FROM THE BULLET TO THE BALLOT:

THE IMPETUS AND EVOLUTION OF

ETHNONATIONALIST

SEPARATIST GROUPS


by

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ABSTRACT

This project has the objective of studying the drivers behind and motivations and goals of ethnonationalist separatist groups. Additionally, this project aims to offer an understanding of the evolution of ethnonationalist separatist groups from subsections of distinct and marginalized ethnic groups within a pluralistic, democratic society; to a paramilitary or terrorist organization; to a representative and capable political group which can eventually negotiate an end to the inter-societal violence and negotiate the creation of a peace and a nation-state; to, ultimately, a government for the new nation-state. This project looks at the theories of alterity, Orientalism, statehood and self-determination, fundamental struggles for resources and economic power, and irridentism to explain the impetus behind ethnonationalist separatist groups. This project examines the group Hamas as an ethnonationalist separatist group which seeks sovereignty and self-determined nation-statehood for the Palestinian nation.

This study hypothesizes that ethnonationalist separatist groups emerge within a democratic society when the minority ethnic group and the group in power face significant socio-economic and cultural differences, and that the ethnonationalist separatist group initially employs violent means to gain recognition. After a violent inter-societal conflict between the ethnonationalist group and the group in power ensues, the ethnonationalist separatist group forms a political party, which can operate as a governing body for the minority group and which can then negotiate and compromise peace and self-determination with the opposing government. Hamas has followed the expected evolution up through the final stage of negotiating a permanent treaty, a lack of

success also attributable to Israel's and the international community's consideration of Hamas as nothing more than a terrorist organization which has illegitimately seized control in parts of the Palestinian territories, and their subsequent behavior towards Hamas.

democracies versus their treatment under authoritarian regimes lacked realistic criteria and therefore simply would not work. Without her insight, I would have realized my error at far too late a time, and would have most likely given up this endeavor. Finally, I must also thank my peers and my loved ones for their support. Throughout this entire process, my close friends and family have supported me emotionally by driving me to continue my efforts and by acting as though they genuinely found my project interesting, which gave me the courage to carry on even when, in fits of despair, I doubted the value of my thesis.

Finally, I thank you, the reader, who by picking up and opening this thesis project have disproven my fears that no one would ever read this. I hope you find this thesis enlightening and usefully educational, and that hereafter you can consider the plights and actions of ethnonationalist separatist groups through a more understanding lens.

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<u>INTRODUCTION</u>

Nationalistic violence and terrorism have become very real and present problems in the twenty-first century.  Terrorism seemingly transcends geographical and cultural borders, presenting a threat to every state.  But several questions remain, such as what drives nationalist terrorist organizations?  Why do they resort to violence?  What values and goals do they cherish and fight for?  And can they achieve their goals without using violence?

This senior honors thesis explores the impetus behind and evolution of ethnonationalist separatist groups.  In this study, I search for the reasons behind the development of ethnonationalist separatist groups in democracies: what causes their formation, what drives them to violence, how do they move past violence and form a political party, and how do they democratically achieve their goals?  Additionally, I explore the questions of what counts as necessary preconditions for successful secession: can only ethnonationalist separatist groups within democracies successfully negotiate independence, does coalescence of opposition groups count as a determining factor, and can ethnonationalist separatist groups only achieve self-determination if they use violence to bring attention to their issues and to literally fight for independence?  To answer these questions I will examine an ethnonationalist separatist group, interpreting this conflict through the lens of *alterity*, concentrating on the risk of "Otherization" by both the minority and majority groups within any given society.  I will look for then trends and patterns, discerning a progression of and evolutionary trajectory of a typical ethnonationalist separatist group.

Ethnonationalist separatist groups exist wherever an ethnic minority group— distinct from the group in power on the bases of ethnicity, religion, language, and culture—faces repression and lack of voice. The situation of conquered territories and conquered historic homelands of ethnic minority groups facilitate the emergence of ethnonationalist separatist groups. Other ethnic groups remain disadvantaged minorities for centuries, all the while cherishing dreams of reestablishing self-determination and self-rule. Still other ethnic groups, under the modern state system, have only ever enjoyed official autonomy over their territories, at best. Other ethnic groups, such as the Palestinians, enjoyed complete sovereignty over their territory until a different group, the Israelis, conquered and established control. Out of a natural desire to maintain their hard-won territory and power, the group in power over the ethnonationalist separatist group invariably reacts to the group's efforts to break away from repression, most often responding to violence with violence. Eventually, both sides realize the futility of violence and come together to negotiate a ceasefire, which hopefully leads to a peace treaty and the creation of an independent, sovereign, self-determined nation-state for the ethnonationalist separatist group.

In order to narrow down a vast topic, this study only examines an ethnonationalist separatist group within a democracy, since democracies have a stronger tendency to listen and respond to their population's concerns, and might prove more amenable to negotiations and compromise to end an internal conflict. Accordingly, ethnonationalist separatist groups which originate in democratic

states stand a better chance of achieving self-determination than do ethnonationalist separatist groups in authoritarian states, who often face strong, harsh state responses to dissent and separatist activities.

I hypothesize that ethnic groups with crucially different characteristics from the majority, dominant group in power seek self-determination and self-rule, initially using violence to make their cases apparent and their voices heard. Then, following responsive violence and repression from the government, the ethnonationalist separatist groups recognize the futility of their violent tactics and seek negotiation, thus evolving from a terrorist group to political parties in order to express their views civilly and use the political process to achieve their political goals. Finally, once both the ethnonationalist separatist group and the government express a desire for peace, the political party representing the ethnonationalist separatist group and the ruling government negotiate and compromise. Ideally, the resultant agreement resolves the conflict with a treaty and creates a separate, sovereign, self-determined state.

This senior honors thesis examines the case of the Palestinians and the group Hamas within Israel as an exemplar of ethnonationalist separatist groups within democracies. Hamas, an ethnonationalist separatist group fighting tirelessly to reclaim the Palestinian homeland, differs from the representative, government-like entity known as the Palestinian Authority which contains members of the Hamas party but which has not established true autonomy or achieved a lasting peace with Israel, let alone achieve complete sovereignty and self-determination. In this case, as in many cases of ethnonationalist separatist groups, the majority group and regime differ from the minority group in terms of

ethnicity, language, religion, culture, history, and traditions. Additionally, this senior honors thesis draws upon various theories such as *alterity*, self-determination, and irridentism in order to better understand the impetus behind the emergence of ethnonationalist separatist groups such as Hamas.

<div align="center">LITERATURE REVIEW</div>

**Theories**

*Alterity, the Other, and Orientalism*

Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary defines "alterity" as "the state or quality of being other; a being otherwise."[1] In his philosophical work *Alterity and Transcendence*, Emmanuel Levinàs explored the binary nature of otherness—you versus me, us versus them, with no grey area or room for nuance. Levinàs states that language presupposes an "other," and that "I" exists because an "other" exists.[2] According to Levinàs, the concept of "other" "represents the phenomenon of the absolutely impersonal"; others exist as a matter of ontology, not because of ulterior, arbitrarily-designated classifications.[3] The theory of *alterity* has expanded beyond the field of philosophy into anthropology and political science, along the way losing its impersonal, objective, ontological character and becoming more focused on the personal, charged, binary aspect of otherness. In anthropology and political science, *alterity* refers to the creation of an Other based on fundamental, insurmountable differences.

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1. "alterity," Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary, accessed February 22, 2014, http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/alterity.
2. Levinàs, Emmanuel, *Alterity and Transcendence*, trans. Michael B. Smith (London: The Athlone Press, 1999), 97-8.
3. Levinàs, *Alterity and Transcendence*, 98.

Thus, *alterity* and Otherization have gained a more negative, sometimes even sinister connotation.

The theory of *alterity* and Otherization have led to the development of additional theories for more specific contexts, such as the Western Otherization of "the East." Edward Said developed the theory of Orientalism to explain the West's (or the Occident's) behavior towards the people of Asia Minor, also known as the Middle East. The theory of Orientalism has since expanded to encompass Western conceptions of and attitudes towards all of Asia, from the Egypt to Japan. Said states that Orientalism formally began in 1312, when, during the Fifteenth Ecumenical Council, the Catholic Church decided to establish foreign language chairs.[4] Orientalism, according to Said, presupposes "the very notion of a *field* of study based on a geographical, cultural, linguistic and ethnic unit called the Orient."[5] Orientalism heaps together studies as disparate as Islamic law, Tibetan language, and Javanese culture, making all peoples and aspects of "the Orient" a monolithic Other. As Said notes, Orientalism has "produced […] a kind of second-order knowledge—lurking in such places as the 'Oriental' tale, the mythology of the mysterious East, notions of Asian inscrutability—with a life of its own."[6] Orientalism creates distinction between the West and East, "us" and "them," a dichotomy that facilitates the attribution of different, even inverse characteristics. By creating a fundamentally different Orient, one has artificially created opposing values; for example, "[r]ationality is undermined by Eastern

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4. Said, Edward, "Orientalism," *The Georgia Review* 31.1 (Spring 1977): 162, accessed February 20, 2014, doi: http://www.jstor.org/stable/41397448.
5. Ibid., emphasis in original.
6. Said, Edward, "Orientalism," 165; Said, Edward, "Orientalism," 167.

excesses, those mysteriously attractive opposites of what seem to be normal values."⁷  Indeed, the "Orient […] became known in the West, since antiquity, as its great complementary opposite."⁸  The Orient became the inverse of the West, and thus supposedly had the opposite of Western virtues.  Such an evolution in Otherization, especially the attribution of opposing qualities from one group to its "Other," promoted the intensification of inter-group relations.

 But what drives one group to Otherize another?  Some psychologists attribute Otherization to unconsciously-operated processes, such as projections, defense mechanisms, and manifestations of various complexes.  In *Owning Your Own Shadow: Understanding the Dark Side of the Psyche*, Robert Johnson explores the concept of the shadow part of the unconscious and how it makes itself known. He writes that, "[t]he tendency to see one's shadow 'out there' in one's neighbor or in another race or culture is the most dangerous aspect of the modern psyche."⁹  The implications of projecting one culture's shadow onto another culture—of Otherizing— range from stigmatization, to scapegoating, to war. Johnson argues that, "It is not the monsters of the world who make such chaos but the collective shadow to which every one of us has contributed."¹⁰  In a seminar entitled "Your Unconscious—How It Reveals Itself to You," Dr. Philip Bechtel explores with students the nature of the unconscious, both personal and collective, and the impact the unconscious has on all interpersonal relationships. The collective unconscious exists in each culture and has particular attributes

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7.  Said, Edward, "Orientalism," 170.
8.  Said, Edward, "Orientalism," 171.
9.  Johnson, Robert, *Owning Your Own Shadow: Understanding the Dark Side of the Psyche* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 27.
10. Ibid.

according to that culture; all past, present, and future unconscious in turn permeates the lives of everyone in that culture.  Bechtel has suggested that the collective unconscious can, out of a collective inferiority complex, create a culture-wide defense mechanism of Otherization.[11]

The Otherization of one group by another can make the differences between the two seem concrete, absolute, and seemingly insurmountable.  The two groups cannot effectively communicate or negotiate because they cannot, on any level, relate.  Otherization often strips the Otherized group of its humanity and demonizes its members; this, in turn, facilitates repression of and aggression towards the Other group.  Majority groups within a society Otherize minority groups that have different cultures, languages, religions, traditions, histories, until the minority groups become inherently inferior and easily subjugated.  The minority groups reciprocate and demonize the majority group(s) which oppress them.  Eventually, the groups no longer see each other as compatriots but as unequivocal enemies, and tensions escalate until violence erupts.  At some point, some fundamentally different minority groups realize that self-determination would offer them safer, better lives; these groups then evolve into ethnonationalist separatist groups and seek independence and self-determined nation-statehood.

*Statehood and Self-Determination*

The abstract concept of "the state" makes a comprehensive, concrete

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11.  Bechtel, Phillip.  "Defense Mechanisms" (class seminar, Your Unconscious—How it Reveals Itself to You, Texas Christian University: Fort Worth, TX, February 17, 2014).

definition difficult to craft, yet political science operates on the assumption that identifiable states exist.  One can easily identify a "traditional" state by its patrimonial, arbitrary, absolutist, illiberal, and unstable characteristics.[12]  Max Weber has defined the "state" as "the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory."[13]  The state governs a people within a territory, and the state protects the people from external dangers in exchange for the authority to maintain peace within that territory via policing.

A state qualifies as a nation-state when its population identifies with a single national identity.  James R. Scarritt defines a national identity as "inherently political, emphasizing the autonomy and unity of the nation as an actual or potential political unit."[14]  A national identity has roots in "ethnic identity," which Scarritt defines as "constructed when some people self-consciously distinguish themselves from others on the basis of perceived common descent [...], shared culture (including values, norms, goals, beliefs, and language), or—most commonly—both."[15]  In modern-day international relations, a sovereign entity does not qualify as a true state until other sovereign states recognize and establish diplomatic relations with it.  Inclusion in international organizations such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the European Union,  the African Union, the Organization of American States, the

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12. Leftwich, Adrian, "Theorizing the State," in *Politics in the Developing World*, ed. Peter Burnell, Vickey Randall, and Lise Rakner, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 225.
13. Weber, Max, "Politics as Vocation," (1919): 1, http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/polisci/ethos/Weber-vocation.pdf.
14. Scarritt, James R., "Ethnopolitics and Nationalism," in *Politics in the Developing World*, ed. Peter Burnell, Vickey Randall, and Lise Rakner, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 131.
15. Scarritt, James R., "Ethnopolitics and Nationalism," 128.

World Trade Organization, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, and the Association of South-East Asian Nations further cement a state's position as a member of the international community and increase its stature and importance. Additionally, recognition by and achievement of member status in the United Nations (UN) has become the seal of approval, the standard, and the legitimizing prerequisite for statehood.

In the first Chapter and the first Article of its Charter, the UN establishes the equal rights "of self-determination of peoples" as one of its primary purposes and as a basis for mutual respect and friendly relations between countries.[16] The Random House Dictionary defines "self-determination" as "the determining by the people of the form their government shall have, without reference to the wishes of any other nation, especially by people of a territory or former colony."[17] Fifty-one states participated in the foundation of the UN in 1945; by 2011, the UN had admitted its one hundred ninety-third member state.[18] Since the inception of the United Nations, one hundred forty-two new, recognized, sovereign states have emerged, mostly out of the end of colonialism, but some out of successful independence movements, such as the Republic of Ireland and South Sudan. Some independence movements, the Palestinian chief among them, have achieved "non-member observer state" status, a designation that "upgrade[s] Palestine's status without prejudice to the acquired rights, privileges and role of

16. United Nations, "Charter of the United Nations and Statue of the International Court of Justice," 1945, 1 UNTS XVI, ch.1. art.1 sec.2, doi: https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/CTC/uncharter.pdf (accessed: February 12, 2014).
17. "self-determination," Random House, Inc., accessed February 12, 2014, http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/self determination.
18. "Growth in the United Nations membership, 1945-present," United Nations, accessed February 12, 2014, http://www.un.org/en/members/growth.shtml.

the Palestine Liberation Organization in the United Nations as the representative of the Palestinian people."[19]    However, while this "upgraded" designation acknowledges the state-like qualities of the entity in question, in this case Palestine and the PLO, it still denies that entity equal rights in the UN such as membership on committees and voting on resolutions, a privilege reserved for member states.

Since 1945, the concept of statehood has become a right worth fighting for. The number of recognized states has more than tripled since 1945, and ethnonationalist separatist groups dream of adding to the number of states by establishing their own state, preferably a nation-state.  Nation-statehood appeals very much to ethnonationalist separatist groups, for they identify as different nationalities from the dominant group and have the desire for self-determination and sovereignty partly out of the tensions and violence resulting from the difference in national identities.  Ethnonationalist separatist groups desire and deserve self-determination and statehood; they see themselves as insurmountably different from the majority and/or dominant group within their country, tire of the repression, and demand self-determination on the basis of essential differences and demand statehood on the basis of capability of self-governance as evinced by their respective political party wings, which negotiate for peace and self-determination.  Recognition of one state by others has become the standard of legitimate statehood.  Unfortunately for adolescent

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19.  "General Assembly Votes Overwhelmingly to Accord Palestine 'Non-Member Observer State' Status in United Nations," United Nations General Assembly, 29 November 2012, accessed 30 November 2012, http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2012/ga11317.doc.htm.

ethnonationalist separatist movements who have achieved autonomy, they do not

qualify as a state under the previously mentioned criteria.

Palestine has not yet become a state in the sense that its governing body

has not achieved sovereignty over its territory and people, and it has not gained

widespread recognition as a sovereign state.  Indeed, many states and

organizations regard the party in power in the Palestinian Authority, Hamas, as a

terrorist organization and will not, therefore, negotiate with Hamas.  While there

exist different criteria for statehood and checkpoints along the progression

towards statehood, an entity has not achieved statehood by twenty-first century

standards until it has achieved recognition of statehood by other states.

*Fundamental Struggle for Power and Resources*

An expanding vein of literature argues that a contest for resources and

economic power often underlies and can exacerbate inter-societal conflicts.

Mirjam Sørli, Nils Petter Gleditsch, and Håvard Strand have challenged the

theory of "Middle East exceptionalism"—which argues that conflict pervades the

Middle East as a result of unique cultural characteristics—and they instead argue

that there exists an "economic opportunity for rebellion" and that economic

development growth coupled with "longer periods of peace […] decrease the

likelihood of [inter-societal] conflict."[20]  However, they also found that "ethnic

dominance" of one group over at least one other within a society has significant

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20. Sørli, Mirjam, Nils Petter Gleditsch, and Håvard Strand, "Why Is There So Much
Conflict in the Middle East?" *The Journal of Conflict Resolutions* 49.1 (February
2005): 142, accessed March 29, 2014, doi: http:///www.jstor.org/stable/30045102.

impact on inter- societal conflicts, "while social fractionalization [does] not."[21]

Edna Bonacich has found that "economic competition" underlies and indeed

motivates "ethnic antagonism" within societies.[22] Bonacich defines "ethnic" as

"sharing a common ancestry," and she defines "antagonism" as "all levels of

intergroup conflict" within a society, "including ideologies and beliefs (such as

racism and prejudice), behaviors (such as discrimination, lynching, riots), and

institutions (such as laws perpetuating segregation)."[23] Macartan Humphreys

has studied "resource-conflict linkages," focusing primarily on the role that

natural resources play in internal conflicts, or civil wars.[24] Humphreys's research

finds that a "resource curse" exists and puts agriculturally-dependent and

countries vulnerable to external exploitation especially at risk of conflict, and

finds that such conflicts tend to end in a comparatively quicker military victory

rather than a mutually-beneficial treaty.[25] Ostensibly, then, inter-societal ethnic

and religious conflicts serve as manifestations of deeper tensions relating to

socioeconomic disparities and ongoing struggles for control of resources and

economic power, and competition for economic resources lies at the heart of

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21. Sørli, Mirjam, Nils Petter Gleditsch, and Håvard Strand, "Why Is There So Much Conflict in the Middle East?"
22. Bonacich, Edna, "A Theory of Ethnic Antagonism: The Split Major Market," *American Sociological Review* 37.5 (October 1972): 548, accessed March 29, 2014, doi: http://www.jstor.org/stable/2093450.
23. Bonacich, Edna, "A theory of Ethnic Antagonism: The Split Major Market," 548-9.
24. Humphreys, Macartan, "Natural Resources, Conflict, and Conflict Resolution: Uncovering the Mechanisms," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49.9, "Paradigm in Distress? Primary Commodities and Civil War" (August 2005): 508, accessed March 29, 2014, doi: http://www.jstor.org/stable/30045129.
25. Humphreys, Macartan, "Natural Resources, Conflict, and Conflict Resolution," 534.

inter-societal conflict and fuels the grievances and drives of ethnonationalist separatist groups.

*Irridentism*

Defining authority *WordNet® 3.0*, an English lexical database managed by Princeton University, defines "irridentism" as "the doctrine that irredenta should be controlled by the country to which they are ethnically or historically related."[26] WordNet® 3.0 defines "irridenta" as "a region that is related ethnically or historically to one country but is controlled politically by another."[27] Understandably, irridentism weighs heavily on the psyches of ethnonationalist separatists, and has become central to ethnonationalist separatist groups' ideologies and strategies. For the Palestinians, irridentism has become one of the bases for the Palestinian argument for self-determination and sovereignty. Indeed, the Islamic Charter, Hamas's constitution, states as its goal the Palestinian liberation of the historic homeland, called the *waqf*, meaning "sacred" or "inalienable Muslim endowment."[28] However, the Israelis have a competing irridentist mindset; Zionism, the movement which helped push for the establishment of Israel after especially World War II, states that there should exist the Jewish state of Israel in Judaism's historic homeland of the Palestine area. Clearly, irridentism strongly influences the ethnonationalist separatist groups' doctrines and goals.

26. "irridentism," WordNet® 3.0, accessed February 20, 2014,
    http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/irridentism.
27. "irridenta," WordNet® 3.0, accessed February 20, 2014,
    http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/irridenta.
28. Mishal, Shaul and Avraham Sela, *Hamas: A Behavioral Profile* (Tel Aviv: The Tami
    Steinmetz Center for Peace Research, 1997), 18.

**The Case Study**

*Hamas in Palestine*

Modern Palestine began its existence as an occupied territory in 1948 with the establishment of the sovereign state of Israel. Palestine as a territory post-1948 refers to the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip territories. Irridentism, nationalism, and Islamism lie at the heart of Palestinians' claims to Palestine and their efforts to win back their "historic homeland" and at the heart of their efforts to make a nemesis out of Israeli Zionism, the political movement to create the state of Israel in Judaism's historic homeland.[29] The Islamist Muslim Brotherhood (MB), which originated in Egypt, established franchises in Palestine in the 1940s and had 38 branches and over 10,000 registered members in Palestine by 1947, the year before the Israeli War for Independence.[30] The 1948 Israeli War for Independence cemented Israeli control of the Palestinian territories and established both the state of Israel and Israel's status as a strong regional power. Hussein Ibish (2012) has noted that the Israeli War for Independence, called "The Catastrophe" in the Arab world, marks the beginning of the Palestinians' and Israelis' conflicting modern historical narratives.[31] Israel's consolidation fractured Palestine and severed the direct connections between the Egyptian and Palestinian elements of the Muslim Brotherhood.[32]

29. Mishal, Shaul and Avraham Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas: Vision, Violence, and Coexistence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 13.
30. Gunning, Jeroen, *Hamas in Politics: Democracy, Religion, Violence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 27.
31. Ibish, Hussein, "Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Panel" (panel presented by the American Taskforce for Palestine, Washington, D.C., November 19, 2012).
32. Gunning, Jeroen, *Hamas in Politics*, 27.

The Palestinians have and have had little in common with the Israelis ruling them. The preexisting cultural differences compounded with socioeconomic disparities between the groups increased the "psychological, social, economic and political distance."[33] The Palestinians became effectively excluded from improvements in economic progress, a factor that increased Palestinians' sense of alienation, which in turn became "the strong driving force for [the Palestinians] to resent, reject, and organize."[34] The Palestinians, facing such hardship and disparity, realized that they needed "to preserve themselves as individuals, preserve their identity, and [preserve] their consciousness, even if [that meant] coming into open clashes with those they perceive[d] as their 'alienators.'"[35] Some Palestinians sought preservation through diaspora, while others resolved to stay and fight for reclamation of their homeland in order to preserve Palestine and the Palestinian identity.

Terrorism in Palestine began in the late 1940s as "sporadic and organized terrorist attacks combined with criminal activity," in a period known as the Fedayeen period, which lasted until 1958.[36] During the Fedayeen period, the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) became "the strongest political force in the Gaza Strip" and officially "did not advocate military activities in the West Bank."[37] This progressive stance for the time indicated a maturing, pragmatic leadership within

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33. Ahmad, Hisham H., *Hamas: From Religious Salvation to Political Transformation* (Jerusalem: Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs, 1994), 25.
34. Ahmad, Hisham H., *Hamas: From Religious Salvation to Political Transformation*, 25.
35. Ibid.
36. Art, Robert J. and Louise Richardson, *Democracy and Counterterrorism: Lessons from the Past* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2007), 262.
37. Ahmad, Hisham H., *Hamas: From Religious Salvation to Political Transformation*, 14-5.

the MB and succeeded in garnering more support for the MB regionally; some

MB members from the Fedayeen period later became senior-level members of the

Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).[38]  By the late 1950s, some MB members

had become frustrated with the official anti-violence stance and set up a separate,

more militant Palestinian nationalist group called Fatah.[39]  Between 1959 and

1973, terrorism became organized and widespread in Palestine, and such

groupsas the Palestine Liberation Organization, the Palestine Liberation Army

(PLA), and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) formed

during this period.[40]  Additionally, both "'internal' terrorist attacks (from within

Israel, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip)" and "'external' terrorist attacks" by

displaced Palestinians throughout the region occurred during this period.[41]

Founded in 1964, the PLO and the PLA—the PLO's military wing—arose as

a response to the MB's lack of success in the fight for the Palestinian homeland.[42]

In its National Charter, the PLO articulated the core values of Palestinian

nationalism, "defined the Palestinian people," determined their rightful

homeland as the territory within the "Mandatory borders," demanded return to

the pre-1948 status quo, and "sanctioned 'armed struggle' as the only way to its

liberation."[43]  The PLO became the first group to represent Palestinian interests

and nationalism.  The PLO beat the MB in municipal elections after the 1967

38. Ahmad, Hisham H., *Hamas: From Religious Salvation to Political Transformation*, 14-5.
39. Gunning, Jeroen, *Hamas in Politics*, 27.
40. Art, Robert J. and Louise Richardson, *Democracy and Counterterrorism*, 262.
41.  Art, Robert J. and Louise Richardson, *Democracy and Counterterrorism*, 262-3.
42.  Art, Robert J. and Louise Richardson, *Democracy and Counterterrorism*, 262.
43.  Mishal, Shaul and Avraham Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas: Vision, Violence, and Coexistence,* 14.

Six-Day War; by 1974, the PLO had achieved recognition as "the sole, legitimate representative" of the Palestinian people.[44]  The PLO usurped the MB's place in Palestinian society, but the small vacuum left in the wake of this turnover created room for an evolution of the MB.

The MB and the PLO vied for power throughout the 1970s, especially in municipal and school elections.  By 1987, Palestinian frustrations over the seemingly endless Israeli occupation coupled with terrorism's failure to liberate Palestine and the injustice of expatriated Palestinian leadership controlling the territories from abroad erupted and culminated in a "popular uprising," or Intifada.[45]  The Intifada stoked the fires of Palestinian nationalism and encouraged the MB to seize the opportunity and reassert its presence within Palestinian society by establishing a "paramilitary wing," Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya (Hamas, "Movement of the Islamic Resistance").[46]  Hamas capitalized on the rise of outer jihadism and Islamism spreading throughout the region and represented the MB's acknowledgement that armed resistance, for the foreseeable future, offered the only chance of successful liberation.[47]  Hamas began to actively fight Israeli occupation of Palestine during the Intifada while simultaneously fighting the PLO for control of Palestinian society.[48]  At this time the PLO began spreading rumors that Hamas actually represented an Israeli attempt to fragment and weaken the Palestinian opposition.[49]  The internal

44. Gunning, Jeroen, *Hamas in Politics*, 29.
45. Art, Robert J. and Louise Richardson, *Democracy and Counterterrorism*, 268.
46. Gunning, Jeroen, *Hamas in Politics*, 34; Gunning, Jeroen, *Hamas in Politics*, 26.
47. Gunning, Jeroen, *Hamas in Politics*, 38.
48. Mishal, Shaul and Avraham Sela, *Hamas: A Behavioral Profile*, 29.
49. Ibid.

struggles between the MB, the PLO, and Hamas demonstrate a divergence between minor ideological points and, in the long run, do nothing constructive towards their overarching goal of achieving a sovereign, liberated Palestine. The Palestinian ethnonationalist separatist groups' inability to compromise with each other impedes their efforts to present a united front to Israel, which undermines their efforts to attain sovereignty.

Hamas, unlike the PLO, absolutely advocated a one-state solution. Hamas's Islamic Charter established Palestine as the sacred *waqf* and declared that giving up even an inch of their rightful territory "was absolutely unlawful and forbidden by the Islamic law," eradicating the possibility for a two-state solution.[50] The Islamic Charter also established *shari'a* law as Hamas's basis, giving the group legitimacy on religious grounds and giving it appeal to Islamists and jihadists throughout the region.[51] Within a few years, Hamas overtook the MB as the preeminent Islamist party, taking over the MB's traditional societal roles, growing the movement and the party infrastructure, and allowing involvement by non-members; all of these developments furthered Hamas's support among the Palestinian populace and furthered Hamas's growth as a political party.[52] The PLO's participation in 1993 in the U.S.-led peace talks with the Israelis known as the Oslo Accords turned much of the Palestinian people against the PLO for risking concession of the *waqf*.[53] Hamas, conversely, "vowed to resist the [first Oslo Accord] and continue fighting occupation by any means

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50. Mishal, Shaul and Avraham Sela, *Hamas: A Behavioral Profile*, 14.
51. Ibid.
52. Gunning, Jeroen, *Hamas in Politics*, 39.
53. Ahmad, Hisham H., *Hamas: From Religious Salvation to Political Transformation*, 83.

necessary," a resolution that gained Hamas much public support and drew the anti-Oslo Accord factions within the PLO to ally with Hamas, a move which "marked the entry of Hamas into mainstream Palestinian politics."[54]  During the Oslo peace process—1993 to 2000—Hamas's overall power decreased due to Israeli and Palestinian Authority efforts, including arrests of violent Palestinian nationalists and the forced closings of many Islamic charitable and educational institutions for allegedly purveying terrorism.[55]

Tensions between Hamas and the PLO erupted into violence in the mid-1990s, putting further pressure on Hamas to do well in the 1996 Palestinian legislative elections.  Hamas had grown and, by this time, included Palestinian nationalists from all sectors of Palestinian society, broadening Hamas's influence while simultaneously inhibiting its ability to efficiently make decisions.  Discord and indecision took hold of Hamas, with leaders and members arguing over which direction Hamas should take in the future, while leaders in Palestine and leaders in exile vied for power, while the military and political factions within Hamas bickered over the appropriate course of action.[56]  The Palestinian Authority—created by the Oslo Accords— and the concentration of all power into the hands of a few Fatah and PLO members weakened Palestinian civil society, which drove the Palestinians to seek help from Hamas-run charities.[57]  Hamas regained its grassroots support, winning municipal, school, and professional

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54. Ahmad, Hisham H., *Hamas: From Religious Salvation to Political Transformation*, 83.; Gunning, Jeroen, *Hamas in Politics*, 42.
55. Roy, Sara, "Hamas and the Political Transformation(s) of Political Power in Palestine" (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, February 17, 2004), accessed November 17 2012, doi: http://carnegieendowment.org/pdf/files/20014-02-17-roy.pdf.
56. Gunning, Jeroen, *Hamas in Politics*, 40-1.
57. Gunning, Jeroen, *Hamas in Politics*, 45.

union elections over Fatah, which compounded Hamas's scope of influence and power within Palestinian society.[58]

By the 1996 elections, Hamas decided that its participation as a party would condone the Palestinian Authority and, by extension, the Oslo Accords, so Hamas did not run candidates on the 1996 electoral ballots.  However, Hamas did encourage its members to vote in the election, indicating acapacity for "politics of adjustment," which allowed Hamas to retain its ideological integrity (by not running candidates) while still avoiding marginalization by or confrontation with the mainstream by encouraging its membership to vote, which allowed Hamas to become legitimately, more officially involved in Palestinian governance and society and marked the emergence of a more democratic Hamas.[59]  Such participation in Palestinian democratic processes, albeit participation as one of Hamas's two political pillars, with "unflinching opposition to the Israeli opposition" constituting the other, central pillar.[60]

The promised socio-economic improvements which would supposedly follow the Oslo Accords never materialized, and in fact Palestine post-Oslo Accords suffered terribly: by 2000, unemployment had increased nine-fold, the Palestinian Gross National Product had decreased eighteen percent, and nearly twenty percent of Palestinians "lived below the 'poverty line,' defined as a 'household with two adults and four children with a yearly consumption of less than $2.10/day."[61]  By 2000, the Palestinian territories had three times as many

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58. Gunning, Jeroen, *Hamas in Politics*, 45.
59. Mishal, Shaul and Avraham Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas: Vision, Violence, and Coexistence*, 148.
60. Gunning, Jeroen, *Hamas in Politics*, viii.
61. Gunning, Jeroen, *Hamas in Politics*, 49.

Israeli settlers as they did at the beginning of the Oslo Accords.[62]  Such injustices, inequalities, and the incessant Israeli occupation eroded Fatah's and the Palestinian Authority's legitimacy and sparked another conflict, the al-Aqsa Intifada, in October 2000.  Internal tensions within Fatah led to the marginalization of Fatah's leadership, including Yassir Arafat's, while the Israeli strategy of targeting Palestinian Authority infrastructure further weakened the Palestinian Authority's perceived and real power.[63]  Hamas seized the opportunity during the al-Aqsa Intifada, "carry[ing] out resistance activities with impunity" and "cement[ing] its place as one of the central political players" in Palestine.[64]  Israel's response of killing Hamas's terrorist activists actually fueled Palestinians' outrage at the oppressive Israeli occupation and increased the publics' support for Hamas.[65]

Israel "won" the al-Aqsa Intifada allegedly by means of its aggressive counterterrorism tactics, assassinating Hamas's leadership, boycotting Palestinian goods, cutting electricity to the territories, preemptively attacking, arresting known and suspected members and leaders of Hamas, and punishing militants' families, relatives, and neighbors.  Israel effectively exhausted Hamas's institutional abilities but could not extinguish Palestinians' will and spirit of resistance.  Hamas could not realistically "claim" military victory, but had won the hearts and minds of the Palestinians by proving itself as a worthy champion of the people and their nationalist cause, especially since many Israeli settlers

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62. Gunning, Jeroen, *Hamas in Politics*, 49.
63. Ibid.
64. Ibid.
65. Gunning, Jeroen, *Hamas in Politics*, 50.

withdrew from the Palestinian territories after the al-Aqsa Intifada, which proved

to Hamas's supporters that "violence was necessary to force Israel into

concessions."[66]  Fatah, conversely, continued to lose power and influence after

the al-Aqsa Intifada, losing public support and its leader, Palestinian Authority

President Yassir Arafat, when he died in November 2004.

By the 2006 Palestinian legislative elections, many Palestinians had tired

of Fatah and the Palestinian Authority's apparent inability to uphold their

promises to better Palestinian society and had become deeply impressed with

Hamas's ability to survive as a party independent of the Palestinian Authority

and of other Palestinian organizations, thereby demonstrating prudence and a

capacity for good governance.  Hamas participated in the 2006 legislative

elections, demonstrating intellectual growth and the wherewithal to capitalize on

opportunity.  While Hamas stayed out of the 1996 elections for ideological

reasons, by 2006 Hamas had evolved into a capable governing entity and a

mature party willing to directly and democratically shape Palestine's future.

Hamas abided by the final al-Aqsa Intifada ceasefire agreement, drew upon its

grassroots support, and stated that Hamas would accept a two-state solution as

an acceptable short-term fix.[67]  The victory awarded Hamas seventy-four out of

one hundred thirty-two seats on the Palestinian Legislative Council (to Fatah's

forty-five), a majority of the sixty-six proportional representation seats on the

Council, and a multitude of local district seats.[68]  The elections, which had a

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66. Gunning, Jeroen, *Hamas in Politics*, 52.
67. Ibid.
68. Abunimah, Ali, "Shifting Attitudes Towards Hamas," in *Alternatives International*
    (Quebec: Montreal, March 13, 2008), accessed October 26, 2012, doi:
    http://www.alterinter.org/spip.php?article1880.

seventy-five percent voter turnout and qualified as free and fair by international observers, gave Hamas effective control of the Gaza Strip but kept the West Bank under Fatah's jurisdiction.[69]

Unfortunately, Israel did not respond positively to Hamas's democratic rise to power, and in fact became immediately more "confrontational" towards Hamas after their 2006 legislative electoral victory.[70]  Israel's hostile response to "the democratically-elected Palestinian government headed by Hamas in 2006, and towards Palestinian national coherence—legal, territorial, political, and economic—has been a major obstacle to substantive peacemaking."[71]  Most Western countries, including the United States, followed Israel's lead and continued to consider Hamas a terrorist organization rather than a democratically-elected and popularly-supported party representing the Palestinian people.  Instead, the countries that disregarded Hamas chose to continue to support Fatah, despite its loss of power, influence, and relative governing legitimacy.[72]

In 2008 the al-Aqsa Intifada ended with a Hamas-Israeli ceasefire agreement; Israel had had firm objections to dealings with Hamas, refusing to recognize the organization as a legitimate, democratically-elected governing force in Palestine, but Saudi, Qatari, and Egyptian intercession allowed for Hamas and Fatah to come together and negotiate a six-month ceasefire with Israel in June

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69. Abunimah, Ali, "Shifting Attitudes Towards Hamas."
70. Nir, Ori, "Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Panel" (panel discussion, Americans for Peace Now, The Washington Campus: Washington, DC, November 19, 2012).
71. Zuhur, Sherifa, "Hamas and Israel: Conflicting Strategies of Group-Based Politics," viii.
72. Abunimah, Ali, "Shifting Attitudes Towards Hamas."

2008.[73] After the ceasefire ran out, Israel resumed bombing the Gaza Strip in early 2009 in a preemptive measure "to stop rockets from being fired on its southern communities"; Hamas responded in July 2009 by officially suspending its rocket attacks on Israel and opted instead towards a more grassroots approach of fostering a "culture of resistance" to challenge the Israeli occupation.[74] Hamas considered armed resistance as "'still important and legitimate,'" but it chose to rather emphasize "'cultural resistance,'" especially since the situation "required a stoppage of rockets" and "[a]fter the war, the fighters needed a break and the people needed a break.'"[75] Hamas's decision to focus on grassroots movements in order to give its people a break indicates a sensitivity to its constituency and pragmatism, placing the future well-being of the Palestinian people and the Palestinian state above the desire for violent vengeance in the short term.[76]

After the regional unrest characteristic of the Arab Spring, which began in 2011, Israel assassinated a key leader within Hamas's military structure in late 2012, and Hamas responded by targeting missiles at Israel from within the Gaza Strip. Israel purportedly aimed "to defend [its] citizens in southern Israel" and claimed that "there [was] no alternative" to military operations in this situation.[77] The Israeli Minister for Public Diplomacy to the United States described the

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73. Zuhur, Sherifa, "Hamas and Israel: Conflicting Strategies of Group-Based Politics" "Hamas and Israel: Conflicting Strategies of Group-Based Politics" (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, December 2008), 14.
74. Bronner, Ethan, "Hamas Shifts from Rockets to Culture War," *New York Times*, July 23, 2009, accessed November 1, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/24/world/middleeast/24gaza.html?_r=3&src=twr.
75. Bronner, Ethan, "Hamas Shifts from Rockets to Culture War."
76. Ibid.
77. Katz, Noam, "Discussion at the Israeli Embassy with The Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars" (seminar, TWC International Affairs Program, Israeli Embassy: Washington, DC, 16 November 2012).

Israeli tactics as "surgical" and targeted at destroying Hamas's long-range

missiles "in a surgical manner," but he also conceded that Israel could not safely

destroy all of Hamas's military infrastructure and weaponry due to the stockpiles'

"strategic placement" in civilian areas, leading to "regrettable" but inevitable

collateral damage.[78] Israel's goal of removing Israeli civilian casualties from "the

equation" of the Palestinian fight for liberation left the option for peace open for

Hamas and resulted in Israel "merely reacting," according to Minister Katz.[79]

Recently deposed Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi and U.S. Secretary of

State Hillary Clinton, successfully brokered a ceasefire between Hamas and Israel

on November 21, 2012, by which time Israeli missiles had killed over one

hundred and sixty Palestinians (over ninety civilians) and decimated the Gaza

Strip, while the Israelis suffered one military and four civilian casualties.[80]

After the ceasefire, Hamas demonstrated a remarkable continuing

conciliatory and cooperative attitude and worked with Fatah to update voter

registration records in the Gaza Strip.[81] The *New York* Times notes that the West

Bank-based Central Elections Commission had the responsibility for maintaining

Palestinian electoral information, and that this move to update voter registration

represented "the first time that Hamas had allowed the commission to operate in

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78. Katz, Noam, "Discussion at the Israeli Embassy."
79. Ibid.
80. McCarthy, Tom, Harroon Siddique, and Matthew Weaver, "Gaza conflict: ceasefire announced in Cairo as it happened," *The Guardian*, November 21, 2012, accessed November 22, 2012, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/nov/21/gaza-conflict-fierce-fighting-clinton-seeks-truce#block-50ad188895cb4169d7c130c3.
81. Akram, Fares, "2 Executed by Hamas as Informers," *The New York Times*, 22 June 2013, accessed 20 February 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/23/world/middleeast/2-executed-by-hamas-as-informers.html?_r=0.

Gaza since 2007," when Hamas took control of the Gaza Strip via electoral victory.[82]  This development indicates both the arrival of Hamas as a political organization and significant maturation of Hamas in its ability to begin rapprochement with an opposition political party.  However, in June 2013, Hamas garnered some international criticism when it executed two Palestinians convicted of spying for Israel, bringing the total of Gazans executed for espionage under Hamas since 2007 to sixteen; this execution followed the execution of seven Palestinians accused of treasonous collaboration with Israel during the November 2012 conflict.[83]  The Hamas government further defied international critics and human rights groups in August 2013 by resolving to continue public executions, further establishing the perception of Hamas as a backwards, authoritarian, oppressive terrorist organization which has illegitimately seized control in Gaza.[84]

The Palestinian-Israeli cease-fire held and appeared to have the opportunity of blossoming into something greater and longer-lasting when, in July 2013, Palestine and Israel agreed "to return to the negotiating table" mediated by United States Secretary of State John Kerry, a critical second step (after establishing a cease-fire) in the peace process.[85]  However, with "reluctance"

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82. Akram, Fares, "Gaza: Palestinians Begin Voter Registration Campaign," *The New York Times*, 11 February 2013, accessed 20 February 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/12/world/middleeast/gaza-palestinians-begin-voter-registration-campaign.html.
83. Ibid.
84. Barzak, Ibrahim and Karin Laub, "Hamas Justice Under Scrutiny over Gaza Execution," *The Associated Press*, 20 August 2013, accessed 20 February 2014, http://bigstory.ap.org/article/rights-group-urges-gazas-hamas-halt-executions.
85. Vick, Karl, "Israel and Palestine Agree to Peace Talks, but With Reluctance," *Time*, 20 July 2013, accessed 21 February 2014, http://world.time.com/2013/07/20/israel-and-palestine-agree-to-peace-talks-but-with-reluctance/.

and "shared pessimism" plaguing the opportunity, the agreement to talk did not herald the promise of a treaty.[86]  Secretary Kerry returned to the region in November 2013 when the discussions stalled, due to various demands and Israeli plans to build more settlements and military fortifications in the Palestinian territories.[87]  Secretary Kerry returned to the region again in January 2014 to "narrow differences between [the] Israelis and Palestinians in [the] peace talks" and to promote the construction of "a framework of core principles," which would facilitate future discussions by establishing mutual interests and goals.[88]  Indeed, the establishment of a framework would demonstrate to all parties and observers that the Israelis and Palestinians have the capacity to cooperate and negotiate, and would prove a positive sign of progress in the peace process.

The cease-fire held until March 2014, when a militant group called Islamic Jihad began firing rockets towards Israel from within the Gaza Strip.[89]  This development indicates that segments of the Palestinian populations, specifically some within the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip, have rejected Hamas's legitimacy or have become frustrated with the lack of progress towards reclaiming the *waqf* and have decided to take matters into their own hands.  Reportedly, Hamas did

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86. Vick, Karl, "Israel and Palestine Agree to Peace Talks."
87. Sherwood, Harriet, "Senator Kerry makes Middle East trip to save stagnating peace talks," *The Guardian*, 4 November 2013, accessed 21 February 2014, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/nov/04/senator-kerry-middle-east-israeli-palestinian-peace-talks.
88. Wroughton, Lesley, "Kerry to push for solutions as Israeli-Palestinian peace talks intensify," *Reuters*, 31 December 2013, accessed 21 February 2014, http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/12/31/us-israel-palestinians-kerry-idUSBRE9BU0KE20131231.
89. Rudoren, Jodi, "Leaders Deny Report of a Truce in Mideast Violence," *The New York Times*, 13 March 2014, accessed 20 March 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/14/world/middleeast/israel-gaza-rockets.html?_r=0&gwh=A1FA69C8836BC8F955F3163FCA2D9400&gwt=regi.

not become aware of the cease-fire between Islamic Jihad and Israel until after Islamic Jihad announced that it had established a cease-fire, revealing a serious usurpation of Hamas's political and military power regarding Israel in the Gaza Strip.[90]  Additionally, despite recognition of Hamas's "state-like"nature and that Hamas "fulfills all operations of a state" by Israeli governmental officials such as Minister Katz, Hamas "is not recognized as a state by anybody" and has not achieved recognition by Israel as a legitimate representative of the Palestinian people; indeed, Israel maintains that Hamas has not evolved beyond a simple terrorist organization that seized control and illegitimately "toppled Fatah in the Gaza Strip."[91]  While Minister Katz's assertion that Hamas "is not recognized as a state by anybody" has since proven not strictly true vis-à-vis the UN General Assembly, most Western states still regard Hamas as a terrorist organization and will not accord Hamas the consideration due a representative governing body. [92] Backslides in Hamas's evolution and ascendance in Palestinian politics threaten Hamas and its position of preeminence within Palestinian society, but these disappointments do not portend Hamas's doom or inevitable failure.  Hamas has proven its capacity to adapt and endure, and so it can persevere.

Hamas's total transition into a nonviolent, non-military, political organization and its achievement of international recognition as a legitimate governing body within Palestine have not yet reached completion.  Furthermore, Hamas has not yet led Palestine through the transition from occupied territory, to

90. "Rudoren Jodi, "Leaders Deny Report of a Truce in Mideast Violence."
91. Katz, Noam, "Discussion at Israeli Embassy."
92. "General Assembly Votes Overwhelmingly to Accord Palestine 'Non-Member Observer State' Status in United Nations," United Nations General Assembly.

fully autonomous region, to an independent, sovereign nation-state. Despite Hamas's efforts and impressive demonstrations of maturity and durability, Israel has proven unreceptive of Hamas at best and, frequently, openly hostile. Until Israel and the international community accept Hamas as a legitimate representative governing organization, real progress seems unlikely and they cannot successfully negotiate a lasting peace or reach a permanent resolution.

<div align="center">RESEARCH DESIGN</div>

**Criteria**

With hundreds of ethnonationalist separatist groups organizing and fighting for independence across the world, I needed to develop a well-defined set of criteria for selecting an ethnonationalist separatist group to study. In order to make a good selection, I developed the following criteria for selecting an ethnonationalist separatist group for this senior honors thesis.


*Core Differences*

I selected an ethnonationalist separatist group that differed from its respective dominant group on the key identifiers of ethnic differences, linguistic differences, religious differences, cultural differences, differences in traditions, and different histories. The Palestinians have an Arab ethnicity, while the Israelis have a Jewish ethnicity; so too, the Palestinians speak Arabic while the Israelis speak Hebrew. Religion presents a major, divisive force in this conflict since the Palestinians follow Sunni Islam while the Israelis follow Judaism. With such deep, widespread differences in ethnicity, language, and religion, Hamas and the Palestinians clearly belong to a different people than the Israelis, and accordingly

have developed different traditions and relate history differently.  Hamas and the Palestinians have a completely different culture from the ruling Israelis.  Such profound differences provide fertile ground for tensions and conflict in their respective societies, conditions which have fostered ethnonationalist separatist groups like Hamas.

*A Constitution or Charter*

Without a charter with defined goals for the nation-state, an ethnonationalist separatist group operates more erratically and has a much lower chance of achieving its goals.  Hamas has its Islamic Charter, which defines the Palestinian people and territory as a nation and which states the reclamation and liberation of the Palestinian *waqf* as the goal.  A charter proves crucially important because it provides a foundational framework for a constitution of the nation-state after independence, facilitating transition to a sovereign state and, ideally, minimizing the chaos and unrest typically associated with the emergence of a new system of governance.

*A Political Wing*

In order to succeed under a democratic system, an ethnonationalist separatist group also has to develop a political wing to represent its demands vis-à-vis the government.  Without a political counterpart, the ethnonationalist separatist group likely remains a terrorist group and cannot effectively negotiate treaties for peace and independence.  The Palestinians have a number of political groups to represent their desires for reclamation of the homeland; unfortunately,

this plethora of Palestinian parties represents a severe disadvantage for the Palestinians, hindering them from presenting a united front to the Israelis and undermining the Palestinians' efforts to liberate Palestine.

Prior to independence and during the conflict, these political parties operate as states, providing social and welfare institutions for the ethnic minority group. As early as the 1970s, the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas's forerunner in Palestine, worked as a "modest charitable network," investing in institutional capacity-building; educational, social, and welfare activities; and focusing on "refugee camps [in the Gaza Strip] and poor urban quarters."[93] During the 1970s and early 1980s the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood established the Islamic Center, the Islamic Association, and the Young Women's Islamic Association, cultivating goodwill among the Palestinian population and demonstrating an ability to both address the social, human needs of the people and to organize the citizens.[94] Activities such as these boost the party's support within the minority group; give the party legitimacy within and outside the minority group; and provide invaluable experience in running institutions, which facilitate transition into a successful, efficient government after the group succeeds in achieving independence.

*In a Democratic State*

In order to have a realistic probability of success via democratic means, ethnonationalist separatist groups have to originate and operate in a democratic

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93. Gunning, Jeroen, *Hamas in Politics,* 30.
94. Ibid.

state. Democracy has become a crucial, determining factor in movements for self-determination. Whether or not the governing state in question qualifies as a liberal democracy with respect for individual, political, civil, and group rights weighs less importantly on the ethnonationalist separatist group's chance of success than the fact of democracy itself. Democracies typically listen and respond to their citizens' demands, and consideration of the constituency's wishes and needs has become a chief characteristic of a true democracy. Conversely, authoritarian—and even "controlled democratic"— states have a habit of suppressing and eliminating all dissent, and accordingly do not tolerate the demands of ethnonationalist separatist groups within their borders; China's actions in response to the Tibetan and Uyghur separatist movements demonstrates this reality. The United Kingdom, Turkey, post-Saddam Iraq, and Israel all have the basic features of democracy: elections with open participation (both candidacy and voting), legislatures, executive branches, judicial branches, constitutions, and institutions. Thus the feature of originating in, fighting against, and working with a democratic state counts as a crucial criterion for inclusion as a case study within this project and for an ethnonationalist separatist group's likelihood of success.

**The Case Study**

The Palestinian political and terrorist organization Hamas serves as an ideal case study that demonstrates the motivations and evolutions of ethnonationalist separatist groups. The Palestinians, an ethnic group distinct

from the majority in their state—the Jewish Israelis—have a plethora of Palestinian nationalist groups among the population, but Hamas has truly exemplified the struggle to emerge from hardship and oppression only to struggle to evolve and adapt to hostile, ever-changing environment of international politics. Hamas distinguishes itself from a rival group such as the PLO and the PLA by still having its political and military components under the same name and not operating as distinct entities. This combination could either indicate a lack of evolution into a democratic, peaceful political organization, or it could indicate a cohesive, integrated cohesion of the various forces and facets of the group, which will hopefully lead to more capability and coherence during ongoing and future peace-talks with the Israelis and with various members of the international community. Either way, Hamas as a single entity still engages in both terrorist activities and in political efforts, and the two facts of the group have not yet split in order to distance Hamas's political side from its terrorist capacities.

For this study, the independent variables consist of the key, core differences between the Israelis and the Palestinians, as well as the Palestinians' and Hamas's goal. The core differences here include a different history from the ruling group, the different culture, different language, and different religion. Additionally, the competing manifestations of irredentism at work in this situation, *waqf* v. Zionism, serve as an independent variable. Finally, the Palestinians' and Hamas's desire for self-rule works as the overarching independent variable in this ethnonationalist separatist group case study.

In this case study, the dependent variables rely upon the parties and their varying attitudes. The dependent variables include the tactics Hamas uses, the rationale behind the transition from violence to peaceful conciliation and negotiation, the continuing fallback to violence, and Israel's alternate pushback and purported willingness to talk. The dependent variables in this case study directly impact Hamas's likelihood of success; violence has succeeded in attracting attention to Hamas's cause but has not succeeded in achieving independence and sovereignty, while Hamas's diplomatic efforts have demonstrated goodwill and maturity but also have not succeeded in achieving independence and sovereignty. Hamas's primary future challenge, regarding the dependent variables, will lie in its ability to react appropriately to the independent variables.

<div align="center">PROBLEMS</div>

Not surprisingly, the nature of the literature posed a problem in my research. While there exists a plethora of literature on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the pervading perception in the West of Hamas as a purely terrorist organization and its designation as such by many international observers makes finding objective literature on the conflict, in the English language, very difficult. Indeed, finding pro-Hamas literature in the English language proved a true challenge which limited my ability to discern between sources and hampered the thoroughness and fairness of my study of Hamas. I did not want to present Hamas in a biased way, either negatively or positively; rather, I aimed to give balanced consideration to both sides of the argument in this study, and found pro-Hamas literature lacking, especially compared to the abundance of anti-

Hamas literature. Subsequently, a fair and balanced analysis of the literature proved quite challenging.

While I found information on the majority of the theories quite accessible, I had an unexpectedly difficult time locating material to explain and support a socio-economic dimension of conflict theory. I found the body of literature relatively lacking in material for such an important, potentially pivotal theory, especially regarding ethnonationalist separatist groups and not solely issues such as civil wars.

With such a timely and constantly evolving case study as Hamas, I encountered a problem of fluidity. Incidents, conflicts, talks, and shifts occur so rapidly in the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict that analyses and reports quickly become rather obsolete because of events. The challenge, then, becomes maintaining an up-to-date, relevant, and still reasonably accurate analysis of the situation and keeping track of Hamas's evolution as it occurs. Finally, another challenge emerges: crafting a study that does not become outdated immediately upon completion. With a goal of exploring and explaining the motivations behind ethnonationalist separatist groups such as Hamas and the progress that Hamas has made since its inception in the 1940s, this case study should not face immediately irrelevance, despite the inevitable occurrences of future and ongoing events.

## CONCLUSION

This case study operated under the hypotheses that ethnic groups with core differences from the group in power and who seek self-determination and sovereignty use violence to gain attention, recognize the futility of violence, seek

negotiation, evolve from a terrorist organization into a political organization, and can then successfully negotiate with the dominant group and opposing governing entity to establish peace and a sovereign, self-defined nation-state. The case study of Hamas and its struggle to reclaim the Palestinian homeland mostly upholds the hypotheses, with the caveat that it has not yet proven correct the final hypothesis because Hamas has not yet successfully negotiated a permanent solution with the Israelis involving peace and the creation of a sovereign, self-determined nation-state for the Palestinians.

Societal conditions such as a legacy of claiming a land as the historical homeland, Otherization, self-definition as having a distinctly separate nationality, and a sinister underlying socio-economic disparity and struggle for resources spark inter-societal tensions and eventually facilitate the emergence of ethnonationalist separatist groups. These ethnonationalist separatist groups, finding no viable recourse to state their grievances and receive just reparations, oftentimes resort to violence in an effort to force their issue to the forefront of the dominant group's point of view. However, the ethnonationalist group does not gain positive recognition from the group in power because of their violent attention-grabbing activities (although the group does tend to gain support among the members of the minority group population for taking such a visible stand against oppression), and the group in power invariably reacts in kind, and an internal military conflict ensues. Out of this crisis milieu, a political party emerges from the ethnonationalist separatist group's militant, terrorist organization. This political party can represent the wishes, demands, and grievances of the ethnonationalist separatist group and of the non-group

members within the general minority group population.  Such a party can then adapt and evolve, becoming increasingly legitimate and democratic in its actions and attitudes, generating respect within the country and within the international community.  Once the ethnonationalist separatist organization has developed into a coherent, capable political organization, the group can successfully sue for peace and diplomatically achieve independence and a sovereign, self-defined nation-state, thereby accomplishing its ultimate end goal.  The ethnonationalist separatist group's representative political party, having proven its capabilities and strength via the conflict and peace processes, can now govern the new, long dreamt-of nation-state.

However, such an evolution can only reach successful completion if the ethnonationalist separatist group has emerged in a fully liberal, democratic state. An undemocratic government will not have the inclination to democratically hear out its citizens' grievances and wishes and will, instead, forcefully suppress any uprising or attempted revolution.  Furthermore, even an illiberal democracy will prove unwilling to stand for challenges to complete power and sovereignty, and will certainly react militarily to any ethnonationalist separatist activities, especially if those activities qualify as terrorist activities.  An ethnonationalist separatist group has no hope of successfully transitioning to a political party capable of achieving and maintaining independent nation-statehood if it faces a government unaccustomed to the democratic process and the growing pains of democracy.  In this case study, while Israel qualifies as a democracy, it has treated the Palestinian population illiberally, and has, in its actions against the terrorist Hamas organization, allegedly violated human rights.  Until the Israeli

government regards Hamas as an opposition party, Hamas cannot reclaim the *waqf*. Hamas and Palestine still have much to accomplish in order to attain full, universal recognition as a state. They must persevere through breakdowns of talks and through conflicts and through prospects of all-out war in order to reach the promised land of peace and nation-statehood.

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