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Summary: Israeli- Palestinian Ethnic Conflict

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CENTRAL ISSUE:

A historical analysis provides evidence of prolonged religious and ethnic conflict in the middle east (Contact, 1992). Ever since the Jewish state of Israel gained independence in 1948 middle eastern Arab neighbours have fostered resentment toward Israel (Mendelsohn, 2008), and anti-semitism in the Arab world was heavily visible after the formation of Israel (Bar-Tal, 1990; Tahar & Tannenbaum, 2008). History points out that Israeli-Arab and Israeli-Palestinian ethnic conflicts stem from territorial battles, linked to the desire to occupy particular middle eastern land (Yiftachel, 1999). However it is evident that religious tensions as well as polarizing ideologies have become byproducts of historical and current territorial battles, as negatively framed ideologies linked to Zionism and Palestinian nationalism are evident (Yiftachel, 1999). The goal of this research 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 Israeli-Palestinian ethnic conflict, the generational longevity of the conflict can be understood and the need for conflict resolution strategies can be appreciated.

THESIS & ARGUMENTS:

The Israeli-Palestinian ethnic conflict will continue to escalate throughout both the short term and long term world future. The current and future animosity between both ethnic groups can be attributed to (a) history based accounts and religious tensions, (b) polarizing ideologies held by both sides, and (c) middle eastern resentment toward the Jewish state of Israel. History based accounts will refer to both biased historical accounts and factual historical events that have

contributed to the Israeli- Palestinian ethnic conflict. Concepts such as ethnicity, nationalism, ideology, Palestinians, Israeli's, Arabs, and religion will be conceptualized in the research paper.

FRAMEWORK GUIDING THE RESEARCH PAPER: (Discussed further in paper)

Three investigative frameworks 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. The Modernist Theory will be used to analyze religion and ethnic conflict (Kurth, 2001), the Perceptual Framework will be used to analyze biased historical accounts and ethnic conflict (Brown, 1993), and the Domestic Framework looking at ethnic nationalism will be used to analyze ideology and ethnic conflict (Brown, 1993). These three frameworks as a whole will be used to put middle eastern resentment toward the state of Israel into perspective.

The Modernist Theory asserts that religion is one of the root causes of ethnic conflicts and it is a factor in the Israeli- Palestinian conflict (Kurth, 2001). For instance, inter ethnic - groups who are adamant about bolstering their religious ideologies may spark an ethnic conflict when faced with an oppositional/ negatively framed ethnic group (Kurth, 2001).

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). With that, social categorization occurs as the out-group is framed as the antagonist and the in-group is framed as the protagonist, which then may lead to inter-ethnic conflicts (Brown, 1993).

The Domestic Framework states that ethnic nationalism tends to marginalize minority ethnic groups, and foster a strong in- group/ out- group distinction (Brown, 1993). As a result, marginalized ethnic groups may begin to experience perceived discrimination as well as a

perceived loss of status/ citizenship equality, which in turn may lead to an ethnic conflict (Brown, 1993).

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