Brotherhood seriously regarding its commitment to democracy remains to be seen. However, if past actions are a good measuring stick of future behavior, then the Brotherhood has certainly made its case for being an active and accommodating participant in the democratic process.

The situation in Egypt is a dynamic one, and events on the ground are changing rapidly as Egyptians work toward a revised Constitution, new elections, and new leadership in the political realm. Though the Muslim Brotherhood in its current incarnation would never be confused with any kind of dynamic institution, forces within the Brotherhood are working to change that. Younger members of the Brotherhood are as irritated with their own leadership as they were with the country’s leadership and have threatened a sit-in protest of the Guidance Bureau and Shura Council on March 17, 2011

¹⁹⁵ Essam el-Errian, “What the Muslim Brothers Want,” *New York Times*, February 9, 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/10/opinion/10erian.html?_r=1 (accessed 11 February 2011).

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

if their demands for the dissolution of those two governing bodies are not met.¹⁹⁸

According to the Egyptian newspaper *Al-Masry Al-Youm*, “Young members say there is no reason why the group should work in secrecy considering the ‘wave of freedom’ witnessed by Egypt following the 25 January uprising, which led to the ouster of Egypt’s longstanding president Hosni Mubarak on 11 February.”¹⁹⁹

It may be several years before anyone will know what a “new” Egypt looks like and whether the political demands made by the protesters in the January 25 movement will be met by the new government. What seems certain at this point is that Egyptian politics have been permanently altered by a non-violent revolution which was supported, though not led, by the Muslim Brotherhood. While some may forecast that allowing the Brotherhood the right to participate in elections will lead to a new Islamic state following the example of Iran, it is important to note that the events in Egypt have served as a defeat, rather than a victory, for radical Islamism. For more than two decades, Ayman al-Zawahiri, al Qaeda’s second-in-command under Osama bin Laden, advocated the violent overthrow of the “infidel” Egyptian regime that once imprisoned him. What Zawahiri and the jihadists have violently tried and failed to do for twenty years, a large, committed group of Egyptian youths did with civil disobedience in two and a half weeks. The Brotherhood’s participation in such non-violent protests could serve as a symbol of hope for the relationship between Islamists and democratization.

Despite years of policies designed to curtail political rights and civil liberties in Egypt and attempts to block opposition movements from gaining any traction in the

¹⁹⁸ “Young Muslim Brothers plan 17 March ‘revolt’ against group leadership,” *Al-Masry Al-Youm*, February 27, 2011, <http://www.almasryalyoum.com/node/333360> (accessed 28 February 2011).

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

Egyptian political scene, the Muslim Brotherhood has emerged as a legitimate political actor in Egypt and one that has shown, throughout the Mubarak regime and now beyond, that it can work within the system, without violence, and with other groups and parties with whom it may disagree. From its leadership of the syndicates in the 1980s to its attempts to win seats in parliament in the 1990s and its reform platform put forth in the mid-2000s, the Brotherhood has shown at every turn that it has evolved from a group violently opposed to military dictatorship in the 1950s to a group capable of participating in peaceful protests to bring about the end of the very same dictatorship decades later.

The Brotherhood has cast itself as a group dedicated to a set of religious principles, but not rigidly so. It decided to abandon paramilitary operations prior to the general amnesty offered by Sadat in the 1970s when many of its members were still in prison, and it has participated peacefully in parliamentary elections for nearly thirty years. The real test for the Brotherhood will be its response to gaining power. Its members may talk of transparency and interfaith harmony, but they have not yet had the chance to prove that this rhetoric can turn into real action. It has achieved two of the benchmarks of Islamist moderation—peaceful electoral participation and no reliance on a military wing. Whether the Muslim Brotherhood truly accepts liberal democratic values may not be known for several years. It is simply too soon in the new era of Egyptian politics to know.

CHAPTER THREE

Hezbollah in Lebanon

On the sixth anniversary of its first rally, the March 14th Movement gathered in Martyr's Square in the heart of downtown Beirut in March 2011 to demand that Hezbollah, the Shi'ite resistance movement founded shortly after the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, disarm and disband its militia.¹ Though the March 14th bloc had been successful in forcing the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon in 2005, it has not had the same success limiting the scope of Hezbollah's power.² Many observers in Lebanon do not foresee the March 14th Movement succeeding in part because it lacks the political and military means to successfully take on Hezbollah.³ Whether or not these protests succeed or fail to force Hezbollah into disarming, they mark the latest in a string of events in Lebanon that demonstrate the increasing divide between the resistance and the rest of the population.

The last decade has seen Hezbollah's relationship with the Lebanese government deteriorate in large part due to what can only be described as Hezbollah's identity crisis. Though at once integrated into the fabric of Lebanese society, the organization also stands outside of it, maintaining close ties to both Iran and Syria and often taking steps to

¹ "Lebanon Pro-Western Opposition Protests against Hezbollah Arms," Ha'Aretz.com, 13 March 2011, <http://www.haaretz.com/news/international/lebanon-pro-western-opposition-protests-against-hezbollah-arms-1.348881> (accessed 21 March 2011).

² Hussein Dakroub, "March 14 Will Struggle to Disarm Hezbollah," The Daily Star (Lebanon), 15 March 2001, http://www.dailystar.com.lb/article.asp?edition_id=1&categ_id=2&article_id=126017#axzz1HGPMu2GS (accessed 21 March 2011).

³ Ibid.

protect its foreign sponsors from the wrath of the Lebanese government. The paradoxical nature of Hezbollah's character is perhaps the biggest impediment to its moderation. It participates in elections, but will circumvent the parliamentary process for its own political gain or to protect Syria and Iran. It supports ending the confessional system and allowing all government jobs to be opened to all Lebanese citizens regardless of confessional affiliation, yet it maintains its own militia which it will not allow to come under the control of the Lebanese government. Though these conflicting orientations have become more problematic over the last decade, they are not new.

Hezbollah's history has been marked by an on-going internal conflict regarding the nature of the movement as well as where its true allegiances lie. Inspired by the Iranian Revolution, steeped in the tradition of Shi'a Islam, stirred by images of martyrdom and resistance to oppression, and fighting to be the sole representative and defender of the Shi'ites of Lebanon, Hezbollah's nearly thirty year history has been rife with contradiction.⁴ David Hirst argues that while Hezbollah has been successful in engaging at the political level, that success has come with a price:

For Hizbullah's very success brought it face to face with what had so long lain in wait for it—the need to make a decisive choice between the two identities which, over time, it had taken on, between its 'Lebanonization' and its wider, trans-national allegiances, between ordinary political party with a national agenda and militia with a universal, jihadist one.⁵

⁴ Scholars have different approaches to referencing those who follow the Shi'a sects of Islam. In general these approaches differ by discipline, with religious scholars tending toward using Shi'a in reference to both the religion and its practitioners, and those who are more concerned with the political and historical using Shi'ite instead. Both are technically correct, though Shi'ite is considered derogatory by some. However, I will use Shi'a in reference to the religion, and Shi'ite in reference to the followers of the religion, as it is a more widely used and recognizable term.

⁵ David Hirst, *Beware of Small States: Lebanon, Battleground of the Middle East* (New York: Nation Books, 2010), 267.

This identity crisis stands as a barrier to Hezbollah both moderating fully and being accepted as a legitimate political party by the international community.

While the Lebanese political system is the most open of the three examined in this dissertation, such openness comes with a price. The confessional system by its very nature invites political participation by many groups, but it also leads to a high level of fragmentation. The fragmented nature of Lebanon's confessional system plays a role in influencing Hezbollah's behavior and serves as an impediment to the complete moderation not only of Hezbollah, but of the whole of Lebanon as well. Despite its dual nature and unwillingness to relinquish control of its militia, Hezbollah has still exhibited some of the traits of a moderating party. It has transitioned from a fundamentalist party which demanded rigid adherence to Shi'a doctrine to a more denomination-based party which cooperates with other confessional groups, offers its social services to all who need them, and is concerned less with ideological purity than with political alliances.

Hezbollah does not display anti-system inclinations toward its own government, but it exhibits strong anti-system tendencies toward Israel, which has occasionally had ramifications for others in Lebanon.⁶ Hezbollah's stubborn refusal to give up its military wing is a self-inflicted obstacle to moderation. However, the organization has shown itself capable of peaceful participation in elections, and it has expressed acceptance of some democratic ideals. On the whole, Hezbollah's path to moderation is both the longest and the most difficult of the three groups studied in this dissertation. Unlike the

⁶ Sartori defines anti-system parties as those which undermine the legitimacy of the regimes they oppose. See Giovanni Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 133. While Hezbollah may criticize the Lebanese government, it has not sought to undermine it. On the other hand, it has, at several points in its history, actively sought to undermine Israel's legitimacy.

Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas, the Arab Spring may have a negative impact on the moderation of Hezbollah.

Scholarship and Hezbollah

The body of literature on Hezbollah, as with every other Islamist organization, has blossomed since 9/11 and covers many aspects of the organization, from its history to its ideology and its religious and political orientation. Prior to the late-1990s, little had been written about Hezbollah and its history. Augustus Richard Norton offered a bit of an introduction to the group in his 1987 book *Amal and the Shi'a*, presenting the “Open Letter” of 1985 as an appendix, but it was not until Hala Jaber’s *Hezbollah: Born with a Vengeance* in 1997 that English-language readers were presented with a history of the organization, as well as insight into its ideology and organizational structure.⁷ Later historical accounts of Hezbollah have included a deeper look at its guerilla tactics which led Israel to withdraw from southern Lebanon in 2000, as well as an examination of the “Lebanonization” of Hezbollah which began with the end of the civil war in 1990 and the party’s decision to run in the 1992 parliamentary elections.⁸

Nizar Hamzeh’s *In the Path of Hizbullah* offers readers the only detailed look at the organizational structure of Hezbollah and how its political, social, and military operations intersect.⁹ Eitan Azani, the Deputy Executive Director of the International

⁷ Augustus Richard Norton, *Amal and the Shi'a: Struggle for the Soul of Lebanon* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987); “Text of the Open Letter Addressed by Hizb Allah to the Downtrodden in Lebanon and the World,” in Norton, *Amal and the Shi'a*, 167-187; Hala Jaber, *Hezbollah: Born with a Vengeance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).

⁸ See for example Augustus Richard Norton, *Hezbollah: A Short History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007); Judith Harik Palmer, *Hezbollah: The Changing Face of Terrorism* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004); Amal Saad-Ghorayeb, *Hizb'ullah: Politics and Religion* (London: Pluto Press, 2002).

⁹ Ahmad Nizar Hamzeh, *In the Path of Hizbullah* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2004).

Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism at the Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya, Israel, argues that Hezbollah's organizational structure has allowed it to become more institutionalized in Lebanese society while still maintaining its militia which makes it more dangerous now than it was as simply a terrorist group during the civil war.¹⁰ Both Hirst and Thannasis Cambanis present more journalistic accounts of Hezbollah and its struggle to find an identity, post-Israeli withdrawal, that allows it to continue being an active member of Lebanon's parliamentary process while holding on to its revolutionary orientation.¹¹

English-language biographies of Hezbollah's leadership as well as primary sources are scarce, but the literature that does exist is quite illuminating. Jamal Sankari has written the authoritative biographical account of Muhammad Fadlallah, the spiritual leader of Hezbollah, exploring his upbringing and education in the Shi'a seminaries in Iraq and Iran as well as his influence on the leadership of Hezbollah, especially Hassan Nasrallah.¹² Nicholas Noe edited and annotated a volume of the major statements from Nasrallah which showcases the varieties of his rhetoric, depending on the audience.¹³ Finally, Naim Qassem, the Deputy Secretary-General of Hezbollah, wrote an insider's account of the party and its rationale for everything from suicide bombings to parliamentary participation.¹⁴ The volume of Nasrallah's statements along with the

¹⁰ Eitan Azani, *Hezbollah: The Story of the Party of God: From Revolution to Institutionalization* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

¹¹ Thanassis Cambanis, *A Privilege to Die: Inside Hezbollah's Legions and Their Endless War Against Israel* (New York: Free Press, 2010).

¹² Jamal Sankari, *Fadlallah: The Making of a Radical Shi'ite Leader* (London: Saqi, 2005).

¹³ Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, *The Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah*, ed. Nicholas Noe, trans. Ellen Khouri (London: Verso, 2009).

¹⁴ Naim Qassem, *Hizbullah: The Story From Within*, trans. Dalia Khalil (London: Saqi, 2005).

Qassem book provide insight into the inner workings of Hezbollah that is nearly unmatched among Islamist groups.

Uniquely Lebanese and Uniquely Shi'ite

Hezbollah is at once uniquely Lebanese and uniquely Shi'ite, and its methods, ideology, and decision making processes cannot be understood apart from those two facets of its character. On one hand, Hezbollah has been shaped by the confessional realities of Lebanon. As a representative of an oppressed people group, it has both fought to protect that group and sought to be a representative of that group within Lebanese society. However, Hezbollah is also undeniably influenced by Shi'a Islam and its narrative of faithfulness in the face of persecution. The reinvention of that narrative in the mid-20th century which reached its apex in 1979 with the Iranian Revolution empowered the Shi'ites of Lebanon to fight for their rights on both a political and a religious level.

In her most recent book, *Dreams and Shadows*, Robin Wright, the long-time foreign affairs correspondent who has spent much of her career covering the Middle East, observes that "Lebanon is rarely a country of moderation."¹⁵ This has certainly been the case since the end of the French mandate in Lebanon in the mid-1940s when the country gained its independence. The unique character of the Lebanese state has been critical in the development of both the Lebanese and Shi'ite aspects of Hezbollah's identity and ideology. When Lebanon became an independent nation in 1943, it was governed by the National Pact, a document which laid out the apportionment of political power to the country's various religious confessions based on their relative size. According to the

¹⁵ Robin Wright, *Dreams and Shadows: The Future of the Middle East* (New York: Penguin, 2008), 139.

National Pact, the president of Lebanon was to be a Maronite, or French Catholic, the prime minister a Sunni Muslim, and the speaker of Parliament a Shi'ite Muslim.

Deputies in Parliament were set at a fixed six-to-five Christian-to-Muslim ratio based on a 1932 census of questionable accuracy which showed Christians to be 54 percent of the population.¹⁶ As a part of the agreement granting Lebanon independence, the Christians of Lebanon were to give up any claim of French protection, and the Arabs would give up pan-Arabism as an ideology as it would undermine the sovereignty of the fledgling state.¹⁷

Despite being one of the larger confessional groups in Lebanon, the Shi'ites lagged behind their Maronite and Sunni counterparts in a number of areas. For example, 40 percent of civil service jobs in Lebanon in 1946 went to Maronites, 27 percent to Sunnis, and only three percent to Shi'ites.¹⁸ By the 1980s, the Shi'ites were estimated to have a population of 1.4 million as opposed to 800,000 each for the Maronites and the Sunni. Despite this demographic shift, no new census has been undertaken in Lebanon since 1932, mostly because those with the power to order a new census (the Maronites and Sunni) wish to keep that power, rather than relinquish it.¹⁹

Leonard Weinberg and Ami Pedazhur define this system as "segmented pluralism," a system in which distribution of wealth, social status, and political power are

¹⁶ Jaber, 10. These are the three most numerous of 18 legally recognized confessional groups in Lebanon. The others are the Alawites, the Armenian Catholic and Armenian Orthodox churches, the Assyrian Church of the East, the Chaldean Catholic church, the Coptic Orthodox church, the Druze, the Greek Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches, the Isma'ilis, Jews, Protestants, Roman Catholics, and the Syrian Catholic and Syrian Orthodox churches. See Norton, *Hezbollah*, 11.

¹⁷ Wright, 139-40.

¹⁸ Hamzeh, 12.

¹⁹ Ibid., 13; Wright, 142.

based largely on sectarian divisions. This system has been further complicated by the presence of several hundred thousand Palestinian refugees.²⁰ 100,000 Palestinian refugees flooded into Lebanon after Israel's founding in 1948, and tens of thousands more came as a result of both the Six Day War in 1967 and the Jordanian war with the PLO in 1970. Many of these refugees settled in camps in the South, a major Shi'ite population center, exacerbating already overcrowded conditions there.²¹ In his biography of Sheikh Muhammad Fadlallah, Jamal Sankari notes

Throughout the modern history of Lebanon, and in particular the 1960s and 1970s, its Shi'i citizens, despite representing the country's largest single confessional group, have constituted the most politically disenfranchised, economically disinherited, and socially alienated of the confessional communities.²²

The alienation of the Shi'ites in Lebanon was understood in that community not only in socio-economic or political terms, but in religious terms as well.

When the Prophet Muhammad died in 632 C.E., he did so without appointing a successor as leader of the fledgling Muslim community. The community was divided as to how his successor should be chosen. The majority, the Sunni, supported Abu Bakr, one of Muhammad's closest companions to succeed him. Others believed that Muhammad's successor should come from the house of the Prophet and supported Ali, the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law. This faction of the *umma* became known as the *shi'at 'Ali*, the partisans of Ali. Abu Bakr became the first caliph to replace Muhammad,

²⁰ Leonard Weinberg and Ami Pedazhur, *Political Parties and Terrorist Groups* (London: Routledge, 2003), 43.

²¹ David L. Phillips, *From Bullets to Ballots: Violent Muslim Movements in Transition* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2009), 36.

²² Sankari, 123.

though Ali is recognized as the fourth caliph by Sunni Muslims.²³ Ali and his descendents were persecuted heavily by the Umayyad dynasty, particularly under Muawiyah and his son Yazid. Yazid's army fought and killed Ali's son, Hussein, and his supporters at Karbala in modern-day Iraq in 680, killing Hussein. The martyrdom of Hussein is memorialized by Shi'ites on '*Ashura*, the tenth day of Muharram, the first month of the Islamic calendar. Persecution and martyrdom are key themes in Shi'a Islam, and many of the narratives of the present-day struggles of Shi'ites are told in parallel with the story of Hussein and Yazid.²⁴

Given their minority status and the persecution they have faced throughout their history, Shi'ites have historically been quietists politically, waiting for the Hidden Imam to return and rid the world of corruption. However, Shi'a seminarians in the early 20th century began to reconsider their theological heritage, reimagining Hussein's martyrdom as a fight against oppression which was worthy of emulation.²⁵ The Ayatollah Khomeini was among those who were influenced by this more activist interpretation of Shi'a Islam, and the Iranian Revolution inspired the Shi'ites of Lebanon to mobilize against discrimination and oppression at the hands of the Maronites and Sunni.²⁶ Norton observes that "Shi'ism—especially the activist variant presently articulated in Iran—has been amply demonstrated to be a culturally validated idiom of protest that imbues its

²³ Sunni means those who follow the *sunna*, understood to be the Qur'an and *hadith* (a record of the sayings and actions of the Prophet). Caliph comes from the Arabic *khalifa* which means "leader."

²⁴ The development of Shi'a doctrine and practice is explained more fully in Husain M. Jafri, *Origins and Early Development of Shi'a Islam* (London: Longman, 1979), Lesley Hazleton, *After the Prophet: The Epic Story of the Shia-Sunni Split in Islam* (New York : Doubleday, 2009), and Juan Cole, *Sacred Space and Holy War: The Politics, Culture and History of Shi'ite Islam* (London : I.B. Tauris, 2002).

²⁵ Cambanis, 102.

²⁶ Jaber, 8.

proponents with a potent and evocative symbolism.”²⁷ This religious narrative of protest against oppression emerged not only because of the inspiration provided by the Iranian model, but also due to the state of the Shi‘ite community in Lebanon on the eve of the civil war.

In the mid-20th century, Lebanon’s political and social life was dominated by clans, led by powerful leaders called *zu‘ama* who handed out favors and patronage to their supporters.²⁸ In the “belt of misery,” the southern suburbs of Beirut, populated by recently urbanized Shi‘ites who moved into the city from the small towns and villages in the South, neighborhoods lacked adequate sewer systems and electricity, and 90 percent of residents did not have access to running water prior to the civil war. Despite such living conditions, before the ascendancy of Hezbollah, Shi‘ite *zu‘ama* cared little about the plight of the inhabitants of the *dahiya*. In some cases, they actually discouraged education in an effort to maintain their positions of power.²⁹ Even after the civil war and two decades of reconstruction efforts throughout Lebanon, Robin Wright points out that the *dahiya* is still very much an area forgotten by many in Lebanon:

The outskirts of Beirut are known as the *dahiya*, Arabic for “suburb.” It is a generic term, but *dahiya* has come to mean the poor, dense, sometimes dangerous maze of slums on the capital’s southern fringe. Its dirty alleys are crammed with concrete block shanties and shabby apartment buildings packed together. Its chaotic streets are clogged with decrepit cars with bad mufflers. Laundry hangs from windows; gnarled masses of wires dangle from one building across to the next, illegally tapping into electricity, phone, and television lines.

While lights burn brightly in trendy downtown Beirut, the *dahiya* is often eerily dark more than two decades after electricity became sporadic, a casualty of

²⁷ Norton, *Amal and the Shia*, 13.

²⁸ Jaber, 10; Norton, *Hezbollah*, 145.

²⁹ Jaber, 145 ff.

Lebanon's civil war, Israel's three interventions, and government neglect. The *dahiya* is ignored or avoided by anyone who does not live there.³⁰

Given the state of the *dahiya*, before, during, and after the civil war, it is not surprising that Hezbollah and its predecessor and sometimes rival Amal found the region to be a fertile recruiting ground.

Civil War and the Birth of Hezbollah

Prior to the advent of Hezbollah, Amal was the group looked to by Shi'ites in Lebanon to provide them with both protection and a voice among the confessional masses. Amal was founded in 1974, on the eve of the civil war, by Musa al-Sadr. Sadr was born in Qom, one of the most highly respected centers of Shi'a learning in Iran. Though he was Iranian by birth, Sadr's ancestral home was in Lebanon.³¹ He studied in Najaf under Khomeini and was influenced by his activist interpretation of Shi'a Islam which advocated the mobilization of the Shi'ites against political restraints and economic inequality.³² Sadr moved to Lebanon in 1959 and began mobilizing the Shi'ite community, working on development projects in underserved Shi'ite areas of the country.³³ After founding the Movement for the Dispossessed in 1974, Sadr established its militia, Amal, a year later as the civil war in Lebanon was beginning.³⁴ In 1978, while visiting Libya, Musa al-Sadr disappeared. Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi claimed that

³⁰ Wright, 159.

³¹ Sankari, 125.

³² John L. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 150-1.

³³ Sankari, 126-7.

³⁴ Jaber, 11-2. Amal was the acronym for the militia's Arabic name, and also the Arabic word for "hope."

he left Libya for Rome, but Sadr never arrived in Italy. His disappearance has led many Lebanese Shi'ites to compare him to the Hidden Imam, and he has become yet another symbol of the suffering endured by Shi'ites at the hands of an oppressive and unjust system.³⁵

In addition to the violence surrounding them due to the civil war, the Shi'ites were also caught in the middle of fighting between the Israelis and the Palestinians who had moved to in southern Lebanon after they were exiled from Jordan in 1970. These two factors were the impetus for founding of Amal as a militia to protect the Shi'ite community in the South.³⁶ The Shi'ites were not the only confessional group with a militia; indeed, all of the major confessional groups had formed their own militias around the same time, and some, particularly the Druze, shared the Shi'ites' critiques of the state of the confessional system. The Shi'ites and the Druze also shared a concern about the presence of PLO guerillas in the South and the Beqaa Valley which only served to further undermine Lebanese stability and increase the factionalization which brought about civil war in the first place.³⁷ The Palestinian presence in the South led to Israeli invasions in 1978, briefly, and on a much larger scale in 1982. At first, the Israeli troops were welcomed by Shi'ites who were growing tired of the brutality of the PLO guerillas in their midst, but the Israelis soon wore out their welcome just as the Palestinians had.³⁸

The defining moment in the early days of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon which led the Shi'ites to turn against Israel occurred on '*Ashura*, the commemoration of the

³⁵ Norton, *Amal and the Shia*, 169.

³⁶ Esposito, 152.

³⁷ Weinberg and Pedazhur, 43-4.

³⁸ Jaber, 14-5.

martyrdom of Hussein. On October 16, 1983, Shi'ites in the southern Lebanese town of Nabatiya had taken to the streets for 'Ashura festivities. An Israeli lieutenant misread a map and led his military convoy straight into the heart of Nabatiya, disrupting the religious ceremonies.³⁹ This was seen as an act of sacrilege by the Shi'ites and a *casus belli* against Israel: "In Lebanon's Shi'i community, the 1983 incident is intrinsic of a commonly shared narrative emphasizing Israel's disrespect for Islam and the injustice of the long Israeli occupation."⁴⁰ This incident took on not only political, but religious significance as well, as Shi'ites began referring to the Israelis as "Yazidis," equating them with the oppressor and murderer of Hussein.⁴¹

Because of the increasing tensions in Lebanon, as well as Israeli intervention, the United States sent troops to the country as a part of the Multi-National Force which was dispatched to help keep the peace and broker a settlement. However, despite its mandate to remain a neutral arbiter, the United States was soon seen by many in Lebanon as picking sides. The turning point for the United States in Lebanon occurred in late 1983 when the *USS New Jersey*, stationed off the coast of Beirut, fired on Druze strongholds in the Chouf Mountains while the Druze were fighting the mostly Christian Lebanese Army.⁴² This perceived partisanship on behalf of "Christian" forces in Lebanon caused the United States to lose credibility with other Lebanese groups which eventually led to those groups' militias turning their wrath on U.S. forces.

³⁹ Norton, *Amal and the Shia*, 113.

⁴⁰ Norton, *Hezbollah*, 66.

⁴¹ Augustus Richard Norton, "Hizballah and the Israeli Withdrawal from Southern Lebanon," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 30, no. 1 (2000): 25.

⁴² Robin Wright, *Sacred Rage: The Wrath of Militant Islam* (New York: Touchstone, 2001), 77-8; Hirst, 172.

These two outside influences, Israel and the United States, along with the situation among the Lebanese, created an environment in which an organization such as Hezbollah could form. While the exact date of Hezbollah's founding is unknown, the organization most likely existed in secret for several years before the publication of its manifesto in 1985, and its origins can most likely be traced to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982.⁴³ Hezbollah was the beneficiary of internal divisions within Amal after the disappearance of Musa al-Sadr. Nabih Berri, Sadr's successor, was more nationalist and less religiously oriented. Upset with the trajectory of the Berri-led Amal, Hussein Musawi formed "Islamic Amal" which would eventually become a part of Hezbollah.⁴⁴ Israel's "Iron Fist" policy of occupation in the South only served to enflame the Shi'ite community further. Even the more moderate Amal was galvanized by the brutality to which they were subjected by the Israelis.⁴⁵ While Israel was the primary target of Hezbollah's military operations, in the early years at least, the United States was the group's primary rhetorical target.

In the 1985 "Open Letter," Hezbollah points to the United States as the greatest of Great Satans: "America and its allies and the Zionist entity that has usurped the sacred Islamic land of Palestine have engaged and continue to engage in constant aggression against us and are working constantly to humiliate us."⁴⁶ This rhetoric was indicative of the level of cooperation that existed between Hezbollah and its Iranian sponsor in the early years of its existence. In fact, Iran provided training and financial assistance to

⁴³ Phillips, 38.

⁴⁴ Esposito, 154-5.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 157; Jaber, 27.

⁴⁶ "Open Letter," 170.

Hezbollah while the organization was still in its infancy to plan and coordinate military operations within Lebanon.⁴⁷

Despite deep ties to the revolutionary regime in Tehran, Hezbollah also argued for autonomy for the Lebanese state. Its stated goals included: “Rescuing Lebanon from subservience to either the West or the East, expelling the Zionist occupation from its territories finally and adopting a system that the people establish of their own free will and choice.”⁴⁸ While the United States was Hezbollah’s principle target in the Open Letter, Israel did not escape its wrath. Hezbollah argued that “this Zionist entity is aggressive in its origins and structure and is built on usurped land and at the expense of a Muslim people. Therefore, our confrontation of this entity must end with its obliteration from existence.”⁴⁹ This intransigence toward Israel has been a constant in Hezbollah’s rhetoric, much more so than its dislike of the United States.

Despite a decidedly pan-Islamic orientation and the inspiration gleaned from Iran, where the ayatollahs were working diligently to create a strictly Islamic society, Hezbollah has argued from the outset that it has no intention of creating an Islamic state: “We do not wish to impose Islam on anybody and we hate to see others impose on us their convictions and their systems.”⁵⁰ A year after the publication of the Open Letter, Hassan Nasrallah who, at the time, had not yet risen to the post of Secretary-General, was interviewed by the Emirati newspaper *Al-Khaleej* and reiterated Hezbollah’s position on the creation of an Islamic state in Lebanon: “We would like to ally the fears of those who

⁴⁷ Esposito, 155.

⁴⁸ “Open Letter,” 155.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 179.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 174.

think that Hezbollah intends to impose Islamic rule by force, and to tell them that we shall not impose Islam; for us, this is a matter of general principle.”⁵¹

Despite these early assurances to non-Shi‘ites, Hezbollah did initially attempt to turn the South into an Islamic Republic, banning the sale of alcohol, as well as parties, dancing, and music. The strict interpretation of Islam which Hezbollah was imposing on villagers in the South cost the organization the support of many in the region. When Nasrallah became Secretary-General, he relaxed these restrictions as he believed that political allegiances were more important than person piety. While he did not endorse immoral behavior, he also decided that this issue was not worth undermining the support of Hezbollah.⁵² This debate among Hezbollah’s leadership regarding the level of interference the group should have in the lives of ordinary citizens was a formative debate regarding the nature of Hezbollah first as a social movement, then later as a political party. The impulse to create an Islamic Republic in Hezbollah-controlled territory is much more in line with Gunther and Diamond’s definition of a religious fundamentalist party which seeks to impose a strict interpretation of religious teachings on the masses. Under Nasrallah, those restrictions were relaxed considerably.

One crucial difference between Hezbollah and the Muslim Brotherhood is the presence of foreign actors—not only Syria and Iran, but also, and perhaps more importantly, Israel. The resistance narrative Hezbollah constructed vis á vis Israel has become one of its primary justifications for not disarming its militia. This narrative appears throughout the history of Hezbollah and is, in fact, a result of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982. In his book, *Hizbullah: The Story from Within*, Naim Qassem, the

⁵¹ Nasrallah, 32.

⁵² Jaber, 29-30; Cambanis, 73-4.

deputy Secretary-General of Hezbollah, argued, “Resistance is perceived to be the only available solution for confronting the power imbalance between the Israeli occupiers and the rightful owners of the land.”⁵³ Resistance has long been Hezbollah’s *raison d’être*, which feeds into the Shi‘a narrative of resistance to oppression in order to create a just system.

However, Hezbollah has spent almost as much of its time fighting Amal as it has fighting Israel. In the 1980s, Hezbollah and Amal competed for legitimacy in the South as representatives of Shi‘ite interests and devoted almost as much of their energy to discrediting the other as they did to fighting common enemies. At the outset, Syria and Iran were on opposite sides as well, Iran having provided Revolutionary Guards to train Hezbollah and Syria supporting Amal.⁵⁴ However, after Hezbollah forces defeated Amal in the “war of the camps” in the mid-1980s, Syria began to reconsider its stance toward Hezbollah, and in 1989, Iran brokered the Damascus Agreement which allowed Hezbollah to operate freely in the South and created joint military operations between Hezbollah and Amal.⁵⁵ Though Hezbollah had to fight for recognition by outside forces, the Lebanese government moved quicker to recognize its charitable operations. In 1988, Hezbollah’s charity wing was recognized by the government, in part, perhaps, because

⁵³ Qassem, 73.

⁵⁴ Esposito, 158; Hirst, 189; Jaber, 32.

⁵⁵ Hirst, 322 ff; Jaber, 35. During the 1980s, Amal fought a three year campaign to remove Palestinian militants from refugee camps around Beirut. Supported by Syria, Amal’s drive to eliminate the Palestinians was opposed by Hezbollah who supported the Palestinians on principle because they were primarily focused on undermining Israel. See Norton, *Hezbollah*, 72.

the government was eager for the Shi'ites, especially in the South and in the *dahiya*, to be someone else's problem.⁵⁶

In 1989, at the same time Syria was forging agreements with Hezbollah, it was also working with Saudi Arabia to negotiate an end to the civil war. Among the key features of the Taif Accords was the equal distribution of seats in parliament between the Sunni, Shi'ite, and Maronite confessional groups who would all be guaranteed 27 seats.⁵⁷ Taif merely amended, but did not put an end to, the confessional system in Lebanon; it did not, for example, change the confessional proscriptions of major offices (president, prime minister, and speaker of parliament). While the agreement fell short of Hezbollah's demands for a just end to the fighting, including the abolition of the confessional system and recognition of Hezbollah as the legitimate representative of the Lebanese resistance to occupation in the South, the group eventually accepted the agreement because of the evolving situation in the region.

The Ayatollah Khomeini had died, the first Gulf War was eminent, Arab-Israeli peace talks had begun, and the internal conflict with Amal had come to an end.⁵⁸ Hezbollah recognized that its relevance both in Lebanon and in the region were contingent upon its ability to adapt to the ever-evolving situation in the Middle East. The discussions which led to the decision to participate in the 1992 elections are emblematic of the desire of Hezbollah to be taken seriously, not only as the recognized leader of the resistance in the South, but also as a major player on a larger scale in the Middle East.

⁵⁶ Jaber, 148.

⁵⁷ Sankari, 235; Norton, *Hezbollah*, 97.

⁵⁸ Sankari, 236; A. Nizar Hamzeh, "Lebanon's Hizbullah: From Islamic Revolution to Parliamentary Accommodation," *Third World Quarterly* 14, no. 2 (1993): 334.

Less than ten years after its founding, Hezbollah faced its first major challenge—whether it was able to transition from mere militia to legitimate political party.

Parliamentary Participation

1992 marks the beginning of Hezbollah's existence as a political party which contests elections. The most impressive accomplishment of Hezbollah in the aftermath of the Taif Accords was its ability to transition quickly into a political machine capable of mobilizing its supporters in a way that guaranteed electoral success. Norton observes:

Over the last fifteen years, Hezbollah has evolved from an Iranian-influenced conspiratorial terrorist group rejecting participation in Lebanese politics, to a party with considerable autonomy and a talent for playing politics and winning elections. The Shii party is now a part of the Lebanese government but simultaneously adopts an opposition demeanor, with a Janus-faced profile that infuriates detractors while seeming perfectly reasonable to its defenders and supporters.⁵⁹

Though Hezbollah has become more independent, its shift away from terrorist group and toward a more conciliatory stance within Lebanon was influenced in the early days by events in Iran.

When the Ayatollah Khomeini died in 1989, Hashemi Rafsanjani became president of Iran and led the country toward a more pragmatic approach to governance. At his urging, Hezbollah did likewise and began making plans to enter the mainstream of Lebanese politics.⁶⁰ More influential than Rafsanjani, however, was Hezbollah's spiritual leader Sayyid Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah. Fadlallah was never convinced that an Iranian-style Islamic Republic was possible in Lebanon because of the demographic challenges facing the country. He instead advocated dialogue with

⁵⁹ Norton, *Hezbollah*, 6.

⁶⁰ Hamzeh, "Lebanon's Hizbullah," 323-4.

Christians and more cooperation with other parties in Lebanon.⁶¹ In this way, Fadlallah helped facilitate the transition of Hezbollah from religious fundamentalist to denomination-based party. The combined influence of Sheikh Fadlallah and Hassan Nasrallah was instrumental in moving Hezbollah toward a more conciliatory stance toward other elements of the Lebanese political landscape.

After the Taif Accords, Fadlallah began to champion what he called the “Lebanonization” of Hezbollah. He coined this term in the late-1980s when it became clear that Hezbollah was going to have to accept the reality of existence in a confessionally heterogeneous society rather than create an Iranian-style theocracy. The idea of Lebanonization was based on pragmatism and a willingness to work in coalition with other parties with whom Hezbollah may or may not share convictions.⁶² When asked in a 1995 interview what he meant by “Lebanonization,” Fadlallah replied,

When I spoke of the Lebanonization of the Islamist movement in Lebanon, what I meant was that the Islamist movement should examine the prevailing circumstances in Lebanon and formulate its strategy within that framework, making allowances for Lebanon’s particular circumstances, its confessional sensitivities, its perception of its environment.⁶³

While Hezbollah followed Fadlallah’s example and advice regarding its repositioning in the Lebanese political arena and though he often spoke of Hezbollah in the first person when discussing the group, Fadlallah was never formally associated with Hezbollah, claiming he wished to remain above party politics.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Ibid., 324; Harik, 60.

⁶² Sankari, 242.

⁶³ Muhammad Hussayn Fadlallah and Mahmoud Soueid, “Islamic Unity and Political Change: Interview with Shaykh Muhammad Hussayn Fadlallah,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 25, no. 1 (1995): 67.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 69; Harik, 61.

Along with the Lebanonization of Hezbollah, Fadlallah also encouraged the various confessional groups in Lebanon to open a dialogue with each other and sought to assure both Jews and Christians that they had more in common than not:

A Muslim may not malign the Torah, he may not malign Moses or Aaron, or the New Testament, or Jesus, or the Virgin Mary—all of these have sanctity for Muslims....Islam's debate with Christianity and Judaism is a debate over what it considers to be deviations from the true message of Moses and of Jesus. Still, Islam calls on Jews and Christians to come together on issues of faith, worship, and obedience, and the unity of God—and the unity of mankind.⁶⁵

Fadlallah's views on Muslim-Christian-Jewish relations informed his views on Hezbollah's place among the power elite in Lebanon. If those three faiths could find common ground religiously, then any conflicts they had politically could be mitigated as well. This view seems to have taken root in the leadership of Hezbollah, as its stance toward other non-Shi'ite groups has moderated over time, particularly after the civil war concluded. Naim Qassem's position on inter-faith dialogue is indicative of the change in Hezbollah's thinking: "Lebanon's peculiarity as a nation of various sects in an issue of paramount importance, and dialogue should be fostered to organize differences in lieu of submitting to the scams and desires of others."⁶⁶

One of the chief beneficiaries of Fadlallah's wisdom regarding compromise and dialogue has been Hassan Nasrallah. Nasrallah had been active in Hezbollah since its inception, and was elevated to Secretary-General in 1992. Abbas Musawi had become Secretary-General only a year earlier, but was killed in a February 1992 Israeli airstrike along with his wife and son. Nasrallah, who was only 31 at the time, was immediately

⁶⁵ Fadlallah and Soueid, 66.

⁶⁶ Qassem, 208.

selected to succeed Musawi, his mentor and long-time friend.⁶⁷ Though Nasrallah would lead Hezbollah into a new era of parliamentary participation, his rhetoric, at least in the beginning, did not reflect the moderation and pragmatism he has come to show. In his eulogy for Musawi in 1992, shortly after he became Secretary-General, Nasrallah called America the “greatest Satan of all,” declared that Israel as a “cancerous growth that needs to be eradicated,” and reiterated Hezbollah’s close relationship with Iran, stating, “The Supreme Guide Ayatollah Khomeini will remain our leader, imam, master, and inspiration in jihad, patience, and willpower.”⁶⁸

Though Nasrallah’s rhetoric was still confrontational, Hezbollah was moving in a more conciliatory direction, though its decision to do so was not without debate. As many have pointed out, this meant a fundamental shift away from Hezbollah’s initial stance rejecting the confessional system as inherently corrupt and toward a new position as a part of that system.⁶⁹ By doing so, Hezbollah had to confront three issues: whether participation in a system not governed by *Shari‘a* was acceptable, whether ideology—and theology—should adapt to practical considerations, and whether participation in elections would strip Hezbollah of its identity.⁷⁰

While there were internal divisions about whether it was wise to participate in the 1992 parliamentary elections, the official response from Hezbollah was in the affirmative. Qassem articulated Hezbollah’s rationale for participating in the elections:

Participation in parliamentary elections is an expression of sharing in an existing political structure, Parliament being one of the regime’s pillars. It does not,

⁶⁷ Jaber, 43 ff.

⁶⁸ Nasrallah, 54.

⁶⁹ Norton, *Hezbollah*, 98-9.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 100.

however, represent a commitment to preserving the structure as is, nor require defense of the system's deficiencies and blemishes. A position in Parliament denotes a representation of a certain group of people and allows the parliamentarian to maintain his viewpoints and defend them, enjoying a freedom of acceptance or refusal and the capability of making his position clear based on his background.⁷¹

Qassem also laid out what he saw as the advantages to parliamentary participation, which include the ability to advance the agenda of the resistance, influence over budget allocations, the opportunity to voice agreement or disagreement with legislation as it is being crafted, representation of the Islamic viewpoint next to all others, and official recognition of the resistance.⁷²

Qassem's rationale for participating in the elections shows a high level of pragmatism and has led some scholars to believe that Hezbollah has fundamentally changed. Judith Harik, who lives in Lebanon and has studied Hezbollah for many years, argues, "By entering the 1992 elections, Hezbollah had sent a clear signal that it had changed its radical course and was abiding by the time-honored rules of Lebanon's electoral game."⁷³ The signal from Hezbollah was perhaps not as clear as Harik would like to believe, nor has Hezbollah necessarily changed its course. While the organization's decision to work within the system rather than rage against it is a positive sign, Hezbollah still has problems divorcing its political operations from the resistance, an issue which plagues it to this day.

The pragmatism of Hezbollah in the months leading up to the 1992 elections was nowhere more evident than in its reconciliation efforts with the Christians in the South.

⁷¹ Qassem, 189-90.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Harik, 52.

After Hezbollah announced that it was participating in the elections, it began a campaign to establish better relationships and stronger ties with Christian leaders in southern Lebanon, where Christians and Muslims had historically intermingled. Hezbollah hosted meetings with the leaders of the various Christian sects to discuss issues of shared political, social, and economic concern.⁷⁴ Nasrallah stressed the unity of the Lebanese people, regardless of their religious affiliation in a speech the February prior to the elections:

We want a formula for governing Lebanon that reflects the will of the Lebanese people, and like any self-respecting country we don't want a formula imposed on the people. The people are well able to elect their own representatives, who will then meet and work on a formula for a new state structure.⁷⁵

Inherent in Nasrallah's argument was the often-heard demand from Hezbollah for an end to the confessional system.

This objective was further expounded upon by Nasrallah in a speech in September 1992, as the elections were on-going. He called for the end of "political sectarianism" and suggested that ability and competence, rather than religious creed should be the yardstick by which public servants were judged.⁷⁶ This demand highlighted one of Hezbollah's primary complaints about the Taif Accords. While the distribution of seats in Parliament had become more equitable, the confessional system had only been altered, not abolished, which meant that national offices such as president and prime minister were still reserved for certain confessional groups. Hezbollah's misgivings about the confessional system and its doubts about the wisdom of electoral participation did not

⁷⁴ Ibid., 73-4.

⁷⁵ Nasrallah, 74.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 89.

diminish its success at the polls. The group won eight of 128 seats, making it the largest party bloc in Parliament. Despite its popularity and success, Hezbollah decided against accepting cabinet positions on theological and political grounds. Theologically, the group was uneasy with being identified with a government based on secular laws, and politically, it did not want to be held responsible for the failures of the government.⁷⁷

Hezbollah's success at the polls in 1992 was due to several factors. The leadership of Hezbollah was pragmatic in its electoral strategy: running on its own party lists in some regions and running on coalition lists in areas where that was considered more beneficial. Hezbollah's constituents were spread across several districts (the Beqaa Valley, the *dahiya*, and the South) which gave it a larger support base. The organization of the party, particularly its charitable wing, increased both its visibility and its good will, and it created a large and effective get-out-the-vote campaign, complete with *fatwas* from key religious figures urging Hezbollah supporters to vote. Finally, Christians in much of Lebanon, including the areas where Hezbollah was popular, boycotted the elections because of their anger over the redistribution of power.⁷⁸ All of these factors led to Hezbollah's initial success in elections. Pro-Syria cabinet ministers occupied 27 of 30 positions in the first post-Taif government, a trend which continued through several more electoral cycles and further helped cement Hezbollah's integration into the Lebanese government.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Phillips, 45; Hamzeh, *In the Path of Hizbullah*, 120.

⁷⁸ Hamzeh, "Lebanon's Hizbullah," 330 ff. A *fatwa* is a legal opinion from a respected religious scholar.

⁷⁹ Hirst, 214; Harik, 46-7.

Hezbollah's success continued in subsequent national elections where it won seven seats in 1996 and 12 in 2000.⁸⁰ The party also experienced electoral success in the 1998 municipal elections, the first held since 1963.⁸¹ As with the national elections, municipal elections were based on the confessional system. For example, Beirut's municipal council reserved three seats for Shi'ites.⁸² Despite restrictions due to the confessional system, Hezbollah won almost all of the seats it contested in 1998, and the lists it created to do so reflected a diversity of opinions one might not expect from a proudly Islamist Shi'ite group. Harik argues, "The heterogeneity of the lists formed showed Hezbollah's fundamentalist ideology is neither overwhelmingly important in creating these lists nor greatly off-putting to those espousing secular or leftist views who join the list for opportunistic reasons."⁸³

Despite its ability to change course and moderate its stance on a variety of domestic issues, Hezbollah's position was often internally contradictory. It despised the confessional system, but deigned to function in it. It agreed to run in elections with the hopes of changing the government from within, but refused to accept cabinet positions where it would have more power to do so. It was proudly, even militantly, Shi'ite, yet welcomed anyone who wanted to support the "resistance," which itself was an ambiguous notion. In many ways, Hezbollah was both anti-system and not. It had sought in its early years to undermine the confessional system and continued to be critical of the idea even after it became part of the government. These internal contradictions

⁸⁰ Weinberg and Pedazhur, 89-90.

⁸¹ Harik, 76.

⁸² Ibid., 100.

⁸³ Ibid., 104, 109.

have led to several high profile clashes with other Lebanese parties in recent years, but with the benefit of hindsight, it seems that the seeds of those conflicts were planted two decades ago. While the domestic conflicts Hezbollah is engaged in currently had simmered for many years before finally becoming problematic, its foreign policy, especially toward Israel, has been evident and extremely confrontational since the beginning.

Hezbollah as Resistance

One of the ironies of Hezbollah's military operations is that many of the operations for which it has gained such notoriety cannot be positively attributed to it. The most spectacular attack in Lebanon during the civil war was the suicide bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut in October 1983, and although this attack has been linked to Hezbollah, it was never claimed by the group.⁸⁴ Though Hezbollah has never claimed responsibility for the attack on the Marine barracks or the other high profile suicide attacks which occurred near the same time, it has used this tactic both in its war against the Multi-National Force (MNF) dispatched to Lebanon to keep the peace during the civil war and against Israeli occupying forces.⁸⁵

Suicide bombing has become one of the most notorious tactics of non-state guerrilla forces over the last 30 years. Despite the dramatic effects of suicide bombing and its use by such forces as Hezbollah, Hamas, and al Qaeda, until recently, very little

⁸⁴ Robert A. Pape, *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terror* (New York: Random House, 2005), 14. Imad Mughniyeh, who was considered the architect of the barracks bombing, was perhaps nominally affiliated with Hezbollah in the 1980s, but generally considered to operate independently. Nevertheless, Hezbollah used these attacks as recruiting tools, irrespective of their direct responsibility for them. See Cambanis, 105-6.

⁸⁵ In April 1983, the U.S. embassy in West Beirut was hit by a suicide bombing, and at nearly the same time as the bombing of the Marine barracks, the French headquarters for the MNF also fell victim to a suicide bombing. See Norton, *Hezbollah*, 71.

had been written about the nature and motivation of suicide bombers. In 2005, a landmark study by Robert Pape of the Chicago Project on Security and Terrorism was published which challenged conventional wisdom about those who carry out suicide attacks.⁸⁶ Several books have followed Pape's which have added to a deeper understanding of the nature of suicide bombing campaigns.

Talal Asad's *On Suicide Bombing* is a philosophical examination of the phenomenon.⁸⁷ Asad challenges the assumptions of many scholars regarding the religious motivations of suicide bombers, before examining how the "War on Terror" has impacted our understanding of suicide bombing. David Cook has written several books about aspects of Islam as they relate to current events, including *Martyrdom in Islam*, which traces the evolution of Islamic understandings of martyrdom, explores the differences between Sunni and Shi'a doctrine on martyrdom, and examines the use of martyrdom narratives in the contemporary context.⁸⁸ Cook also co-authored a book with Olivia Allison which served as a critique of Pape's argument, which they claim neglected to address the religious and historical justifications of suicide bombers; *Understanding and Addressing Suicide Attacks* was designed as a corrective to that oversight.⁸⁹ Cook and Allison also offer their ideas regarding how the incidences of suicide bombing could be reduced or prevented.

⁸⁶ Pape identifies several of the stereotypes of suicide bombers as religious fanaticism, poverty, lack of education, and irrationality. See Pape, 16-7.

⁸⁷ Talal Asad, *On Suicide Bombing* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).

⁸⁸ David Cook, *Martyrdom in Islam* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

⁸⁹ David Cook and Olivia Allison, *Understanding and Addressing Suicide Attacks: The Faith and Politics of Martyrdom Operations* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2007). Pape does not overlook religion, so much as he approaches it differently. In Pape's estimation, it is not religion, but religious difference which allows groups to justify their suicide operations. See *Dying to Win*, 87-8.

Mia Bloom also addresses the motivations of suicide bombers, though she focuses mostly on how organizations that utilize suicide bombing rely on the anger and frustration of aggrieved populations to fuel support of their operations.⁹⁰ Pape's follow up to *Dying to Win*, written with James Feldman, updates the statistical data on suicide attacks and argues that U.S. military strategy is exacerbating the epidemic of suicide bombing.⁹¹ While all of these authors have added to our understanding of suicide bombing, given the scope of the present study, the data from the Chicago Project on Security and Terrorism is the most useful for understanding the nature of Hezbollah's resistance activities.

In *Dying to Win*, Pape traced all known information about suicide bombers—gender, age, nationality, religious background, and target—and concluded that between 1980 and 2003, there were 315 separate suicide attacks, 301 of which were part of 18 distinct campaigns.⁹² These campaigns continued until their leadership decided that their desired objectives had been obtained or that further attacks would be counter-productive.⁹³ Pape argued that every campaign identified was motivated by nationalist goals—namely, they wanted to rid their countries of foreign occupation.⁹⁴ Pape also observed that democracies are overwhelmingly the targets of suicide campaigns. He postulates that this might be because democracies are thought to be softer and more

⁹⁰ Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).

⁹¹ Robert A. Pape and James K. Feldman, *Cutting the Fuse: The Explosion of Global Suicide Terrorism and How to Stop It* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

⁹² Pape, 39.

⁹³ Ibid., 41.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 42.

susceptible to internal and external pressures and less likely to respond with overwhelming force.⁹⁵

All three of the patterns identified by Pape are present in the case of Lebanon and Hezbollah. Hezbollah used suicide bombing until it was determined that its objective (the removal of Israeli forces from the South) was close at hand, its goals were nationalist and involved ridding Lebanon of foreign occupation, both the MNF and the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF), and all three targets of the attacks associated with Hezbollah (Israel, France, and the United States) are democracies. Pape and Feldman argue that military occupation is the driving force behind the Lebanese suicide bombing campaign:

The principal cause of suicide terrorism in Lebanon is foreign military occupation. In June 1982, Hezbollah did not exist. On June 6, 1982, Israel invaded southern Lebanon with 78000 combat soldiers and 3000 tanks and armored vehicles and one month later, Hezbollah was born.⁹⁶

While speculation about when exactly Hezbollah was founded may be ill-advised, the point is still well-taken that the Israeli invasion was the spark that lit the resistance.

However, it would be a mistake to believe that all of the suicide attacks committed during the occupation were the fault of Hezbollah and other Islamist groups. In fact, of the 41 suicide attacks during the occupation, 30 were committed by non-Islamist groups: 27 by Marxists, three by Christians, three were of unknown origin, and only eight of the 41 attacks were carried out by Muslims.⁹⁷ Perhaps the greatest lesson learned by others from Hezbollah's use of suicide bombing is that it works. The suicide attacks on French and American military installations compelled both nations to

⁹⁵ Ibid., 44.

⁹⁶ Pape and Feldman, 196.

⁹⁷ Pape, 129-30.

withdraw their military forces from Lebanon, and the Israeli occupation ended in 2000 in part because of the coercive value of suicide attacks.⁹⁸ The other notable aspect of the suicide bombing campaign in Lebanon is the target selection. While Hezbollah is considered a terrorist organization by many, including the United States government, none of the suicide attacks perpetrated by it and other organizations in Lebanon targeted civilians. As seen in Figure 1, all of the attacks in Lebanon were directed toward security or political targets, and the overwhelming majority of those attacks were directed at military and security outposts.

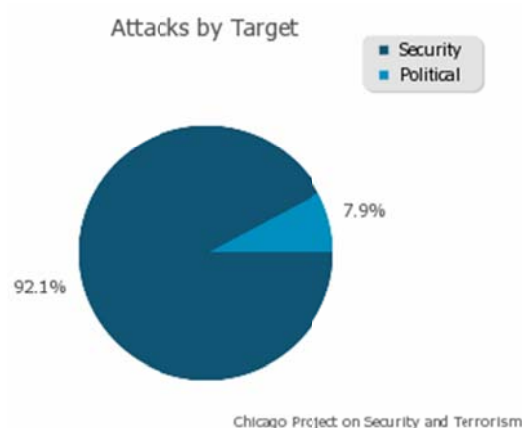


Figure 1. Suicide Attacks by Target in Lebanon⁹⁹

Though Hezbollah had obvious political and strategic reasons for resorting to suicide attacks, it justified those attacks using religious imagery which appealed strongly to the Shi'a tradition. Hezbollah used Hussein's fight against Yazid and his army and the

⁹⁸ Ibid., 22.

⁹⁹ Chicago Project on Security and Terrorism, "Search Results," http://cpost.uchicago.edu/search_results.php (accessed 15 March 2011). The search parameters were all attacks in Lebanon, broken down by target type. The U.S. Code defines terrorism as "premeditated politically motivated violence perpetrated against *non-combatant targets* by sub-national or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience." See "Terrorism FAQs," Central Intelligence Agency, 12 April 2002, <http://www.cia.gov/terrorism/faqs.html> (accessed 10 November 2003).

oppression faced by early proto-Shi'ites as a parallel narrative to their own struggle against Israeli occupation. Hussein's martyrdom became the archetype for all other acts of martyrdom. In this understanding of Shi'a tradition, any self-sacrificing act, including suicide bombing, in a struggle against oppression and injustice constitutes an act of martyrdom.¹⁰⁰ Naim Qassem contrasts martyrs with those who are suicidal:

Martyrdom is a voluntary act undertaken by a person who has all the reasons to live, love life, and cling to it, and also possesses the means for living. It is thus an act of one who does not suffer from any reasons compelling him to commit suicide....Martyrdom is therefore different from suicide, which is an expression of despair, hopelessness, frustration, and defeat, all of which lead to a loss of meaning in existence and push a desperate man towards ending his life.¹⁰¹

Though martyrdom, an expression of sacrifice for the benefit of one's community, is an integral part of the Shi'a narrative, Hezbollah did not depend on suicide attacks alone. It has committed itself to creating a world-class guerrilla force capable of waging a conventional, if irregular war against the Israeli occupying force.

In 1993, following an Israeli bombardment of southern Lebanon, Hezbollah and the IDF came to a verbal agreement known as the "Understanding." According to the "Understanding," military targets within the Security Zone in southern Lebanon were acceptable targets for Hezbollah to hit. However, if one side were to attack civilians, the other could respond in kind.¹⁰² Hassan Nasrallah defended the "Understanding" as a way to ensure the Lebanese right to self-defense in an interview conducted shortly after the hostilities in the South ceased in 1993:

[W]e have been announcing for the past two years that our purpose is not to bombard the settlements, but to carry out operations inside the occupied

¹⁰⁰ Saad-Ghorayeb, 125 ff.

¹⁰¹ Qassem, 47.

¹⁰² Norton, *Hezbollah*, 83-4; Harik, 115.

[Lebanese] territory. But when our people, towns, cities, and villages are being bombarded, then it is our right to use all weapons available to us to stop the aggression. This is our policy, and we have never started firing Katyusha missiles at the settlements. Even Rabin himself always used to say that Hezbollah doesn't start bombarding settlements, but it only does so in response to [Israel's] military actions.¹⁰³

Indeed, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and several high ranking officials in the Israeli military establishment have conceded that Hezbollah has always operated by the "rules of the game."¹⁰⁴ Furthermore, Israel and Hezbollah have both publicly stated that the "Understanding" is a reason for restraint in their dealing with each other militarily, and Israel has limited its retaliation to Hezbollah attacks on outposts in the South acknowledging that such attacks were permitted based on the "Understanding."¹⁰⁵

While Hezbollah did not breach the terms of the "Understanding" during the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon, the IDF made several excursions into Lebanese territory which explicitly targeted civilians and increased Hezbollah's popularity. One of the most notorious of these attacks was Operation Grapes of Wrath in 1996. Israel began bombardment of civilians in the South after Hezbollah had ambushed Israeli soldiers at a border crossing.¹⁰⁶ Israeli officials had hoped that the attack would undermine support for Hezbollah among the Lebanese in the South, but it had the opposite effect, due in large part to the Qana massacre.¹⁰⁷ Hundreds of Lebanese sought refuge at a UN compound in Qana, in the South, but they were not immune to Israeli airstrikes which hit

¹⁰³ Nasrallah, 104-5.

¹⁰⁴ Harik, 167.

¹⁰⁵ Norton, *Hezbollah*, 86.

¹⁰⁶ Jaber, 171.

¹⁰⁷ Norton, *Hezbollah*, 84.

the compound, killing 109 civilians.¹⁰⁸ Rather than undermine support for Hezbollah, the Qana massacre became an event around which Hezbollah could rally support, not only from Shi'ites, but from all corners of Lebanese society. The continuing failure of Israel to diminish Hezbollah's popularity, along with mounting domestic pressures, created a situation which led Israel start planning a unilateral withdrawal from South Lebanon.

It became obvious in early 2000 that Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon was imminent, and while this was a victory for Hezbollah, the organization was not prepared to make peace. In an interview with the Egyptian newspaper *Al-Ahram* in February 2000, Hassan Nasrallah argued that Israel was "an illegitimate, aberrant, and cancerous entity, which we therefore cannot recognize." He also told the paper that Lebanon's demands included a return of all Israeli-occupied Lebanese territory, repatriation of Palestinian refugees into Palestine, and compensation for damages and losses sustained during the occupation.¹⁰⁹ Among the occupied territories Hezbollah considered Lebanese is Shebaa Farms, a small strip of land which lies along an ill-defined border between southeast Lebanon and Syria. Hezbollah claims that Shebaa Farms is Lebanese territory and should thus be returned to Lebanon. However, it is classified as Syrian territory, taken during the 1967 War and not party to the U.N. resolutions requiring Israel return all *Lebanese* territory to Lebanese sovereignty. Continued Israeli occupation of Shebaa Farms has become Hezbollah's new *raison d'être* for its continued fight with Israel.¹¹⁰

While Hezbollah's relationship with Israel remained volatile, and despite its victory against the IDF, the organization did not wish to have continued animosity with

¹⁰⁸ Jaber, 169.

¹⁰⁹ Nasrallah, 221.

¹¹⁰ Harik, 139-40; Azani, 225.

its Christian brothers in the South. In the months leading up to the Israeli withdrawal, Hezbollah mounted a public relations campaign to reassure Christians in the South that those who had not been collaborators with the South Lebanon Army (SLA) would not be targeted for retribution and emphasized again the shared beliefs between Muslims and Christians.¹¹¹ Nasrallah stated in his interview with *Al-Ahram*, “The Islamic Resistance does not only fight to defend Muslims, or Muslim areas, but rather all of Lebanon: its villages and citizens, be they Muslims or Christians.”¹¹²

Peaceful coexistence between Christians and Muslims in the South was one of Hezbollah’s primary goals after the Israeli withdrawal. The group also hoped to reconcile with other confessional communities in Lebanon, increase cooperation between Hezbollah and the state, assist the state with reconstruction efforts in the South, and punish SLA members using the judicial system rather than vigilantism. Despite their plans for improving relations with other groups in Lebanon, Hezbollah did not have a similar interest in reconciliation with Israel, rejecting all peacemaking efforts as long as Israel held Lebanese political prisoners and occupied Shebaa Farms.¹¹³

One of the difficulties presented by a group such as Hezbollah or Hamas is finding a way to divorce their foreign and domestic policies. Domestically, Hezbollah has shown on a number of occasions that it is capable, perhaps even willing, to work with other groups with whom it differs ideologically. It has even found a way to function in the confessional system it so disdains. It would be difficult to suggest that the Hezbollah of the last decade is anti-system domestically. However, while it has not actively sought

¹¹¹ Harik, 136. The SLA often served as Israel’s proxy in the South

¹¹² Nasrallah, 223.

¹¹³ Wright, *Dreams and Shadows*, 184-5.

to undermine the Lebanese government, Hezbollah's stance toward Israel has been decidedly anti-system with constant attempts not only to dislodge Israel from within Lebanon's borders but also to undermine Israeli security.

Hezbollah's military success in forcing the Israeli withdrawal translated into political success. In the parliamentary elections of 2000, held several months after Israel's withdrawal, the joint Hezbollah-Amal list won by landslide margins in the South and the Beqaa Valley, and in Beirut, the only winner of a seat in parliament not from Rafiq Hariri's list was from Hezbollah. Hezbollah and its allies were again the largest bloc in parliament.¹¹⁴ The organization's success continued four years later, as Hezbollah was a "steamroller" in the Beqaa and the *dahiya* where it again won most of the seats it contested. Furthermore, Hezbollah was able to claim more seats than Amal in the 2004 municipal elections by a two-to-one margin.¹¹⁵ Hezbollah's electoral success brought it more visibility and with that, more scrutiny as well. While the group had a reputation for competent governance and the provision of social services, its ties to both Syria and Iran were well-known, and as tensions between certain factions of the Lebanese government and Syria escalated, Hezbollah found itself, for the first time, on the wrong side of public opinion in Lebanon.

The March 14th Movement and the 2006 War

The drive toward ending Syria's influence on Lebanese politics was led by Rafiq Hariri, an independently wealthy contractor who made his fortune in the construction business in Saudi Arabia, before returning to his homeland and spending millions of his

¹¹⁴ Harik, 149 ff.

¹¹⁵ Norton, *Hezbollah*, 106-7.

own money to fund the reconstruction of Beirut in the aftermath of the civil war.¹¹⁶

Hariri became prime minister in 1992 thanks to a deal with Syria, but his relationship with Damascus was rocky at best. He resigned his post in 1998 when Emile Lahoud, a staunch Syrian ally became president.¹¹⁷ Hariri returned to the post in 2000 after the Israeli withdrawal, hoping that would mitigate Syria's meddling in Lebanese affairs, but he constantly found himself at odds with Lahoud.

Among the prime minister's constitutionally appointed duties is chairing cabinet meetings, but Lahoud would often take over those meetings, vetoing any suggestions made by Hariri or his allies out of hand.¹¹⁸ Hariri made a permanent break with Syria in 2004 when Bashar al-Assad demanded that Lahoud's term as president be extended three years beyond the constitutionally mandated six years. Hariri resigned as prime minister six weeks after Parliament voted to extend Lahoud's term, then announced his plans to form a new party committed to eradicating Syrian influence from Lebanese politics. Hariri's open opposition to Syria ultimately led to his demise via car bomb on February 14, 2005. 1000 pounds of explosives were detonated on a busy Beirut street as his motorcade passed, killing him and several members of his entourage.¹¹⁹ The subsequent investigation into Hariri's death has become one of the major points of contention between Hezbollah and the Lebanese government.

Demands that Hariri's assassins be brought to justice became a rallying cry for the March 14th Movement, so named because of the day it took to the streets in 2005

¹¹⁶ Wright, *Dreams and Shadows*, 330.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 144 ff.

¹¹⁸ Norton, *Hezbollah*, 125.

¹¹⁹ Wright, *Dreams and Shadows*, 146 ff.

protesting Syrian interference in Lebanese affairs. Led by Rafiq Hariri's son, Saad, the March 14th Movement demanded that Syrian troops withdraw from Lebanon, top officials in the Lebanese security services with close ties to Syria be terminated from their positions, and that the United Nations lead an investigation into Hariri's death.¹²⁰ These protests eventually compelled Syria to withdraw its troops from Lebanon in April.¹²¹

Hariri's party, the Future Movement, and its anti-Syrian allies won 72 seats in parliament in the May 2005 elections, with the Hezbollah-Amal coalition securing 35 seats.¹²² For the first time in its 13 years of electoral participation, Hezbollah accepted the invitation to join the coalition government put together by Saad Hariri; a senior Hezbollah official became the minister of energy. Hezbollah likely decided to join the government to prevent attempts to disarm its militia and to block the investigation into Hariri's assassination. Despite their cooperation in the new government of Lebanon, the March 14th bloc was deeply distrustful of Hezbollah, accusing the organization of trying to pick a fight with Israel over Shebaa Farms and putting Lebanese civilians at risk, not to further the interests of Lebanon but of Syria.¹²³

The distrust between the March 14th bloc and Hezbollah was a clear signal of the conflict caused by Hezbollah's dual focus as both a Lebanese and Shi'ite resistance movement. In the aftermath of Israel's withdrawal in 2000, the "resistance to oppression" narrative advanced by Hezbollah's religious orientation had created a situation in which Hezbollah was searching for a new reason for the resistance, in this

¹²⁰ Ibid., 153.

¹²¹ Azani, 229.

¹²² Ibid., 230.

¹²³ Ibid., 230-1; Wright, *Dreams and Shadows*, 188.

case the occupation of Shebaa Farms, while the Lebanese government and a growing percentage of the Lebanese population were content with regaining sovereignty in the South and wanted a cessation of violence.¹²⁴

In the weeks leading up to the 2005 elections, Hezbollah was obviously feeling the pressure of other factions in Lebanon who wanted it to disarm. In a rally days before the election, Hassan Nasrallah said, “There will be no fear for the future of Lebanon from domestic issues if we are all ready and willing to make concession and settle our internal disagreements.” He then ominously added that “the real danger lies in targeting the resistance.”¹²⁵ Robin Wright points out the tension between Hezbollah’s domestic and foreign policy goals:

Hezbollah had become fully integrated. It had a fully developed political wing, and it had taken a place in Lebanon’s fragile democracy. The evolution, however, was far from complete. Its policies were tortuously two-faced. Hezbollah was both part of the state and outside of it. It retained its own private army, and it crafted its own defiant foreign policy.¹²⁶

In the summer of 2006, it would be the defiant foreign policy of Hezbollah which would again throw the region into chaos.

The 2006 war began with what had become a regular occurrence along the Israeli-Lebanese border: a group of Hezbollah guerillas attacked an Israeli border patrol on July 12, 2006, killing three soldiers and kidnapping two more in the hopes of using them for a prisoner exchange.¹²⁷ Instead of a prisoner exchange, Hezbollah and all of southern Lebanon was subjected 34 days of heavy bombardment by the IDF. Israel established a

¹²⁴ Harik, 114.

¹²⁵ Nasrallah, 347.

¹²⁶ Wright, *Dreams and Shadows*, 190.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

“killing box” in the South, designed to force civilians from the area and turn popular opinion against Hezbollah.¹²⁸ Israel’s heavy-handed response to Hezbollah’s actions did not have the desired effect. Whatever differences Hezbollah’s domestic opponents had with the group, all of Lebanon was united against Israeli aggression. The costs of the Israeli military incursion on the Lebanese people were great. Israel’s air strikes and artillery attacks destroyed 15,000 homes. One million people were internally displaced, and 1,200 died as a result of the fighting.¹²⁹

While Israel was able to cause a great deal of damage to Lebanon’s infrastructure, it was unable to find Hezbollah, much less defeat it. Hezbollah’s guerillas were trained in all aspects of asymmetric warfare. Using stolen American and Israeli training manuals, they paid particular attention to America’s misadventures in Vietnam and the success of the Viet Cong. As Robin Wright observed, “To the surprise even of the Lebanese, it had become the most effective guerilla force in the world.”¹³⁰ Hezbollah sustained severe losses in the fighting which echoed the experience of its fellow citizens; however it emerged as a clear winner in the war, and its success raised questions about the military invincibility of the IDF. In many ways, Hezbollah emerged stronger from the fighting than it had been before the war.¹³¹

Despite the fact that Hezbollah was the victor in the war, its leadership acknowledged openly that they had miscalculated how severely Israel would respond. Nasrallah said as much in an interview with Lebanese TV after the war:

¹²⁸ Norton, *Hezbollah*, 137-8.

¹²⁹ Wright, *Dreams and Shadows*, 200 ff.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 199-200.

¹³¹ Hirst, 343.

You ask me now: If there was even a 1 percent chance that the...operation would have led to a war like the one that happened, would you have done it? I would say no, absolutely not, for humanitarian, moral, social, security, military, and political reasons.¹³²

Hezbollah's acknowledgement of the seriousness of repercussions of its war with Israel extended to its role in the reconstruction effort. The organization offered a year's rent and money for furniture to those whose houses had been damaged or destroyed in the fighting, thanks to \$150 million provided to it by Iran for that purpose. It also organized the reconstruction of the *dahiya*, which had sustained heavy damage, dividing it up into 86 districts and assigning four-man teams to each district to plan the reconstruction.¹³³

The war was not without consequence for Hezbollah, however. It was forced to make serious concessions to the Lebanese government, including the acceptance of a plan to disarm *all* militias, allowing the Lebanese Army to man outposts along the border formerly staffed by Hezbollah guerillas, accepting UN peacekeeping troops to support the Lebanese Army, and avoiding attacks on Israeli troops.¹³⁴ Despite making such concessions in theory, little has changed in Hezbollah's practices. Its militia remains active, and it maintains an extensive security and surveillance network. It was the presence of the latter which led to a near-civil war in 2008.

In May 2008, Walid Jumblatt, a Lebanese politician from the most prominent Druze family in the country, demanded that Hezbollah disband its secret telecommunications network as well as its surveillance system throughout the country.¹³⁵ These demands came near the end of 18 months of protests by the anti-Syrian March 14th

¹³² Nasrallah, 394.

¹³³ Wright, *Dreams and Shadows*, 205.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 204.

¹³⁵ Cambanis, 246.

Movement which saw Hezbollah's actions as proof of its allegiance not to the nation of Lebanon, but to its Syrian benefactors.¹³⁶ Hezbollah laid siege to Muslim West Beirut for four days, and the fighting resulted in 37 deaths and many more wounded.¹³⁷ In the end, the Lebanese government relented, allowing Hezbollah's hand-picked security chief at the Beirut International Airport to remain at his post and assuring the group that its communications network would be dealt with in a way that did not adversely affect the resistance.¹³⁸ While internal fighting is something to which Lebanon is no stranger, this conflict was unique in that it marked the first time that Hezbollah had acted out against its fellow Lebanese, a disturbing turn of events which was indicative of the struggle within Hezbollah itself.¹³⁹

With the threat of indictments being handed down by the special UN tribunal convened to investigate Rafiq Hariri's death, Hezbollah, which had been operating as a part of the coalition government headed by Prime Minister Saad Hariri, abruptly pulled its cabinet ministers out of the coalition in early 2011, causing the government to collapse.¹⁴⁰ The tribunal is expected to implicate Hezbollah officials as well as Syria in

¹³⁶ Krista E. Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots: Governance by Islamist Terrorist and Guerilla Groups* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 92.

¹³⁷ Laila Bassam, "Lebanese Troops Patrol after Hezbollah Pullout," Reuters.com, 11 May 2008, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2008/05/11/us-lebanon-army-idUSL114406220080511> (accessed 19 March 2011).

¹³⁸ Khaled Yacoub Oweis, "Lebanese Army Overturns Measures against Hezbollah," Reuters.com, 10 May 2008, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2008/05/10/idUSL10245906> (accessed 19 March 2011).

¹³⁹ Cambanis, 247-8.

¹⁴⁰ Anthony D. Shadid, "For Hezbollah, Claiming Victory Could Be Costly," *New York Times*, 13 January 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/14/world/middleeast/14lebanon.html> (accessed 19 March 2011).

the elder Hariri's death, though it may be months until the indictment is unsealed.¹⁴¹ This crisis has brought Lebanon to a place where it must confront issues with which it has never fully dealt since the end of the civil war in 1990, including "the power of Lebanon's largest religious communities, its posture toward Israel, the fate of Hezbollah's arms and the power of foreign patrons."¹⁴²

The way Lebanon deals with the four issues Anthony Shadid mentions will affect Hezbollah's trajectory from this point forward. Though it toppled Saad Hariri's coalition government, Hezbollah remains, in some ways, more committed to democratic principles than many of its opponents in Lebanon:

Not a single, powerful political party in Lebanon, with the exception of Hezbollah, argued for a wholesale redesign of the political system because all of them knew that a more fair, just, or representative system would cast them from their perches....Lebanon's most liberal overlords...had almost no interest in civil liberties, economic liberalization, an independent judiciary, or transparency in government.¹⁴³

Hezbollah, of course, advocates the end of the confessional system because it believes it would have an advantage over other parties given the Shi'ites' demographic superiority relative to the other confessional groups. It is unknown, however, if Hezbollah would still be content to operate in the absence of the confessional system if the new government did not guarantee its continued dominance of the Lebanese political scene.¹⁴⁴

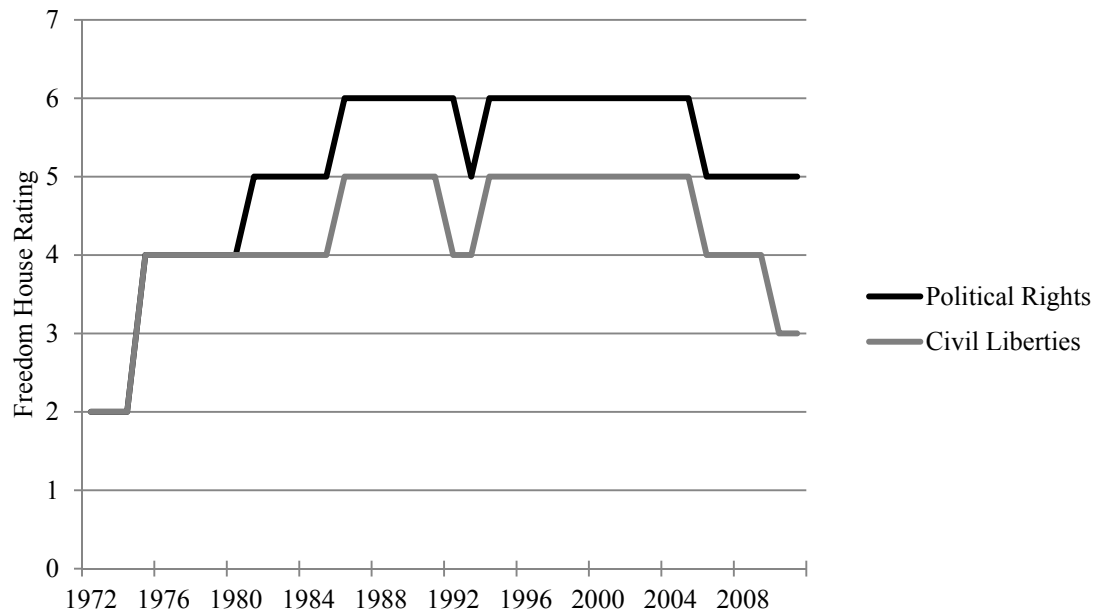
¹⁴¹ "Prosecutor Expands Scope of Hariri Killing Indictment," ArabNews.com, 12 March 2011, <http://arabnews.com/middleeast/article315097.ece> (accessed 19 March 2011).

¹⁴² Shadid, "For Hezbollah, Claiming Victory Could Be Costly."

¹⁴³ Cambanis, 261.

¹⁴⁴ Hezbollah's hand-picked candidate, Najib Mikati, was elected to replace Saad Hariri as the caretaker prime minister in Lebanon until elections can be held, effectively giving Hezbollah control over the Lebanese government. See Anthony Shadid, "Ousted Lebanese Leader Swallows Rivals' Bitter Pill," *New York Times*, 25 January 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/26/world/middleeast/26lebanon.html?_r=1&pagewanted=1 (accessed 19 March 2011).

Table 3. Political Rights and Civil Liberties in Lebanon, 1972-2011¹⁴⁵



The Freedom House (Table 3) rankings for Lebanon may provide some reason for optimism, but taken together with Lipset and Rokkan's four thresholds, a different story emerges. As seen in Table 4, moderately high thresholds to the rights for a group to voice its own platform, participate in elections, succeed independently of other parties, and provide adequate checks on the government existed in 1992—when the first parliamentary elections after the conclusion of the civil war were held, thus making Lebanon at that point an emerging parliamentary system according to Lipset and Rokkan.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁵ The information in Table 3 was taken from the comparative and historical regional data of Freedom House's Freedom in the World survey found at <http://www.freedomhouse.org/File/fiw/historical/FIWallScoreRatingsByRegion1973-2011.xls> (accessed 5 February 2011).

¹⁴⁶ Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan, "Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments: An Introduction," in *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives*, ed. Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan (New York: Free Press, 1967), 27. Much of the reason the legitimation and incorporation thresholds are defined as being moderately high in 1992 was self-imposed by the Christian population which boycotted the elections.

Table 4. Lipset and Rokkan's Four Thresholds in Lebanon

Year	Legitimation	Incorporation	Representation	Majority Power
1992	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
2000	Low	Low	Medium	High
2005	Low	Low	Medium	Medium

The circumstances in 2000, when Israel withdrew from southern Lebanon, and 2005, when Syria did likewise, nearly mirror each other, with one notable exception. Virtually all Lebanese citizens who wanted to were able to voice their grievances and participate in elections. However, given the sheer number of parties participating in elections, many found that some degree of alliance making was necessary. The main difference between 2000 and 2005 involved the amount of power wielded by the president. In 2000, Emile Lahoud, who was strongly supported by Syria, was able to circumvent many of the constitutional protections that prevented an abuse of power. In either instance, Lipset and Rokkan describe the resulting party system as one with some need for alliances, but with policies in place to prevent fragmentation.¹⁴⁷ Despite the best efforts of Lebanese politicians to attempt to limit the fragmentation of Lebanese society, lest a new civil war follow, there is still a high degree of divisiveness in Lebanon, particularly when it comes to Hezbollah's relationship with other parties and factions. Because of this, Lebanon is in a precarious situation. How Hezbollah behaves in the future will likely have a strong influence on Lebanese politics in general.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 29.

Concluding Remarks

Hezbollah has proved to be adaptable in the past. It was able to transition relatively quickly from mere militia to political party in the early 1990s, and it has adopted a much less strident religious worldview than its Iranian sponsor. However, neither of those adaptations threatened the very heart of Hezbollah's identity. The call for Hezbollah to disarm is another matter entirely. The "resistance" is so closely tied with Hezbollah's Shi'ite identity that the mere suggestion that Hezbollah consider disarming has been cause for several outbursts of violence between the organization and its opponents. This issue will be one of the most important to deal with going forward in Lebanon.

The influence of foreign patrons like Syria and Iran will continue to be a stumbling block for Hezbollah and Lebanon as a whole. While Hezbollah has advocated from the beginning a Lebanon free of subservience to other powers, it has never shied away from allowing its sponsors to use it for their own purposes. Despite the success of the March 14th Movement in evicting Syrian troops from Lebanese soil, it is evident from Hezbollah's attempts to circumvent cooperation with the UN tribunal that Syria still has influence over Lebanese affairs. Iranian influence over Hezbollah can be best seen in its stance toward Israel as the rhetoric of Hassan Nasrallah has often paralleled the rhetoric of the ayatollahs in referring to Israel as a "cancer" and calling for its "eradication."

Hezbollah is, at present, at war with itself as much as it is at war with others in Lebanon and throughout the region. Though dedicated to representing the Shi'ites of Lebanon, it cannot divorce itself from the religious imperatives that are so deeply ingrained in its character. The resistance aspect of Hezbollah have long been at odds

with its more pragmatic side, but only after Israeli withdrawal did that conflict become obvious to the rest of the world. If true moderation is to happen for Hezbollah, it must first deal with the internally contradictory aspects of its ideology. Of course, this process does not occur in a vacuum, and the turmoil around the Middle East, particularly in Syria and Iran, may factor heavily into how Hezbollah adapts in the future. Should the Assad regime fall in Syria, Hezbollah would lose one of its primary benefactors. This is perhaps why despite using its TV station al-Manar to extol the virtues of the anti-government protests in Egypt and Tunisia, Hezbollah has not expressed the same level of support for the Syrian protestors.¹⁴⁸ Questions about the longevity of the Assad regime must be factored into any prediction regarding the future moderation of Hezbollah.

Though Hezbollah has moderated, its evolution is not at all complete. Khalil al-Anani's definition of Islamist moderation is instructive in addressing the successes and shortcomings of Hezbollah in its moderation. Anani defines Islamist moderation as "the extent to which movements accept peaceful political participation, do not rely on militias, and accept the values of democracy and its various components, such as freedom, tolerance, and equality, irrespective of religion, ethnicity, or gender."¹⁴⁹ Hezbollah's most obvious shortcoming on the path of moderation is its unwillingness to abandon its militia. It has, however, accepted peaceful political participation. The level of acceptance for democratic values is somewhat more difficult to measure, but the ongoing efforts by Hezbollah to forge better relations with the Christian community of Lebanon, as well as its demands that political offices be available to the most competent

¹⁴⁸ Margaret Besheer, "Hezbollah Supportive of Egyptian, Tunisian Uprisings But Not Syria's," *Voice of America*, May 20, 2011, <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/middle-east/Hezbollah-Supportive-of-Egyptian-Tunisian-Uprisings-But-Not-Syrias-122348949.html> (accessed 23 May 2011).

¹⁴⁹ Khalil al-Anani, *Working Paper No. 4: The Myth of Excluding Moderate Islamists in the Arab World* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2010), 1.

candidates, regardless of their religious affiliation are indicators that it can work with parties which do not share its religious convictions.

Hezbollah's willingness to work with other parties and confessional groups in Lebanon is indicative of a denomination-based party. While it maintains a very specific religious point of view, the group has shown a high degree of willingness to cooperate with others. Despite its continued criticism of the confessional system, Hezbollah could not properly be called "anti-system" with regard to Lebanon itself because it does not actively seek to undermine the Lebanese system—merely some of its adversaries within the system. However, it continues to actively seek to undermine Israeli security with occasional rocket attacks into northern Israel. This is influenced further by its Iranian and Syrian benefactors. It is also a large part of the internal struggle in Hezbollah between the national and the trans-national.

The political openness of Lebanon has been more vice than virtue for much of the nation's history. While Lebanon's multi-confessional government has allowed many different points of view to be heard, it also exacerbates the tensions that have long existed among those confessional groups. As the Arab Spring progresses, particularly the protests in Syria, Hezbollah may actually suffer from the demands for reform around the region. Because of the already heightened tensions between Hezbollah and the March 14th bloc and others in the Lebanese parliament, should the Assad regime fall in Syria, new tensions could arise in Lebanon which could further challenge the ability of Hezbollah to continue down a path toward moderation.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Palestinian Hamas

“On January 25, 2006, the Palestinians became the first Arabs to peacefully and democratically reject the status quo. They took their uprising to the ballot box. It started out as quite a party.”¹ That party to which Robin Wright was referring ended quickly for the Palestinians as factions within the Palestinian Authority and outside actors began attempting to undermine the fairly elected Hamas majority. The Islamic Resistance Movement won 44 percent of the popular vote, but 74 of 132 seats in the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC). While three-fourths of Palestinians supported Fatah’s policy on a final settlement with Israel, they voted overwhelmingly for Hamas in protest of the corruption of Fatah and the Palestinian Authority (PA).²

Despite announcing plans for a unity government with all factions represented as well as pledging cooperation with PA president Mahmoud Abbas, Hamas found itself hamstrung by executive orders from Abbas which stripped the government ministries of all their power. This was nowhere more apparent than in the Interior Ministry where Fatah would not relinquish control of its web of security services. In addition to the incessant meddling in ministerial affairs by Fatah, Hamas was also left to deal with

¹ Robin Wright, *Dreams and Shadows: The Future of the Middle East* (New York: Penguin, 2008), 19. The elections were considered by international election monitors to be free and fair by international standards. See “Preliminary Statement of the NDI/Carter Center International Observer Delegation to the Palestinian Legislative Council Elections,” The Carter Center, January 26, 2006, <http://www.cartercenter.org/news/documents/doc2283.html> (accessed 2 May 2011).

² David L. Phillips, *From Bullets to Ballots: Violent Muslim Movements in Transition* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2009), 83.

economic sanctions imposed by the international community which crippled the government and created economic hardship for ordinary Palestinians.³ The effects of the campaign to undermine Hamas—both from within and without—has harmed Palestinian unity, caused millions of dollars of damage as the result of both intra-Palestinian violence and Israeli military action, and created a situation in which Hamas, despite showing signs of moderating in the months leading to the 2006 election, has done an about-face, becoming more strident in its Islamic ideals, not less.

Conventional wisdom has long said that Hamas is bent on the destruction of the state of Israel and wants to set up a strict Islamic state in Palestine. However, this view neglects the dynamic history of the movement which has undergone a number of ideological shifts often motivated by pragmatic, rather than dogmatic, concerns. Hamas has long been a player in elections in the Palestinian territories, be they municipal elections or elections for professional and student unions and has gained a reputation for integrity and responsibility. Jeroen Gunning argues provocatively: “Among the Palestinian factions, Hamas is one of the democratically oriented—certainly in comparison to Fatah.” In a statement foreshadowing the events that would follow Hamas’ victory in 2006, Gunning continues, “Hamas is the only faction capable of providing an effective opposition to Fatah. Without Hamas, the likelihood of an

³ Zaki Chehab, *Inside Hamas: The Untold Story of the Militant Islamic Movement* (New York: Nation Books, 2007), 202-3; Azzam Tamimi, *Hamas: A History from Within* (Northampton, MA: Olive Branch Press, 2007), 228 ff.

autocratic Palestinian state increases drastically, just as the eradication of Fatah would increase the likelihood that Hamas would become autocratic.”⁴

Khaled Hroub, an Arab observer of Hamas, has argued that the movement has repeatedly shown its ability and willingness to change its course as dictated by the facts on the ground. He worries,

With the ever mounting external pressures on Hamas, in the form both of ceaseless Israeli attacks on the Palestinians to embarrass the government and of United States-led Western cutting of aid to the Palestinian people and efforts to isolate the government, the chances of aborting the natural development of a “new Hamas” appear great.⁵

The “new” Hamas of which Hroub speaks had shown, prior to the 2006 elections, that it could moderate under the right circumstances. Hamas has never simply been an organization bent on the destruction of Israel. Even in its infancy, it was a dynamic movement with a deep connection to the community because of its extensive network of social services. Because of its pragmatism and the overwhelming desire of the Palestinian people to reach some sort of agreement which would give them a state of their own, if given the chance, Hamas still has the potential to become a moderating influence in Palestinian politics.

As was the case with the Muslim Brotherhood and Hezbollah, Hamas has, at times, shown the characteristics of both a religious fundamentalist and denomination-based party. It has also occasionally displayed some anti-system tendencies. Like Hezbollah, Hamas saves most of its anti-system inclinations for Israel, which it has

⁴ Jeroen Gunning, “Peace with Hamas? The Transforming Potential of Political Participation,” *International Affairs* 80, no. 2 (2004): 254.

⁵ Khaled Hroub, “A ‘New Hamas’ Through its New Documents,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 35, no. 4 (2006): 27.

explicitly called for the destruction of. Domestically, Hamas has been critical of the Fatah-led government and boycotted elections it felt would lead to the institutionalization of the principles of the Oslo Accords which it finds to be deeply flawed. However, Hamas has seldom attempted to undermine the Palestinian Authority with violence and would likely argue that since its 2006 victory has been the victim of a campaign to undermine its legitimate attempts to govern.

Hamas has shown a willingness to moderate in several ways, including peaceful participation in elections and continued assurances to other Palestinian factions after its 2006 electoral victory that it desired an open and transparent government in which many voices were heard. Hamas has even suggested that it would be willing to consider a long-term cease-fire with Israel and stop attacks on Israeli civilians in exchange for an Israeli withdrawal from the Occupied Territories. As with the Muslim Brotherhood, these signs of moderation are made all the more interesting by the existence of extensive restrictions on both political participation and civil liberties. Despite the decades long concentration of power in the hands of Yasser Arafat and his Fatah party and continuing restrictions on freedom of movement by the Israelis, Hamas exhibits many tendencies that indicate that the group is much less rigid and intransigent than its opponents often portray.

Scholarship and Hamas

The literature on Hamas addresses a number of different facets of the movement's ideology and development. All of these authors add to our understanding of Hamas, and while many of them address the issue of political participation, none have focused on the link between political participation and moderation. Authors such as Michael Irving Jansen and Andrea Nüsse have explored the Islamist orientation of Hamas. Nüsse

addresses Hamas' religious ideology from a philosophical point of view, whereas, Jansen's approach focuses more on the day-to-day manifestations of Hamas' Islamism.⁶ However, this approach does not deal specifically with the political realities of Hamas' positions.

Others have offered more comprehensive studies of Hamas. Two Israeli scholars, Shaul Mishal and Avraham Sela, attempt to cut through the caricature of Hamas as a single-mindedly radical Islamist organization to see its multifaceted character.⁷ Jeroen Gunning relies on extensive fieldwork and interviews with Hamas members to paint a picture of Hamas that contradicts the public's over-simplified opinion of the organization.⁸ Beverley Milton-Edwards and Stephen Farrell present an in-depth examination of the movement which is both critical of and sympathetic to Hamas, especially in light of its electoral victory and the aftermath.⁹

Some authors have explored the ramifications of a single event in the history of Hamas. Paul McGeough chronicles the "truth is stranger than fiction" story of the attempted Mossad assassination of Hamas Political Bureau chief Khalid Mishal and how Israel's failure to neutralize Mishal strengthened both his resolve and the movement

⁶ Michael Irving Jansen, *The Political Ideology of Hamas: A Grassroots Perspective*, trans. Sally Laird (London: I.B. Tauris, 2009); Andrea Nüsse, *Muslim Palestine: The Ideology of Hamas* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1998).

⁷ Shaul Mishal and Avraham Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas: Vision, Violence, and Coexistence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).

⁸ Jeroen Gunning, *Hamas in Politics: Democracy, Religion, Violence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008).

⁹ Beverley Milton-Edwards and Stephen Farrell, *Hamas: The Islamic Resistance Movement* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010).

itself.¹⁰ Jonathan Schanzer likewise examines the civil war between Hamas and Fatah that followed the 2006 election.¹¹ However, while many of the accounts of Hamas are remarkably balanced, the same cannot be said of Schanzer's work. He argues, "The driving force behind Hamas...is radical Islam." He also states that

even if only 10 percent [of the world's Muslim population] embrace Islamism, some 150 million people seek a world dominated by a radical interpretation of the faith and harbor a deep hatred of the principles upon which the West was built, including capitalism, egalitarianism, individualism, and democracy.¹²

This view of Islamism is very similar to that of Daniel Pipes which should not be surprising given that Pipes is both Schanzer's former boss at Middle East Forum and the author of the forward to his book. This point of view is detrimental to appreciating the richness of the history of Hamas which defies the stereotypical approach to Islamism exemplified by Schanzer and Pipes.

Unlike the Muslim Brotherhood and Hezbollah, there is a dearth of quality primary sources from Hamas leadership. Aside from interviews with Hamas leadership and the Hamas Charter, there are no first-hand accounts of the beliefs, statements, or ideology of Hamas.¹³ However, several Arab journalists and scholars have been able to use their relationships with Hamas to write insider accounts of the movement which move beyond conventional wisdom and to a deeper appreciation of the nuance within the

¹⁰ Paul McGeough, *Kill Khalid: The Failed Mossad Assassination of Khalid Mishal and the Rise of Hamas* (New York: New Press, 2009).

¹¹ Jonathan Schanzer, *Hamas vs. Fatah: The Struggle for Palestine* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

¹² *Ibid.*, 5.

¹³ One of the more comprehensive interviews with Hamas leadership is "Interviews from Gaza: What Hamas Wants," *Middle East Policy* 9, no. 4 (2002): 102-115. The "official" translation of the Hamas Charter was published in 1993: "Charter of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) of Palestine," trans. Muhammad Maqdisi, *Journal of Palestine Studies* 22, no. 4 (1993): 112-134.

movement.¹⁴ Despite their obvious sympathy for plight of the Palestinian people, these authors are clear-eyed in pointing out the weaknesses as well as the strengths of Hamas.¹⁵ Khaled Hroub has written two books which use his knowledge of the Occupied Territories and his access to Arabic language primary sources to present a comprehensive historical account of the development of the institutions of Hamas as well as its changing opinions on peace and relationships with Israel.¹⁶ What is most striking about the literature on Hamas is that, with the exception of Schanzer, these authors present a balanced, nuanced account of the movement which is often lacking in the political and media discourse.

Despite the quality of scholarship on Hamas, very little has been written about Hamas and moderation theory. Scholars who have dedicated their research to moderation theory tend to discount Hamas as a group capable of moderation because of the existence of a well-developed armed wing which plans and carries out suicide attacks and other acts of violence.¹⁷ However, the evolution of Hamas has shown that it is moving in the direction of moderation, defined by Khalil al-Anani in the context of Islamist groups as “the extent to which movements accept peaceful political participation, do not rely on militias, and accept the values of democracy and its various components,

¹⁴ Included in these accounts are both Tamimi and Chehab.

¹⁵ Chehab was raised in a Palestinian refugee camp in southern Lebanon. See Chehab, ix.

¹⁶ Khaled Hroub, *Hamas: Political Thought and Practice* (Washington, D.C.: Institute of Palestine Studies, 2000) and *Hamas: A Beginner's Guide*, 2nd ed. (London: Pluto Press, 2010).

¹⁷ Güneş Murat Tezcür, “The Moderation Theory Revisited: The Case of Islamist Political Actors,” *Party Politics* 16, no. 1 (2009): 74-5.

such as freedom, tolerance, and equality, irrespective of religion, ethnicity, or gender.”¹⁸

This evolution is not yet complete, and in fact, may have been turned back in recent years due to the reaction against its electoral victory in 2006. However, the development and growth of Hamas suggests that given a chance to participate—unfettered—in elections, the organization might be willing to rely less on its militia and become more of a mainstream political party.

The Palestinian Problem and the Birth of Hamas

The Jewish state had its genesis in the desire of European Jews to find shelter from the storm of anti-Semitism which enveloped Europe in the late-19th century. In 1896, Theodor Herzl, a thoroughly assimilated Jew from Austria, wrote *Der Judenstaat* which advocated the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine designed to absorb European Jewry and put an end to the persecution to which Jews had been subjected.¹⁹ Though other sites had been discussed, Palestine was the most desirable place for a new Jewish state because of the religious and historical affinity of the Jews for the land. However, this decision was not without its drawbacks. The founding myth of Zionism is that Palestine was a “land without people for a people without land.” In reality, when the first wave of Jewish immigration to Palestine began in the 1880s, the Arab population of Palestine was 600,000.²⁰ By 1947, the Arab population was nearly 1.3 million, compared

¹⁸ Khalil al-Anani, *Working Paper No. 4: The Myth of Excluding Moderate Islamists in the Arab World* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2010), 1.

¹⁹ Charles D. Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 4th ed. (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2008), 38-9; Avi Shlaim, *The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World* (New York: Norton, 2001), 2.

²⁰ Naim Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1989), 26.

to 600,000 Jews.²¹ Despite the tangible evidence before Zionists that the founding myth of Israel was false, they have never been able to escape the most enduring legacy of Zionism: it has never been able to reconcile the national aspirations of the Jews with the competing national aspirations of the Palestinians who also desire a state of their own.²²

Palestinians refer to 1948 as the *Nakba*, or “catastrophe,” because of the dispossession they experienced at the hands of the Jews upon Israel’s independence.²³ The Arab armies went to war with the fledgling Jewish state, and Jordan was able to occupy the West Bank, including East Jerusalem while Egypt occupied the Gaza Strip.²⁴ This status quo continued until 1967 when Israel staged a pre-emptive strike on the Egyptian, Jordanian, and Syrian armies, capturing the West Bank (including East Jerusalem and the Old City) from Jordan, the Golan Heights from Syria, and the Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula from Egypt. When Israel captured the Old City on June 7, 1967, Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Dayan visited the Western Wall and offered a prayer: “Let peace reign in Israel. We have come back to our holiest of holy places, never to be parted from it again.”²⁵ Israel’s overwhelming victory over the Arab armies and its occupation of formerly Arab territory marked a new chapter in the relationship between the Israelis and Palestinians, one characterized by heightened religious awareness on both sides as well as an increasing sense of frustration and impotence

²¹ Smith, 190-1.

²² Shlaim, 5; Dilip Hiro, *Sharing the Promised Land: A Tale of Israelis and Palestinians* (New York: Olive Branch Press, 1999), 294.

²³ Ilan Pappé, *A History of Modern Palestine*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 140.

²⁴ Smith, 201 ff.

²⁵ Hiro, 6.

among the Palestinians who were now subjected to an occupation that was becoming more restrictive.

The Palestinian situation has long been a *cause célèbre* among Islamists, and the Muslim Brotherhood has a history of activism on the part of the Palestinians. The first branch of the Muslim Brotherhood in Palestine was established in 1943 in Jerusalem. Its membership was comprised mostly of urbanized Palestinians who wanted more religious influence in Palestinian politics.²⁶ The Palestinian Brotherhood was forced to split in 1948 after the first Arab-Israeli war. The Gaza chapters were under the auspices of the Egyptian Brotherhood, and the West Bank chapters were absorbed into the Jordanian Brotherhood.²⁷ The differing attitudes of the Egyptian and Jordanian regimes toward the Muslim Brotherhood affected the development of the Brotherhood in the territories. The Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood was focused on preaching, social activism, and education with no military activity. The Brotherhood in the West Bank was able to compete in Jordanian parliamentary elections during the 1950s and 1960s and won seats in Hebron and Nablus. Because of the toleration shown to the Brotherhood by King Hussein, there was relatively little friction between the organization and the monarchy and the Brotherhood was able to operate openly though it was under the strict scrutiny of the *Mukhabarat*.²⁸

The situation was much different in the Gaza Strip. Because of the close ideological and geographical ties with the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, the Gazan

²⁶ Hroub, *Hamas*, 14; Krista E. Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots: Governance by Islamist Terrorist and Guerilla Groups* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 125.

²⁷ Wiegand, 125-6.

²⁸ Hroub, *Hamas*, 20 ff; Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 37. *Mukhabarat* is the generic term for state intelligence services in Arab countries.

Brotherhood was more committed to revolution and national independence and had both an active political presence as well as a militia.²⁹ However, because the Gaza Strip was under Egyptian rule, the Brotherhood there was subject to the same crackdown in the 1950s as the Egyptian branch of the Brotherhood was, forcing the movement underground.³⁰ The differing circumstances in the West Bank and Gaza Strip gave rise to two different interpretations of Islamism. In Gaza, it took on a decidedly revolutionary feel, reacting against Egyptian repression, but in the West Bank, because of the cordial relationship the Brotherhood enjoyed with the Jordanians, Islamism was more traditional and concerned with Islamizing society from below.³¹

The defeat of secular Arab nationalism in the 1967 war allowed the Gazan Brotherhood, long driven underground by Nasser to reassert itself: “For the Muslim Brotherhood, the war was a landmark in the ideological competition between the Islamic position and the Nasirist Arab nationalist position because the latter had been soundly defeated.”³² The failure of Arab nationalism did not necessarily mean that Palestinian youths were turning toward Islam in the aftermath of the 1967 War. In fact, many of them were pushed further to the left and became members of Marxist groups.³³ However,

²⁹ Hroub, *Hamas*, 23.

³⁰ Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 34-5.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 37.

³² Hroub, *Hamas*, 29.

³³ Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 38. Among these groups were the People’s Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP). While Yasser Arafat’s Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) could not correctly be categorized as “Marxist,” it was also founded around this time (1964).

given that Gaza was no longer under Egyptian control, the Muslim Brotherhood was able to operate freely once again.

From 1967-1977, Israel had a policy of nonintervention in the Occupied Territories and allowed Palestinian activism as long as it was confined to non-political action.³⁴ In 1973, senior members of the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood established the Islamic Center in Gaza which provided social services, medical care, and educational opportunities to refugees living there. Israel allowed the Islamic Center to operate freely because it served as a useful foil to the PLO, and the social services provided by the Islamic Center proved useful in engendering the goodwill of the residents of Gaza.³⁵ The Islamic Center was the brainchild of Ahmed Yassin, a Palestinian sheikh who was paralyzed in his teens in an automobile accident. Yassin was born in Ashkelon in what is now Israel, but his family was forced to flee in 1948. He lived the rest of his life in a refugee camp in Gaza.³⁶ While Yassin was called “Sheikh” by many of his supporters, the title was largely honorific. His religious credentials were subpar, but this was not uncommon for Palestinian Islamists who, like their compatriots in the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, were generally lay-led.³⁷

Yassin and his supporters were greatly influenced by the teachings of Sayyid Qutb and believed that before the Palestinians could achieve any of their nationalist goals, they first had to return to Islam. This ideology led to open confrontation with the secular nationalists in Gaza, including the PLO, which Israel turned a blind eye to

³⁴ Tamimi, 37-8.

³⁵ Wiegand, 126; Tamimi, 36; Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 47.

³⁶ Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 6.

³⁷ Ibid., 48.

because these intra-Palestinian conflicts kept the nationalists busy and therefore unable to harass Israel.³⁸ In 1978, the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood established the Islamic University in Gaza (IUG)—the first university in the Gaza Strip. Staffed mostly by Muslim Brothers and their associates, IUG was also endorsed by the PLO.³⁹ Despite the approval of the PLO, all was not well between secularists at IUG and members of the Islamic Center. Some of the less religious professors at the university were harassed and forced to resign, while others were beaten or subjected to acid attacks by Islamists.⁴⁰

The relationship between secular and religious Palestinians was not the only deteriorating relationship in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The relationship between Palestinians living in the Occupied Territories and their Israeli occupiers was also souring. In the years immediately following the 1967 War, the situation in the Gaza Strip improved dramatically. No longer under Egyptian control, Gazans were able to move freely between the Strip and Israel to find work and the economy of Gaza flourished.⁴¹ However, the old Zionist attitudes regarding the Palestinians persisted, and Palestinian laborers in Israel became increasingly frustrated by the second-class treatment to which they were subjected.⁴²

The situation grew worse upon the signing of the Camp David Accords in 1978. The peace settlement between Israel and Egypt normalized relations between those two countries, but did not address any other issues, such as final resolution of the Palestinian

³⁸ Ibid., 41.

³⁹ Tamimi, 39.

⁴⁰ Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 46.

⁴¹ Tamimi, 11.

⁴² Ibid., 12.

problem.⁴³ Instead, the Likud government of Israel, led by Menachem Begin, authorized the first settlements to be built in the Gaza Strip, and because Israel had ceded the Sinai to Egypt, it redeployed many of its military forces to Gaza.⁴⁴ The Palestinians began feeling the pressures of the occupation more than ever before. In 1980, Fathi Shikaki formed the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, a splinter group of the Brotherhood. Islamic Jihad was born of frustration at what was perceived to be the inaction of the Brotherhood in the face of increasing Israeli repression. While Islamic Jihad maintained some of the charitable institutions of the Brotherhood, it was an organization primarily focused on the liberation of Palestine through armed struggle. The emergence of Islamic Jihad forced the Brotherhood to re-examine its mission, and it too began organizing armed brigades to aid in the resistance.⁴⁵

Aside from the creation of more violent opposition groups such as Islamic Jihad, other factors also contributed to the increased aggressiveness of the Brotherhood toward Israel. The conditions in Gaza were deteriorating rapidly. Settlements were being built with increasing speed. This meant that land was being expropriated from Palestinians who were being forced into refugee camps where “temporary” living arrangements were becoming more permanent. Gaza’s population density by the mid-1980s was among the highest in the world, and the youth population was bulging. However, curfews that extended for days and tighter restrictions on movement at Israeli checkpoints made

⁴³ Smith, 362.

⁴⁴ Tamimi, 13.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 43-4; Hroub, *Hamas*, 32-3.

finding and keeping work difficult.⁴⁶ Israel assumed it was in control of the territories, but the Palestinian population was growing more restive as its already limited political and economic power continued to decline.⁴⁷ All that was missing was one catalyzing event to ignite the anger that had been boiling just under the surface.

On December 6, 1987, a Jewish settler was stabbed by a member of Islamic Jihad in Gaza City. In what was seen by many Palestinians as retaliation, an Israeli truck swerved at a checkpoint two days later, crashing into a car full of Palestinian laborers attempting to get home after work. Four men were killed and seven more were injured. Protests and demonstrations began immediately, with young Palestinians throwing rocks, sticks, and Molotov cocktails at Israeli tanks. The car crash and resulting protests are regarded as the official start of the first Intifada.⁴⁸ The Muslim Brotherhood had been anticipating something like the Intifada since the early 1980s and immediately mobilized its resources in support of the protests. It coordinated general strikes and also provided aid to those who participated.⁴⁹ However, because of the official prohibition on violence within the organization, those affiliated with the Brotherhood broke away from the group to form the Islamic Resistance Movement (*al-harakat al-muqawama al-islamiyya*). The abbreviation of the movement's Arabic name is "Hamas," which also means "zeal" in Arabic.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Wiegand, 126; Nüsse, 17.

⁴⁷ Hroub, *Hamas*, 37.

⁴⁸ Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 52; Hroub, *Hamas*, 39; Ateek, 45. *Intifada* means "to shake (something) off." In the case of the Palestinians, that "something" was Israeli occupation.

⁴⁹ Tamimi, 52.

⁵⁰ Wiegand, 126.

Hamas was the largest Palestinian group working inside the Occupied Territories to organize protests and general strikes. However, the PLO, exiled to Tunis after its expulsion from Lebanon in 1982, moved quickly to claim its position as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Despite being taken by surprise by the outbreak of the Intifada, the PLO soon established the Unified National Leadership of the Uprising (UNLU) in the territories to coordinate the PLO's response to the Intifada.⁵¹ The PLO extended an invitation to Hamas to join UNLU, but Hamas refused on religious grounds, declining to be in league with secularists whom they partly blamed for the conditions of the Palestinian people. The PLO accused Hamas of intentionally harming Palestinian national unity, but it was unable to exert any pressure on Hamas which was the only other Palestinian organization with the infrastructure to sufficiently challenge the PLO's hegemony.⁵² At this point, Hamas was behaving much more like a religious fundamentalist party driven by ideological rigidity rather than a desire to work in conjunction with other groups toward a common goal.

While the PLO was able to use the Intifada to restore some control over events in the Occupied Territories at the direction of its exiled leadership, Hamas was able to survive the Intifada because of its leaders in exile. Mass detentions of Hamas leaders in the Territories, particularly Gaza, nearly killed the movement. The final blow to the movement's internal leadership came with the 1989 arrest of Sheikh Yassin.⁵³ His arrest and the detention of much of the senior leadership of Hamas were part of what Israeli

⁵¹ Tamimi, 54.

⁵² Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 54-5.

⁵³ Mishal and Sela, 160-1.

Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin called his “Iron Fist” policy, designed to restore order in the Occupied Territories by any means necessary, including the use of force and detention of those believed to be leading the uprising. Had it not been for the leadership of Hamas that was stationed elsewhere in the Arab world, the movement may not have survived Rabin’s Iron Fist.⁵⁴

The internal and external leadership of Hamas engage in collaborative decision making in the Shura Council, which is selected by regional councils throughout the Territories. The Shura Council in turn selects the Political Bureau which has the final say in the daily operations of Hamas.⁵⁵ Hamas’ choice to use the Shura Council as the primary decision making organ for the movement is guided by its religious ideology. *Shura* was the preferred method of decision making during Muhammad’s time, and most Sunni jurists acknowledge *shura* as the method most in keeping with Islamic practice for decision making.⁵⁶ Despite the cooperation between the internal and external leadership of Hamas, the two branches have occasionally found themselves at odds because of differing ideological outlooks. The external leadership tends to be more intransigent in its thinking regarding engagement with Israel than the internal leadership. This trend is likely the result of distance from the day to day realities of life in the Occupied Territories. It is easier to adopt a hard line when not confronted with the difficulties of

⁵⁴ Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 53-4; Tamimi, 60-1.

⁵⁵ Phillips, 75; Gunning, “Peace with Hamas?” 244.

⁵⁶ Gunning, “Peace with Hamas?” 244. *Shura* means “consultation” in Arabic.

such a position vis á vis Israel on a daily basis.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, as Gunning points out, Hamas' Shura Council has had a positive effect on the movement's internal dynamics:

The net effect of Hamas's engagement in consultative egalitarian politics is that it can count on an extraordinary sense of loyalty and belonging among its members and supporters, which in turn can account for the fact that Hamas has seen remarkably few defections and remarkably little internal violence.⁵⁸

By the early 1990s, Hamas had reorganized itself from an *ad hoc* organization in the early years of the Intifada to a multi-layered organization with clearly defined divisions, each with its own mission and goals. The political wing, led by the Shura Council, oversaw the reorganization of Hamas. Despite its status as a relative neophyte in national parliamentary elections, Hamas has actually acted as a political party for a number of years, participating in student and professional union elections almost since its founding as well as municipal elections after 1994.⁵⁹ Thus, Hamas has been more than a social movement for much of its history, despite what conventional wisdom might suggest.

In 1991, the Izz Eddin al-Qassem Brigades were established and placed under the control of the resistance wing of Hamas. With approximately 1000 active members, the Qassem Brigades are responsible for all of Hamas' paramilitary operations. However, the division of Hamas which is the most robust and also the most useful in generating goodwill among the Palestinians is the social services wing.⁶⁰ Between 85-90% of all of

⁵⁷ Phillips, 77; Mishal and Sela, 161. While generally true, there are notable exceptions. Abdul Aziz al-Rantisi, who took over the leadership role in Gaza after the death of Yassin, was a noted hardliner, as is Mahmoud Zahar, the foreign minister of the Hamas-led government.

⁵⁸ Gunning, "Peace with Hamas?" 245.

⁵⁹ Gunning, *Hamas in Politics*, 144; Hroub, *Hamas*, 216 ff.

⁶⁰ Wiegand, 127; Phillips, 75.

Hamas' budget expenditures are devoted to its social services.⁶¹ Hamas has an extensive network of medical, educational, and vocational services which help offset the inconveniences of Israeli collective punishment. Additionally, Hamas sponsors sporting clubs and summer camps to socialize Palestinian youth in the organization's ideology and helps pay tuition for university students.⁶² Despite the charitable nature of Hamas towards the Palestinians, the movement's stance toward the Jewish state has always been fraught with hostility, both in theory and in practice.

Despite the creation of Hamas in December 1987, it did not issue its manifesto until August 1988. "The Charter of the Islamic Resistance Movement" outlines the goals and strategy of Hamas but also includes a great deal of anti-Semitic rhetoric. The prologue of the Hamas Charter warns, "Our battle with the Jews is long and dangerous, requiring all dedicated efforts."⁶³ Articles 22, 28 and 32 rely heavily on conspiracy theories regarding Jews and world domination and quote from *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, the most famous forgery used to promote anti-Semitism in Czarist Russia in the early 20th century.⁶⁴ However, at other points in the Charter (articles 7 and 14 for example), Hamas singles out not Jews or Judaism, but Zionism as a political ideology.⁶⁵ Article 31 argues, "In the shadow of Islam it is possible for the followers of the three

⁶¹ Phillips, 78; Wright, 37.

⁶² Phillips, 79.

⁶³ "Hamas Charter," 123.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 129, 131-2.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 124, 126.

religions—Islam, Christianity, and Judaism—to live in peace and harmony....”⁶⁶ Despite this schizophrenia regarding exactly who the enemy of Hamas is, one thing that is known and has been known about Hamas since the beginning is that the organization vehemently denies Israel’s right to exist.

A leaflet from August 1988 unambiguously titled, “From the Sea to the River,” demanded the liberation of historic Palestine from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea.⁶⁷ Many of Hamas’ leaders still hold to this position, including Khalid Mishal, the head of the Political Bureau who was exiled in Damascus, defense minister Mahmoud Zahar, and the late Abdul Aziz al-Rantisi.⁶⁸ Others, including Sheikh Yassin, fellow founding member Ismail Abu Shanab, and Prime Minister Ismail Haniya rejected the notion of Israel’s right to exist while still advocating a more pragmatic approach which recognized the realities of the facts on the ground and urged coexistence and negotiation under certain circumstances.⁶⁹ These pragmatists have been the driving force behind conversations regarding revisions to the Hamas Charter. Many in Hamas have distanced themselves from the rhetoric used in the Charter and regard it as a hastily prepared document, meant more for internal consumption than to be shared with the outside world, and no longer representative of the group’s ideology. 9/11 has also been a catalyst for the

⁶⁶ Ibid., 132.

⁶⁷ Mishal and Sela, 51.

⁶⁸ Phillips, 76; Chehab, 112.

⁶⁹ Phillips, 77; Chehab, 111.

drive to revise the Charter with the hopes of making it more attractive to a broader range of Palestinians and more palatable to the rest of the world.⁷⁰

Oslo, al-Aqsa, and the War for Peace

The first Intifada resulted in several significant consequences: it brought the Palestinian cause to international prominence; it gave rise to Hamas; and it brought Israelis and Palestinians to the negotiating table. Secret negotiations between Israeli and Palestinian representatives were conducted in Norway and concluded in August 1993. The official signing ceremony took place at the White House on September 13. The Oslo Accords were an interim agreement designed to lay the groundwork for final status negotiations and Palestinian self-government in parts of the Occupied Territories.⁷¹ Oslo created a new governing entity, the Palestinian Authority (PA), which would control the autonomous regions of the Occupied Territories. In exchange for its renunciation of violence and the recognition of Israel, Arafat's PLO was recognized as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and his organization was appointed to head the PA.⁷² Among the issues not addressed by Oslo and preserved for "final status negotiations" were Jerusalem, security and borders, the right of return for Palestinian refugees, and Israeli settlements in the Occupied Territories.⁷³

By signing the Oslo Accords, Yasser Arafat cemented himself as the *de facto* leader of the Palestinian people, a position to which he had not been elected. Arafat's

⁷⁰ Wiegand, 128; Tamimi, 148 ff.

⁷¹ Smith, 458 ff.

⁷² Pappé, 242.

⁷³ Smith, 461.

decision to negotiate with Israel was met with scorn from Hamas leadership who strongly disliked the idea of a two-state solution and recognition of the state of Israel.⁷⁴ To Hamas, Oslo was not a step in the right direction, but a step toward cementing Israeli control over the Palestinians. According to Hamas, the PLO sold out the Palestinian cause for its own sake and failed to provide the Palestinians with a voice in their own affairs. Among other criticisms, Oslo had not created a stable economy that was not dependent on Israel, nor would it foster democracy—as evidenced by the selection rather than the election of Arafat as the head of the PA. Hamas also argued that Oslo failed to achieve some of the basic aims of the Palestinian cause such as right of return and establishing the Palestinian capital in Jerusalem.⁷⁵

Mahmoud al-Zahar said of Hamas' rejection of Oslo: "We opposed the talks because the terms of the Oslo Accords put us at a negotiating disadvantage and would bring us nothing. And Israeli actions have proven our assumption to be true."⁷⁶ However, despite its vehement condemnation of the PLO's decision to sign the Oslo Accords, Hamas did not act out violently toward the Palestinian Authority.⁷⁷ Indeed, when Arafat issued an order disarming all factions in November 1994 and PA security services attacked Hamas supporters at a Gaza mosque, killing 14, Hamas leadership issued an appeal for calm, even as some of its supporters were planning to ransack the PA

⁷⁴ Phillips, 70.

⁷⁵ Ibid.; Tamimi, 190; Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 73.

⁷⁶ "Interviews from Gaza," 112.

⁷⁷ Mishal and Sela, 67.

headquarters in Gaza.⁷⁸ While Hamas declined to use violence against fellow Palestinians, it had no qualms about attacking Israeli targets, both military and civilian. The choice not to attack the Palestinian Authority is indicative of a movement that is not anti-system domestically. However, Hamas' stance toward Israel remained decidedly anti-system during this period.

Despite its reputation and the ire it attracts from the international community for its use of suicide attacks, unlike Hezbollah, Hamas did not begin its life as an organization dedicated to using suicide attacks. In fact, Hamas did not use suicide bombings until 1994, seven years after its founding. On February 25, a Jewish settler named Baruch Goldstein from the Kiryat Arba settlement adjacent to Hebron opened fire on Palestinians praying at the Tomb of the Patriarchs, killing 29 worshippers. Forty days later on April 6, after the standard period of mourning in Islam, a Hamas suicide bomber detonated his explosives on a bus in Afula in northern Galilee, killing eight people and injuring 34.⁷⁹ This was the first time a Sunni organization had utilized suicide bombing as a tactic in an asymmetric conflict.⁸⁰ The targets of Hamas suicide bombings, unlike those of Hezbollah, were overwhelmingly civilian (Figure 2). Hamas has long justified its decision to target civilians with the argument that if Israel will not discriminate between civilian and military targets, then it is unfair to ask the Palestinians to make such a distinction.⁸¹ In a 2002 interview, Abdul Aziz al-Rantisi put it succinctly: "We've told

⁷⁸ Tamimi, 191.

⁷⁹ Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 77-8.

⁸⁰ Tamimi, 162.

⁸¹ Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 79.

the Israelis again and again that if they stop killing our kids, our civilians, we will not use this weapon [suicide bombing].”⁸²

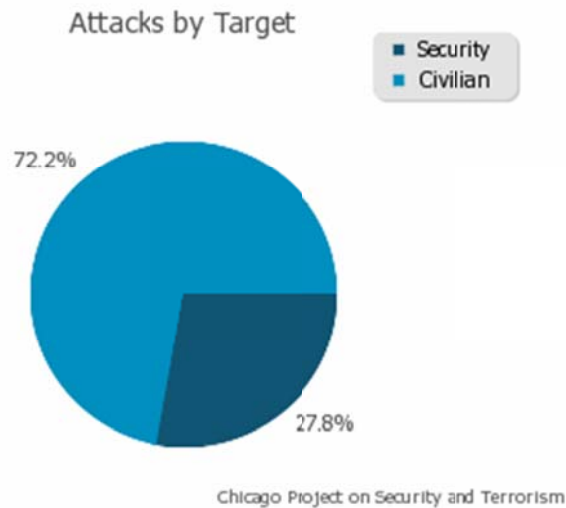


Figure 2. Hamas Suicide Attacks in Israel by Target, 1994-1999⁸³

Despite the dramatic effects of suicide bombing, Hamas’ campaigns were carried out with specific objectives in mind and only against certain targets. For example, Hamas has never attacked targets abroad. It confines its attacks to targets within Israeli-controlled territories.⁸⁴ Robert Pape points to this tendency as evidence that suicide bombing at large, and particularly related to Hamas, is a tactic driven by nationalism and directed toward foreign occupiers. Furthermore, Hamas has never attacked Jewish

⁸² “Interviews from Gaza,” 105.

⁸³ “Search Results,” Chicago Project on Security and Terrorism, http://cpost.uchicago.edu/search_results.php (accessed 15 April 2011). The search parameters were all Hamas suicide attacks carried out in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories from 1994 to 1999.

⁸⁴ Hroub, *Hamas*, 245.

targets outside of Israel either, which suggests that religion is not the primary motivating factor in Hamas suicide attacks despite the rampant anti-Semitism found in its rhetoric.⁸⁵

While nationalism may drive Hamas' suicide bombing campaigns, asymmetry justifies them. Hamas argues that its lack of power relative to Israel's gives it license to use any means necessary to combat the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land.⁸⁶ Khaled Hroub notes, "Hamas's goal has been to transform Israel from a land that attracts world Jews to a land that repels them by making its residents insecure."⁸⁷ Hamas has judged that the best way to repel Jews from Israel is to strike at civilians, particularly in retaliation for Israeli air strikes which kill or injure scores of Palestinian civilians. As one recruiter for suicide attacks told Mia Bloom in her field research for her book on suicide bombing, "Jihad and resistance begin with the word, then with the sword, then with the stone, then with the gun, then with planting bombs, then with transforming bodies into human bombs."⁸⁸

Hamas has utilized suicide bombing with great success, but it approaches such tactics and all other military tactics with a great deal of pragmatism. The organization has shown a willingness to intensify, lessen, or suspend suicide bombing campaigns as circumstances have dictated.⁸⁹ Shortly after its first suicide campaign commenced,

⁸⁵ Robert A. Pape, *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terror* (New York: Random House, 2005), 50-1.

⁸⁶ Baruch Kimmerling, *Politicide: Ariel Sharon's War Against the Palestinians* (London: Verso, 2003), 136.

⁸⁷ Hroub, *Hamas*, 247.

⁸⁸ Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 27.

⁸⁹ Hroub, *Hamas*, 249-50.

Hamas extended the offer of a *hudna* to Israel. *Hudna* is an Islamic truce or cease-fire agreement. While any cease-fire offer from Hamas would not include recognition of the state of Israel, it would entail a cessation of hostilities for 20-30 years. After the prescribed time, the *hudna* could either be extended or hostilities be allowed to commence again. Sheikh Yassin was the primary architect of the early *hudna* proposals offered to Israel. In exchange for 20 years of peace, Hamas asked Israel to withdraw from all territories occupied by Israel after the 1967 War.⁹⁰ Ismail Abu Shanab, a pragmatist in Hamas' Gaza leadership prior to his 2003 assassination by Israel, argued that if Israel would agree to Hamas' terms for a *hudna*, Hamas would be too busy with state building to bother Israel:

Hamas is focusing on an agenda for Israel's withdrawal from the lands taken in 1967, the establishment of a Palestinian state, and a solution for the refugees....If these things are implemented, the Palestinians will be satisfied, and they will be busy for more than 20 years, building their state. The new Palestine can have good relations with Israel, as well as the rest of our neighbors.⁹¹

Because Israel has not been willing to negotiate with Hamas, particularly when withdrawal to 1967 borders is the basis of the negotiations, Hamas has, on occasion, declared a unilateral cease fire or period of calm, called a *tahdi'ah*. These periods of calm are generally much shorter and because they are implemented unilaterally, they can be broken at will. This has often been the case as many of the calming periods declared by Hamas have been broken by Israeli attacks on Hamas senior leadership.⁹² Hamas has also used the *tahdi'ah* to allow elections, as called for by the Oslo Accords, to occur

⁹⁰ Chehab, 105; Tamimi, 158.

⁹¹ Chehab, 111; "Interviews from Gaza," 109.

⁹² Tamimi, 166-7.

peacefully.⁹³ In spite of its willingness to allow elections to happen without incident, Hamas remained highly critical of the peace process and utilized suicide bombings not only to seek revenge for Israeli attacks on Palestinian civilians, but also to delegitimize the Palestinian Authority and undermine the peace process.⁹⁴

The 1996 parliamentary elections were the first national elections held in Palestinian territory since 1976. Between 1976 and 1994 when the Palestinian Authority was established, Israel controlled the state offices in the Occupied Territories and appointed people to positions of power. During those two decades, the only contestable elections for Palestinians were student and professional union elections, and historically, the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas have done very well in those elections—either alone or in alliance with other groups.⁹⁵ Hamas was also active in municipal elections and voiced strong opposition to PA efforts to appoint mayors and municipal council members which circumvented the democratic process.⁹⁶

The question of whether or not Hamas, which had previously had success in electoral politics, should participate in the 1996 elections was a hotly contested one within the organization. Hamas had always argued that it would accept the will of the Palestinian people in elections. However, the group was worried that participation in the elections would signal acceptance of the Oslo Accords.⁹⁷ Nonetheless, Sheikh Yassin

⁹³ Nüsse, 241-2. Hamas implemented a six-month *tahdi'ah* prior to the 1996 parliamentary elections.

⁹⁴ Bloom, 24; Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 80.

⁹⁵ Gunning, *Hamas in Politics*, 144; Hroub, *Hamas*, 216 ff..

⁹⁶ Hroub, *Hamas*, 219.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 210-1; Nüsse, 161.

urged Hamas to participate in the elections because he feared that boycotting the elections would leave the fate of the Palestinians in future negotiations in the hands of Hamas' opponents.⁹⁸ Some Hamas-affiliated sheikhs issued *fatwas* banning participation in election, but Yassin quickly and publicly condemned the practice.⁹⁹ Ultimately, despite the urging of Yassin and overtures from the PA, Hamas decided to boycott the elections.¹⁰⁰ The organization feared that participation would legitimize the peace process and undermine the Palestinian cause, as well as the mission of Hamas.¹⁰¹ Despite the boycott, 71 percent of eligible Palestinians voted in the 1996 elections. Yasser Arafat won 88 percent of the presidential vote, and Fatah won 68 of 88 seats in the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC).¹⁰²

For the next ten years, Fatah would keep a tight grip on power, particularly in the West Bank. However, Hamas' popularity did not wane during that decade, in part because the situation in the Occupied Territories did not improve. In the 1996 Israeli elections, Benjamin Netanyahu was elected prime minister from the right-wing Likud party. Netanyahu was opposed to the creation of a Palestinian state and took a hard line regarding the Palestinians, lowering expectations then giving them a small portion of what they demanded, hoping to both appease the Palestinians and increase Israel's standing in the international arena.¹⁰³ Netanyahu appealed to Israel's Orthodox and ultra-

⁹⁸ Chehab, 107.

⁹⁹ Hroub, *Hamas*, 222.

¹⁰⁰ Phillips, 70.

¹⁰¹ Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 82; Hroub, *Hamas*, 224.

¹⁰² Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 83.

Orthodox Jewish communities with the assurance that the West Bank was and would always be a part of Israel.¹⁰⁴ To ensure that Israel stayed united, Netanyahu implemented plans to build new settlements in the West Bank, particularly around East Jerusalem. The most controversial of these was the settlement at Har Homa on the outskirts of East Jerusalem. On February 19, 1997, Netanyahu announced a plan for a 6500 unit settlement in Har Homa, declaring, “The battle for Jerusalem has begun.”¹⁰⁵ While the Har Homa settlement displaced no Palestinians, it did threaten to sever the link between the Jerusalem and Bethlehem districts of the Palestinian-administered West Bank.¹⁰⁶

The settlement construction was also taken by the Palestinians as further proof that Israel was not seriously invested in the peace process. The Palestinian were becoming increasingly agitated not only by Israeli actions, but by the United States’ ambivalence toward the Palestinians stance on Jerusalem. The city’s fate was tabled at Oslo and considered a topic for “final status” negotiations. However, the tenor of the language used to address the issue of Jerusalem changed as a result of Oslo. Prior to the Accords, East Jerusalem was considered a part of the Occupied Territories, acquired by Israel in war. However, President Clinton began referring to Arab Jerusalem as “disputed” territory, implying that both sides had a claim to it.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ Hiro, 103 ff.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 101-2, 299.

¹⁰⁵ Shlaim, 581.

¹⁰⁶ Menachem Klein, *Jerusalem: The Contested City* (New York: New York University Press, 2001), 280.

¹⁰⁷ Smith, 461-2. Despite this change in tone, Clinton nevertheless did not bend to pressure from Congress to relocate the American Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem as called for by the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995. The text of the bill can be found at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-104publ45/html/PLAW-104publ45.htm> (accessed 22 April 2011). The Justice Department

Tensions continued to escalate through the failure of the 2000 Camp David talks between Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Arafat.¹⁰⁸ Conventional wisdom regarding who is to blame for the failure of the talks generally suggests that Yasser Arafat walked away from a “generous offer” from the Israelis, but perspectives differ about the truthfulness of this position.¹⁰⁹ The Palestinians, even those who opposed Arafat such as Hamas, were outraged at the perception of Arafat on the international stage. In an article for the *New York Review of Books*, Robert Malley and Hussein Agha point out the underlying issue many Palestinians had with the notion that Israel was “offering” to “give” the Palestinians land or a state of their own: “The notion that Israel was ‘offering’ land, being ‘generous,’ or ‘making concessions’ seemed to them doubly wrong—in a single stroke both affirming Israel’s right and denying the Palestinians.’ For the Palestinians, land was not given but given back.”¹¹⁰

Increasingly restricted freedom of movement within the Occupied Territories, continued settlement building and expansion, and the stalled peace process had caused

issued a memorandum to the president advising that Congress had violated the separation of powers by attempting to formulate foreign policy in direct violation of the Constitution. See “Memorandum Opinion for the Counsel to the President,” Department of Justice, May 15, 1995, <http://www.justice.gov/olc/s770.16.htm> (accessed 22 April 1995). In a White House briefing from October 24, 1995, Clinton’s press secretary Mike McCurry expressed the president’s opposition to the measure, calling it an “unnecessary intrusion into the Middle East peace process.” See “Press Briefing by Mike McCurry,” Office of the Press Secretary, October 24, 1995, <http://clinton6.nara.gov/1995/10/1995-10-24-press-briefing-by-mike-mccurry.html> (accessed 22 April 2011).

¹⁰⁸ Barak beat Netanyahu handily in the 1999 prime ministerial election in Israel. See Shlaim, 608.

¹⁰⁹ The differing points of view include those who either were at the summit or have spoken extensively with many of the key players. See, for example, Dennis Ross, *The Missing Peace: The Inside Story of the Fight for Middle East Peace* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005) and Clayton E. Swisher, *The Truth About Camp David: The Untold Story About the Collapse of the Middle East Peace Process* (New York: Nation Books, 2004).

¹¹⁰ Robert Malley and Hussein Agha, “Camp David: The Tragedy of Errors,” *The New York Review of Books*, 9 August 2001, <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2001/aug/09/camp-david-the-tragedy-of-errors/> (accessed 22 April 2011).

the Palestinians to become more frustrated with their circumstances. Those frustrations finally exploded into a new Intifada in September 2000. The al-Aqsa Intifada began on September 28, 2000 when Ariel Sharon ascended Temple Mount in Jerusalem in contravention of the official position of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel which forbids Jews from such an activity.¹¹¹ The action was made all the more inflammatory because Sharon was accompanied by 1000 riot police.¹¹²

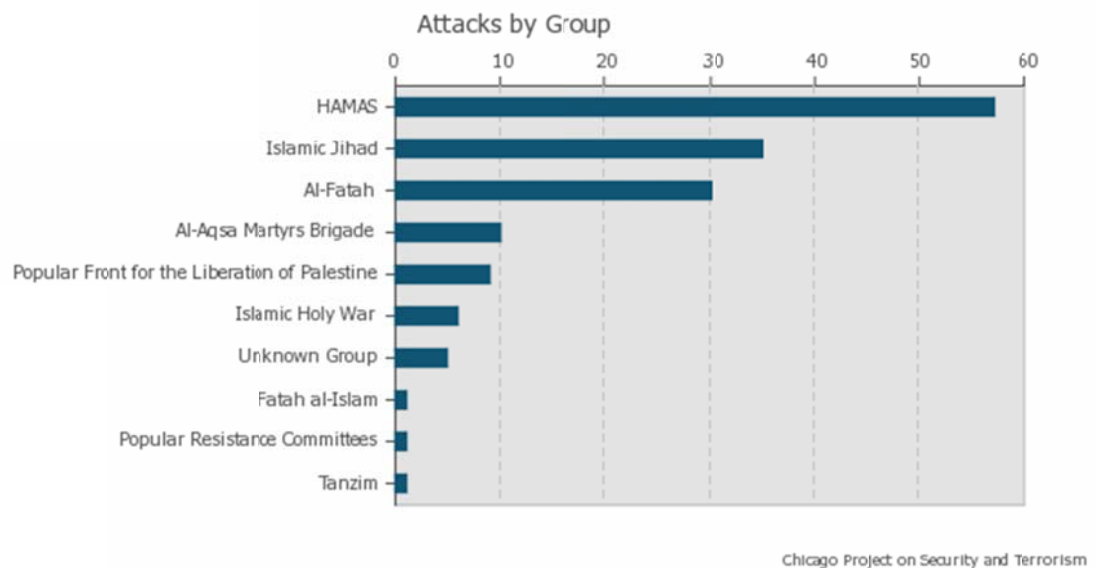


Figure 3. Suicide Attacks by Group, 2000-2010¹¹³

¹¹¹ Klein, 57 ff. The Chief Rabbinate's decision has both religious and political dimensions. Religiously, the rabbis worry that since the practice of making Temple sacrifices is no longer observed, Jews are not able to reach the level of ritual cleanliness to enter the Temple area. Politically, the shared sovereignty of the area, with the presence of the Dome of the Rock on Temple Mount and Jewish control over the Western Wall, has created a situation where any kind of provocation could spark violence.

¹¹² Bernard Wasserstein, *Divided Jerusalem: The Struggle for the Holy City*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 317.

¹¹³ "Search Results," Chicago Project on Security and Terrorism, http://cpost.uchicago.edu/search_results.php (accessed 15 April 2011). The search parameters were all attacks between 2000 and 2010 in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

In the aftermath of the visit, a fresh wave of suicide attacks began. While Hamas was responsible for nearly all of the suicide attacks carried out in the Occupied Territories and Israel and used them as a means to delegitimize the PA and disrupt the peace process, the pattern of suicide attacks in the al-Aqsa Intifada represented a new paradigm.¹¹⁴ As Figure 3 demonstrates, the suicide bombing campaigns of the second Intifada became part of a competition between groups vying for power and influence among the Palestinians.¹¹⁵ Though Hamas was still responsible for more suicide attacks than any other group, the number of groups competing for the hearts and minds of the Palestinian people through the use of the tactic had increased with not only more groups utilizing suicide attacks as a tactic, but also engaging in more suicide attacks than the first Intifada.

The exponential increase in suicide bombings in Israel and the Occupied Territories during the al-Aqsa Intifada led to an increasingly aggressive Israeli military response. Israel began engaging in “targeted” killings of the leadership of Hamas and other Palestinian resistance movements. These extra-judicial killings of those suspected of terrorism and armed resistance were not always clean operations because they generally involved the use of missile strikes on apartment buildings where terrorists were thought to reside.¹¹⁶ According to B’Tselem, the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, 412 Palestinians have been killed as collateral damage

¹¹⁴ “Search Results,” Chicago Project on Security and Terrorism, http://cpost.uchicago.edu/search_results.php (accessed 15 April 2011). The search parameters were all attacks between 1994 and 1999 in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Hamas was responsible for 17 of 24 attacks. Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for five, and two were of unknown origin; Bloom, 24.

¹¹⁵ Bloom, 24.

¹¹⁶ Kimmerling, 162-3.

in “targeted” killings while 242 Palestinians who were killed were the intended victims of those strikes.¹¹⁷ Palestinian outrage over what was seen as the murder of innocent civilians created a cycle of violence between the Israelis and Palestinians which also brought the peace process to a complete halt and created a recruiting boom for Hamas and other groups.¹¹⁸

The 2006 Elections and the Struggle for Unity

Due to the high cost of maintaining a security presence in the Israeli settlements in Gaza, in December 2003, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon announced that Israel would be unilaterally disengaging from Gaza. Sharon viewed Gaza’s rapidly growing Palestinian population as a threat to the Jewish identity of Israel and hoped the gesture would mollify the United States so that he could implement his plan to annex many of the settlements in the West Bank with little to no protest from Israel’s closest ally.¹¹⁹ Sharon’s decision to withdraw from Gaza unilaterally was also based on his belief that the Palestinian leadership was too weak to be an effective negotiating partner.

Sharon’s opinion of Yasser Arafat’s weakness was echoed by the Palestinian parliament. In September 2002, Arafat dismissed his cabinet rather than face a no-

¹¹⁷ These statistics were derived from the data collected by B’Tselem from the beginning of the second Intifada to the beginning of Operation Cast Lead in December 2008, through Operation Cast Lead, and after Operation Cast Lead, which ended in January 2009. See “Statistics,” B’Tselem: The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, <http://www.btselem.org/english/statistics/Index.asp> (accessed 15 April 2011). Among those Hamas leaders killed in “targeted” killings were Ismail Abu Shanab in 2003 and Sheikh Ahmed Yassin and Abdul Aziz al-Rantisi in 2004. See Chehab, 111, 199-200.

¹¹⁸ Phillips, 70-1.

¹¹⁹ Tamimi, 205.

confidence vote by the PLC.¹²⁰ In early 2003, he bowed to international pressure and appointed Mahmoud Abbas as prime minister. However, despite Abbas' best efforts to enact reform, he was undermined at every turn by Arafat who would not relinquish any power and resigned in September 2003 after only months on the job.¹²¹ Despite their inability to work together, Abbas succeeded Arafat as PA president upon Arafat's death in November 2004. One month later, the first of four rounds of municipal elections began in the Palestinian Territories. These municipal elections continued through early 2005, but new elections for the PLC were delayed because of Abbas' fears of a Fatah defeat.¹²² However, municipal elections continued according to plan, and after all four rounds of elections were complete, Hamas and its supported lists had won a third of the seats on local councils.¹²³ While Abbas and other in Fatah wished to delay the elections further, the Bush administration pushed the PA to hold them in January 2006, despite warnings that Fatah would likely not do well.¹²⁴

While many in Fatah wished to delay the PLC elections, other observers, including Khalil Shikaki of the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research, worried that delaying legislative elections until after the Israeli pullout in Gaza would only exacerbate divisions between Hamas and Fatah. In an essay in *Foreign Affairs* in late 2004, Shikaki warned that autonomy in Gaza and occupation in the West Bank

¹²⁰ Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 237.

¹²¹ Khalil Shikaki, "The Future of Palestine," *Foreign Affairs* 83, no. 6 (2004): 50-1.

¹²² Tamimi, 209, 213.

¹²³ Gunning, *Hamas in Politics*, 146.

¹²⁴ David Rose, "The Gaza Bombshell," *Vanity Fair*, April 2008, <http://www.vanityfair.com/politics/features/2008/04/gaza200804/> (accessed 13 April 2011).

would highlight the divisions between the Palestinian factions and worried that Israeli withdrawal from Gaza would lead to more power struggles and that “Gaza will become a breeding ground for radicalism of the worst kind...”¹²⁵

The warnings of Khalil Shikaki went unheeded by the PA, and PLC elections were held January 2006, several months after Israel completed its withdrawal from the Gaza Strip. Hamas’ campaign materials for both municipal and national elections were designed to exploit themes that appealed to a broad range of voters while exposing the weaknesses of the Fatah platform. Calling its national list the “Change and Reform” list, Hamas emphasized the grievances of many in the Occupied Territories, particularly the lack of law and order and rampant corruption that had proliferated under Fatah leadership.¹²⁶ The decision to participate in the 2006 parliamentary elections was as hotly contested as the decision not to participate in the PLC elections a decade earlier. The pragmatists within Hamas argued that participation would benefit the organization on two levels.

First, the Islamization of Palestine would be easier to accomplish with access to ministries and budgets.¹²⁷ Secondly, Hamas decided to contest the elections because it hoped that participating in the democratic process would persuade the international community to end its embargo of Hamas and make it impossible for Hamas to be ignored by the world’s powers.¹²⁸ The peace process, as envisioned by Oslo, was all but dead in 2006, as well. Thus, any concern Hamas may have had regarding its participation

¹²⁵ Shikaki, 52-3.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 151.

¹²⁷ Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 248.

¹²⁸ Tamimi, 215.

signaling acceptance of the peace process had been effectively rendered moot. In the end, Hamas won 74 of 132 seats in the PLC to Fatah's 45. In Ramallah, the seat of Fatah's power, Hamas won four seats to the national assembly to Fatah's one seat.¹²⁹

Several factors account for Hamas's landslide victory over Fatah. First, as Khalil Shikaki warned in his 2004 essay, "The Palestinian public became painfully aware of the widespread corruption in the PA and its security services and grew more frustrated than ever."¹³⁰ Palestinians also felt as that Hamas was the only major representative of the Palestinian people still committed to a free Palestinian state, particularly after the peace process had failed to bear any fruit. Hamas also provided social services to the impoverished populations in the territories who were hardest hit by the greed and corruption of Fatah. Furthermore, the explicit Islamic orientation of Hamas appealed to the generally religious nature of the Palestinian people.¹³¹

Despite international agreement that the Palestinian elections had been both free and fair, the "Quartet"—the United States, the European Union, Russia, and the United Nations—announced that it refused to deal with any Palestinian government that would not renounce violence, recognize Israel, or abide by existing treaties.¹³² Hamas refused to accept these terms and, as David Rose described in his exposé on the Bush administration's complicity in the Palestinian civil war that was to come, "the Quartet shut off the faucet of aid to the Palestinian Authority, depriving it of the means to pay

¹²⁹ Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 259.

¹³⁰ Shikaki, 47.

¹³¹ Tamimi, 219 ff.

¹³² Mandy Turner, "Building Democracy in Palestine: Liberal Peace Theory and the Election of Hamas," *Democratization* 13, no. 5 (2006): 749; "Gaza Bombshell."

salaries and meet its annual budget of roughly \$2 billion.”¹³³ The reaction of the international community angered the Palestinians who felt that because Hamas had been elected in what were widely accepted as free and fair elections, international attempts to undermine the Hamas-led government infringed upon the rights of the Palestinians to have a say at the ballot box.¹³⁴

Some international observers argued that Hamas’ electoral victory would cause the organization to become more broadly pragmatic and moderate, while others saw the outcome of the elections as proof that the Palestinians could not be trusted and Israel had a right to use any means necessary to contain Hamas.¹³⁵ To that end, Israel closed all of the border crossings in Gaza, effectively staunching the flow of humanitarian aid to Palestinians and cutting off trade for Gazan farmers and manufacturers. It also began holding all taxes collected by Israel for the PA in escrow to prevent Hamas from using the funds to finance terrorist attacks. These measures made life more difficult for ordinary Palestinians.¹³⁶

¹³³ Rose, “Gaza Bombshell.” It is worth mentioning that it is not only Hamas among the Palestinians who has difficulty with the notion of recognizing Israel’s right to exist. In his book *Justice and Only Justice*, Naim Ateek, the former canon of St. George’s Cathedral in Jerusalem and the founder of the Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center, states, “It has taken me years to accept the establishment of the state of Israel and its need—although not its right—to exist. I now feel that I want it to stay, because I believe that the elimination of Israel would mean greater injustice to millions of innocent people who know no home except Israel.” See Ateek, 164.

¹³⁴ Nataša Kubíková, “Political Inclusion as a Key Factor to Moderate Islamists: The International Community’s Choice of Policy Impacts on Hamas’s Pragmatic or Radical Tendencies,” *Perspectives: Central European Review of International Affairs* 17, no. 2 (2009): 154.

¹³⁵ Phillips, 84-5.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 85-6; Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 270-1.

The international pressure coupled with internal disagreements severely limited Hamas' ability to form a unity government as they had planned.¹³⁷ Hamas' "Change and Reform" list platform emphasized reform, ending corruption, and respect for the separation of powers.¹³⁸ However, reform initiatives could not move forward because no other Palestinian factions wanted to join the cabinet because they did not want to be associated with Hamas.¹³⁹ Fatah was particularly reticent to cooperate with Hamas. On its last day in power in the PLC before the new parliament was sworn in, Fatah passed several measures that gave Mahmoud Abbas, as president, sweeping powers and appointed Fatah members to four key posts, including head of the anti-corruption commission.¹⁴⁰ Abbas issued several executive orders which effectively stripped the new Hamas government and its cabinet ministers of their power.¹⁴¹

The Fatah campaign to undermine Hamas was detrimental to both the Palestinian economy and the security situation in Gaza. Hamas inherited a dire economic crisis from Fatah, brought on by years of corruption under Arafat. Economic sanctions crippled the ability of the PA to function. Banks were unable to lend money to the government, already trying to cope with massive debt. Because of this, the PA was not able to pay its civil servants who went on strike in September 2006, which caused public services to be

¹³⁷ Ibid., Chehab, 202.

¹³⁸ Hroub, "New Hamas," 11 ff.

¹³⁹ Chehab, 203.

¹⁴⁰ Tamimi, 227; Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 263.

¹⁴¹ Tamimi, 228.

curtailed even further.¹⁴² In response to the deteriorating economic situation, President Abbas, blaming Hamas for the suspension in aid from the international community, announced that new elections would be held sometime early in 2007. Hamas accused him of attempting a coup.¹⁴³

The other area in which Fatah attempted to undermine Hamas was security. The Gaza Strip was particularly hard hit by Israeli reprisals during the al-Aqsa Intifada. Because of that, much of the security infrastructure was destroyed, and Gaza suffered from a breakdown of law and order.¹⁴⁴ Years of cronyism and corruption had created a confusing and inefficient web of more than a dozen different security services, none of which were under Hamas' control. Mahmoud Abbas continued issuing executive orders which undermined the Interior Ministry which was constitutionally mandated to control the internal security forces in PA administered territory.¹⁴⁵ Fatah also created its own shadow security service called the Directorate of Internal Security which was intended to be a rival to the Interior Ministry.

These dueling security services clashed throughout late 2006 in Gaza, and violence was made worse by smaller clan-based militias who used kidnapping and extortion to maintain their own power bases. Some observers felt this violence was deliberate, a way to make Gaza nearly ungovernable for Hamas.¹⁴⁶ Despite being outnumbered by the myriad of Fatah security forces, Hamas' Interior Ministry troops

¹⁴² Ibid., 230; Phillips, 88.

¹⁴³ Tamimi, 252-3.

¹⁴⁴ Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 261.

¹⁴⁵ Rose, "Gaza Bombshell," Tamimi, 229.

¹⁴⁶ Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 272.

were able to put an end to the violence in Gaza, so Fatah supporters began terrorizing West Bank towns that were without Hamas protection. There, government buildings were set on fire, and Hamas officials were kidnapped.¹⁴⁷

Seeing that conditions were rapidly spiraling toward civil war, Mahmoud Abbas backed down. The Saudis had been attempting to bring Hamas and Fatah together to discuss creating a unity government, and in February 2007, the Mecca Agreement was signed.¹⁴⁸ This agreement gave Hamas control of nine Cabinet ministries while Fatah was granted control of six ministries. It also featured a pledge to end the intra-Palestinian violence and called for pan-Arab recognition of the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority. Though neither Hamas nor Fatah were particularly pleased with the terms of the agreement, their reticence was overshadowed by their desire to alleviate the suffering in Gaza.¹⁴⁹ On March 17, the unity government was sworn in and given a vote of confidence by the PLC. The new coalition included Hamas officials the international community was not fond of, but also figures such as Salam Fayyad, a former World Bank official as finance minister. Fayyad's unenviable task was to get the Palestinian financial situation back in order.¹⁵⁰

Despite the new unity government, the internal conflicts which had plagued the Palestinians for over a year were not dead. Three months into the new unity government's tenure, violence started again as Fatah factions within the Palestinian security services refused to heed orders from Hamas leadership. Frustrated by his

¹⁴⁷ Tamimi, 250.

¹⁴⁸ Rose, "Gaza Bombshell."

¹⁴⁹ Tamimi, 256 ff; Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 276.

¹⁵⁰ Tamimi, 261; Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 277.

inability to gain control over the Interior Ministry, the Hamas-appointed Minister of the Interior, Hani Qawasmi resigned in protest.¹⁵¹ Fatah took advantage of the power vacuum in the Interior Ministry and amplified its attacks on Hamas outposts in Gaza. While it appears Hamas tried to resolve the issue without violence, Fatah began killing suspected Hamas members and sympathizers which set off a new civil war during which Hamas brought Gaza under its control in just five days.¹⁵²

Despite international condemnation that its actions in Gaza in June 2007 constituted a coup, Hamas maintained that it had carried out a counter-coup aimed at putting an end to Fatah's attempts to undermine the democratically elected government.¹⁵³ Having vanquished Fatah, however, Hamas began acting much more like a stereotypical radical Islamist group and less like a moderating Islamist group willing to move toward the mainstream. Its strategy in Gaza was based on consolidating its power in political and social institutions as well as in the security apparatus. It sought to deter Israeli attacks on Gaza, eliminate internal threats, and suppress all opposition to its program.¹⁵⁴

The ruthlessness with which Hamas dealt with its opponents during and after the violence against Fatah has made it an object of fear and scorn in Gaza.¹⁵⁵ Beverley Milton-Edwards observed:

¹⁵¹ Tamimi, 264; Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 279-80.

¹⁵² Tamimi, 264.

¹⁵³ Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 288-9.

¹⁵⁴ Beverley Milton-Edwards, "The Ascendancy of Political Islam: Hamas and Consolidation in the Gaza Strip," *Third World Quarterly* 29, no. 8 (2008): 1591.

¹⁵⁵ Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 290-1.

Hamas' version of Islamic governance is not palpable unless as an expression of authoritarian tendencies and the advocacy of draconian Muslim norms and values; something which many of Gaza's Muslims reject. This undermines any Hamas rhetoric about its democratic credentials and leaves it vulnerable in the long term.¹⁵⁶

Meanwhile, the Hamas takeover of Gaza had essentially split the Palestinian territories into two separate entities. On June 17, 2007, Mahmoud Abbas dissolved the PLC, appointed a new emergency government, and swore in Salam Fayyad, the former finance minister, as prime minister, though the Fatah-led government only had control of the West Bank.¹⁵⁷ Gaza was still under the stranglehold of Hamas, and the situation would only get worse.

Gaza suffered from food and fuel shortages, buildings which had been destroyed or damaged in the fighting could not be rebuilt because of import restrictions at checkpoints with Israel, and the economy continued to suffer as aid was restored to the Fatah government in the West Bank while citizens of Gaza received none.¹⁵⁸ Azzam Tamimi concluded his 2007 insider account of Hamas with this observation:

The Gaza Strip had by then [June 2007] been facing the prospect of becoming literally the world's largest prison camp. Should Israel close the passages into the Strip and cut all supply of water, fuel, and electricity, the prison inmates may find no alternative but to explode in the face of a world community that had denied them democracy and is now denying them life.¹⁵⁹

Now in control of the Gaza Strip with no other Palestinian party to keep it in check, Hamas began firing Qassem rockets into southern Israel. Other militants also felt as if they could do likewise and Israel responded to these attacks with reprisals against

¹⁵⁶ Milton-Edwards, 1598.

¹⁵⁷ Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 291.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 297; Rose, "Gaza Bombshell."

¹⁵⁹ Tamimi, 264.

refugee camps.¹⁶⁰ In June 2008, Egypt helped broker a six month cease fire between Hamas and Israel which was criticized by many as appeasement of Israel and did little to relax the Israeli siege of the Gaza Strip.¹⁶¹ Exactly six months later, as talks broke down regarding an extension of the cease fire, Hamas began firing rockets into southern Israel again.¹⁶² On December 27, 2008, the Israeli Defense Forces began a bombardment of the Gaza Strip code named “Operation Cast Lead.” The operation lasted until January 18, 2009. During that time, B’Tselem estimates that 1389 Palestinians were killed, including as estimated 900 civilians.¹⁶³

The Israeli action destroyed thousands of homes, factories, schools, and government buildings. It also destroyed Gaza’s infrastructure, as well as Hamas’ military networks. The damage was estimated at \$2 billion. This damage, however great, was not sufficient to dent Hamas’ support. Beverley Milton-Edwards and Stephen Farrell note that “despite short-term anger against Hamas, it was by no means clear that the offensive immediately succeeded in turning Palestinians away from the Islamists in significant numbers.”¹⁶⁴ In the aftermath of Cast Lead, Hamas began to face increasing levels of criticism from the residents of Gaza. However, it remained popular with Palestinians in the West Bank who were still burdened by Fatah and its rampant corruption. In the

¹⁶⁰ Rose, “Gaza Bombshell,” Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 296.

¹⁶¹ Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 296-7.

¹⁶² Ibid., 298.

¹⁶³ “Fatalities during Operation “Cast Lead,” B’Tselem: The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, http://www.btselem.org/english/statistics/casualties.asp?sD=27&sM=12&sY=2008&eD=18&eM=01&eY=2009&filterby=event&oferet_stat=during (accessed 15 April 2011).

¹⁶⁴ Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 302-3.

words of Milton-Edwards and Farrell, “Stasis, stalemate, intransigence and enmity clouded the political landscape.”¹⁶⁵

Perhaps the greatest tragedy in the two years following Hamas’ parliamentary victory in January 2006 is that much of the violence and destruction that occurred did so at the behest of the international community. The decision to cut off aid to the Palestinians after they elected a Hamas-majority parliament was only the beginning. Despite explicit signs that it was willing to part ways with some of its more hard line rhetoric, certain actors, particularly the United States, took a tough stance against Hamas, refusing to work with the group despite the fact that its positions vis á vis Israel continued to moderate.

Hamas’ rhetoric during the campaign and in the days after it won the election showed an evolution away from anti-system rhetoric and a willingness to work with Israeli authorities on the day-to-day administration of the Territories while still maintaining that Palestine was indivisible and that Palestinians had a right to resist what Hamas saw as an unjust occupation.¹⁶⁶ Shortly after negotiations for a national unity government fell through in the spring of 2006, Hamas leader and Palestinian Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh presented the platform of his cabinet to the PLC. Despite representing only the views of Hamas, the policies laid out by Haniyeh were still crafted in such a way as to appeal to a wide range of Palestinian viewpoints rather than the narrowly focused goals of Hamas.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 303 ff.

¹⁶⁶ Chehab, 203; Hroub, “New Hamas,” 20.

¹⁶⁷ Hroub, “New Hamas,” 19.

One important step for Haniyeh—and Hamas at large—was the de facto acknowledgement of a two-state solution. Referencing the political, economic, social, and cultural development of the Palestinian people, Haniyeh insisted on strengthening the link between the two halves of Palestine with no reference to “the rest of the homeland.”¹⁶⁸ Reading between the lines in such a sentiment is an acknowledgement, however grudging, that some other geographical entity existed and would continue to exist in historic Palestine. Without ever mentioning it by name, this reference marks an implicit recognition of the state of Israel. Even the seven main points of emphasis in Haniyeh’s presentation of the Hamas platform move the group away from radicalism and toward the mainstream.

He called for resistance to occupation, increased stability and security within the territories, improvements to and stabilization of the Palestinian economy, financial and administrative reforms, restructuring of Palestinian organizations to make them more reflective of multiple viewpoints, a plan to raise regional awareness of the Palestinian issue, and a desire to improve Palestinian relationships with regional and international actors.¹⁶⁹ Not only was Hamas becoming more accepting of the existence of Israel, but the Hamas platform also indicates a move away from the religious fundamentalist party paradigm toward a denomination-based party which was more willing to work with other Palestinian factions in order to effectively govern Palestinian territory.

Despite the obvious evolution in Hamas’ thought away from radicalism and toward pragmatism with an emphasis on state building, the international community, led

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 22.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 23.

by the United States, still refused to work with Hamas.¹⁷⁰ According to David Rose, in his examination of the United States' response to the Hamas victory,

Some analysts argued that Hamas had a substantial moderate wing that could be strengthened if America coaxed it into the peace process. Notable Israelis—such as Ephraim Halevy, the former head of the Mossad intelligence agency—shared this view. But if America paused to consider giving Hamas the benefit of the doubt, the moment was “milliseconds long,” says a senior State Department official. “The administration spoke with one voice: ‘We have to squeeze these guys.’ With Hamas’s victory, the freedom agenda was dead.”¹⁷¹

One such analyst who saw the benefit in allowing Hamas to show that it was serious about moderating its position was David Wurmser, Vice President Dick Cheney’s chief advisor on Middle Eastern affairs until July 2007. Wurmser accused the Bush administration of “engaging in a dirty war in an effort to provide a corrupt dictatorship [led by Abbas] with victory.” He also agreed with Hamas’ interpretation of the events of June 2007, suggesting that Hamas did not take over Gaza in a coup but rather aborted a coup attempt by Fatah.¹⁷² An avowed neoconservative, Wurmser was appalled by the Bush administration decision to undermine Hamas in the manner that it did: “There is a stunning disconnect between the president’s call for Middle East democracy and this policy....It directly contradicts it.”¹⁷³ According to Rose, when Abbas acquiesced to the Mecca talks in the spring of 2007, the United States stepped up pressure on Fatah to undermine the Hamas government and bring it to an end. Israel assisted the U.S. and Muhammad Dahlan, Fatah’s long-time security chief, by allowing small arms to pass

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 25.

¹⁷¹ Rose, “Gaza Bombshell.” It should be noted that after the publication of Rose’s exposé, United States officials refused to comment on the article, but neither did they deny any of its allegations. See Milton-Farrell and Edwards, 283.

¹⁷² Rose, “Gaza Bombshell.”

¹⁷³ Ibid.

through Egypt and Jordan into the Palestinian territories and the hands of Fatah's various security services.¹⁷⁴

The fear of an Islamist majority in the Palestinian Legislative Council had led the international community to undermine Hamas at every turn, which “brought the reformist and the radical wings within Hamas closer together again and helped to entrench the current uncompromising stance.”¹⁷⁵ Khaled Hroub has argued that the Hamas campaigns in both municipal and parliamentary election in the mid-2000s signaled a “new” Hamas, one committed not to the destruction of the state of Israel, but the building of a state for the Palestinians. However, he worries that because of the continued Israeli siege on Gaza and international isolation, “the chances of aborting the natural development of a ‘new Hamas’ appear great.”¹⁷⁶

A New Hamas for a New Palestine?

The situation in the Palestinian territories is much different than those in Egypt or Lebanon largely because of the presence of the Israeli occupation. This is even true in Gaza where, despite a lack of direct military interference and the dismantling of Jewish settlements in 2005, the border between the Gaza Strip and Israel proper is heavily guarded and movement between the two is restricted. A similar situation exists in the West Bank where checkpoints between Palestinian and Israeli controlled territories limit the freedom of movement of Palestinians. This is one reason why, as Table 5 demonstrates, the Palestinian Territories constitute the only one of the case studies in this

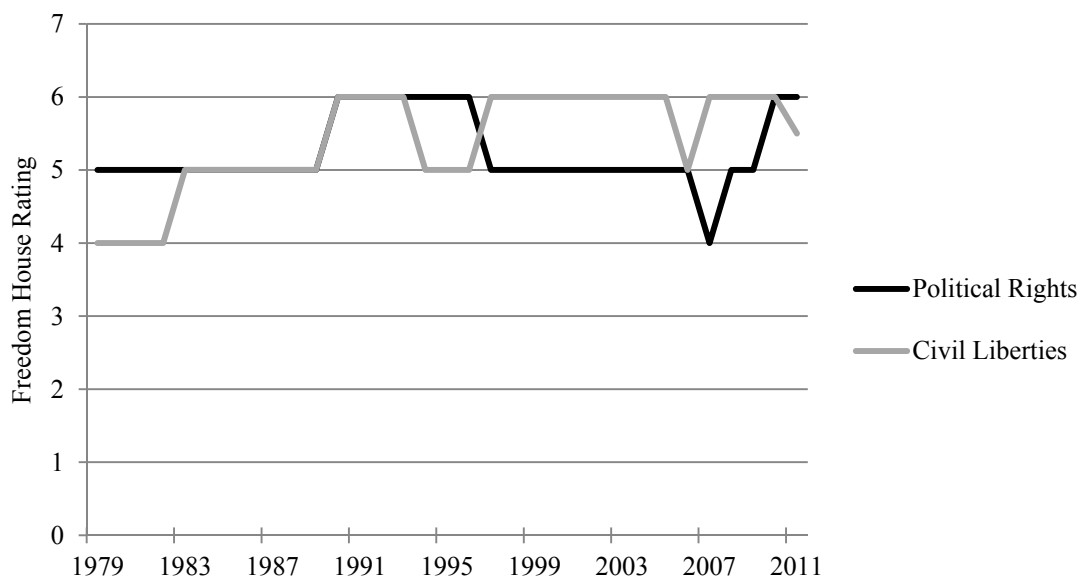
¹⁷⁴ Ibid., Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 283.

¹⁷⁵ Turner, 751.

¹⁷⁶ Hroub, “New Hamas,” 27.

dissertation in which the Freedom House ratings indicate that civil liberties are more restricted than political rights.¹⁷⁷ There was a marked decline in restrictions on political rights during the 2006 elections. However, the political climate became increasingly restrictive as tensions between Fatah and Hamas have risen in the years since the election.

Table 5. Political Rights and Civil Liberties in the Occupied Territories, 1979-2011¹⁷⁸



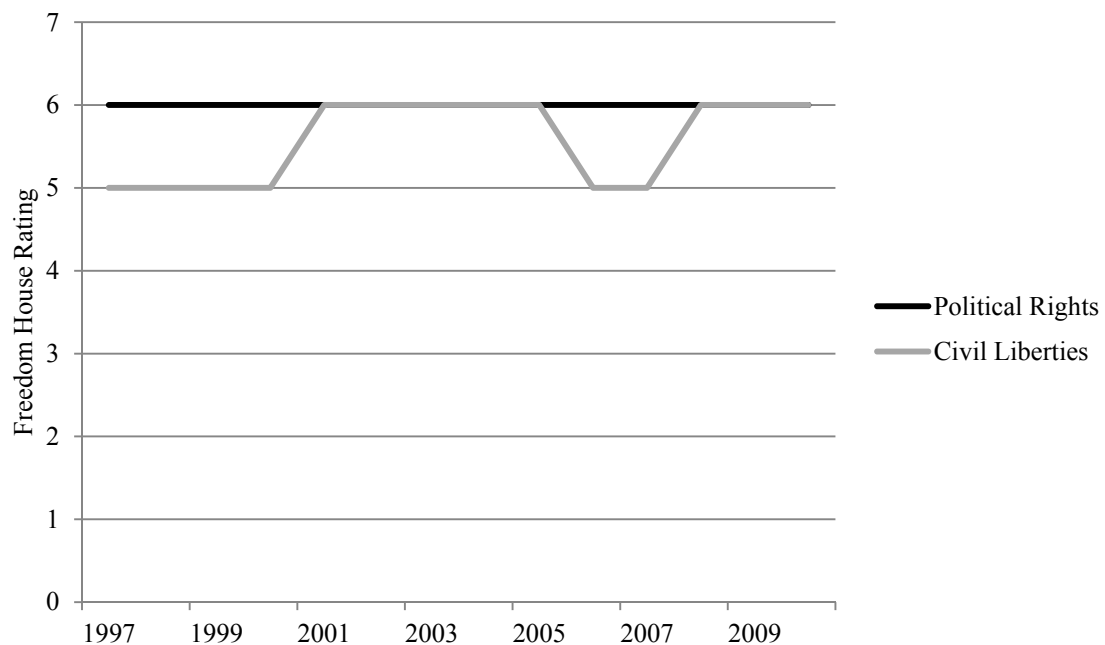
While the situation in the Palestinian Authority administered territories has, on occasion, shown signs of improvement, the same cannot be said for Israeli-administered

¹⁷⁷ Freedom House places questions regarding freedom of movement and availability of employment in the cohort of questions regarding civil liberties. See “Checklist Questions and Guidelines,” Freedom House, http://freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=351&ana_page=364&year=2010 (accessed 26 May 2011).

¹⁷⁸ The information in Table 5 was taken from the comparative and historical regional data of Freedom House’s Freedom in the World survey found at <http://www.freedomhouse.org/File/fiw/historical/FIWAllScoresTerritories1973-2011.xls> (accessed 5 February 2011). Freedom House categorized the West Bank and Gaza as “Occupied Territories” until 1996 (the pre-Oslo era), then as “Palestinian Authority Administered Territories” from 1997-2010, then for the 2011 report, reflecting the divided government, presented separate ratings for the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The 2011 political rights and civil liberties scores were averaged for Table 5.

Occupied Territories, primarily East Jerusalem and the Old City. Since Freedom House began differentiating between Palestinian and Israeli administered territories in 1997, the situation in Israeli-administered Occupied Territories has remained consistently as restrictive, if not more so, than in Palestinian-administered territory (Table 6). Palestinians living in Israeli-controlled territories cannot vote in Israeli elections, checkpoints restrict the freedom of movement, and the IDF often breaks up protests over settlement expansion and the separation barrier being built, which have all contributed to the unfavorable ratings for Israeli-administered territories.¹⁷⁹

Table 6. Political Rights and Civil Liberties in Israeli-Administered Territories, 1997-2010¹⁸⁰



¹⁷⁹ “Country Report: Israeli-Occupied Territories,” Freedom House, <http://freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=22&year=2010&country=7963> (accessed 26 May 2011).

¹⁸⁰ The information in Table 6 was taken from the comparative and historical regional data of Freedom House’s Freedom in the World survey found at <http://www.freedomhouse.org/File/fiw/historical/FIWallScoresTerritories1973-2011.xls> (accessed 5 February 2011).

Because of the difficulty in gauging the level of openness using the Freedom House rankings given the influence of the Israeli occupation, Lipset and Rokkan's four thresholds provide a clearer picture of the state of the Palestinian political system irrespective of the influence of the occupation (Table 7). In the late-1980s, the barriers to all four of Lipset and Rokkan's thresholds to participation were high. While they would characterize this as autocracy, it would more appropriately be described in this instance as military occupation as the Palestinians had no control over their own political future since Israel appointed municipal leaders and there were no national elections.¹⁸¹

Table 7. Lipset and Rokkan's Four Thresholds in the Palestinian Territories

Year	Legitimation	Incorporation	Representation	Majority Power
1988	High	High	High	High
1996	Medium	Medium	High	High
2006	Low	Low	High	Medium

In 1996, when the first parliamentary elections were held under the Palestinian Authority, more groups were able to present candidates for elections and the opportunity to participate in the elections existed for many more Palestinians. However, Yasser Arafat's Fatah party controlled the government, and he enjoyed nearly un-checked power as the PA president. Nevertheless, these elections marked a transition toward a parliamentary system.¹⁸² By the 2006 elections, the Palestinian system closely

¹⁸¹Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan, "Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments: An Introduction," in *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives*, ed. Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan (New York: Free Press, 1967), 27.

¹⁸² Ibid., 28. As was the case with the 1992 parliamentary elections in Lebanon when the Christians boycotted, the legitimation and incorporation thresholds were moderately high largely because of the decision of the Hamas leadership to boycott the elections.

resembled a parliamentary system.¹⁸³ Few barriers were in place to prevent any party that chose to do so from running in the elections and suffrage was nearly universal. However, the need for alliances between parties so that they could govern was still high. In fact, the inability of Hamas to craft alliances with any other parties played a key role in the eventual split between Hamas and Fatah. Likewise, while Hamas had expressed a willingness to be more open and allow check and balances on its power, Mahmoud Abbas and Fatah used their power not to check the power of Hamas but undermine it at every turn. What had looked like the promising beginning of a more open parliamentary era in Palestinian politics quickly spiraled out of control as the chasm between Fatah and Hamas widened and eventually lead to a divided government.

It remains to be seen what the chances of reconciliation between the two top Palestinian factions are. Events of the last two years are cause for optimism as violence between Israel and Gaza has declined, and Hamas and Fatah are discussing the possibility of a new unity government. In January 2009, Israel declared a unilateral cease fire which put an end to Operation Cast Lead.¹⁸⁴ While some rocket attacks have occurred in southern Israel, they have not been claimed by Hamas, but by smaller radical groups not affiliated with it and therefore, Hamas claims, not under its control. These attacks have not been enough to coerce Israel to break the cease fire.¹⁸⁵ Though the Palestinians living in Gaza have not been the victim of another Israeli siege such as Cast Lead, they have still had to contend with a divided government.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ "US Envoy Calls for Bolstering Gaza Truce, Ending Smuggling," *Jordan Times*, January 29, 2009, <http://www.jordantimes.com/?news=13884> (accessed 5 May 2011).

¹⁸⁵ "Gaza Violence: Hamas Declares Ceasefire with Israel," *BBC News*, April 8, 2011, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-13008789> (accessed 5 May 2011).

The two governments came together in early May 2011 in Cairo to sign a unity agreement designed to bring the Palestinians closer to statehood, which was promised by Fatah Prime Minister Salam Fayyad earlier in the spring.¹⁸⁶ The unity government plans to work on state building enterprises with elections to follow in 2012, and the initial overture toward reunification came from Hamas with the support of Egypt.¹⁸⁷ Despite the fact that Hamas was the driving force behind the reconciliation, Israel and the United States have both expressed concern that the new unity government will not be productive in attempting to craft a lasting peace.

On May 6, 2011, 29 senators sent a letter to President Barak Obama urging him to cut off aid to the Palestinian Authority if the unity government moves forward. The letter warns that any deal involving Hamas “threatens to derail the Middle East peace effort for the foreseeable future and to undermine the Palestinian Authority's relationship with the United States.”¹⁸⁸ The continued desire of American politicians to interfere in the inner workings of the Palestinian government is not likely to produce better results the second time around. Following the 2006 elections Mandy Turner argued,

The United State's uncompromising response to Hamas's electoral success will only serve to undermine democracy promotion in the region by showing other

¹⁸⁶ Marwa Awad, “Palestinians End Four-Year Rift at Cairo Ceremony,” *Reuters*, May 4, 2011, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/05/04/us-palestinians-reconciliation-idUSTRE7431VM20110504> (accessed 5 May 2011); Edmund Sanders, “Leader Confounds Both Sides with Plans for Palestinian State,” *L.A. Times*, January 21, 2011, <http://articles.latimes.com/2011/jan/21/world/la-fg-palestinian-fayyad-20110121> (accessed 5 May 2011). Robert Danin discussed the political impact of “Fayyadism” in an essay in *Foreign Affairs*. See Robert M. Danin, “A Third Way to Palestine,” *Foreign Affairs* 90, no. 1 (2011): 94-109.

¹⁸⁷ Avi Issacharoff, “PA: New Unity Government to Prepare Elections and Rehabilitate Gaza,” *Ha’Aretz*, April 29, 2011, <http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/news/pa-new-unity-government-to-prepare-elections-and-rehabilitate-gaza-1.358701> (accessed 5 May 2011).

¹⁸⁸ Josh Rogin, “29 Senators: No U.S. Aid for a Palestinian Unity Government,” *Foreign Policy*, May 6, 2011, http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2011/05/06/29_senators_no_us_aid_for_a_palestinian_unity_government (accessed 7 May 2011).

Islamist groups that it only accepts the outcome of free and fair elections if the victor suits them. Seeking to subvert Hamas by isolating it is a mistake, and will have repercussions well beyond Palestine.¹⁸⁹

A divided Palestinian Authority is not in the interests of Hamas, Fatah, Israel, or the United States. While the rift between Hamas and Fatah will not be easy to heal, it is the best interests of all involved that the Gaza Strip and West Bank are under the administration of one, unified Palestinian government rather than two competing governments.

Concluding Remarks

Hamas came into being as an alternative to the varieties of secular nationalist organizations in the Palestinian Territories. It became well-known and widely respected within the Palestinian territories for its provision of vital social services as well as its reputation for honesty and a lack of corruption. Though an aspect of Hamas' character has always been somewhat militant and anti-system, it did not become violent until several years into its history. While officially opposed to the peace process and intent on undermining Fatah's standing as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, Hamas was nevertheless willing to allow periods of calm during the Oslo era to allow elections to be held peacefully. The breakdown of the peace process by 2000 created a scenario in which the Palestinian people as a whole returned to violent attacks on Israeli targets, a trend of which Hamas was at the forefront. However, as the 2006 elections neared, Hamas began to recreate itself as an organization trying to moderate, become acceptable to the mainstream, and attain international legitimacy and respectability.

¹⁸⁹ Turner, 752.

Despite the predictions of some that Islamist groups with robust militias cannot moderate, especially if the state lacked the capability to force them to, Hamas' impulses toward moderation have been instigated by the organization and not at the behest of any other group.¹⁹⁰ This has occurred in part because Hamas is, above all, a pragmatic organization that is not oblivious to how it is perceived internationally. Its offer of a long-term cease fire was first extended to Israel shortly after it began its suicide bombing campaign in the mid-1990s. Despite the continued presence of virulently anti-Semitic rhetoric in the Hamas charter, the movement has shown that it is willing, if grudgingly so, to accept the reality of a Jewish state and to discontinue the use of violence if both sides can agree to the terms.

The violent clashes between Hamas and Fatah in the aftermath of Hamas' 2006 electoral victory reversed much of the progress Hamas had made toward moderation, especially without Fatah present in Gaza as a check on its power. Much as Gunning predicted, the authoritarian impulses of Hamas were able to flourish in the Gaza Strip without the presence of any opposition party strong enough to keep them at bay. However, the new unity agreement signed by both Hamas and Fatah and initiated by Hamas is a signal that both sides, but particularly Hamas, are aware of the impracticality of a divided Palestinian Authority and are willing to take steps to reconcile. Furthermore, the objective of Salam Fayyad, that is, a state-like apparatus which would be autonomous and ready for self-rule and independence, is not at all incompatible with Hamas' goals. In fact, Hamas has spent much of its 25-year existence becoming quite proficient at state-building with its commitment to supporting infrastructure, the public service sector, and

¹⁹⁰ Güneş Murat Tezcür, "The Moderation Theory Revisited: The Case of Islamist Political Actors," *Party Politics* 16, no. 1 (2009): 74-5.

education. Assuming both sides can downplay their ideological differences, the practical objectives of Fayyad and Hamas are not far apart.

Despite the weight of occupation on the Palestinian population and years of corruption and nepotism by the Palestinian Authority, Hamas emerged in 2006 as a moderating party that was committed to working with other Palestinian factions in order to improve living conditions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Initial attempts to undermine its authority did not change the party's commitment to Palestinian unity and strengthening economic, political, social, and cultural ties between the two territories. Unfortunately, the civil war between Hamas and Fatah has caused Hamas to retreat from a willingness to work with others with whom it does not share a common religious ideology to a more fundamentalist approach in which doctrinal rigidity is preferred over an acceptance of multiple points of view. The new unity agreement may be a signal that Hamas' recent fundamentalist bent was more a result of circumstances than a renewed desire for ideological purity.

Thus far, Hamas has shown that it is capable of peaceful participation in electoral politics, one of al-Anani's benchmarks for Islamist moderation. As with Hezbollah, its reliance on its militia is troublesome, but given its multiple overtures toward Israel of a cease fire, it seems likely that if Hamas found itself in a position where it viewed resistance as less necessary, then its military wing would become increasingly marginalized. What remains to be seen for Hamas is the degree to which it is committed to the democratic ideal of a peaceful transition of power in elections. The new elections called for in the unity agreement will provide an answer to Hamas' critics about its true commitment to democracy. The organization would be able to silence some of the

criticism leveled at it by outside observers if it abides by the results of the next round of elections, regardless of their outcome. As Gunning observed,

The real test will come in the next round of elections. Given the financial chaos that resulted from the boycott the international community has imposed to force Hamas to recognize Israel, and the resulting inability to make good on its election promises of increasing jobs and economic security, it is unlikely that Hamas will gain as many votes as it did in the 2006 election....If Hamas loses the next elections and bows out without violence, it will have shown that an Islamist organization is not inherently less capable of playing by the electoral rules than a “secular” nationalist organization.¹⁹¹

¹⁹¹ Gunning, *Hamas in Politics*, 188.

CHAPTER FIVE

Moderation Revisited

New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman's advice to Western foreign policy elites regarding the Arab Spring is three-fold: they should pray for Germany, hope for South Africa, and prepare for Yugoslavia.¹ Friedman argued in an April 2011 column that peaceful democratic transition, as occurred in Germany following the Cold War, is most likely in homogenous nations where ethnic and religious differences are not at the forefront of the nation's consciousness. The Arab countries most similar to post-Cold War Germany in Friedman's estimation are Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco. Friedman's less optimistic prognosis for the rest of the Arab world where populations are ethnically, tribally, and religiously fragmented is civil war—the Yugoslavian scenario. The only hope for a gradual transition to democracy in countries like Yemen, Syria, Libya, and Bahrain is the emergence of leadership committed to moving those countries forward, rather than dwelling on the past:

The Arab world desperately needs its versions of South Africa's Nelson Mandela and F.W. de Klerk—giants from opposing communities who rise above tribal or Sunni-Shiite hatreds to forge a new social compact. The Arab publics have surprised us in a heroic way. Now we need some Arab leaders to surprise us with bravery and vision. That has been so lacking for so long.²

One of the biggest questions that looms in the Arab world is where post-revolution leadership may emerge from. The opposition movements in many of these countries

¹ Thomas L. Friedman, "Pray. Hope. Prepare," *New York Times*, April 13, 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/13/opinion/13friedman.html> (accessed 18 April 2011)

² Ibid.

include a combination of unlikely—and uneasy—allies, including those who demand a higher profile for Islam in the political discussion.

The Arab Spring continues to bring the necessity of understanding Islamist movements into clear relief. In all of the nations where protests are on-going or have toppled regimes, Islamist groups are included among the opposition. While the opposition in each nation has a distinct list of grievances and is demographically unique, commonalities exist, including the demand for less corruption and an end to one-party rule. Many of the demands of these demonstrations are also shared by the three case studies presented in this dissertation. A comparative study of these cases provides insight into the trends and areas of divergence among them which may provide better insight into the Arab Spring as a whole. The six factors which have been considered in each case study examined in this dissertation can be applied to Islamist movements in any of the countries currently experiencing unrest to evaluate their prospects for moderation.

Lipset and Rokkan's four thresholds encountered by opposition movements attempting to participate in the political process and Freedom House's rankings of the level of political freedoms and access to civil liberties demonstrate the structural impediments to the emergence of new parties—both Islamist and otherwise. These structural barriers can also influence the behavior of opposition movements. The timing of the transition of each party from social movement to identifiable political party speaks to the relationship between the party and the political climate in each case. An understanding of the characteristics of each party—such as the manifestation of its religious ideology and the degree to which it seeks to work within or against the system—offers insight into its ability to cooperate with other parties with which it may

disagree. Finally, using Anani's three-pronged definition of Islamist moderation, it is possible to identify the degree of success Islamist parties have had in becoming accepted—and acceptable—actors in the political arena.

Trends and Divergence

The immediacy of the need for understanding Islamism and its prospects for moderation is frustrated by the simple fact that revolution and protest seldom lead to immediate resolution. This has been the case in the Middle East where the results of the Arab Spring will likely not be clear for many years. However, a historical analysis of these groups may provide some insight into the tendencies one might expect to see in the evolution of Islamist movements. The three case studies examined in this dissertation all exist in different contexts and with different grievances, yet there are some identifiable trends which can be observed in each.

Noah Feldman argues in *The Fall and Rise of the Islamic State* that their response to social upheaval is one of the key reasons for the success of Islamists in politics:

The Islamists' aims are both religious and worldly. To be sure, they seek to follow God's will. But they also explicitly say that they want to restore just government and world significance to the countries in which they live. Without these stated goals—and the chance that it might be possible to accomplish them—the Islamists would have little or no popular support. Political actors in the contemporary Muslim world, from ordinary voters to elites, take Islam seriously as a basis for government only to the extent that *they believe it can make a practical difference in places where both the state and society itself have fallen on hard times*.³

This has certainly been the case with the three Islamist movements studied in this dissertation. In each instance, these groups have come of age during periods of great social upheaval.

³ Noah Feldman, *The Fall and Rise of the Islamic State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 3. Emphasis added.

The Muslim Brotherhood has been in existence long enough that it has experienced two waves of upheaval, both of which have influenced its development. The first occurred during the 1950s when the Brotherhood was declared illegal by the Nasser regime and many of its members were imprisoned and tortured while in prison.⁴ The years that the Muslim Brothers spent in jail influenced both the moderates and the radicals upon their release from prison under Sadat's general amnesty in 1975.⁵ The second period of upheaval in the Brotherhood's history began in the mid-1990s when the Mubarak regime began implementing strict laws governing the syndicates due to the Brotherhood's more timely and efficient response to the 1992 Cairo earthquake.⁶ This pattern of repression continued until Mubarak was deposed in February 2011. Despite continued attempts to thwart the Brotherhood's participation in Egyptian politics, it has continued to grow and attract new members throughout the last two decades.

Hezbollah came into existence during the Lebanese civil war which resulted from the imbalance of power created by the confessional system.⁷ The presence of Palestinian militants which led to the Israeli invasion of southern Lebanon in 1982 also contributed to the violence.⁸ Hezbollah, and its predecessor and competitor Amal, were formed to provide protection for the Shi'ite population of Lebanon from other Lebanese confessional groups, Palestinian guerillas who had infiltrated refugee camps in the South,

⁴ Barbara Zollner, *The Muslim Brotherhood: Hasan al-Hudaybi and Ideology* (London: Routledge, 2008), 33 ff; Gilles Kepel, *Muslim Extremism in Egypt: The Prophet and Pharaoh*, rev. ed., trans. Jon Rothschild (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 28.

⁵ Zollner, 45 ff.

⁶ Hesham al-Awadi, *In Pursuit of Legitimacy: The Muslim Brothers and Mubarak, 1982-2000* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 156-7.

⁷ Hala Jaber, *Hezbollah: Born with a Vengeance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 10.

⁸ Ibid., 14-5.

and the Israeli army.⁹ The civil war and the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon would shape both Hezbollah's ideology and its relationship with its neighbors.

Hamas also emerged from a tenuous situation, though its emergence was years in the making. Many Palestinians have been living as refugees since 1948 when Israel declared its independence.¹⁰ The situation began to noticeably worsen after the Camp David Accords were signed in 1978 when Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin redeployed the IDF from the Sinai Peninsula to the Gaza Strip, making the occupation of Gaza more restrictive.¹¹ Hamas formed during the first intifada in the late-1980 and was radicalized by the "Iron Fist" policy of Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin.¹² The frustrations felt by the Palestinians toward their occupiers as well as the overwhelming force used by the IDF during the first intifada influenced Hamas and its reaction against Israel.

The second area of commonality among these groups is that while they all began as social movements, they evolved into political parties that participate in elections. The timing of this shift is important in each instance. Until 1984, the Muslim Brotherhood operated strictly as a social movement. However, a combination of the coming of age of the leaders of Islamic student organizations and Mubarak's preoccupation with

⁹ John L. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 152.

¹⁰ Ilan Pappé, *A History of Modern Palestine*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 140.

¹¹ Azzam Tamimi, *Hamas: A History from Within* (Northampton, MA: Olive Branch Press, 2007), 13.

¹² Ibid., 60-1; Beverley Milton-Edwards and Stephen Farrell, *Hamas: The Islamic Resistance Movement* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010), 53-4.

consolidating his own power within the ruling National Democratic party provided the Brotherhood the opening it needed to gain traction in Egyptian electoral politics.¹³

Hezbollah formed in the midst of civil war when elections were suspended, but when the Taif Accords were finalized, bringing an end to the sectarian conflict and redistributing confessional power in the Lebanese parliament, Hezbollah decided, after much discussion, to participate in the 1992 parliamentary elections.¹⁴ It would be over a decade before Hezbollah stepped out of the role of opposition party and into a position in the Cabinet.¹⁵

Finally, Hamas has been participating in municipal and union elections for a number of years.¹⁶ It boycotted the first post-Oslo parliamentary elections in 1996 because it did not want its participation to be mistaken for approval of the peace process.¹⁷ However, after the second Intifada, the peace process appeared to be dead, and Hamas felt that it could participate in the 2006 parliamentary elections without being forced to change its position on Oslo.

Third, while all three case studies, at some point in their history, could have been classified as anti-system, this is no longer the case domestically with any of them. The Muslim Brotherhood was militantly anti-system in the early-1950s when it actively

¹³ Maye Kassem, *Egyptian Politics: The Dynamics of Authoritarian Rule* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2004), 147.

¹⁴ Augustus Richard Norton, *Hezbollah: A Short History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 98 ff.

¹⁵ Eitan Azani, *Hezbollah: The Story of the Party of God: From Revolution to Institutionalization* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 230-1.

¹⁶ Jeroen Gunning, *Hamas in Politics: Democracy, Religion, Violence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 144; Khaled Hroub, *Hamas: Political Thought and Practice* (Washington, D.C.: Institute of Palestine Studies, 2000), 216 ff.

¹⁷ Hroub, 210-1.

sought to undermine the Nasser regime—including an assassination attempt against Nasser in 1954.¹⁸ However, the mass arrests and imprisonments that followed this period caused the Brotherhood to reconsider the nature of its opposition to the regime.¹⁹ During the anti-regime protests in 2011, the Brotherhood was an active participant along with a number of other parties demanding an end to the Mubarak regime. However, these protests could not accurately be called “anti-system” as neither the Brotherhood nor the other opposition parties expressed a desire to completely remake the way Egypt is governed. They were, instead, demanding changes to the Egyptian constitution that would allow for freer elections in which more parties would be allowed to participate as well as new leadership that would be more committed to democratic ideals. For its part, the Brotherhood has not suggested at any point that it wants to create a theocratic government in Egypt. In fact, the Brotherhood has made the decision to only contest half of the seats in Parliament in the upcoming elections.²⁰

Hezbollah and Hamas are slightly more difficult to categorize as anti-system or not because of the deep involvement of Israel in both instances. Hezbollah has repeatedly called for an end to the confessional system in Lebanon, which is a key element of the Lebanese political system.²¹ The degree to which this demand could be construed as anti-system is debatable because of the continued discrepancy between the

¹⁸ Christina Phelps Harris, *Nationalism and Revolution in Egypt: The Role of the Muslim Brotherhood* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Publications, 1964), 221; Zollner, 36.

¹⁹ Zollner, 45 ff.

²⁰ Thanassis Cambanis, “After Years in the Dark, Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood Struggles in New Role,” *The Atlantic*, June 8, 2011, <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2011/06/after-years-in-the-dark-egypts-muslim-brotherhood-struggles-in-new-role/240100/> (accessed 13 June 2011).

²¹ Judith Palmer Harik, *Hezbollah: The Changing Face of Terrorism* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 89; Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, *The Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah*, ed. Nicholas Noe, trans. Ellen Khouri (London: Verso, 2009), 74.

allocation of power in the confessional system and the demographic realities of Lebanon. Where Hezbollah has been consistently and unquestionably anti-system is in its position toward Israel. Hezbollah's leaders have often made anti-Semitic remarks and maintain their military wing in part because of the group's animosity toward Israel.²²

Hamas might best be categorized as a "soft" anti-system party during the Oslo period. While it rejected the two-state solution proposed in the peace process as deeply illegitimate and refused to participate in elections based on that framework, it nevertheless called for a period of calm before the 1996 elections to allow voting to occur with minimal unrest.²³ In the aftermath of the civil war that played out following the 2006 elections, Hamas would contend—and others would agree—that it was not they, but Fatah, who was the anti-system party during the civil war since Hamas was the legitimately elected majority party in the Palestinian Legislative Council, and Fatah attempted at several critical junctures to undermine its authority.²⁴

Another key element of the identity of each of these cases is the degree to which its religious ideology factors into its relationship to other parties. In each instance, these parties have displayed both religious fundamentalist impulses as described by Gunther and Diamond in that each of them has been ideologically rigid and refused to accept or

²² In 1992, Nasrallah called Israel a "cancerous growth that needs to be eradicated," and in 2000, he argued that Israel was "an illegitimate, aberrant, and cancerous entity, which we therefore cannot recognize." Nasrallah, 54, 221.

²³ Andrea Nüsse, *Muslim Palestine: The Ideology of Hamas* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1998), 241-2.

²⁴ This point was compellingly argued in David Rose's piece in *Vanity Fair* regarding the United States' encouragement of Fatah's efforts to undermine Hamas' authority. See David Rose, "The Gaza Bombshell," *Vanity Fair*, April 2008, <http://www.vanityfair.com/politics/features/2008/04/gaza200804/> (accessed 13 April 2011).

cooperate with those with more compromising attitudes.²⁵ However, they have also shown a willingness to work with other parties with whom they shared little in common in order to achieve common goals.

The Muslim Brotherhood has the longest history of operating as a denominationally-based. It has shown a willingness to work with other parties, even those with whom it had ideological disagreements at several points during its history. During the 1940s when criticism of the Egyptian royal family reached its peak, the Brotherhood and the Free Officers colluded to undermine the king and the Free Officers helped the Brotherhood set up the Special Apparatus.²⁶ More recently, the Brotherhood's tenure in leadership positions in the Egyptian syndicates in the 1980s and early 1990s also demonstrated its willingness to work with other groups to improve the quality of services provided by the syndicates to their membership.²⁷ Despite its popularity and the high chance of success it could have had in winning most or all of the seats on the executive councils of the syndicates, the Brotherhood nevertheless made the decision *not* to contest all of the seats, allowing other groups to be represented as well.²⁸ The inclusion of a Coptic Christian in a key leadership position in the Brotherhood's newly

²⁵ Richard Gunther and Larry Diamond, "Species of Political Parties: A New Typology," *Party Politics* 9, no. 2 (2003): 182-3. Gunther and Diamond define denominationally-based parties as those parties which have a religious point of view but are willing to work with other groups with whom they might disagree. Fundamentalist parties are more rigid in their worldview, hierarchical in their internal structure, and intolerant of other opinions, either from within the group or outside of it.

²⁶ Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of Muslim Brothers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), 24-5; Gudrun Kraemer, *Hasan al-Banna* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2009), 71, 74.

²⁷ Al-Awadi, 97-8; Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *Mobilizing Islam: Religion, Activism, and Political Change in Egypt* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 192

²⁸ Wickham, 186.

formed political party is another indication of its willingness to cooperate with other groups in Egypt.²⁹

If the Brotherhood was ever more a fundamentalist party, it was likely during the 1950s when oppression under Nasser was high and Sayyid Qutb's more confrontational ideology was prevalent within the Brotherhood. During this period, the group was much more rigid in its ideology and did not cooperate with any other groups.³⁰ However, the most fundamentalist Islamist thinkers in Egypt have not come from the Brotherhood but its more radical offshoots which were established in the 1970s. Influenced by Qutb, these groups shunned any attempts to work with others and held to a rigid ideology that suggested that all who did not adhere to their understanding of Islam were not true believers.³¹

In the early years of Hezbollah's existence, it attempted to set up an Iranian-style theocracy in southern Lebanon and demanded ideological purity from its members and supporters. When Hassan Nasrallah assumed leadership of the movement, he recognized the error of this approach which was costing Hezbollah much of its support in the South.³² Under Nasrallah, Hezbollah transitioned from a fundamentalist party to a more denominationally-based one. He emphasized reconciliation with the Christian population in the South at the end of the civil war and made some of Hezbollah's charitable services

²⁹ Cambanis, "After Years in the Dark, Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood Struggles in New Role."

³⁰ Qutb's understanding of Islam pulled the Brotherhood toward a much more rigid religious point of view. Additionally, because the Nasser regime had banned all other political parties, once the Brotherhood rebuffed the Free Officers, there were not many other groups to which the Brotherhood could turn.

³¹ These groups such as the *Gama'at al-Islamiyya* and Egyptian Islamic Jihad were more directly influenced by Farag and others like him who introduced the idea of *takfir* into jihadist ideology.

³² Jaber, 29-30; Thanassis Cambanis, *A Privilege to Die: Inside Hezbollah's Legions and Their Endless War Against Israel* (New York: Free Press, 2010), 73-4.

such as medical clinics open to all Lebanese citizens, though non-Shi'ites must pay a small fee.³³

Prior to the emergence of Hamas as a movement separate from the Muslim Brotherhood, Islamists in Palestine were often at odds with secularists. During the 1970s, the Palestinian Brotherhood clashed, sometimes violently, with secular parties in Gaza.³⁴ During the Intifada, Hamas refused to participate in UNLU, which was organized by Fatah.³⁵ However, as the 2006 elections grew closer, Hamas, like Hezbollah, began to evolve into a more denominationally-based party which sought alliances and cooperation with other Palestinian factions—most notably, Fatah. Unfortunately, the civil war which effectively divided the Palestinian territories led Hamas to revert back to a more fundamentalist approach in which Gaza became ruled by strict adherence to conservative religious teaching.³⁶ It remains to be seen whether the new unity agreement between Hamas and Fatah will cause Hamas to pull back from its rigid religious positions.

The path toward moderation in each of the three case studies has been uneven at best. The one area of success for each has been the ability of each group to peacefully participate in elections and accept the results of such elections. While there may have been violence or voter intimidation, it has generally been the fault of the regime, rather than its Islamist opposition. This is especially true of Egypt where voter intimidation in

³³ Harik, 73-4; Norton, 110.

³⁴ Tamimi, 39; Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 46.

³⁵ Milton-Edwards and Farrell, 54-5.

³⁶ Beverley Milton-Edwards, "The Ascendancy of Political Islam: Hamas and Consolidation in the Gaza Strip," *Third World Quarterly* 29, no. 8 (2008): 1598.

neighborhoods known to have a strong Brotherhood presence was widespread under Hosni Mubarak.³⁷

While all three parties have accepted the peaceful transfer of power through elections, the same cannot be said of the desire to give up military operations. This is the first key point of divergence among these groups. The Muslim Brotherhood is the only one of the three cases presented here that has not only given up its own militia, but renounced violence as well.³⁸ This is as much a product of the Brotherhood's experiences in Nasser's jails as it is a result of the political situation in Egypt. While the torture the Brotherhood endured during the 1950s and 1960s caused its leadership to question the wisdom of open hostilities with the Egyptian regime, Egypt is also the only one of these case studies which has not dealt with military occupation or excessive foreign intervention over the last several decades. Hezbollah and Hamas both created military wings in part to protect their constituents from the violence of other actors.

The structural impediments in these cases are also different. According to the Freedom House rankings, Lebanese society is the most open of the three studied.³⁹ However, when Lipset and Rokkan's four thresholds are considered, Lebanon emerges as the most precarious political system because of the likelihood of fragmentation as a result

³⁷ David L. Phillips, *From Bullets to Ballots: Violent Muslim Movements in Transition* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2009), 17-8; Bruce K. Rutherford, *Egypt After Mubarak: Liberalism, Islam, and Democracy in the Arab World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 167-8.

³⁸ Mubarak's decision to allow Brotherhood members to run on other parties' lists in 1984 was due in part to its renunciation of violence. See Rutherford, 84; Al-Awadi, 8.

³⁹ The Freedom House rankings, particularly for civil liberties, in Lebanon have consistently shown that country to be more free than either Egypt or the Palestinian territories. See the comparative and historical regional data of Freedom House's Freedom in the World survey found at <http://www.freedomhouse.org/File/fiw/historical/FIWAllScoreRatingsByRegion1973-2011.xls> (accessed 5 February 2011).

of the confessional system.⁴⁰ Though the confessional system allows all of Lebanon's recognized religious sects to have a place at the table, it also includes barriers which limit access to positions of power such as president and prime minister which are still assigned to specific confessional groups.⁴¹ Additionally, no census has been taken since 1932 which perpetuates the power imbalance among the confessional groups.⁴² This continued inherent imbalance in the Lebanese system is one key reason that Hezbollah is the least likely group to moderate in the near term

One final area of divergence can be seen in the relationship between the level of moderation achieved by each Islamist group and the amount of power accumulated. According to al-Anani's definition of Islamist moderation, the Muslim Brotherhood has moderated the most.⁴³ It both accepts peaceful political participation and no longer relies on a militia. It may or may not accept liberal democratic ideals in practice, but that is yet unknown because of the constraints under which it operated during the Mubarak regime. However, because of its renunciation of violence, it is, at this point, the most moderate of the three case studies in this dissertation. It has also achieved the least electoral success of the three groups. Both Hezbollah and Hamas have secured positions in their

⁴⁰ In 2005, with low legitimization and incorporation thresholds and moderately high representation and majority power thresholds, the Lebanese system would be classified by Lipset and Rokkan as one in which policies must be in place to prevent fragmentation. See Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan, "Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments: An Introduction," in *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives*, ed. Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan (New York: Free Press, 1967), 29.

⁴¹ According to the National Pact of 1943, the Lebanese president must be a Maronite and the prime minister a Sunni. See Jaber, 10.

⁴² Ahmad Nizar Hamzeh, *In the Path of Hizbullah* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2004), 13; Wright, 142.

⁴³ Al-Anani defines Islamist moderation as "the extent to which movements accept peaceful political participation, do not rely on militias, and accept the values of democracy and its various components, such as freedom, tolerance, and equality, irrespective of religion, ethnicity, or gender." See Khalil al-Anani, *Working Paper No. 4: The Myth of Excluding Moderate Islamists in the Arab World* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2010), 1.

respective governments' cabinets while the Brotherhood has toiled in the opposition since 1984, though this could change depending on the outcome of the parliamentary elections scheduled for September 2011.

Because of their continued reliance on militias, it could be assumed that Hezbollah and Hamas are at roughly the same place on the path toward moderation, but this is likely not the case. Hezbollah flatly refuses to give up its militia and caused the collapse of the Lebanese government in January because of fears that a U.N. report on the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri might implicate Hezbollah and its Syrian allies.⁴⁴ Meanwhile, Hamas has routinely offered to give up its military struggle against Israel if the latter would agree to withdraw to the 1967 borders, which opens the possibility that it may be willing to give up its militia bringing it closer to moderation.⁴⁵ While all three groups have expressed some degree of willingness to accept liberal democratic values, their actual track records are a mixed bag of follow through and the lack thereof. As events unfold due to anti-regime protests and other upheaval in the Arab world, these groups, and many others like them, may have a chance to finally prove their detractors right or wrong regarding the depth of their commitment to democracy.

Prospects for Moderation

Prior to the Arab Spring, the Muslim Brotherhood had moderated the most of the three case studies examined in this dissertation. While the Arab Spring could mean that more Islamist groups will moderate if given the chance to openly participate in

⁴⁴ Anthony D. Shadid, "For Hezbollah, Claiming Victory Could Be Costly," *New York Times*, 13 January 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/14/world/middleeast/14lebanon.html> (accessed 19 March 2011).

⁴⁵ Zaki Chehab, *Inside Hamas: The Untold Story of the Militant Islamic Movement* (New York: Nation Books, 2007), 105; Tamimi, 158.

democratizing nations, the Muslim Brotherhood paradoxically may not be one of them. That is not to say that the Brotherhood will become less moderate, but that the situation in Egypt may cause its moderation to stall. Hezbollah's continued moderation, already threatening to recede given the tensions between it and the March 14th Movement, may actually be a victim of the Arab Spring, depending on the outcome of anti-regime protests in Syria. While the Arab Spring may not play a key role in events in the Palestinian territories, Hamas could, nevertheless, emerge from 2011 with the best chance of moderation.

While there is no guarantee that Hamas *will* moderate, the variables which could promote its moderation are all present. Hamas has argued for many years that it would be amenable to a *hudna*, or long-term ceasefire agreement, with Israel assuming that the latter would end its occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and pull back to 1967 borders. This position was echoed by the Arab League in a proposal drafted by King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia in 2002 which promised normalized relations with all 22 member-states of the Arab League in exchange for Israeli withdrawal to the 1967 boundaries.⁴⁶ Furthermore, in a speech on the United States' foreign policy in the Middle East in May 2011, President Barack Obama stated, "We believe the borders of Israel and Palestine should be based on the 1967 lines with mutually agreed swaps, so that secure and recognized borders are established for both states."⁴⁷ If Hamas is truly serious about

⁴⁶ "The Arab Peace Initiative, with Comments from Jordanian Foreign Minister Marwan Muasher," The Jordanian Embassy, http://www.jordanembassyus.org/arab_initiative.htm (accessed 13 June 2011).

⁴⁷ "Remarks by the President on the Middle East and North Africa," The White House, May 19, 2011, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/05/19/remarks-president-middle-east-and-north-africa> (accessed 13 June 2011).

its cease fire offer, an agreement which recognizes a Palestinian state within the 1967 borders could compel Hamas to give up its military operations against Israel.

Another reason for optimism regarding Hamas' prospects for moderation is proposal for United Nations recognition of a Palestinian state within the 1967 borders that was approved by the Arab League in May 2011.⁴⁸ This proposal, which followed President Obama's speech, was also a response to Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad's plan to establish all of the state-like apparatus necessary in Palestine before elections to be held in 2012. Despite Fayyad's desire for a state, this proposal would likely not have happened if not for the new unity agreement signed in Cairo earlier in May between Hamas and Fatah.⁴⁹ Hamas has an impressive résumé when it comes to state building as they have experience building hospitals, schools, and housing, as well as managing infrastructure in Gaza. Assuming that the unity agreement between Hamas and Fatah can hold, Fayyad could have a natural ally in his state-building enterprise.

Of course, Hamas' path to moderation is not without obstacles. First and foremost, Israel is not amenable to the idea of dismantling most of its settlements in the West Bank or making land swaps that would allow it to keep some of the larger settlements, a position driven home by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in his address to a joint session of Congress on May 24, 2011.⁵⁰ International actors too,

⁴⁸ "Arab League Seeks UN Recognition of Palestine," al-Jazeera.com, May 28, 2011, <http://english.aljazeera.net/news/middleeast/2011/05/2011528202911144389.html> (accessed 13 June 2011).

⁴⁹ Edmund Sanders, "Leader Confounds Both Sides with Plans for Palestinian State," L.A. Times, January 21, 2011, <http://articles.latimes.com/2011/jan/21/world/la-fg-palestinian-fayyad-20110121> (accessed 5 May 2011); Avi Issacharoff, "PA: New Unity Government to Prepare Elections and Rehabilitate Gaza," Ha'Aretz, April 29, 2011, <http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/news/pa-new-unity-government-to-prepare-elections-and-rehabilitate-gaza-1.358701> (accessed 5 May 2011).

⁵⁰ Joe Klein, "What Bibi Gains by Misrepresenting Obama's Middle East Policy," Time.com, May 25, 2011, <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2074015,00.html> (accessed 13 June 2011).

particularly the United States, must refrain from undermining Hamas and give it a chance to prove that it can live up to its promises. Despite his advocacy of a two-state solution based on the 1967 borders, President Obama, in his May 2011 speech, admonished, “Palestinian leaders will not achieve peace or prosperity if Hamas insists on a path of terror and rejection. And Palestinians will never realize their independence by denying the right of Israel to exist.”⁵¹ The evidence does not support an assertion that Hamas “insists on a path of terror and rejection;” in fact, the evidence suggests that the president’s proposal may be entirely amenable to Hamas. The reaction to the president’s speech also demonstrated Congress’ lack of desire to work with a Palestinian Authority that includes Hamas, as nearly 30 lawmakers demanded that the United States suspend aid if Hamas becomes a part of the new government.⁵² Finally, Hamas and Fatah must find some way to put aside all of the anger and resentment that have accumulated over the past four years and actually abide by the terms of their unity agreement.

While Hamas has the clearest path to moderation, it still must contend with a number of factors that could hamper those efforts. However, given the importance of resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict, every effort should be made to ensure that Hamas is given the opportunity to prove that it is capable of governing responsibly. This may include a realization that whether or not Hamas officially recognizes Israel’s right to exist is secondary to whether it will agree to a cease-fire agreement and abide by it. Concerns about rhetorical flourishes that allow Hamas to keep the support of its base seem

⁵¹ “Remarks by the President on the Middle East and North Africa.”

⁵² Josh Rogin, “29 Senators: No U.S. Aid for a Palestinian Unity Government,” *Foreign Policy*, May 6, 2011, http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2011/05/06/29_senators_no_us_aid_for_a_palestinian_unity_government (accessed 7 May 2011).

superfluous when the reality of the situation suggests that Hamas' *actions* increasingly point toward acceptance of a two-state solution.

The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt had made the most democratic gains prior to the Arab Spring and while it almost certainly will not recede from its moderation, the speed with which Egypt plans to hold new parliamentary elections may cause its moderation to stall. The Egyptian people have already proven with their response to the war of attrition waged by Egyptian Islamic Jihad and the Gama'at al-Islamiyya in the 1990s that they have no patience for radicalism.⁵³ Because of this, it is highly doubtful that the moderation the Brotherhood has already experienced will wane. However, many observers worry that holding parliamentary elections in September as scheduled will benefit the Muslim Brotherhood and its newly formed Freedom and Justice Party and those who used to be members of the ruling National Democratic Party to the detriment of smaller opposition parties who will not have had adequate time to organize.⁵⁴ Many of the smaller parties are also protesting the order in which the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) has proposed to approach reforming the Egyptian political system.

SCAF currently plans to hold elections of a new parliament, which will, in turn, choose a 100 member council that will recommend changes to Egypt's constitution.⁵⁵

⁵³ Fawaz A. Gerges, *Journey of the Jihadist: Inside Muslim Militancy* (Orlando: Harcourt, 2006), 91.

⁵⁴ Ian Black, "Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood Poised to Prosper in Post-Mubarak New Era, *The Guardian*, May 19, 2011, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/may/19/muslim-brotherhood-poised-prosper-egypt> (accessed 20 May 2011); Kristen Chick, "Muslim Brotherhood Officially Enters Egyptian Politics," *Christian Science Monitor*, June 8, 2011, <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2011/0608/Muslim-Brotherhood-officially-enters-Egyptian-politics> (accessed 13 June 2011). This concern is not new. Jason Brownlee noted that Mubarak had created a *de facto* two-party system nearly a decade ago. See Jason Brownlee, "The Decline of Pluralism in Mubarak's Egypt," *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 4 (2002): 12.

Those opposed to this plan recommended that “a constitution be drafted first, because this is the best guarantee against a certain force—widely believed to be Muslim Brotherhood—does not impose its Islamist ideology on the next constitution.”⁵⁶ If SCAF’s timetable is followed, and the Brotherhood and former NDP members and supporters win the majority of the seats in parliament, the Brotherhood’s moderation could stall. Because the Brotherhood is a conservative organization, it seems unlikely that a parliament made up mostly of its members and old guard secularists from the NDP would make much progress toward a more democratic and pluralistic form of government.⁵⁷

The military could also pose an obstacle to moderation in Egypt. The Egyptian army has been at the center of Egyptian politics since the Free Officers’ Revolution in 1952 and may be hesitant to give up its extensive power. Though the military has assured Egyptians that it has no plans to nominate anyone from within its ranks for the presidency, the military is deeply entrenched in the nation’s economy, controlling up to one-third of all industry in Egypt, including many civilian ventures.⁵⁸ It is not unreasonable to think that the military would resist any attempts to reform the economy that include privatizing the industries controlled by the army.

⁵⁵ Gamal Essam el-Din, “Egypt Secularist Forces want Constitution First, Elections Later,” *al-Ahram*, June 11, 2011, <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/14072/Egypt/Politics-/Egypt-secularist-forces-want-constitution-first,-e.aspx> (accessed 13 June 2011).

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Frustration with the Brotherhood’s septuagenarian leadership is also evident in the movement’s youth, many of whom openly disobeyed a directive from their leaders not to participate in protests on what was called the “Second Day of Rage” in May 2011. Dina Ezzat, “Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood Battles Against Its Youth,” *Al-Ahram*, May 28, 2011, <http://english.ahram.org.eg/~NewsContent/1/64/13148/Egypt/Politics-/Egypt-Muslim-Brotherhood-battles-against-its-youth.aspx> (accessed 13 June 2011).

⁵⁸ “Egypt’s Military Has No Plans to Enter Upcoming Elections,” CNN.com, June 12, 2011, <http://edition.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/africa/06/12/egypt.election/> (accessed 13 June 2011); “Egypt’s Army Marches, Fights, Sells Chickens,” *Business Week*, February 17, 2011, http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/11_09/b4217012945891.htm (accessed 13 June 2011).

The greatest obstacle to forecasting the trajectory of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt at present is the uncertainty of revolution. The process of holding new elections and amending the Constitution—in whatever order those events occur—and economic reform and reorganization will not happen overnight. It will likely be years before any conclusions can be drawn about the role of the Muslim Brotherhood in a post-Mubarak Egypt. However, while further moderation may not happen immediately, the Brotherhood is not likely to regress to a fundamentalist orientation that would be highly exclusionary and divisive.

The group which has the longest road to moderation is Hezbollah. While Hezbollah has shown in some circumstances that it has the capacity to moderate—it participates in elections and cooperates with the Christian population in southern Lebanon—it has been unwilling to give up its militia and openly antagonizes Israel, most recently in 2006 with disastrous results. Since the end of the Israeli occupation in 2000, Hezbollah's identity crisis has caused the progress it had made toward moderation to cease and perhaps even decline. After the Lebanese civil war, Hezbollah began a process of "Lebanonization," in which it remade itself as a Lebanese movement, representing its constituents in the Lebanese parliament.⁵⁹ However, it also maintained its more pan-Islamic persona, influenced by the Iranian Revolution and Shi'a religious doctrine which perpetuated a narrative of resistance to oppression and persecution. With the Israeli

⁵⁹ Sheikh Muhammed Hussein Fadlallah, the architect of the "Lebanonization" of Hezbollah defined it as a process in which "the Islamist movement should examine the prevailing circumstances in Lebanon and formulate its strategy within that framework, making allowances for Lebanon's particular circumstances, its confessional sensitivities, its perception of its environment." See Muhammad Hussayn Fadlallah and Mahmoud Soueid, "Islamic Unity and Political Change: Interview with Shaykh Muhammad Hussayn Fadlallah," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 25, no. 1 (1995): 67.

“Yazid” vanquished from the South, Hezbollah has not been able to reconcile these often diametrically opposed aspects of its character.⁶⁰

Hezbollah’s refusal to give up its militia has most recently led to conflict within Lebanon. The March 14th Movement, led by Saad Hariri, the son of the assassinated Rafiq Hariri, won a major political victory in 2005 when Syrian forces were forced to withdraw from Lebanese territory. Emboldened by this victory, Hariri and his supporters began to demand Hezbollah’s disarmament, but these demands were met with violent resistance from the group. Hezbollah nevertheless joined Hariri’s coalition government after the 2006 elections, but also caused the coalition to collapse in January 2011 when its cabinet ministers resigned their posts. In June 2011, a new cabinet was appointed by Prime Minister Najib Mikati which included ministers from Hezbollah and its supporters in over half of the Cabinet positions.⁶¹ The makeup of the new Cabinet may lead to an increase in Syrian and Iranian influence in Lebanon, but this, as with many other events in the Middle East, may be contingent on the outcome of anti-regime protests in the region.

Syria’s president Bashar al-Assad has been the target of anti-regime demonstrations since March when protests began in the southern town of Dara’a. Assad responded to these protests with overwhelming force, laying siege to Dara’a in April and cutting off the city’s electricity, water, and telephones in a move reminiscent of his

⁶⁰ Augustus Richard Norton, “Hizballah and the Israeli Withdrawal from Southern Lebanon,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 30, no. 1 (2000): 25. Yazid was the son of the Umayyad caliph Muawiyya who killed Hussein, the Prophet’s grandson at Karbala in Iraq. Hussein became a revered martyr to the Shi’a and Yazid a symbol of oppression.

⁶¹ Laila Bassam and Yara Bayoumy, “Lebanon Gets Hezbollah-led Cabinet after 5-Month Lag,” *Reuters*, June 13, 2011, <http://af.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idAFTRE75C2FI20110613?sp=true> (accessed 14 June 2011).

father's brutal repression of an uprising in Hama in 1982.⁶² Despite Hezbollah Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah's open admiration for the anti-regime protests occurring elsewhere in the region, he has not been as supportive of the Syrian protests.⁶³ Nasrallah continues to openly support his primary foreign benefactors in Damascus against protests he argues will serve American and Israeli interests.⁶⁴ While his analysis of whom the Syrian uprising would benefit is likely true, Nasrallah is also mindful of the adverse affects Syrian regime change would have for his organization.

The Assad family are members of the Alawite sect of Shi'a Islam. The Alawites are a minority in Sunni-dominated Syria, which also has a substantial population of Kurds and various sects of Christianity.⁶⁵ If the Assad regime falls, whatever follows it, whether a civil war or a government more representative of the demographic realities of Syria, would more than likely not be as supportive of Hezbollah as the present regime. If Hezbollah felt additional pressure to disarm from outside forces it had previously relied on for support, the organization could move in one of two directions: it could finally bend to the pressure and disarm, propelling it further down the path of moderation, or it could feel cornered and become more confrontational, setting off a new wave of violence in

⁶² Steve Coll, "The Syrian Problem," *The New Yorker*, May 30, 2011, http://www.newyorker.com/talk/comment/2011/05/30/110530taco_talk_coll (accessed 14 June 2011).

⁶³ Margaret Besheer, "Hezbollah Supportive of Egyptian, Tunisian Uprisings But Not Syria's," *Voice of America*, May 20, 2011, <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/middle-east/Hezbollah-Supportive-of-Egyptian-Tunisian-Uprisings-But-Not-Syrias-122348949.html> (accessed 23 May 2011).

⁶⁴ "Lebanon Gets Hezbollah-led Cabinet after 5-Month Lag."

⁶⁵ Anthony D. Shadid, "Syrian Unrest Stirs New Fear of Deeper Sectarian Divide," *New York Times*, June 13, 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/14/world/middleeast/14syria.html?_r=1 (accessed 14 June 2011).

Lebanon. Given some of the dire warnings given by Hezbollah's leadership about the folly of attempting to disarm its militia, the latter scenario seems more likely.⁶⁶

Application of the six factors used to evaluate the prospects of moderation for Islamist groups to the Islamist movements at work in those countries where protests continue is hampered by the dearth of recent literature on these countries—not only the political climate of each, but also the Islamist movements operating within them. Of the other countries (Tunisia, Libya, Syria, and Bahrain) in which demonstrations are on-going, only two can boast any scholarly literature regarding their history and political development published less than a year before the Arab Spring began.⁶⁷ The most recent wave of literature on Syria's Assad regime occurred in 2005 with the publication of two superb biographies of Bashar al-Assad and his struggles to fill his father's footsteps as the leader of Syria.⁶⁸ The situation is even bleaker when one considers Libya and Bahrain, where the absence of recent scholarship is even more apparent.⁶⁹ The only in-depth study of Islamism that deals with any of these countries is Azzam Tamimi's biography of

⁶⁶ Prior to the 2005 elections, Hassan Nasrallah said at a Hezbollah rally that the party was willing to make concessions on domestic issues, then added that "the real danger lies in targeting the resistance." See Nasrallah, 347.

⁶⁷ Christopher Alexander, *Tunisia: Stability and Reform in the Modern Maghreb* (London: Routledge, 2010); Ronald Bruce St. John, *Libya: Continuity and Change* (London: Routledge, 2010).

⁶⁸ Flynt Lawrence Leverett, *Inheriting Syria: Bashar's Trial by Fire* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2005); David W. Lesch, *The New Lion of Damascus: Bashar al-Asad and Modern Syria* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).

⁶⁹ Dirk Vandewalle is the pre-eminent contemporary historian of Libya, and his books address the development of Libyan society under Qadhafi. See Dirk Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006). The most recent scholarship on Bahrain has come from foreign policy think tanks. See, for example, Dalia Dassa Kaye, Frederic Wehrey, and Audra K Grant, *More Freedom, Less Terror? Liberalization and Political Violence in the Arab World* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2008) which devoted a chapter to Bahrain and International Crisis Group, *Bahrain's Sectarian Challenge* (Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2005).

Rachid Ghannouchi, the founder of the al-Nahda party in Tunisia.⁷⁰ While there are many good historical accounts of the struggles faced by these nations, these do little good when attempting to address the current problems facing these regimes. Contemporary scholarship of high quality is essential to fully understanding the challenges faced by these countries.

Islamism, Moderation, and the Arab Spring

As of this writing, the Arab Spring has only managed to dislodge two dictators. Three others are perched precariously on the edge of regime failure, but they are still stubbornly holding on to power. In each instance, Islamists stand to gain political power.⁷¹ However, a number of obstacles remain between Islamists (and other reformist groups) and the reforms they hope to implement in their respective countries. As Thomas Friedman observed, Tunisia and Egypt represent the best chances of a relatively smooth transition to democracy. However, the military which helped oust the dictators in both

⁷⁰ Azzam Tamimi, *Rachid Ghannouchi: A Democrat within Islamism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

⁷¹ In Tunisia, the Nahda party, which was forced into exile in the 1990s, but its leadership has returned to Tunis and is preparing candidates to run in the October elections. See “Islamist Parties Gain Traction In Tunisia, Egypt,” NPR.com, May 31, 2011, <http://www.npr.org/2011/05/31/136829582/islamist-parties-gain-traction-in-tunisia-egypt> (accessed 10 June 2011) and Eileen Byrne, “From Political Prisoner to Power Broker,” *Financial Times*, June 14, 2011, <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/2e5af4b2-96a2-11e0-baca-00144feab49a.html#axzz1PGIIt0mU> (accessed 14 June 2011). In Libya, Muammar Qaddafi has strictly regulated Islamic practice, but the rebels in eastern Libya have already begun adopting new religious practices in the parts of the country they have liberated. See Mohammad Abbas, “Libya Clerics See Big Role for Islam after Gaddafi,” Reuters.com, May 22, 2011, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/05/22/us-libya-islam-idUSTRE74L1H220110522> (accessed 10 June 2011). The Muslim Brotherhood in Syria has been the victim of persecution under the Assad regime, but it is now a key player in the opposition to the regime. See “Syrian Brotherhood Says Assad Opposition ‘Peaceful,’” *Khaleej Times*.com, June 8, 2011, http://www.khaleejtimes.com/displayarticle.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/June/middleeast_June230.xml§ion=middleeast&col= (accessed 10 June 2011). Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) is taking advantage of the chaos in Yemen to seize territory along the southern coast near major shipping lanes. See Sudarsan Raghavan, “Militants Linked to al-Qaeda Emboldened in Yemen,” *Washington Post*, June 12, 2011, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/militants-linked-to-al-qaeda-emboldened-in-yemen/2011/06/12/AG88nISH_story.html (accessed 13 June 2011).

countries may be an obstacle to democratization in each instance. It is likely that the military will retain some degree of influence, regardless of whom they have as governing partners.⁷²

In *The Third Wave*, Samuel Huntington described five patterns of change in democratizing nations. While direct transition from an authoritarian regime to a stable democratic system is obviously the preferred outcome, given the weakness of the democratic opposition in Egypt and Tunisia, second try democratization, described by Huntington as the replacement of weak democratic movements with new authoritarian regimes until stronger, more successful democratizing agents emerge, is a more likely scenario in both of these instances given the continued demonstrations by protesters against the interim military leaders in each country.⁷³

The situation is bleaker in Syria, Libya, and Yemen where religious, tribal, and ethnic divisions are emerging in the midst of the demonstrations against those countries' regimes.⁷⁴ Jack Snyder warns of the probability of ethnic or nationalist conflict in

⁷² Noah Feldman, "Praise the Arab Spring, Prepare for the Arab Fall," *Bloomberg*, June 12, 2011, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-06-13/praise-the-arab-spring-prepare-for-the-arab-fall-noah-feldman.html> (accessed 14 June 2011).

⁷³ Samuel Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993), 42-3. In both Tunisia and Egypt, the anti-regime protests themselves were not strong enough to topple the regime. Only when the military decided it was in their interests to side with the people over the government was it possible to finally overthrow the regime. See Feldman, "Praise the Arab Spring, Prepare for the Arab Fall." Additionally, the lack of preparedness for elections has resulted in the postponement of elections or calls to postpone them. Elections have been postponed in Tunisia to give parties which once operated as illegal opposition parties more time to organize. See David D. Kirkpatrick, "Tunisia Postpones Election, Possibly Aiding New Parties," *New York Times*, June 8, 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/09/world/africa/09tunis.html> (accessed 14 June 2011). Many parties in Egypt would like elections there to be postponed because they feel they are not adequately prepared to move forward with elections in September. See Michael Birnbaum and Ernesto Londono, "Egypt's Liberals Worry about Loss of Clout as Muslim Brotherhood Rises," *Washington Post*, May 13, 2011, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/egypts-liberals-worry-about-loss-of-clout/2011/05/10/AF8C112G_story.html (accessed 14 June 2011).

⁷⁴ Friedman, "Pray. Hope. Prepare;" Shadid, "Syrian Unrest Stirs New Fear of Deeper Sectarian Divide;" Feldman, "Praise the Arab Spring, Prepare for the Arab Fall."

fragmented societies in *From Voting to Violence*: “Rocky transitions to democracy often give rise to warlike nationalism and violence ethnic conflicts....[T]he earliest phases of democratization have triggered some of the world’s bloodiest nationalist struggles.”⁷⁵ The breakup of Yugoslavia unfolded much as Snyder predicted and may be the best model for what is to come in the Middle East as Friedman predicted.⁷⁶ The fact that many of these nations are already on the brink of becoming failed states will make democratic transition even more difficult. Noah Feldman, in comparing and contrasting what happened in Eastern Europe and what is unfolding in the Arab world in 2011, observed, “In retrospect, the successes of Eastern European democratization were a near-miracle. The rise of the post-dictatorial Arab world may take an actual one.”⁷⁷

It will be years before any definitive conclusions can be drawn about the Arab Spring. However, one thing that seems to be a near certainty is that “Islamist parties have become a reality in Arab electoral space.”⁷⁸ In order to avoid repeating past mistakes, policy makers must move beyond black and white caricatures of Islamist parties toward a deeper appreciation of their histories and platforms. The Muslim Brotherhood has moved beyond the radicalism of Sayyid Qutb and become a party willing to work with many different groups within Egyptian society whether trying to reform the professional syndicates or calling for a new regime more responsive to the electorate. Hezbollah continues to stubbornly cling to its militia and exploit its close ties with Syria and Iran, but it has also shown a willingness to work with other confessional groups in Lebanon.

⁷⁵ Jack Snyder, *From Violence to Voting: Democratization and Nationalist Conflict* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000), 15-6.

⁷⁶ Friedman, “Pray. Hope. Prepare.”

⁷⁷ Feldman, “Praise the Arab Spring, Prepare for the Arab Fall.”

⁷⁸ Feldman, *Fall and Rise*, 142.

Hamas has been vilified for its unwillingness to accept Israel's right to exist, yet it has repeatedly offered to negotiate a long-term cease fire. It participated in free and fair elections and attempted to create a broad coalition government in the Palestinian Territories. If Islamist parties are now a reality that all must accept, then putting aside fears of the proliferation of Iranian-style theocracy in favor of clear-eyed, fact-based analysis of these groups must also become a necessity.

Noah Feldman offers a thought-provoking analysis of the development of the intellectual framework for an Islamic state, its collapse following the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, and attempts by contemporary Islamists to reimage an Islamic state in his book, *The Fall and Rise of the Islamic State*. Building in many ways on the conclusions he reached in *After Jihad* regarding the potential for successful Islamist governance, Feldman argues that ultimately, Islamists must be allowed the chance to govern:

Where Islamists win elections in a functioning state, the United States and other regional actors are sufficiently nervous about Islamist government that opponents—including those prepared to use force—will typically find external support for undermining the Islamists in power. This paradigm was set first in Algeria, where France and the United States supported the military regime in canceling the election results and squelching Islamist rule. We have seen it again in Palestine, where the United States encouraged Fatah to deny Hamas the role in government that was supposed to come with its electoral victory, ultimately providing a motive for the Gaza take over that split the Palestinian Authority in two. As of this writing, there is still no case where an Islamist government has come to power by peaceful means and been allowed to govern peacefully.

But so far, we also do not have examples of Islamist governments taking power under basically peaceful conditions and *failing* to govern. Until Islamists actually do have the opportunity to govern and so to succeed or fail, the public can be expected to continue voting for them. It is not that Islamists are less susceptible than other political movements to the test of effective government. It is, rather, that the appeal of the Islamists' platform relies so heavily upon the ideals of functioning government and a just legal system that the public will not

be satisfied until they have had a chance to see whether the Islamists can actually carry it off.⁷⁹

In all likelihood, the Middle East will not transition quietly from a region where authoritarian regimes are the status quo to one where democracy can flourish; such a transition, if it occurs, is more likely to be protracted, violent, and bloody. In the end, Islamist parties will probably emerge as major players in many of the countries currently experiencing anti-regime protests, especially where they have a history of vocal opposition to corruption, tyranny, and oppression. Despite Western worries about the endpoint of these protests, T.E. Lawrence's advice to his peers during the Arab revolt is as wise today as it was nearly a century ago.⁸⁰ Western governments must resist the urge to step in and solve the problems facing these countries. At the end of the day, it is the responsibility of the citizens of these countries to determine their own fate. They may not proceed as those in the West would prefer, but interference will not be beneficial to either Western interests in the region or the region itself.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 145-6.

⁸⁰ One of Lawrence's "27 Articles" in a 1917 edition of the *Arab Bulletin* was "Do not try to do too much with your own hands. Better the Arabs do it tolerably than that you do it perfectly. It is their war, and you are there to help them, not to win it for them. Actually, also, under the very odd conditions of Arabia, your practiced work will not be as good as, perhaps, you think it is." *The Essential T.E. Lawrence*, ed. David Garnett (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1951), 139.

GLOSSARY

Abbas, Mahmoud—Succeeded Yasser Arafat as president of the Palestinian Authority in 2004

Amal—Shi'ite party founded in mid-1970s in Lebanon; rival to Hezbollah

Arafat, Yasser (d. 2004)—Founder of Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO); signatory of Oslo Accords on behalf of the Palestinians; became first president of the Palestinian Authority (PA)

Banna, Hasan al- (d. 1949)—Egyptian school teacher; founded the Muslim Brotherhood in Ismailiyya in 1982

Caliph—From the Arabic *khalifa*, “leader”

Dahiya—Arabic, “suburb;” used specifically to refer to the southern suburbs of Beirut

Fadlallah, Sheik Muhammad Hussein (d. 2010)—Spiritual leader of Hezbollah, though he never formally joined the organization

Fatah—Largest party in Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO); political party to which Yasser Arafat belonged

Fayyad, Salam—Former World Bank official; prime minister of Palestinian Authority in West Bank

Hamas—Islamic Resistance Movement; Islamist group formed in Gaza Strip in late-1980s

Hezbollah—Party of God; Shi'ite movement formed in Lebanon shortly after 1980 Israeli invasion

Hudna—Arabic, “armistice;” a long-term negotiated cessation of hostilities

Intifada—Arabic, “to shake something off;” the name given to the Palestinian uprising that began in December 1987

Islamic Salvation Front (FIS)—Algerian Islamist party; achieved aborted electoral success in early-1990s but election results were nullified by ruling secular party

Islamism—any ideology which believes that Islam ought to be *the* vehicle for political and social change in society

Islamist moderation—Defined by Khalil al-Anani as “the extent to which movements accept peaceful political participation, do not rely on militias, and accept the values of democracy and its various components, such as freedom, tolerance, and equality, irrespective of religion, ethnicity, or gender.”

Jihadism—an ideology which seeks to rid the world of all un-Islamic influences, primarily by force

Jahiliyya—Arabic, “time of ignorance;” refers to pre-Islamic Arabia, but has been reinterpreted as anything un-Islamic in the modern world

Jama‘at—Arabic, “group or organization”

Jihad—Arabic, “struggle in the way of Allah;” sometimes also translated as holy war

March 14th Movement—Movement led by Sa‘ad Hariri in Lebanon to end Syrian interference in Lebanese affairs

Minha—Arabic, “persecution”

Mukhabarat—The internal intelligence service; common term used to describe such organizations in many Arab nations

Muslim Brotherhood—The world’s oldest Islamist organization; founded by Hasan al-Banna in Egypt in 1928

Nakba—Arabic, “catastrophe;” the scattering of Palestinians after Israel declared its independence and many Palestinians left, fled, or were forced from their homes in the fighting that followed

Nasrallah, Sayyid Hassan—Secretary-General of Hezbollah

Nasser, Gamal Abdul (d. 1970)—Member of the Free Officers; first president of the Arab Republic of Egypt

National Pact (1943)—Agreement in Lebanon that established the ratios for representation among the various confessional groups; called for a Maronite president, Sunni prime minister, and Shi‘ite speaker of parliament; established a permanent 6:5 ratio of Christians to Muslims in Lebanese parliament

Oslo Accords—Peace accord signed in 1993 between the Israelis and Palestinians; set the precedent of “land-for-peace” and the two-state solution; established the Palestinian Authority (PA)

Palestinian Authority (PA)—Interim Palestinian government created as a result of the Oslo Accords

Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC)—Legislative body created by Oslo Accords; the first PLC elections were held in 1996

Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO)—Umbrella organization founded by Yasser Arafat in 1964; included a number of parties, generally secular and leftist, demanding self-determination for the Palestinian people

Quartet—The United States, United Nations, European Union, and Russia; established in 2002 to address the Arab-Israeli conflict and work toward a peaceful settlement

Qutb, Sayyid (d. 1966)—Egyptian educator; later, the chief ideologue of the Muslim Brotherhood; active in Brotherhood campaign to confront Nasser

Sadat, Anwar (d. 1981)—Member of the Free Officers; Nasser’s vice-president who succeeded him in 1970; assassinated by Islamists in 1981

Shura—Arabic, “consultation;” the preferred method of decision making by many Islamist organizations, including Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood

Taif Accords—Brokered peace accord which ended the Lebanese civil war in 1989; amended, but did not abolish, the confessional system

Tahdi’ah—Arabic, “period of calm;” a unilateral cessation of hostilities; not binding or open to negotiations

Takfir—Arabic, “to label one an infidel”

Tawhid—Arabic, “oneness (of God)”

Wasat—Arabic, “center;” a party created in the mid-1990s in Egypt

Yassin, Sheikh Ahmed (d. 2004)—Leader of Hamas in Gaza Strip until his death via “targeted assassination”

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