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Israeli- Palestinian Ethnic Conflict

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INTRODUCTION:

The Israeli- Palestinian ethnic conflict will continue to escalate throughout both the short term and long term world future, unless provocative elements such as history, religion, ideology, and resentment are pinpointed and countered. The current and future animosity between both ethnic groups can be attributed to (a) history based accounts and religious tensions, (b) polarizing ideologies linked to ethnic nationalism, and (c) middle eastern resentment toward the Jewish State of Israel. Three investigative frames namely the Modernist Theory, Perceptual Framework, and the Domestic Framework will be utilized as a means to provide a theoretically basis for the central arguments, that will be validating the thesis. In close, this research paper will summarize the significant elements that are fueling and sustaining the the Israeli- Palestinian ethnic conflict, with respects to the three investigative frameworks that were mentioned above. In addittion, the Symbolic- Interactionist framework will be discussed in order to provide two meaningful and strategic conflict resolution strategies, that are geared toward alleviating religious tensions, overcoming history based accounts, de-polarizing ideologies, and fostering a peaceful middle eastern geopolitical climate.

CONCEPTUALIZATIONS:

Ever since the Jewish state of Israel gained independence in 1948 (Bar- Tal, 1990, Pg. 17; Mavroudi, 2008, pg. 61) middle eastern Arab neighbours have fostered resentment toward Israel (Mendelsohn, 2008), as anti- Semitism in the Arab world was heavily visible after the formation of Israel (Bar- Tal, 1990; Tahar & Tannenbaum, 2008). A neutral historical analysis provides evidence of prolonged religious and ethnic conflict in the middle east (Contact, 1992) between the Israeli- Arab's and Israeli- Palestinian's, as each side demands the ownership of

particular areas of land in the middle east (Yiftachel, 1999). With that, it is evident that religious tensions as well as polarizing ideologies have erupted due to historical and current territorial battles, that are highlighting polarizing ideologies linked to Zionism and Palestinian nationalism (Yiftachel, 1999). The goal of this investigative paper is to expose these historical, religious, and ideological wars that have fueled the Israeli- Palestinian conflict in the past as well as at the present. By exposing these provocative elements linked to the ethnic conflict under investigation, the generational longevity of the conflict can be understood and the need for conflict resolution strategies can be appreciated.

Prior to preceding with the research analysis on the Israeli- Palestinian ethnic conflict, relevant terms will be conceptualized, and the theoretical frameworks will be discussed in order to ensure understanding and appreciation of the investigative analysis. For the purposes of this paper ethnic nationalism will refer to a nations commitment towards establishing an ethnically and culturally distinct/ unique nation (Smith, 1993). Ideology will refer to the meaningful ideals and beliefs held either Israeli or Palestinian ethnic groups. History based accounts will refer to both biased historical accounts and factual historical events, that have been and are contributing to the Israeli- Palestinian ethnic conflict. Palestinians/ Palestinian- muslims will refer to muslim individuals living in the West Bank, as the research articles studied mainly referred to Palestinians residing in the West Bank region (Bekerman & Zembylas, 2009), however, it is important to point out that Palestinian- Christians also live in the West Bank (Bekerman, 2002). Arab- nations will refer to Islamic- States located in the middle east (Bras, Epstein, Palti, & Soskoine, 1996; Yiftachel, 1999). Israeli's/ Israeli- Jew's will refer to individuals residing within the Jewish state of Israel (Bar- Tal & Oren, 2007; Tahar & Tannenbaum, 2008), and who hold the

Jewish faith of Judaism (Munson, 2005). Israeli- Arab's will refer to the Arab citizens of Israel who hold the Islamic/ Muslim faith (Bekerman, 2002). Ethnicity/ ethnic group will be conceptualized as groups of people/ individuals of the same nationality, language, and culture (Enbal & Sherer, 2006), as this conceptualization is ideal for the distinct comparison between Israeli and Palestinian ethnic groups who have different ideologies, historical recollections, and religious beliefs. Lastly, religion will be defined as a social institution that emphasizes specific customs and rituals in order to experience spirituality, and a relationship with God (Clarke, 2006). Research states that in some cases religion and ethnicity become interconnected and inseparable among certain ethnic groups, as religion itself shapes their group identity (Kurth, 2001, 284). In respects to the Israeli- Palestinian ethnic conflict, ethnicity and religion are distinct elements that are independently fueling the Israeli- Palestinian conflict and other conflicts in the middle east (Conant, 1992).

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS & ANALYSIS:

The Modernist Theory, the Perceptual Framework, and the Domestic Framework are the theoretical frameworks that will be used to validate the thesis. The Modernist Theory asserts that religion is one of the root causes of ethnic conflicts such as the Israeli- Palestinian conflict, and recognizing this link between religion and ethnic conflicts is essential for understanding ethnic conflicts and formulating ethnic conflict resolutions (Kurth, 2001, pg. 281- 282, 290- 291). For Modernist, the force of religion is so significant that they would advocate for strategies that demand the suppression of religion and religious teachings (Kurth, 2001, pg. 282, 292), since inter ethnic -groups who are adamant about bolstering their religious ideologies may spark an ethnic conflict when they come in contact with each other (Kurth, 2001, pg. 284- 285). It is

evident that this type of conflict resolution strategy is not only unrealistic and radical, but it can also be seen as a potential instigator to future ethnic conflicts due to pockets of resistance it may foster. The major contribution of the Modernist Theory is the ability to expose the link between religion and ethnic conflicts, and this link will be analyzed in respects to the Israeli- Palestinian conflict.

The Perceptual Framework asserts that ethnic conflicts are a result of biased and unaccurate historical accounts that are found in areas such as educational text (Brown, 1993). Furthermore, these biased historical accounts by ethnic groups are bolstered to frame their group as the protagonists and the out- group as the antagonist (Brown, 1993). As a result of this type of social categorization and ethnocentrism, ethnic groups begin to foster negative and aggressive sentiments toward the out group which could potentially lead to an inter-ethnic conflict (Brown, 1993). It is evident that biased ethnocentric historical accounts that have been instilled into the minds of individuals from a young age, are likely to solidify a status quo or ideological belief that fuels and contributes to the prolonged maintenance of an inter- ethnic conflict (Brown, 1993). Therefore, the Perceptual Framework has exposed the link between biased historical accounts and inter ethnic conflicts such as the Israeli- Palestinian ethnic conflicts.

The Domestic Framework states that ethnic nationalism tends to marginalize minority ethnic groups, and foster a strong in- group/ out- group distinction between minority and majority ethnic groups (Brown, 1993). As a result minority ethnic groups become threatened by majority/ dominant- group nationalism, as they begin to realize that their minority group goals and agendas will be challenged and not embraced by the dominant group (Brown, 1993). For example, marginalized ethnic groups may begin to experience perceived discrimination as well

as a perceived loss of status/ citizenship equality, which in turn will ignite an inter- ethnic conflict (Brown,1993). In the case of the Israeli- Palestinian conflict the Palestinians are the minority group within Israeli borders, and Israeli's are the dominant group. However, at a middle eastern level Israel is the minority group as it is surrounded by Arab- nations who are the majority. Through the analysis of ethnic nationalism under the Domestic Framework, the link between polarizing ideologies and the Israeli- Palestinian ethnic conflict will become evident.

(A) 1. FACTUAL HISTORY BASED ROOTS AND RELIGIOUS TENSIONS:

Over the past century Israeli's and Palestinians have been in conflict over a wide array of issues pertaining to natural resources, economics, land/sovereignty (Feitelson, 2002), disputes over holy locations, and ideologies (Bar- Tal & Oren, 2007, pg. 112; Yiftachel, 1999). In terms of history based roots and the competition for natural resources, in 1967 after the Six Day War in the middle east that resulted in Israel establishing control over water supply outlets in non-Israeli land (Possick, 2004), tensions with Palestinians and Arab's ignited (Feitelson, 2002). During the late 1900's the control of and access to water was a sensitive issue in the middle east, as humanitarian necessities linked to population growth, and agricultural necessities linked to the mode of production were major political priorities for Arab nations, Palestine, and the State of Israel at the time (Feitelson, 2002). Though Palestine is not an independent nation state as Israel and her Arab neighbours are, Palestine is still a sovereign territory governed by an execute and legislative branch (Feitelson, 2002; Yiftachel, 1999). The execute branch is known as the Palestinian Authority (Yiftachel, 1999) and the legislative branch is known as the Palestine National Council (Feitelson, 2002), and political priorities and organizations such as the

Palestine Liberation Organization have been established to fight for Palestine and Palestinians (Bar- Tal & Oren, 2007; Feitelson, 2002).

   In light of history based roots and economic issues, the 1989 labour market disadvantages experienced by Palestinians were a major economic issue that reinforced Israeli - Palestinians tensions and the ethnic (Yiftachel, 1999). For example in 1989 48% of Palestinian children experienced the plight of poverty, in comparison to the 18% of Jewish children who were experiencing poverty (Yiftachel, 1999, pg. 295). The 1989 economic plight experienced by Palestinians can be traced back to when Israel was declared an Independent state in 1948, as employment opportunities and upward occupational mobility favored the Jewish people over the Palestinian people (Yiftachel, 1999). With that, Yiftachel (1999) asserts that the biased economic stratification that was maintained for a long period after Israel's independence in 1948, played a significant role in the Israeli- Palestinian ethnic conflict.

   History based roots and the conflict over land/ sovereignty was evident pre and is evident post 1948 Israel independence (Yiftachel, 1999). When looking at the post 1948 conflict it is clear that the first year after Israel gained independence up until 1966, Palestinians were discriminated by the government of Israel due to laws that not only marginalized Palestinians, but also stripped away some of their freedoms (Bar- Tal, 1990; Yiftachel, 1999). The 1949 Abandoned Areas Ordinance Law and the 1954 Absentee's Property Law, are two examples of laws that legalized the confiscation of land owned by Arabs and non- Jewish Israeli citizens residing in Israel (Bar- Tal, 1990). With that, many Palestinians living within Israeli borders were also forced out of Israeli and ethnic tensions and violence emerged from both sides (Bar- Tal, 1990). For example, Bar- Tal (1990) cities that during the time of forced Palestinian exclusion,

Israeli- Jews engaged in attacks that targeted Palestinians located in refugee camps, villages, and areas within Arab borders. On the Palestinian side the rise of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1964, also caused physical attacks that in this case targeted Jewish individuals living in Israel and in other parts of the world (Bar- Tal, 1990). Further more, after the formation of the PLO in 1964 and its legitimization by the Palestine National Counsel, attacks targeting the Jewish people increased in violence and escalated to terrorist activities (Bar-Tal, 1990). Both Falah and Newman (1995) argue that brazen attacks by Palestinians are linked to their two state resolution agenda where by both Israel, and Palestine being granted significant areas from Israel become two separate independent states. Ethnic violence and tension is evident among both Israeli and Palestinian ethnic groups, however, in light of the Perceptual Framework both sides are likely to identify different historical instigators and have different recollections of the historical conflict. The Perceptual Framework will be discussed in relation to biased history based roots, and their contribution to the Israeli- Palestinian ethnic conflict will be exposed.

(A) 2. BIASED HISTORY BASED ROOTS AND RELIGIOUS TENSIONS:

In analyzing the biased history roots of the Israeli- Palestinian conflict, it is evident that both ethnic groups have contrasting historical accounts that have contributed to their ethnic plight. In terms of biased historical accounts and the 1967 six day war that occurred in the middle east, it is evident that both sides have contrasting interpretations of the War. Palestinians hold that in 1967 Israel launched a planned attack against the Arab world as a means to expand their borders into the West Bank, and prevent Arab unity in the middle east as Arab states were slowing becoming unified around that time (Bar- Tal, 1990). Israeli's on the other hand hold that the tensions in the middle east had stabilized in 1967, and Israel was willing to engage in the

joint demilitarization of national forces with the Arab world (Bar- Tal, 1990). However Israel claims that in May of 1967, Egypt brazenly declared war on Israel by boldly voicing that Israel had been a nation for longer than desired (Bar- Tal, 1990). With that, the King of Jordan put his army under the control of Egypt, and both forces along with Iraqi army forces were deployed to Jordan for strategic purposes (Bar- Tal, 1990). Next, national forces of Kuwait and Algeria moved to Egypt and this in turn caused the State of Israel to be surrounded by the Arab world (Bar- Tal, 1990). With that, Israel was forced to launch a preemptive strike for national security purposes (Bar- Tal, 1990).

In terms of biased historical accounts linked to the territorial expansion of Israeli borders after the 1967 middle eastern six day war, both Israeli and Palestinian groups have different interpretations of the expansion. Palestinians assert that the expansion of Israeli borders into the West Bank region through settle projects, was a Zionist movement (Israeli ethnic Nationalism) that was geared towards delegitimizing Palestine and threatening the people of Palestine (Bar- Tal, 1990; Mendelsohn, 2008). In sum, Palestinian accounts hold that territorial expansion was a coercive political movement that would increase Israeli dominance over Palestine, and further marginalize Palestinians and deteriorate their sociocultural situation (Bar- Tal, 1990; Mendelsohn, 2008). In contrast, Israeli accounts link Post War- 1967 territorial expansion to religious ideology and the legitimacy of war. For instance historical accounts by pro- Israeli and Zionist religious leaders, framed the expansion as a re- claiming of biblical landed that once belonged to the ancestors of Israel (Possick, 2008). Secondly, the legitimacy of the expansion was tied to the fact that Israel gained control of certain regions of land supra- Israeli borders, during the six day war against the Arab world and it was part of the war (Possick, 2008). From

the above accounts it is evident that both religious appeals as well as ideological beliefs rooted in both religion and nationalism, shaped historical accounts and produced biases. Both religion and ideology are important concepts that have influenced biased historical recollections, and more importantly are concepts that are inherently part of the ethnic conflict equation. It is evident that biased intra- ethnic historical accounts also do exist, however, due to intra- ethnic power differentials present in all sociocultural groups only select biases are seen in the educational sector.

Subjective/ biased historical accounts have infiltrated both educational institutions (late 1990's) as well as select media outlets (Bar- Tal & Oren, 2007). For example, Jewish text books for grades 1 to 12 proliferated information that negatively framed Palestinians as the illegitimate citizen (Bar- Tal & Oren, 2007). On the other side Palestinian text books demonized Jewish migrants by framing them as violent murders and thieves, and the text also portrayed the Jewish state of Israel as an illegitimate state (Bar- Tal & Oren, 2007). Loza (2007, pg. 146) makes known that this type of educationally channelled propaganda occurred in the middle east during the 1990's as a result of Islamic extremists/ leaders, who influenced Arab governments such as Egypt to send teachers over to nations such as Saudi Arabia in order to become radicalized. With that, the objective was to have radicalized teachers who would be able to inject extremists/ terrorist provoking perceptions into the minds of youth/ their students (Loza, 2007, pg. 146). It is evident that both the Israeli and Palestinian authorities responsible for the dissemination of educational text, did not critically analyze the historical events that were being passed onto to the youth through school text books. According to the Perceptual Framework and Bekerman & Zembylas (2009) the dissemination of biased history has contributed to the current inter- ethnic

conflict, between the Jews and Palestinians. Apart from educational textbooks the teaching domain is also filled with biased lectures, as tensions among Palestinian and Israeli teachers also exist as they debate about what the curriculum should encompass (Bekerman & Zembylas, 2009). For example these debates encompass issues from the holocaust to Palestinian history, as teachers project information that is linked to/ verified through their ethnically biased world views (Bekerman & Zembylas, 2009). For example Bekerman & Zembylas (2009) point out that within inter ethnically integrated schools in Israel, teachers are highly influenced by the ideologies of their ethnic culture. With that, biased historical accounts along with prejudices and fears are injected into the minds of students (Bekerman & Zembylas, 2009). The Perceptual framework recognizes that biased historical accounts do play a significant role in reinforcing and instigating ethnic conflicts (Brown, 1993). Therefore it is important that prior to peace fostering meetings by the ethnic groups in conflict, government official representing the ethnic groups should reach common ground when it comes to the interpretation and recollection of history. This strategy which is based on the Perceptual Framework, may allow for tension alleviation and mutual understanding and cooperation among the ethnic groups in conflict. It is evident that the current Israeli- Palestinian ethnic conflict is a consequence of factual history related issues such as physical attacks and marginalizing initiates, and biased history related issues such as unaccurate tension provoking historical recollections. In essence, these history based roots have perpetuated the inter- ethnic group distancing seen among Israeli- Jews and Palestinian- Muslims, which in turn has influenced the rise of a negative emotional climate among citizens in Israel and the West Bank (Bar- Tal & Oren, 2007). Bar- Tal & Oren (2007) state that among Israeli's and Palestinians a form of emotional warfare exists as a result of historical plights, and it is vital that political

negotiators involved in middle eastern peace initiatives target the emotional obstacle to peace. With that, the deflation of emotionally charged cognitions that instigate and perpetuate conflict, violence, and disdain behaviours is a logical strategy that could bring peace to the middle.

As discussed above both biased history based roots and religion are key ingredients in ethnic conflicts such as in the case of the Israeli- Palestinian ethnic conflict, and both ingredients can be theoretically grounded using the Modernist Theory and the Perceptual Framework. As discussed in detail above, the Modernist Theory identifies religion as the root cause of ethnic conflicts (Kurth, 2001, 290- 291), and the Perceptual Framework identifies biased historical accounts as significant instigators and reinforces of ethnic conflicts (Brown, 1993).

The analysis of religion through the Modernist Theory provides an understanding regarding the categorization of select individuals/ out ethnic groups, into distinct categories such as the villain and the hero (Munson, 2005). With that the Israeli- Palestinian ethnic conflict can be attributed to religious based categorizations/ classifications, that legitimatize violence against those classified as the villain/ the other (Munson, 2005). In light of the Muslim religion extremism advocates for the marginalization of Jews as well as Christians, as they are framed as being spiritually inferior and counter- productive to Islam (Loza, 2007, pg. 236). The paper is not linking the Palestinian people with Muslim extremism, instead the above information provides insights into political groups such as the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) that may be reinforcing corrupt religious based mandates. For instance, in 1977 the Israeli government stated that the PLO which was formed in 1964, contained criminal ideologies that supported the destruction of Israel (Bar- Tal & Oren, 2007). Both Israeli- Jews and Palestinian- Muslims have religious based desires to occupy specific areas of land desired by the other (Munson, 2005), and

as a result the peace process may be short lived if religion as a root factor is not recognized through the Modernist Theory and alleviated.

(B) POLARIZING ETHNIC NATIONALIST IDEOLOGIES HELD BY BOTH SIDES:

Polarizing ethnic nationalist ideologies entrenched within the Israel- Palestinian ethnic conflict, reflect Zionism (Jewish Nationalism) and Palstinian Nationalism (Yiftachel, 1999). Zionism which is associated with the Israeli- Jews advocates for/ favors the formation of a distinct Jewish Nation State, that embraces Jewish heritage, religion, culture, and tradition (Bar- Tal, 1990, pg. 17; Munson, 2005). For Israeli- Jews Zionism was an instrument that would enable the establishment of a non anti- semitic state that would ensure the the survival of the Jewish people (Yiftachel, 1999, pg. 20), as it would be self reliant when it came to national security issues (Bar- Tal, 1990, pg. 17). Zionism for the Israeli's was also seen as a religious movement geared toward re- claiming the holy land of Israel (Possick, 2004), and a platform from which the Jewish people could advocate for their right to exist as a nation (Mendelsohn, 2008). Israeli's also assert that Zionism was rational, emotional, religious (Bar- Tal, 1990; Possick, 2004), and it influenced a political agenda that benefited Israel economically, socially, and culturally (Bar- Tal, 1990). In contrast to the Zionist mentality/ ideology described by the Israeli- Jews, the Palstinian Liberation Organization framed Zionism as a racist, violent, and exclusionary political movement against the Palestinian people in Palestine (Bar- Tal & Oren, 2007). In fact, Palestinians hold that the establishment of the Jewish state of Israel in 1948 (Bar- Tal, 1990, pg. 17; Mavroudi, 2008, pg. 61) was actually an invasion of Jewish settlers from different parts of the globe, rather than a legal reclaiming of Israeli land (Bar- Tal, 1990).

Palestinian nationalism is geared toward establishing an independent Palestinian State

that is grounded in Palestinian history, language, and culture (Bar- Tal, 1990, pg. 19-20), within Israeli borders and the West Bank ((Bar- Tal, 1990, pg. 19-20; Mavroudi, 2008; pg. 62). In addittion, Palestinian nationalist ideology supports the agenda that the State of Israel should be replaced by the State of Palestine (Yiftachel, 1999; pg. 301). With that, ethnic nationalist ideologies held by both Israeli's and Palestinians are an inevitable conflict provoking ideology, as each ethnic group claims rights/ ownership to specific areas of land (E.g. Israel) that the opposing group is not willing to give up or recognize as a result of their own nationalist mentality (Bar- Tal, 1990, pg. 19; Falah & Newman,1995; Mendelsohn, 2008; Yiftachel, 1999, pg. 301). However, it is important to state that within Israel and Palestinian areas such as the West Bank, there are individuals and groups from both ethnic groups that do not hold such polarizing ideologies and who embrace bilateral negotiations and solutions (Maoz, 2003). Lastly, the Palestinian people favor Palestinian nationalism as they feel that by having their own independent nation state, they will be ensured physical security and human rights protection against the government of Israel, who they feel will not uphold international law and make peace with Palestinians (Falah & Newman, 1995, pp. 697).

When inter- ethnic nationalist ideologies are polarized to the extent to which is present among Israeli- Jews and Palestinian- Muslims, it is difficult to comprehend future compromise between the two ethnic groups and easier to prepare for short term as well as long term inter-ethnic conflict. Ethnic nationalism is a critical phenomenon that needs to be highlighted and addressed by peace process players, as polarizing ideologies produce emotionally charged sentiments that alleviate and dissolve feelings of guilt, and in turn reinforce and legitimate ethnic conflicts (Bar- Tal & Oren, 2007). In terms of an additive understanding, it is highly probable

that ethnic nationalist ideologies coupled with complementary religious ideologies, are powerful precursors and reinforces of inter- ethnic conflicts such as the Israel- Palestinian ethnic conflict.

The Domestic Framework described above sheds light on the critical role of ethnic nationalism when it comes to inter- ethnic conflicts, as ethnic nationalism both marginalizes select ethnic groups, and produces us verse them distinctions that results in inter ethnic ideological polarization, tension, and discrimination (Brown, 1993). With that, polarizing ethnic nationalist ideologies can also be linked to ethnocentric mentalities, as these mentalities tend to propagate the perception that the opposing ethnic group is inferior, while ones own ethnic group is superior (Bar- Tal & Oren, 2007). Therefore, polarizing ethnic nationalist ideologies may also lead to intense in-group ethnic solidarity, as result of the out-group ethnicity being repelled due to conflict and tension (Yiftachel, 1999), and due to voluntary rather than involuntary ethnic segregation with the in-group (Falah & Newman, 1999). The Domestic Framework has identified ethnic nationalism as a significant factor that contributes to inter- ethnic conflicts such as between Israeli's and Palestinians, and it is mandatory for polarizing ethnic nationalist ideologies to be pin pointed and countered in order to foster long term peace among Israeli- Jews and Palestinians in the middle east.

(C) MIDDLES EASTERN RESENTMENT TOWARD THE JEWISH STATE OF ISRAEL:

Ever since the Nation State of Israel was established in 1948, both Israeli- Jews as well as the international community have been plagued with the continuous threat against Israel's survival and safety (Bar- Tal, 1990, pg. 17). Middle eastern resentment toward Israel can be understood in reference to multiple factors such as polarizing ideologies linked ethnic nationalism (Domestic Framework), non- biased history roots, biased history roots (Perceptual

Framework), and religious tensions (Modernist Theory) as pin pointed above. In sum, the reality of ethnic categorization (E.g. Jew vs. Arab World) as a result of polarizing ethnic nationalists ideologies are producing in and out-group distinctions, that are reinforcing hostile and brazen emotions and mentalities that can be linked to middle eastern resentment toward Israel (Domestic Framework) (Brown, 1993). Non biased history roots have contributed to the negative sociocultural environment of the middle eastern, and this is acting as a platform for resenting Israel as a result of problems linked to natural resources, economics, land/sovereignty (Feitelson, 2002), and holy locations (Bar- Tal & Oren, 2007, pg. 112; Yiftachel, 1999). Biased history roots in reference to the Perceptual Framework are proliferating provocative biased historical accounts, that are unconsciously and consciously demonizing the out group (Israel) and rationalizing negativity toward them (Brown, 1993). Lastly, the Modernist Theory has exposed the religious ideological component that is potentially fueling resentment toward Israel as a result of an macro level Israeli- Arab world ethnic conflict, in which religion and national history (Biased/ non Biased) are inter-connected (Brown, 1993; Kastroyaro, 2004, pg. 1234).

Resentment toward Israel can also be credited to the Palestinians living in diaspora, meaning Palestinians living outside the territorial areas of Palestine (Mavroudi, 2008). The Palestinian diaspora are framed as transnational groups/ populations since even though they do not reside within the borders of their homeland namely Palestine, they still maintain cultural, economic, and political connections to Palestine (Mavroudi, 2008, pg. 59). With that, Palestinians in diaspora have the ability to advocate for their cause and either proliferate or alleviate Israeli- Palestinian ethnic tensions (Mavroudi, 2008, pg. 68), and resentment toward Israel. For example, one Palestinian research respondent in diaspora stated that they tell their

friends not to buy Israeli merchandise for personnel reasons (Mavroudi, 2008, pg. 68), which in turn has the potential to propagate biased historical information and ethnocentrism.

In terms of the resentment conveyed by middle eastern governments, historical evidence provides information regarding middle eastern resentment/ hostility toward the State of Israel. For example, during the Israel- Hezbollah war it was estimated that between July 12 and August 14 of 2006, 4000 missiles targeting Isreali- Arabs and Jews rather than military personnel were fired into Israel (Canetti- Nisim, Galea, Hobfoll, Johnson & Palmieri, 2008). Secondly, during the Persian Gulf War Israel was victimized by Iraqi forces out of shear resentment, as Iraq fired 39 missiles into civilian populated cities within Israel such as Tel- Aviv, even though Israel was not apart of the Persian Gulf War (Baras, Epstein, Palti, Soskolne, 1996; Falah & Newman, 1995). Lastly, there is a day in Iran called Quad Day which is set aside to express solidarity with the Palestinian people and express resentment toward Israel (The Associated Press, 2009). The victimization of Israel by neighbouring Arab states is not a new phenomenon as presented throughout this research paper, rather it is a historical fact and a present day realization as described through the theoretical frameworks and brazen examples of the victimization of Israeli.

Regional conflicts between the middle east and Israel are proliferating the Israeli- Palestinian ethnic conflict, and contributing to the future escalation of the conflict as a result of the production and dissemination of resentment toward Israel and her people (Bar- Tal & Oren, 2007). Furthermore, it is important to consider that middle eastern resentment toward Israel as well as the othering of Palestinians by Israeli's, is promoting the emergence of a self- fulling prophecy where by both ethnic groups are framing the other as always being in the wrong (Bar- Tal & Oren, 2007). It is plausible to assume that individuals and middle eastern neighbours that

hold anti- semitic ideologies and agendas (E.g. Iran), will inevitably frame Israel as being in the wrong despite any type of peace oriented initiate Israel embarks on. This was evident in 1992 when Israel gave up one of her cities known as Shechem to the Palestinian Authorities under the Oslo Accords, in an attempt to foster inter ethnic peace (Possick, 2004; Mavroudi, 2008). However, despite Israel forfeiting one of her own cities as a means to achieve peace and stability, Israel is consistently seen in a negative light by her Arab neighbours (Mavroudi, 2008). Establishing middle eastern peace and positive Israeli- Palestinian relations will be a major political, social, and international challenge due to the historic and current animosity between Israeli's and Palestinians, and middle eastern resentment toward the Jewish State of Israel (Bar-Tal, 1990, pg. 16).

CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

Israeli's and Palestinians are not the only two ethnic groups that are experiencing an inter ethnic conflict, as other ethnic conflicts such as those in Lebanon, Sudan, Chechnya, and Kashmir are also a reality (Kurth, 2001, 291). With that, this research paper provides a starting point for comprehending different ethnic conflicts as well as the Israeli- Palestinian ethnic conflict, through the analysis of provocative elements such as religion, ethnic nationalism, factual history based roots, and biased history based roots. However among certain ethnic conflicts such as the ethnic conflict in Rwanda between the Hutu's and Tutsi's, certain provocative elements such as religion don't exist due to groups in conflict embracing the same religion (Kurth, 2001, pg. 282), and so other factors such as ethnic identity need to be studied.

The current Israeli- Palestinian ethnic plight is aggressively giving rise to a strong in-group- out- group distinction, as a resulted of historical and religious roots, the polarizing

ideologies held by both sides, and middle eastern resentment toward the Jewish state of Israel. These instigating factors/ attributions have been put into perspective through the use of the Modernist Theory, Perceptual Framework, and the Domestic Framework. With that, these frameworks need to be unilaterally analyzed as a means to formulate specific solutions that target the specific problems identified under each framework.

The Modernist Theory has identified religion to be one of the root causes of the Israeli-Palestinian ethnic conflict (Kurth, 2001, 290- 291), and Kurth (2001, pp. 282) argues that the suppression of religion and religious based ideologies are a key strategy in preventing ethnic conflicts that are instigated by religion. The Perceptual Frame has identified unaccurate and biased historical accounts as prejudice fostering sources, that lead to ethnic tensions and conflict (Brown, 1993). This presents the need to ensure that educational institutions worldwide are not preaching and teaching propaganda, which is a hegemonic force that is cable of negatively altering the cognitive mindset of individuals (St. John III, 2006). Lastly, the Domestic Framework has identified ethnic nationalism as playing a role in the emergence of ethnic conflicts (Brown, 1993). Therefore ethnic nationalism should be coupled with programs and initiatives that prevent ethnic minority groups from developing perceptions of marginality, as these negative perceptions contribute to inter- ethnic conflicts (Brown, 1993).

As academic scholars our task should be to focus on exposing the above attributions in order to implement attribution specific solutions and strategies, rather than generalized solutions that don't target key issues. Issues such as the psychology behind ethnic conflicts as discussed under polarizing ideologies, and the generational persistence of the inter-ethnic conflict which is evident through historical and current middle eastern resentment toward Israel (Bar- Tal & Oren,

2007). The Symbolic- Interaction Perspective can be utilized in order to view the micro- level roots of the Israel- Palestinian ethnic conflict, as interpretations give rise to individual social realities (Enbal & Sherer, 2006; Nairn, 2009). For example much of the inter ethnic conflict is rooted in interpretations and meanings that have been acquired through religion, history (factual and bias), and ideology which have been reinforced through negative inter group contact and prolonged through generational transmission (Bar- Tal & Oren, 2007).

In light of the psychology behind inter- ethnic conflicts such as between Israeli's and Palestinians, a strategy known as the contact hypothesis can be applied (Bekerman, 2002, pg. 409- 410; Maoz, 2003). The contact hypothesis is an inter- ethnic group conflict resolution strategy, that links physical contact between the ethnic groups at conflict with a decline in negative sentiments (Bekerman, 2002). However, two caveats namely status equality and cooperative interdependence need to be established prior to the physical contact (Bekerman, 2002, pg. 410). In addittion, Maoz (2003) states that for bilateral contact to achieve the desired objective of reducing prejudice and resentment, four caveats need to be established. The first caveat is the realization of equal status between both groups (Maoz, 2003, pg. 702). Second is the willingness for both ethnic groups to cooperate with each other (Maoz, 2003, pg. 702). Thirdly, physical contact must occur at a personal level and lastly physical contact/ first hand communication must be supported by the government officials of both sides (Maoz, 2003, pg. 702). Israeli's, Palestinians, and neighbouring Arab nations need to engage in multi-lateral channels of physical contact and communication aimed at decreasing middle eastern tension, and resolving the Israeli- Palestinian ethnic conflict. With that the Palestinian people and their

officials as well as neighbouring Arab nations need to recognize Israel as a sovereign nation state, prior to any form of meaningful solution oriented physical contact (Mendelson, 2008).

In light of preventing the generational persistency of the Israeli- Palestinian ethnic conflict, Tahar and Tannenbaum (2008) present a language oriented solution that has the potential to mend inter ethnic conflict. Their proposal is to teach the Jewish and Palestinian children the language of the out- group, in order to foster inter ethnic group dialogue and positive relationship building (Tahar & Tannenbaum, 2008). Through meaningful communication and interaction it is possible that polarizing ideologies could be de- polarized and historical and religious tensions alleviated, to a degree that may establish a new phase in the Israeli- Palestinian ethnic conflict resolution initiative. However, the current and future animosity between both ethnic groups can be attributed to (a) historical and religious tensions, (b) polarizing ideologies lined to ethnic nationalism, and (c) middle eastern resentment toward the Jewish state of Israel. It is important to realize that these three attributions are interconnected as religious tensions, hostile ideologies, and resentment toward Israel have historical roots that reinforce the animosity between Israeli- Jews and Palestinian- Muslims. With that, an unfortunate consequence is that the Israeli- Palestinian inter-ethnic conflict will continue to escalate throughout both the short term and long term world future, unless the exposed ethnic conflict fostering attributions of the Israeli- Palestinian conflicted are countered.

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