

The Success of an Ethnic Political Party: A Case Study of
Arab Political Parties in Israel

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Abstract

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Israeli Arab political parties are observed to determine if these ethnic political parties are successful in Israel. A brief explanation of four Israeli Arab political parties, Hadash, Arab Democratic Party, Balad, and United Arab List, is given as well as a brief description of Israeli history and the Israeli political system. The total performance as well as individual party performances is compared to the percentage of Israeli Arabs in Israeli society in order to determine that overall Israeli Arab political parties are not successful, although there are nuances to the term of success that the parties achieve.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In 1948, war was waging around my grandparents' home in the small coastal town of Balad Al-Sheikh, Palestine as the Arab nations of Jordan, Syria, Egypt, and Lebanon fought the newly founded state of Israel. My grandparents feared for their lives as well as their son, my uncle Saleh, and when the Arab army told them that an Arab victory was certain, they decided to flee for safety. They packed what was necessary and left the home they had built, still furnished with all their belongings. They traveled to their original hometown, the village of Jabba located outside of Jenin in the West Bank. My grandparents were so certain that they would return to their home, but they never did return. The Arab nations lost the war, Israel stood strong and victorious, and my grandparents became refugees, two of the 780,000 Palestinian refugees that fled to safety during the Naqba or "catastrophe" and currently still live along with their descendents in the West Bank, Gaza, and other countries around the world.

If you skim the scholarly works on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, you would assume that my grandparents' story is the only story that exists following the Naqba. A quick browse of a library's section on Israel would reveal dozens of books concerning the Palestinian refugees who were displaced outside of Israel with subjects such as peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians, the lives of Palestinians living in the West Bank, Gaza, and the surrounding Arab countries, and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). However, not all of the Palestinians left their homes during the Naqba. About 150,000 Palestinians remained in the country following the establishment

of Israel in 1948, and they and their descendents still live within Israeli borders, composing of twenty percent of the current Israeli population of 7,910,500. Whenever a peace settlement is made between the Israeli government and the external Palestinian refugees, these Palestinians, known in Israel as Israeli Arabs, will remain. Whatever issues this community has with the Israeli public and government will remain once a Palestinian state is created. Therefore, it is important to know what this community is and how it lives in order to understand the challenges Israel will encounter once the state has achieved peace with the external refugees.

One avenue to better understand the Israeli Arab community is by observing political parties designed by their creators to serve the Israeli Arab community. In some form or another, a political party has existed that caters to the Israeli Arab community since the establishment of the modern state of Israel. A political party is designed to be an organized front for a group of people in order for them to obtain material benefits or achieve a political project. An ethnic political party, such as the Israeli Arab political parties, is unique in that the group striving to achieve benefits or success in a political project is an ethnic group or minority. For these ethnic political parties, success is not only winning parliamentary seats but improving the standards of living for an ethnic group. Thus, observations on the Israeli Arab political parties' success or lack of success and the reasons of it could reveal more information about how this ethnic minority lives in Israel today. I will, therefore, be researching if these Israeli Arab political parties are successful and why they are or are not successful.

The degree of overall success will be determined by a comparison of how close the number of parliamentary seats these parties win in election to the percentage of Israeli

Arabs in the general population from electoral and census data obtained from the Israeli government spanning the years between the first election of 1949 and the eighteenth election of 2009. The design of a parliament such as Israel's Knesset is intended to create an accurate representation of a nation's population. The idea is that an accurate representation of a nation in the parliament will produce legislation that is democratic and best serves the nation. Therefore, the closer the number of parliamentary seats is to the Israeli Arab percentage of the population, the more successful the Israeli Arab political parties are because they fulfill the goals of the Knesset's construction. However, political scientist Yael Yishai has proposed that for Israeli politics, a political party's success is determined by elements beyond achieving an accurate representation of the ethnicity in the parliament and winning parliamentary seats. To Yishai, success is determined by a party's survivability and their influence on the national public policy. A political party does not need to obtain a large amount of parliamentary seats that is proportionate to its constituents' population if the party can exert a large amount of influence in the Knesset.¹ Due to this deduction, I will also consider success as the Israeli Arab political parties' ability to exist in the Knesset at all for a long period of time and for its ability to exert any political influence. Electoral analyses and the general history of Israel will be utilized to explain reasons for any increases or decreases in success these parties achieve.

Beyond the success of the Israeli Arab political parties, I am hoping to gain a better understanding of these ethnic political parties as well. In Israel, there is more than

¹ Yael Yishai. "Israel's Shas; Party Prosperity and Dubious Democracy." In *When Parties Prosper: The Uses of Electoral Success*, ed. Kay Lawson and Peter H. Markl, 231-247. (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers), 231, 236-237.

one Israeli Arab political party, and I will be researching four parties of this subset, most of which emerged around the 1990s after forty years of Israeli statehood. Previous research on the subject of ethnic political parties in general proposes that an ethnic political party is formed after a major social event in a nation. I am curious to see if the research on ethnic political parties' origins explains why most of the Israeli Arab political parties were created in the 1990s. If the research is true, what event sparked the formation of these parties? If the research is not true, why did most of the parties form at this point in history? Since there is more than one party in existence, are all the Israeli Arab political parties part of a united movement or not?

I will be answering these questions along with the question of if the Israeli Arab political parties are successful in the following thesis. To help answer the questions, I have gathered research on the current literature on ethnic political parties and political parties in general as well as a general history of Israeli history, politics, and Israeli Arab political parties. I then will utilize this research to provide context to my analysis of the Israeli Arab political parties' performance in Israeli elections which should answer my research questions. At the beginning of my research, I hypothesized the following:

H₁: Israeli Arab political parties are unsuccessful in terms of representation or power but are successful in terms of longevity.

H₂: The political parties are a united movement.

H₃: The reason for most of these parties' creation is the Palestinian uprising known as the First Intifada that occurred in the late 1980s.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Any discussion of Israeli Arab political parties or their success pertains to the overall academic discussion of political parties, particularly ethnic political parties, and their success. Political scientists have been unable to unilaterally agree on the function of political parties. Various schools of thought believe that a political party is for a different societal reason. One of the earliest theories supported by some such as Max Weber, Michel Offerle, and Daniel Gaxie is that a political party is a voluntary organization created for the sole reason of attaining intellectual and material benefits for its members by securing power for the party leaders. The political party is considered in economic terms where the party is the enterprise, the party members are the laborers, and the intellectual and material benefits are the products. These benefits are the party members' reward and encourage them to remain in the party. For each member of the party, this reward will be something different, for a party's utility is different for each member. A political party must create an organized system within itself with a differentiation of resources between party leaders and party subordinates that provides labor specific for the different tiers of the party in order for the party to survive. The composition of a party is fluid. The party adapts to the political environment and to the capital members invest into the political party.²

Daniel Louis Seiler theorized that political parties are not enterprises devised for obtaining power but instead a mobilized support system created in order for a political

² Jean Charlot. "Political Parties: Towards a New Theoretical Synthesis." *Political Studies* 37 no. 3 (1989), 357-359.

project to succeed. The political project is the party's main goal and is created from social conflicts fostered from institutionalized social cleavages in a society. According to Seiler, society consists of four social cleavages: the owner-worker cleavage, the church-state cleavage, the center-periphery cleavage, and the urban-rural cleavage. These cleavages breed political parties unique to each cleavage such as bourgeois and worker political parties forming from the owner-worker cleavage and centralist and regionalist political parties forming from the center-periphery cleavage. The party is the vector where these cleavages and the conflicts converge. Even though a party can change which cleavage it lives on depending of changes in the political environment, the political party will always be located on a social cleavage.³

Kay Lawson perceived political parties as an organization devised to be democratic intermediaries between the citizenry and the government.⁴ These political parties' linkages between the citizenry and the government are strategic designs intended to be the most effective way for the political parties to achieve their goals.⁵ According to Lawson's theory, political parties operate according to four types of linkage: directive linkage, participatory linkage, policy-responsive linkage, and linkage by reward. Directive linkage is unique to one-party, totalitarian regimes while the other three types can occur in a democratic environment. Participatory linkage is characterized by balanced interactions between the citizenry and the government, policy-responsive linkage is characterized by government-instigated interactions that are a response to voter opinions,

³ Ibid. 353-354.

⁴ Peter H. Merkl. "Linkage or What Else? The Place of Linkage Theory in the Study of Political Parties." In *Political Parties and Political Systems: The Concept of Linkage Revisited*, ed. Andrea Rommele, David M. Farrell, and Piero Ignazi, 3-16. (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2005), 4,6.

⁵ Mildred A. Schwartz. "Linkage Processes in Party Networks." In *Political Parties and Political Systems: The Concept of Linkage Revisited*, ed. Andrea Rommele, David M. Farrell, and Piero Ignazi, (Westpoint: Praeger Publishers, 2005), 37.

and linkage by reward is characterized by clientelistic interactions where political parties exchange votes for rewards. To survive, the political party must provide some form of long lasting linkage between the government and the citizenry. The linkage provides the political party with legitimacy and authority, and a failure to create a linkage will inevitably result in the party's demise.⁶

Political parties do not operate independently but are greatly influenced by their political environment, particularly by the electoral system of the parties' host country. An electoral system is a set of rules that determine how an election is operated and how the votes procured during the election are translated into political seats.⁷ Douglas Rae highlighted the three major components of an electoral system as the size of the constituency also known as the district magnitude, the electoral formula for translating the votes into parliamentary seats, and the ballot structure. An electoral system can take several forms and is usually classified by its electoral formula. The main classifications are the proportional representation (PR) system, the single-member plurality (SMP) system, single transferable vote (STV) system, and a majority system.⁸ These components influence how a political party can operate and succeed. For example, the district magnitude can alter the distortion and the proportionality of electoral results. Gerrymandering and uneven population densities can allow one political party an advantage over other parties, and the larger the district magnitude, the more proportional the election results will be to the population. An electoral threshold, the required

⁶ Merkl. 7-8, 10.

⁷ David M. Farrell. *Electoral Systems: A Comparative Introduction*. (New York: Palgrave, 2001). 3-4.

⁸ Ibid. 6.

minimum of the percentage of the vote a party must obtain to win a parliamentary seat, in the electoral formula restricts which political parties will participate in government.⁹

The premier scholar on the relationship between electoral systems and political parties is Maurice Duverger. According to Duverger, electoral systems operate as an accelerator and/or brake for political systems by exerting pressure.¹⁰ From this viewpoint, he developed three laws for the relationship between electoral systems and political parties. The first law states that a proportional representation system encourages multiple, independent political parties to exist unless waves of popular emotion are present. The second law is a majority system encourages multiple political parties that are flexible, dependent, and stable to exist. Duverger's third and most famous law states that a single-member plurality system encourages only two, independent political parties to exist. His third law is the most accepted of the three laws amongst political scientists. For this law, Duverger argued that only two political parties will survive in the single-member plurality system because the party is geared towards under-representation, the phenomenon of a third political party to always obtain less parliamentary seats than the votes it won. Voters will recognize this phenomenon and will vote for the two largest parties instead of the other available parties in order to avoid wasting their vote. While the law implies that its prediction will occur nationwide, in actuality, the law occurs in individual elections. In the single-member plurality system, each individual constituency operates as an individual election, and the results are amplified nationwide.¹¹

⁹ Ibid. 12-14, 17.

¹⁰ Virgilio Afonso Da Silva. "Duverger's Laws: Between Social and Institutional Determinism." *European Journal of Political Research* 45, no. 1 (2006), 37.

¹¹ Ibid. 33-34.

Unique to my research are the concepts of ethnic political parties and their success. These concepts are dominated by two schools of thought founded by Kanchan Chandra and Donna Lee Van Cott. According to Chandra, an ethnic party is a party that promotes itself to voters as a champion for one or more ethnic groups and excludes other ethnic groups by designating them as the outsiders. She considers an ethnic identity to be an inherited nominal membership to categories such as race, language, caste, and religion. An individual can have several identities but will choose to identify more strongly to one of these identities.¹² The exclusion occurs in the form of its mobilization strategy towards only one type of voter or giving posts to a certain ethnic group.¹³

To Chandra, political parties, no matter if they are ethnic or multiethnic, are successful if they are able to incorporate new elites from important ethnic groups into the parties. These elites are individuals from ethnic groups who are better educated and better financially from others in their ethnic groups. New elites will come from ethnic groups that had just modernized and want to obtain a chance of holding political office.¹⁴ By being able to incorporate new elites, a political party will be stable in the long run and will be able to retain allegiance from its followers when it is not governing.¹⁵ The best way for a political party to be able to incorporate new elites is by competitive rules for positions in the party. These competitive rules are usually in the form of intraparty elections governed by majority rule and open membership policies. The competitive rules work because it provides incentives for old elites to recruit new elites in order to create

¹² Kanchan Chandra. "Elite Incorporation in Multiethnic Societies." *Asian Survey* 40, no. 5 (2000), 837-838.

¹³ Kanchan Chandra. "The Transformation of Ethnic Politics in India: The Decline of Congress and the Rise of Bahujan Samaj Party in Horshiarpur." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 59, no. 1 (2000), 40.

¹⁴ Chandra. "Elite Incorporation in Multiethnic Societies.", 838-39.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 837.

coalitions of support for the elections. The rules also do not encourage defection because if a party member loses his or her position, it is possible for him or her to gain the position back.

Chandra illustrates this theory with the multiethnic party, the Indian National Congress and the ethnic party, Bahujan Samaj in India. In the beginning, the dominant Indian National Congress party used competitive rules and was thus able to incorporate elites from the Scheduled Caste minority in the state of Karnataka. However, in 1972, the party switched from competitive rules to centralized rules, a system where party positions are allotted by single leader or selectorate. Therefore, the Indian National Congress party was unable to incorporate Scheduled Castes in other states such as Uttar Pradesh and Punjab. In these states, the party was weakened by the ethnic party Bahujan Samaj which represents Scheduled Castes. The Bahujan Samaj party was able to win supporters from the Indian National Congress party in these states which eroded the Indian National Congress party's base.¹⁶

Chandra explains that the elites are created after an ethnic group modernizes.¹⁷ The Bahujan Samaj party was created from members of the Scheduled Caste minority who became educated as a result of India's affirmative action program.¹⁸ She explains that the reason elites created the Bahujan Samaj party was because the Indian National Congress party and the party system as a whole did not have meaningful representatives from the Scheduled Castes and because these elites were facing social discrimination.¹⁹

¹⁶ Ibid. 845, 849.

¹⁷ Ibid, 840-843.

¹⁸ Chandra, "The Transformation of Ethnic Politics in India: The Decline of Congress and the Rise of Bahujan Samaj Party in Horshiarpur.", 28.

¹⁹ Ibid. 28, 35.

These origins were reflected in its political campaigns. The Bahujan Samaj party placed more of an emphasis on psychological oppression and humiliation in their political message as a way to argue that voting would give Scheduled Castes self-respect.²⁰

Donna Lee Van Cott argues that an ethnic party is “an organization authorized to compete in elections, the majority of whose leaders and members identify themselves as belonging to a nondominant ethnic group, and whose electoral platform includes among its core demands programs of an ethnic or cultural nature.” (Van Cott 3). This definition includes organizations that consider themselves political movements but operate in a similar way to political parties and parties that contain members who are not of that ethnic group or align with parties who are not of the same ethnic group.²¹ A successful ethnic political party is a party that is able to compete well for power at the national level and represent a broad geographical section of the country at the national level. These parties usually are unified, organized, and experienced, having about fourteen years of political experience. They are usually located in districts with about 25 percent of the ethnic group they represent.²²

From her research on indigenous political parties in Latin America, Van Cott proposes that ethnic political parties are formed from social movements. She illustrates this theory with 1990s Latin America. During the 1990s, Latin America was experiencing radical constitutional reforms which involved indigenous social movements. Participation in the reforms encouraged some of these social movements to form political parties in order for them to have the reforms realized and to stop nonindigenous groups from

²⁰ Ibid. 37-39.

²¹ Donna Lee Van Cott. *From Movments to Parties in Latin America: The Evolution of Ethnic Parties*. (New York: Cambrige University Press, 2005), 3

²² Ibid. 217-219.

exploiting them. The reform process aided them by providing the new political parties political access and ease at electoral mobilization.²³

However, social movements are not the only element needed for ethnic political parties to form and flourish. Van Cott describes the opportune environment for the birth of ethnic political parties as an environment that is decentralized, has improved voting access for its citizens, a weakening political left, a significant proportion of indigenous people in a district, and the reservation of seats for indigenous groups.²⁴ She places a considerable amount of emphasis on the need for decentralization and a weakened political left. Decentralization allows citizens to directly elect politicians at the local and subnational level which gives political strength to the citizens.²⁵ The weakening of the political left allows ethnic political parties to appeal to the poor by class along with by ethnicity.²⁶ Members of the left are able to be incorporated into the ethnic parties and provide experience and development to the parties.²⁷

Ethnic political parties are not a phenomenon exclusive to Latin America, India, or Israel, but a global phenomenon that has been expressed in various forms. One such example of the concept is the current Maori Party in New Zealand. The Maori are the indigenous people of New Zealand and have had some minor ethnic political parties that existed in the early 1900s and the 1980s before the creation of the Maori Party.²⁸ The Maori have had a history of political participation in New Zealand politics since the 19th

²³ Ibid. 10-11, 312.

²⁴ Ibid, 215-16.

²⁵ Ibid, 220.

²⁶ Ibid, 9.

²⁷ Ibid, 216.

²⁸ Alexandra Xanthaki and Dominic O'Sullivan. "Indigenous Participation in Elective Bodies: The Maori in New Zealand." *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights* 16 (2009).203.

century due to the Maori Representation Act of 1867 that guaranteed four parliamentary seats to the Maori in every parliament.²⁹

Although unlike its predecessors, the Maori Party is operating under a mixed member proportional system. In 1993, New Zealand voted to change its electoral system from the previous single member plurality system to the mixed member proportional system. According to the nation's electoral laws, the ballot will be divided between a constituency vote of individual candidates and a nationwide vote of individual political parties. For the constituency vote, the candidate with the most votes will win the parliamentary seat. For the nationwide political party vote, the parliamentary seats will be dispersed according the Sainte-Lague allocation formula for all parties that receive five percent or more of the vote. According to the Sainte-Lague allocation formula, each political party's total votes will be divided by numerical sequence of odd numbers. After each division, the party with the highest quotient shall obtain a parliamentary seat until all 120 seats are dispersed. The politicians who shall receive these parliamentary seats are determined by a predetermined candidate list each political party sent to the Electoral Commission. The seats will be given to the people from the first slot on the list down to whatever number the allocated seats are. Voting is mandatory in New Zealand for every person over the age of eighteen, and every eligible person must register with the Register of Electors. According to New Zealand law, an eligible political party is one with 500 current financial members who are eligible voters, and each party must register with the Register of Political Parties and pay a deposit of one thousand dollars before giving a candidate list to the Electoral Commission.

²⁹ Ibid. 190-191.

Under this new electoral system, the Maori Representation Act of 1867 no longer applies. The Maori have electoral districts separate from the general electoral districts that are dependent on the size of the Maori electoral population. These districts are determined by dividing the Maori electoral population by the quota for the general electoral districts. A Maori can choose to register as an elector for these separate electoral districts or for the general electoral districts and can periodically switch between the two electoral districts during registering renewal. However, a Maori cannot vote in both electoral districts at the same time.³⁰

The Maori Party was formed in 2004 as a result of nationwide protests against New Zealand's Foreshore and Seabed Act. The Foreshore and Seabed Act gave the New Zealand government jurisdiction over the country's foreshore and seabed, land that was previously a jurisdiction of Maori Land Courts. The Maori could make claims for customary rights to the land, but the claims would have to be sent to New Zealand's High Court instead of the Maori Land Court. The law's intention was for the government to exploit the land's natural resources for financial gain and was part of the administration's agenda to promote privatization and commercialism. Before and after the Foreshore and Seabed Act was enacted in November 2004, the Maori nationwide protested against it usually in the form of protest road marches known as *hikoi*. To the Maori, the law was more than the exploitation of New Zealand natural resources. The Foreshore and Seabed Act was part of a larger argument between the New Zealand government and the Maori about the ownership of natural resources and its benefits and was a threat from the

³⁰ New Zealand. 1993. *Electoral Act of 1993*.

government against the Maori. The law's enactment fostered disillusionment amongst the Maori that the government could govern fairly.³¹

Dr. Pita Sharples and Tariana Turia founded the Maori Party as a byproduct of the protests and the subsequent debate to better protest the Foreshore and Seabed Act and to promote Maori rights.³² The political party participated in the national parliamentary elections the year after its creation and performed well winning four parliamentary seats. In the following 2008 election, the Maori Party won five parliamentary seats.³³ One factor of this success was the electoral reforms from 1993 that created the mixed member proportional system. Due to the change from the Maori Representation Act of 1867 to the Maori electoral districts, the likelihood of a Maori candidate winning a parliamentary seat has increased. This increased likelihood encourages Maori participation in parliamentary elections as the Maori are more likely to vote when a Maori representative is available on the ballot because they view a government that includes a significant amount of the Maori as being more responsive to them.³⁴

Another factor for the Maori Party's success is their campaign strategy. The Maori Party maneuvered in the Maori cultural paradigm and utilized methods of unifying the Maori politically. The party presented the Foreshore and Seabed Act as a threat to the Maori people and their self-determination and proposed that the best defense against this threat was Maori politicization and working within the government. The Maori Party was

³¹ Maria Bargh. "Changing the Game Plan: the Foreshore and Seabed Act and Constitutional Change." *Kotuitui: New Zealand Journal of Social Sciences Online* 1 no. 1 (2006), 15-16, 19-20.

³² Michele Schoenberger-Orgad and Margalit Toledano. "Strategic Framing: Indigenous Culture, Identity, and Politics." *Journal of Public Affairs* 11 no. 4 (2011). 329.

³³ *Ibid.* 332.

³⁴ Alexandra Xanthaki and Dominic O'Sullivan. "Indigenous Participation in Elective Bodies: The Maori in New Zealand." *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights* 16 (2009). 182, 198.

this defense.³⁵ To further convince voters, the party highlighted tribal affiliations and the Maori identity by campaigning at *maraes*, ceremonial Maori meeting grounds, and using Maori cultural images in their visual campaign materials. By using these cultural elements, the party was to consolidate a party identity that the Maori public could identify and avoid the various disputes amongst the Maori population.³⁶

In Slovakia, the current successful ethnic political party is the Most-Hid party. The Most-Hid party is a party in a line of organizations that have represented the Hungarian minority in Slovakia as a result of Czechoslovakia absorbing a Hungarian portion of the Austro-Hungarian Empire after World War I and Slovakia retaining this piece of land when the nation was founded after the Cold War.³⁷ During the Communist regime of Czechoslovakia, the Hungarians did not have any ethnic political parties. Instead, they organized via mass organizations. The first of these organizations was Czechoslovak Hungarian Workers' Cultural Association (CSEMADOK) which began to advocate for minority rights after participating in the Prague Spring. In the 1970s, the Czechoslovak Hungarian Minority Rights Committee (CSMKJB) appeared as political opposition against communism and for a transition to democracy. The committee also advocated for Hungarian minority rights.

After the fall of communism and the founding of Slovakia, three major Hungarian ethnic political parties formed amongst the plethora of political parties: the Independent Hungarian Initiative (MOS), the Coexistence movement, and the Hungarian Christen-Democratic Movement (MKDH). These political parties were ideologically divided but

³⁵ Schoenberger-Orgad and Toledano, 329. Bargh, 19.

³⁶ Schoenberger-Orgad and Toledano, 330-331.

³⁷ Sherrill Stroscheh. "Measuring Ethnic Party Success in Romania, Slovakia, and Ukraine." *Problems of Post-Communism* 48 no. 4 (2001),61.

merged together in 1998 as the Party of the Hungarian Coalition (SMK) due to increasing electoral threshold exclusively for coalitions. Previously, the three parties were a coalition to counter the previous increase of the general electoral threshold to five percent of the vote. In 2009, the Most-Hid party broke from SMK due to SMK's recent controversial actions.³⁸

Slovakia adopts a proportional representation electoral system that has voters with one nationwide constituency. On the ballot, voters can choose four eligible political parties in preferential order, and parties that succeed the five percent electoral threshold will be subjected to the Hagenbach Bischoff method of allocating parliamentary seats. Each party's total number of votes is divided by a combination of the total number of seats in parliament and the number one. The quotient is the number of parliamentary seats that political party shall receive. The candidates for these seats are chosen in numerical order from a predetermined list submitted to the Electoral Commission by the political party before the election. Voting is voluntary and an eligible voter is a citizen eighteen years or older.³⁹

The Most-Hid party's success was due to its ability to present itself as the less-radicalized Hungarian ethnic party. From 1998 to 2006, SMK had been a part of the governing coalition in Slovakia and had adopted a moderate stance in order to appease other parties in the coalition. While the party still pursued Hungarian minority rights, it renounced its more extreme demands such as territorial autonomy and the abolition of the Benes decree, a historical decree from World War II that had confiscated Hungarian land

³⁸ Daniel Boehler and Edina Szocsik. "Building Inter-Ethnic Bridges or Promoting Ethno-Territorial Demarcation Lines? Hungarian Minority Parties in Competition." *Nationalities Paper* 41 no. 5 (2013), 770-773.

³⁹ Slovakia. *PARLINE*.

and took away Hungarians' Czechoslovakian citizenship. However, when the party was no longer in a governing coalition, SMK resumed its extremist demands. In 2009, the party had planned to propose restitution to victims of the Benes decree but retreated due to opposition. The controversy this action caused resulted in a break-off of the party that became the Most-Hid party. The Most-Hid party presented itself as a multi-ethnic party founded in cooperation between the Slovak and Hungarian communities. Whereas SMK focused on controversial Hungarian issues in subsequent campaigns, the Most-Hid party discussed issues beyond Hungarian minority issues. Thus, the party attracted more moderate ethnic Hungarians and a small percentage of Slovaks to vote for it in the 2010 election. This strategy resulted in the Most-Hid party gaining parliamentary seats while SMK failed to meet the electoral threshold.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Bolcher and Szocsik. 772-774.

Chapter 3: Case Study

3.1: The History of Israel

The modern state of Israel was founded on May 14, 1948 after gaining its independence from a British mandate on the territory previously known as Palestine from 1920 to 1948. During the mandate era, the territory was populated by a majority native Palestinian Arab population at 1,310,866 or 67% at 1946 and a smaller growing population of European Jewish settlers who wished to form a Jewish homeland under the ideals of the Jewish nationalist movement Zionism. Conflicts between the two communities occurred sporadically in the 1920s and 1930s, but the conflict became intercommunal war between the two sides when Great Britain announced in September 1947 that the nation would end the Palestinian mandate after a series of Jewish attacks and sabotage against the British occupation after the end of World War II. The war and the Holocaust revitalized the Zionist movement and encouraged Jewish settlers to form a Jewish state as a safe haven for Jewish survivors of these events' atrocities. Following the establishment of the state of Israel, a regional war was added to the intercommunal war between the Palestinians and Jews when Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Transjordan (Jordan today), and Iraq invaded Israel on May 15, 1948. Throughout the both the intercommunal war and the regional war, Palestinians living in the now state of Israel fled the violence in the thousands to neighboring states in what is known as the *Naqba* or catastrophe, although not all of the Arabs left the territory.⁴¹ The Arab population dropped from about

⁴¹ William L. Cleveland and Martin Bunton. *A History of the Modern Middle East: Fourth Edition*. (Boulder: Westview Press, 2009), 254-270.

two million people at the eve of fighting to about 150,000 people at the end of fighting in December 1948. In other words, the population that became the Israeli Arabs were the ten percent of Arabs who remained in the now state of Israel.⁴² This sudden shift in population affected the Israeli Arab population long after the violence. The memory of being the majority population still remains in the Israeli Arab communal memory and inspires an aspiration to have majority status once more in the future.⁴³

However, the Israeli Arabs were never able to achieve majority status. After the fighting, the Israeli government placed areas of high Israeli Arab population under military control from 1948 to 1966. The military controlled all aspects of Israeli Arab life from freedom of speech to Israeli Arab institutions. Organizations that promoted Arab or Palestinian nationalism were banned, agricultural production and the establishment of new businesses were restricted, and Arab-owned land was expropriated.⁴⁴ The reasoning for the military control was mainly security. The Israeli government viewed the Israeli Arab population as a possible threat to the nation's security because the population could possibly align with underground cells determined to fight the government or aid refugees attempting to illegally re-enter the country. The government believed that the Israeli Arab population did not fully accept the state of Israeli and wanted to change the government to their benefit and the detriment of the Jewish population. A military rule was the only

⁴² As'ad Ghanem. *The Palestinian-Arab: Minority in Israel, 1948-2000*. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001), 13.

⁴³ Gadi Hitman. "Israel's Arab Leadership in the Decade Attending the October 2000 Events." *Israel Affairs* 19 no. 1 (2013), 121.

⁴⁴ Ghanem. 19-21.

way to deter any Israeli Arab backlash and successfully solve any problems with the Israeli Arab community.⁴⁵

The Palestinian diaspora and the military regime politically weakened the Israeli Arabs. The Arab political leadership and organizations that existed during the Mandate period were destroyed, and any attempt to politically organize afterwards failed due to the military regime's restrictions.⁴⁶ However, an Israeli Arab political awakening began to occur during the 1970s after the Six Day War of 1967 occurred.⁴⁷

The Six Day War was fought in June 1967 between Israel, Egypt, Syria, and Jordan. In the previous month, Egypt had acquired faulty intelligence from its ally the Soviet Union that Israel was preparing to attack Syria, Egypt's ally, as retribution against Syria's aid to Palestinian guerillas. To bolster Egypt's image as the leader of the Arab world, Egypt's president Gamal Abdel Nasser deployed troops in the Sinai Peninsula near the Israeli border and placed a blockade on the Straits of Tiran, an important Israeli shipping passage even though he was militarily weak at the time due to a military intervention in Yemen. Soon after, Jordan signed a defense pact with Egypt as Nasser's action gained regional popularity. The Israeli government viewed this alliance between Egypt, Syria, and Jordan and Egypt's actions as a threat to Israel's security and launched a pre-emptive attack on the three nations on June 5. The Arab nations were unprepared for the attack, and Israel won the war in six days.

⁴⁵ Yoav Gelber. "Israeli's Policy Towards its Arab Minority, 1947-1950." *Israel Affairs* 19 no. 1 (2013), 66, 68.

⁴⁶ Ghanem. 14, 17.

⁴⁷ Hitman. 122.

The quick and remarkable victory against three nations gave Israel a sense of invincibility and a image of military superiority in the Middle East. The country was no longer afraid of possible attacks from its Arab neighbors. Along with the confidence boost, Israel gained a significant amount of territory with the addition of East Jerusalem, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Sinai Peninsula, and the Golan Heights.⁴⁸ While the Palestinian population in these territories are not considered Israeli Arabs or have the same rights of their Israeli Arab counterparts, the addition of the territories influenced the Israeli Arabs. The two communities were now able to connect to family members separated from since the *Naqba* , engage in daily contact amongst themselves and develop economic, cultural and educational ties. These interactions fostered a nationalist awareness amongst the Israeli Arabs that resulted in a political awakening that was now possible due to the end of the military regime. This new awakening campaigned for improved conditions for the Israeli Arab population and for the Palestinians living in the territories.⁴⁹

Another major development of the 1970s was the Yom Kippur war and its aftermath. The Yom Kippur War was a 1973 Israeli victory against an Egyptian and Syrian surprise attack that unnerved the general Israeli population. In the year previous to the war, current Egyptian president Anwar Sadat attempted to instigate a peace deal between Egypt and Israel in order to receive much-needed economic benefits from Israeli allies. However, Sadat was unsuccessful because Israel was still in a position of confidence and power from the Six Day War. To better convince Israel to engage in a peace deal, Egypt along with its ally Syria launched a surprise attack on Israel on October

⁴⁸ Cleaveland and Burton. 338-341.

⁴⁹ Hitman. 122-123.

6, 1973. Egypt was able to successfully overtake the Israeli side of the Suez Canal but did not proceed to march further into Israeli territory and was later surrounded by Israeli troops. The two sides agreed to a cease-fire on October 20, 1973. For Sadat, the war and Egypt's crossing of the Suez Canal was a political victory. Israel became more willing to commence a peace process with Egypt.⁵⁰ However, for Israel, the surprised attack destroyed Israel's image of superiority.

This blow to Israel's confidence helped end the thirty reign of the Labour party in the 1977 elections with its loss to the Likud party. Until that election, the Labour party led every government since the nation's establishment.⁵¹ The end of Labour dominance destabilized the political environment and increased the importance of Israeli Arabs in national elections. Now that the final results were uncertain, the two major political parties, Labour and Likud, needed every vote possible for political victory including the Israeli Arabs. The Israeli Arabs had more political power and options after Labour's defeat.⁵²

The desire to form peace talks caused by the Yom Kippur War also led to the creation of the Camp David Accords. Diplomatic initiatives to form the peace talks did not occur directly after the war's conclusion but instead after Anwar Sadat's historic visit to Jerusalem on November 20, 1977 and his speech before the Israeli parliament, the Knesset. He was the first Arab leader to do so at that time. Peace talks began soon after between the nations with the United States as the third party and focused on bilateral Israeli-Egyptian relations as well as comprehensive plan for peace in the Middle East. In

⁵⁰ Cleveland and Burton. 374-376.

⁵¹ Arian Asher. *Politics in Israel: The Second Republic Second Edition*. (Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 2005.), 125.

⁵² Ghanem. 22.

September 1978, the two nations met at Camp David in the United States for an intensive thirteen day negotiation that formed the Camp David Accords. The Camp David Accords were composed of an Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty, the first between Israel and an Arab nation, and “A Framework for Peace in the Middle East”, a proposed plan for peace in the region that would create an autonomous Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza. The treaty was signed on March 26, 1979, but the framework failed soon after.⁵³

Domestic relations between Israeli Jews, Israeli Arabs, and the Palestinian external refugees located in the territories reached a nadir in 1987 with the First Intifada. What began as a minor road accident in the Gaza strip between the Israeli military and local Palestinians that resulted in the deaths of four Palestinians quickly became a series of protests against the Israeli occupation in the Palestinian territories that included peaceful means like mass demonstrations and strikes as well as violent means such as stabbings and shootings in the Palestinian territories against Israeli occupation from 1987 to 1990.⁵⁴

The sudden appearance of the First Intifada surprised the Israeli public. The First Intifada was the first of kind of protest of this magnitude since the state was founded in 1948 and was unlike previous protest movements for the First Intifada had elements such as women and children being a significant amount of the casualties and the blocking of Israeli roads.⁵⁵ While the majority of demonstrators were Arabs who lived in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the events of the Intifada affected the relationship of the Israeli Arabs and the Israeli Jews. Expressions of Palestinian nationalism that ranged from

⁵³ Cleveland and Burton. 379-380.

⁵⁴ Ibid. 475-477.

⁵⁵ Ilan Asya. “The Israeli Newspapers’ Coverage of the Israeli Arabs during the Intifada.” In *The Israeli Palestinians: an Arab Minority in the Jewish State*, 187-211, (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2003), 195.

publically waving Palestinian flags to actively participating in the movement increased amongst the Israeli Arabs, but distrust of the community from Israeli Jews also increased.⁵⁶ To some Israelis, there was no difference between the Palestinian territories and Israel Proper and between the Palestinian Arabs who lived in the territories and the Israeli Arabs who lived in Israel Proper. The First Intifada was perceived as an event occurring all over the country, and no Israeli Jew was safe from these attacks specifically because of their Israeli Arab neighbors.⁵⁷ Once again, society perceived the Israeli Arabs as a security threat to the existence of Israel, and both the government and the Israeli media threatened the community to not participate in the First Intifada and conform to Israeli society.⁵⁸

Following the First Intifada, the Israeli government and the Palestinians strengthened their resolve to achieve peace between the two communities. In October 1991, Israel and Palestinian representatives along with Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan gathered at the Madrid Conference, a jointly Soviet Union-the United States sponsored conference designed to form a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians. The conference and subsequent meetings failed due to a disagreement amongst the two sides concerning Israeli settlements in the Palestinian territories. However in 1993, Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), a Palestinian resistance organization headed by Yasser Arafat, signed the Oslo Accords after a series of clandestine meetings in Oslo, Norway.

⁵⁶ Ibid. 188, 192-195.

⁵⁷ Ibid. 196-197.

⁵⁸ Ibid. 199-204.

The Oslo Accords consisted of two agreements. The first agreement stated that the state of Israel recognizes the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and the PLO recognizes Israel's right to exist and renounces the use of terror and violence. The second agreement was the Declaration of Principles on Palestinian Self-Rule also known as Oslo I. Oslo I outlined a five year plan for an interim Palestinian autonomous government in the Palestinian territories although Israel would still maintain sovereignty over the area. This autonomous government would become the current Palestinian Authority. The Oslo II agreement that was signed in 1995 provided the details to how power was to be given to this government and where it would rule. Oslo I was meant to lead to a final peace agreement even though the agreement neither explicitly mentioned the creation of a Palestinian state nor provided a solution to continuous issues such as the Palestinian refugees or the Israeli settlements. Despite these flaws, the Oslo Accords were still considered an historic step forward to peace between the Palestinians and the Israelis.

Criticism against the Oslo Accords came from both sides, in particular the religious factions. Both the Orthodox Jews and Islamic fundamentalists, the militant Palestinian resistance movement Hamas in particular, viewed the accords as a violation of their religious creeds. For the Orthodox Jews, giving any land to the Palestinians was against God's covenant of the land promised to the Jewish people. For the Islamic fundamentalists, recognizing the existence of Israel prevented them from returning the land to Islamic rule. Both sides responded with violent protests. Hamas began a series of suicide bombings in Israel in 1994, and in November 1995, a Jewish religious student assassinated Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, the prime minister who signed the Oslo

Accords. The assassination suspended future negotiations, but the violent acts further sowed distrust between the two sides and disenchanted both communities about the possibility of success.⁵⁹

A Second Intifada flared as a result of the disenchantment about the likelihood of peace between Israel and the external Palestinian refugees. In July 2000, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian Authority's president, met in the United States for a two week conference for peace negotiations in what was known as Camp David II. The conference failed because neither side could reach a settlement on the controversial issues they had been avoiding. Soon after the conference's failure, Israeli politician and former army general Ariel Sharon visited the contentious area the Temple Mount, a holy site for both Jews and Muslims, in September of that year. Viewing the visit as an affront to Islam, the Palestinians protested in mass demonstrations that signaled the beginning of the Second Intifada. The Second Intifada was marked by militarization of both sides. Whereas before the Palestinians attempted mostly peaceful protests where the most violent acts were throwing stones, the Second Intifada consisted of suicide bombings and loosely organized militant groups. The Israeli response to the protests was also more deadly in the Second Intifada with the Israeli military using the likes of tanks and fighter jets against the protesters. Once again, the Israeli Jews felt threatened and vulnerable and grew to distrust all Palestinians including the Israeli Arabs.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Cleveland and Burton. 500-509.

⁶⁰ Ibid. 513-516.

3.2: The Israeli Political System

The Israeli electoral system is a proportional representation system where citizens vote nationwide constituency for political parties to serve in the Israeli parliament, the Knesset. A political party wins parliamentary seats as long as it wins currently two percent or more of the national vote, one of the lowest electoral thresholds in the world which promotes small, niche political parties to be formed and fractionalization in the party system. Seats are currently distributed according to the Bader-Ofner Method, more commonly known as the D'Hondt method. According to the Bader-Ofner Method, each valid party's total votes are divided by a general indicator that is calculated by dividing the total valid votes of the election by 120, the total number of seats in the Knesset. The quotient is the number of parliamentary seats each party obtains. Between 1949 and 1973, the seats were determined by the Hagenbach-Bischoff method also known as the Hare method, a process of giving seats to the parties with the largest excess votes after the party surpasses a quota. Candidates for these seats are chosen numerically from a list previously made by the political party and sent to the Electoral Commission. Political parties are allowed to practice apportionment, the practice of joining for an alliance and link their lists of candidates. Any surplus votes from this alliance are dividing the each party's total valid votes by the alliance's number of seats and the number one. The party with the highest quotient will receive the surplus seat.⁶¹

Political parties cannot participate in the election if the party incites racism, does not acknowledge the existence of the state of Israel as the state of the Jewish people, or

⁶¹ The Electoral System in Israel. *Knesset English*

does not acknowledge the democratic character of Israel. Such suspensions can only occur after either the attorney-general, the chairman of the Central Committee, or one fourth of the Election Committee appeals to the Supreme Court for the suspension. Citizens are ineligible to be candidates for Knesset seats if they are either the president of the state, one of the Chief Rabbis, a judge currently in office in the legal courts or the religious courts, the state comptroller, the chief of the General Staff of the Defense Army, a religious minister, or a senior state employee or army officer whose functions are determined by the law.⁶²

As previously stated in the literature review, the design of an electoral system can affect the party system of a nation. Israel's proportional representation system and large district magnitude promote a theoretically more proportional election result and encourages more political parties to be in the Knesset. The average voter has no involvement in the individual candidates who will possibly represent them in the Knesset due to the candidate lists being made before the election by the political party's headquarters and its members. This situation along with the large district magnitude does not promote much candidate-constituency interactions on the individual level. An electoral threshold is generally created to reduce the number of small political parties that are organized around niches such as ethnicity. However, Israel's electoral threshold is so low that these parties still flourish.⁶³ The threshold has risen over the course of the nation's existence but is still unable to counteract this phenomenon.⁶⁴

⁶² Israel. 1958. *Basic Law: The Knesset*.

⁶³ Farrell. 79-83, 95, 163.

⁶⁴ The Electoral System in Israel. *Knesset English*.

The only major electoral reform in Israeli history has been the separate election for prime minister between 1996 and 2001. The reform was an attempt to stifle the ongoing party fractionalization in the Israeli political system. The government believed that there were too many small, niche political parties for the political system to operate effectively. Before and after the reform, the president of Israel appoints a politician after the election to form a governing coalition. This person is usually the leader of the party that won the most seats in the election and will become the prime minister.⁶⁵ According to the electoral reform, in the 1996, 1999, and 2001 elections, the position of prime minister was chosen by a nationwide direct election performed at the same time of parliamentary elections. Much like how New Zealand's electoral reform increased voter participation and how the fall of Communism in Slovakia prompted the creation of several political parties, the reform resulted in various new political parties being formed in this time period. In the 1999 election, an unprecedented thirty-three political parties participated in the election, and of those parties, fifteen won seats in the Knesset.⁶⁶

3.2.1: The Two Major Israeli Political Parties

In Israel, the political system is dominated by two political parties, the Labour Party representing the political left and the Likud Party representing the political right. Even though these parties are the dominating forces in Israel, the two parties have begun to lose political strength since the 1990s.⁶⁷

The Labour Party officially formed in 1968 following the merging of the Mapai Party, the Ahdut Havoda Party, and the Rafi Party. Before the merge, Mapai dominated

⁶⁵ Arian. 264.

⁶⁶ Cleveland and Burton. 513.

⁶⁷ Arian. 140.

Israeli politics, establishing every governing coalition since the establishment of the state. Mapai was formed in 1930 in the Palestinian mandate on the basis of Zionism and socialism. Ahdut Havoda and Rafi were parties that broke away from Mapai in 1942 and 1965 respectively. Following the merge, Labour continued the political left's dominance of Israeli politics until the 1977 elections when the party lost to the Likud Party.⁶⁸ This loss was a result of the discovery of corruption within the political party, an inadequate party structure coupled with a leadership vacuum, and the national shock from the surprise attack starting the October War which occurred during Labour's dominance.⁶⁹ Since the 1977 elections, Labour has only been able to win the 1984, 1992, and 1999 elections, although following the 1984 election, Labour ruled the government in a coalition with Likud.⁷⁰

Following the First Intifada, the Labour Party began to advocate peace negotiations with the Palestinians. In 1996, the party agreed to no longer oppose a Palestinian state or an end to Israeli control of the Golan Heights. A Labour government formed the Oslo Accords as well as other peace attempts. Following the Second Intifada, the party called for a unilateral withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza.⁷¹

The Likud Party was formed in 1973 from a merge of political parties that consisted mainly of the Herut Party and the Liberal Party but also consisted of smaller political parties such as the National List.⁷² The Herut Party was founded in 1925 with its ideals founded on the Revisionist form of Zionism. Revisionism formed in 1925, its

⁶⁸ Ibid. 130-133.

⁶⁹ Ibid. 125.

⁷⁰ Ibid. 128, 135.

⁷¹ Ibid. 136-137.

⁷² About the Likud Party: History of the Movement. *Likud: National Liberal Party*. <<http://www.likud.org.il/en/about-the-likud/history-of-the-movement>>

followers believed that the ruling Zionist Organization, from which Mapai formed, needed to be revised and that Jews needed to adopt militancy to achieve their nationalistic goals.⁷³ Herut followed this ideology and also believed that Israel should have claim over all the territory under the former British mandate. To Herut's followers, this territory should not be divided in any manner. Settlements in the West Bank and Gaza following the 1967 war were therefore encouraged by the Herut Party. The Liberal Party founded its ideology from the General Zionists, an organization that supported a limited government and free enterprise. Between these two political parties, Herut was the major force inside Likud while the Liberal Party experienced a weaker role.⁷⁴ Likud itself supports a mixing of these two parties' ideals. It supports a free market economy along with a preservation of Jewish culture and territory. Likud established settlements in the West Bank and introduced the law that stated a united Jerusalem as Israel's capital.⁷⁵ The party also opposed the Oslo Accords and a Palestinian state. The party first won an Israeli election in 1977 and has been the main political party in power since then.⁷⁶

3.3: Israeli Arab Political Parties

The Palestinian community's political foundation that existed during the Mandate period dissipated after the Naqba due to the exit of political leaders and the exit of 780,000 Palestinians. The Israeli military rule placed over the Israeli Arab community from 1948 to 1966 restricted any independent Israeli Arab political parties from forming

⁷³ Arian. 140.

⁷⁴ Ibid. 147-149.

⁷⁵ About the Likud Party: History of the Movement. *Likud: National Liberal Party*. <<http://www.likud.org.il/en/about-the-likud/history-of-the-movement>>

⁷⁶ Arian. 139, 147.

although attempts were made.⁷⁷ Most notable of these failed attempts is the Al-Ard movement of 1961-1964, a movement whose ideology can be inferred by the translation of its name. In Arabic, al-ard means “the earth or the ground” which signifies that this movement’s focus was territorially based. In its essence, the Al-Ard movement was nationalistic. In 1964, when the movement attempted to register as a political party, the Haifa district commissioner refused to register the organization on the grounds that the movement’s goal was to subversively influence the public with propaganda that supported the destruction of the state of Israel. During the appeals case, the Supreme Court ruled that the Al-Ard movement was an illegal organization.⁷⁸ However, Israeli Arab political parties that were supported by Zionist parties were able to survive during the military regime. Zionist parties, in particular the modern Labour party’s predecessor Mapai, would back political parties led by Israeli Arab clan leaders that would operate as their satellite parties as extensions of clan politics that governed the Israeli Arab community. These satellite parties would have the same policies and objectives as their Zionist counterparts but were composed of Arab members instead of Jewish members and operate in the Arab sectors that the Zionist parties would avoid. The satellite parties allowed the Zionist parties to have control over an Israeli Arab constituent without opening the party to the Israeli Arab community. All of the satellite parties that won Knesset seats, such as the Democratic List of the Palestinian Minority and Progress and

⁷⁷ Ghanem. 14,19.

⁷⁸ Rebecca Kook. “Between Uniqueness and Exclusion: The Politics of Identity in Israel.” In *Israel in Comparative Perspective: Challenging the Conventional Wisdom*, ed. Michael N. Barnett, 199-225, (Albany: State University of New York, 1996): 215.

Development, were the ones supported by Mapai, and this brand of party exited the Israeli political stage by 1981.⁷⁹

Since the end of the satellite parties, four ethnic political parties have emerged that represent the Israeli Arab community: Hadash, Arab Democratic Party, Balad, and the United Arab List. While other Israeli Arab political parties have been created, these four parties have won Knesset seats, and three of the four are currently members of the Knesset. None of these parties are alike as well. Each of these political parties represents a different political ideology within the Israeli Arab community. Due to their political strength and diversity, I will be focusing on Hadash, Arab Democratic Party, Balad, and the United Arab List in my research.

3.3.1: Democratic Front for Peace and Equality (Hadash)

The roots of the communist party Democratic Front for Peace and Equality (also known as Hadash,) roots exist from the foundation of the state of Israel. Maki, the Israeli Communist Party, incorporated Arab members into its organization since its inception in 1948. In the 1960s, political infighting with the Jewish and Arab factions within Maki resulted in the formation of the Arab faction's New Communist List (Rakeh) which created Hadash in 1977 as an umbrella organization for both Rakeh and its allies such as the Black Panthers, a political party that sought to improve the lives of Mizrahi Jews (Jews who were immigrated from the Middle East).⁸⁰

Much like its ancestors, Hadash is composed as a Jewish-Arab party that caters to both communities. The party's priorities best reflect this. Although Hadash does support

⁷⁹ Ghanem. 39-41.

⁸⁰ Ibid. 66-68.

Israeli Arab rights, it also supports women's and workers' rights, disarmament, environmental policies, and an end to privatization. Hadash's mission statement is to unite both Jewish and Arab supporters for peace, equality, and democracy and to a political alternative to governmental policies it viewed as wrong.⁸¹ Despite this inter-ethnic composition, Hadash attracts mostly Israeli Arab voters because the party focuses more on a Palestinian nationalistic identity than a communist identity or a Jewish/Arab identity in its campaign materials.⁸²

Hadash flourished after its creation in the late 1970s. Its platform at that time reflected the changing social environment in Israeli Arab community and met the demands of this community. In this time period, secularism was increasing amongst the Israeli Arabs, and because of this, Hadash's secular tenets attracted those secular within the community. The party also at this time was the first to make such demands as the demand for a two state solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict which attracted the more general Israeli Arab community.

Hadash's popularity began to decline in the mid 1980s, in part because of a larger decline of communism's popularity in Israel as the global Communist bloc became weaker. The once revolutionary tenets of Hadash's platform began to become the norm as more Israeli Arab political parties entered the political stage and challenged it with similar platform demands. The party was unable to adapt to the changing political

⁸¹ *Hadash-Democratic Front for Peace and Equality* <www.hadash.org.il/english>

⁸² Hillel Frisch. "Stability Amidst Flux: The Arab Parties Come of Age in the 2006 General Elections." *Israel Affairs* 13 no. 2 (2007): 375-376. David Koren. "Arab Israeli Citizens in the 2009 Elections: Between Israeli Citizenship and Palestinian Arab Identity." *Israel Affairs* 16 no. 1 (2010): 133.

environment and even deterred voters with its harsh campaign tactics against these rivals.⁸³

However, Hadash still remains a dominant political party in the Israeli Arab political spectrum. In most elections, the party has won either the largest or second largest amount of Knesset seats amongst the Israeli Arab political parties competing. Since the 1980s, the party has evolved and has begun to more heavily promote secular issues that would conflict with all the religious communities within the state. In 2003, the party released a new mission statement that for the first time stated it supports a secular state and a separation between religion and the state. The party began to support civil marriages and divorces, civil institutions that only exist in Turkey in the Middle East. Along with this mission statement, the party aired television campaign commercials that featured Israeli Arab men drinking alcohol and Israeli Arab men and women intermingling, features that offended religious Israeli Arabs for the features went against Islamic principles.⁸⁴ According to Islam, alcohol is forbidden and the sexes should not intermingle in public places. Along with a secular identity, Hadash has begun to promote specifically a Palestinian nationalist identity in its campaign materials. In the 2006 election, the party highlighted strongly in the city of Um al-Fahm that the candidate on its list's fourth slot is a citizen of the city. Leaflets contained a quote that stated that Hadash represents pan-Arab nationalism and preserves Islamic and Arab civilization.⁸⁵ With these campaign materials, the political party appears to have abandoned its idea of Jewish-Arab solidarity in favor of an idea that champions Palestinian nationalism. No

⁸³ Ghanem. 69-74.

⁸⁴ Hillel Frisch. "The Influence of the Al-Aqsa Intifada on the Arab Vote in the 2003 General Elections." *Israel Affairs* 10 no. 4 (2004): 140.

⁸⁵ Frisch. "Stability Amidst Flux: Arab Parties Come of Age in 2006." 375, 377.

longer is each community treated the same. Instead, Hadash caters to the Israeli Arab community.

3.3.2: Arab Democratic Party(ADP)

The Arab Democratic Party (ADP) was founded by former Labour politician Abdulwahab Darawshe as the First Intifada was occurring in Israel. At a rally protesting the government's reaction to the unrest in the occupied territories in January 1988, the Knesset member announced that he was resigning from Labour and establishing a new political party. Darawshe's resignation was a reaction to an increase in governmental discrimination against Israeli Arabs following the First Intifada. This party, the ADP, was founded in June later that year.

The political party operated on the idea that for there to be peaceful coexistence amongst the Jews and Israeli Arabs, the Israeli Arabs must receive civic equality. At the time of the party's creation, civic equality for the community had not been achieved. The party believed that the best way to achieve this civic equality was for a party representing the Israeli Arabs to be part of the government's government coalition. As a coalition member, Israeli Arabs can obtain considerable political influence and benefits that will allow the community to gain civic equality. Working within the Zionist parties to achieve this equality was impossible. To the members of the ADP, the Zionist political parties were not making any serious attempt to aid the Israeli Arabs and were just exploiting the Israeli Arab vote for their gain. Civic equality must be achieved by an Israeli Arab political party, although cooperation with the Jewish people and operating within the Zionist political structure was necessary to achieve this.

Civic equality was one of the main demands of the Arab Democratic Party. Other demands were for the two-state solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to be enacted, recognition of the Israeli Arabs as a national minority in Israel, and the full integration of the Israeli Arabs in Israeli society. In terms of identity, the party believed that the Israeli Arabs were a part of the Palestinian people, but any sort of autonomy for the community was counterproductive for the party's goal of civic equality. The party preferred full integration into Israeli society while preserving an Israeli Arab identity. A Palestinian nationalist identity was second to an Israeli identity that was considered equal by the government for all ethnic groups in Israel.

ADP was able to gain one Knesset seat in its first election in 1988. Its success was in part because the party focused more on the concerns of daily life for the Israeli Arab community instead of the Palestinian cause. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict was handled more as lip service for the party. Success was also achieved due to how the party did not offend the current political order by ignoring Zionism in its campaign material. In the 1996 election, ADP gained more seats as the United Arab List joined the party, and in the 1999 election, the party obtained more Knesset seats as a former prominent Hadash member Hashem Mahameed joined the party. Despite these successes, by the 2003 elections, the Arab Democratic Party was absorbed into the United Arab List.⁸⁶

⁸⁶ Ghanem. 42-48, 53, 60.

3.3.3: The National Democratic Assembly (Balad)

The National Democratic Assembly Party is a nationalist political party founded in 1996 by Dr. Azmi Bishara, a philosophy professor from Bir Zeit University.⁸⁷ Ironically, the National Democratic Assembly Party is known more commonly by its Hebrew acronym, Balad. The reason the nationalist party uses a Hebrew acronym is that the word exists in the Arabic language. In Arabic, Balad means “homeland” or “country” in a more emotional sense of the word. By using the term Balad, the party illustrates that its conception of nationalism is more philosophically-based than territorially-based.

Dr. Azimi Bishara is a unique figure in Israeli politics, in that he is the only strong, charismatic political leader amongst the Israeli Arab political parties. Other Israeli Arab parties lack such a leader in their organizations.⁸⁸ To Bishara, Israeli Arabs are essentially foreigners in Israel because of state actions towards them and because of the Jewish composition of the state. The Israeli Arab community is an extension of the Palestinian community outside Israel. Palestinians and Israeli Arabs are one and the same. He believes that the best way for Israeli Arabs to live in the state is with civic equality and cultural autonomy, although Israel must be a state designed for all its citizens instead of a Jewish state for such living conditions to exist successfully. However, instead of promoting a cultural autonomy, the Israeli government is pushing the Israeli Arabs to the fringes of society and psychologically and culturally causing them to view believe that they are semi-citizens in a policy Bishara names “Israelization”. To

⁸⁷ Abigail Fraser and Avi Shabat. “Between Nationalism and Liberalism : The Political Thought of Azmi Bisharah.” In *The Israeli Palestinians: an Arab Minority in the Jewish State*, 16-38, (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2003): 16.

⁸⁸ Hillel Frisch. “The Arab Vote in the Israeli Elections: The Bid for Leadership.” *Israel Affairs* 7 no. 2/3 (2000): 160.

Bishara, this concept is best represented by Israeli Arabs who attempt to improve the living standards of the community politically within the current governmental parameters of Zionism and Israel as a Jewish state. Due to “Israelization”, the Israeli Arab community is losing its Palestinian identity. Instead, the community is regarded as citizens in a Jewish state.

The political party Balad is Bishara’s defense against Israelization.⁸⁹ The party campaigns for the Israeli Arab community to be recognized as a national minority in Israel while also maintaining Bishara’s desired cultural autonomy. Under this autonomy, the party wants a separate elected assembly and executive branch to rule over the Israeli Arabs. As a national minority, the community would be officially protected from institutional and private discrimination that excludes Israeli Arabs from higher education and the job market. In terms of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the party calls for the Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories as well as for Israel to grant Palestinian refugees the right of return and create a separate Palestinian state.⁹⁰

In the beginning of the party’s life, Balad did not enter the Israeli election alone. In the 1996 election, the party ran with Hadash while in the 1999 election, the party joined with the Arab Movement for Change Party. During the 1999 election, Bishara controversially ran for prime minister in the separate election for prime minister present in Israel at that time and obtained two to three percent of the vote.⁹¹ He conceded defeat before the second round of voting but has stated that winning was not his goal. His

⁸⁹ Fraser and Shabat. 23-30.

⁹⁰ Koren. 133.

⁹¹ Randy Harber and Jerrold Kessel. 1999. “Arab Candidate Drops Out of Israeli PM Race.” *CNN.com* May 15. Accessed April 19, 2014.
<<http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/meast/9905/15/israel.elex.03>>

campaign was an attempt to publicize the grievances of the Israeli Arab population, even though most Israeli Arabs and all Israeli Arab political parties criticized and condemned his run for prime minister.⁹²

In the 2003 election, Balad successfully ran independently winning the second most Knesset seats amongst the Israeli Arab political parties. This success was in part because of controversy Balad encountered before the election. Between the 1999 election and the 2003 election, Bishara made statements after the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon in 2000 that offended the mainstream Israeli community. He praised the withdrawal as a victory for the Arab resistance and a sign of hope for total victory in the future. He further courted controversy when he praised the terrorist group Hezbollah in 2001 as the Second Intifada raged and also encouraged Arabs to engage in a resistance against Israel during a visit to the grave of Hafez al-Assad, the former dictator of Syria, the same year. Bishara was attempting to advocate a pan-Arab and Palestinian nationalist identity with these actions by portraying the Israeli state as an Other to the Israeli Arabs and the Arabs outside Israel, but his actions had drastic consequences. As a result of these statements, the Knesset conducted a trial to remove Bishara's immunity on the grounds that he had broken the Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance by praising Hezbollah, encouraging Israel Arabs and Palestinians to adopt Hezbollah's techniques, and illegally arranging visits for Israeli Arabs to Syria. After deliberations, the Knesset voted to remove Bishara's immunity on November 7, 2001, the first such action from the Knesset in the modern state's history.

⁹² Hillel Frisch. "The Arab Vote in the Israeli Elections: The Bid for Leadership." *Israel Affairs* 7 no. 2/3 (2000):159-160. Fraser and Shabat. 16.

Two months before the election, Israeli right-wing political parties brought the case of both Balad and the United Arab List as well as individuals Bishara and Arab Knesset members Ahmad Tibi and Abdul Malik Dechamshe to the Central Elections Committee. Much like with the First Intifada, the Second Intifada, which was occurring at the time of the 2003 election, increased the Israeli Jewish community's fear of the Israeli Arabs and diminished any tolerance towards the Israeli Arabs.⁹³ Along with this new opinion shift, the Israeli Left was diminishing and the Israeli Right was gaining more power.⁹⁴ The Israeli right-wing political parties claimed that these parties and members violated Israeli electoral law by not accepting the Jewish democratic charter of the state. The Central Elections Committee banned only Balad, Bishara, and Tibi from the election. However, three weeks before the election was to commence, Israel's High Court overruled this decision.⁹⁵ In 2007, the government continued its persecution of Bishara to the point that he left the country to avoid prosecution. Bishara currently lives in Qatar where he is the founder and general director of the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies.⁹⁶

Despite these obstacles, Balad has maintained a focus in its campaign materials that exemplifies a Palestinian nationalist identity over an Israeli identity. The party's website is currently only in Arabic, and the party's message remains to be about pride in Palestinian culture and citizenship and criticism of Zionist organizations and practices. Its

⁹³ Frisch. "The Influence of the Al-Aqsa Intifada on the Arab Vote in the 2003 General Elections." 131.

⁹⁴ Michel Warschawski . "The 2003 Israeli Elections: Labor's Increasing Irrelevance?" *Journal of Palestine Studies* 32 no. 3 (2003):57, 59.

⁹⁵ Frisch. "The Influence of the Al-Aqsa Intifada on the Arab Vote in the 2003 General Elections." 134-137.

⁹⁶ . المركز العربي للأبحاث ودراسة السياسات العاملون في المركز. < <http://www.dohainstitute.org/staff>>

slogans in the 2009 election were “I’m an Arab-Palestinian. Full national identity.” and “Your vote is a weapon of self defense.”⁹⁷

3.3.4: United Arab List (UAL)

The Islamic political organizations that formed the basis for the United Arab List did not appear in the Israeli political scene until after the 1967 war. The Naqba created a vacuum, and the military government prevented any such organization to operate while the regime was enforced. While the military regime stunted any religious political organizations from forming amongst the Israeli Arabs, religious seminaries and fundamentalist religious organizations flourished in the West Bank and Gaza. With the addition of these territories after the 1967 war, Israeli Arabs began to interact with the religious organizations that were already founded in the occupied territories. This interaction along with the end to the military government fostered similar religious organizations to form within Israeli borders.

The most notable Islamic political organization is the Islamic Movement which began to participate in municipal Israeli elections in 1984 and since its inception in the mid 1980s, provided social services such as libraries and dental centers.⁹⁸ Despite the municipal participation, the Islamic Movement was divided concerning participation in the national parliamentary elections. Proponents against participation did not recognize the Knesset or the Israeli government at large and believed that the Knesset is against the “spirit of Islam”, thus unable to further their Islamic objectives. Proponents for participation viewed the national parliamentary elections as a legitimate and effective

⁹⁷ Konen. 127.

⁹⁸ Ghanem 124-125.

method for further the movement's goals. Three weeks before the 1996 elections, the Islamic Movement split with the southern branch of the Islamic Movement creating the United Arab List political party and ran in conjunction with the Arab Democratic Party.⁹⁹

Due to its origins from the Islamic Movement, the UAL's main doctrines and objectives are based in Islam. The party's slogan is "Islam is the solution", and the party members' main identity is as a Muslim with a Palestinian, Arab, and Israeli identity secondary to this religious identity. By focusing on a religious identity, the UAL excludes in its conception of Israeli Arabs the prominent Christian community within the Israeli Arab community as well as other religious minorities in the community. The party protests the Israeli authorities' care of Muslim holy sites and demand that these holy sites should be placed under Muslim care. According to the party, the Israeli Arabs are a minority in the state that has experienced discrimination from the Israeli government because of their culture and religion. Despite its religious ideology, the political party campaigns for equal rights for all citizens of Israel and for the state to be a state for all citizens instead of a Jewish state. It views the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a pan-Islamic issue but recognizes the state of Israel's right to exist. To solve the conflict, the UAL suggests that the best solution is a two state solution with a Palestinian state created from the West Bank and Gaza and the Palestinian refugees having the right of return.¹⁰⁰

In the 1999 election, the UAL won its highest amount of Knesset seats in existence, winning the most Knesset seats amongst the Israeli Arab political parties. The party's success in the election was in debt to heightened tensions between Israeli Arab

⁹⁹ Ibid. 133-134.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. 125-129. Konen. 133.

Christians and Muslims in the city of Nazareth, a political center for Israeli Arab political life and predominantly Christian city. In 1997, a building was destroyed leaving new property available in Nazareth located near the grave of Sheikh Shihab al-Din, the nephew of Salah al-Din and near the Basilica of the Annunciation. The city council agreed to use the new land to extend the Basilica in preparation for millennium celebrations in 2000, but Muslim citizens protested the decision stating that the grave and land were Islamic endowment property and a mosque instead should be built on the land. The dispute intensified after the UAL won the majority of seats in the 1998 municipal elections. During the 1998 Christmas procession and 1999 Easter celebrations, violence erupted between Christian and Muslim youths. The dispute remained as the 1999 elections approached, and the UAL used the issue as part of its campaign, resulting in an electoral victory.¹⁰¹ However, in the following election, the UAL increased its religious rhetoric to disappointing results. The party failed to win more Knesset seats than Balad or Hadash in the 2003 election and has failed to achieve results similar to the 1999 election since then.¹⁰² It can be assumed then that the Israeli Arab community has been unable to accept the Islamic identity as the community's main identity in the same degree as in the 1999 elections.

3.4: Important Factors Concerning the Israeli Arab Political Parties

No matter how many Knesset seats an Israeli Arab political party wins, the likelihood of an Israeli Arab political party joining the governing coalition is slim. Due to Israel's fractured party system, a governing coalition is necessary for any political party

¹⁰¹ Frisch. "The Arab Vote in the Israeli Elections: The Bid for Leadership." 156-157.

¹⁰² Frisch. "The Influence of the Al-Aqsa Intifada on the Arab Vote in the 2003 General Elections." 141.

to govern Israel. One party is unable to obtain the necessary parliamentary seats to unilaterally control the Knesset. If the politician designated by the president to form a coalition, he or she must choose wisely which political parties are a part of the governing coalition. If one party within the coalition has a platform deemed too controversial, the coalition is susceptible to collapse whether before or during the coalition's rule. Enough political parties could refuse to join a coalition with such a controversial party that a coalition could never be initially formed to govern the state. If a coalition is still able to be formed with a controversial party, discontent with that party's platform and actions would grow to the point of a major coalition member's defection and the coalition's demise. In Israeli politics, the demand for a withdrawal from the occupied territories and a two state solution are considered too controversial for most politically mainstream Israel citizens and political parties. Parties, particularly those on the political Left, may say they support one of these issue or the other but while in power, rarely enforce these issues in practice. Doing so would anger the constituents and end their rule in the Knesset. On the other hand, the Israeli Arab political parties actively promote a withdrawal and the establishment of a Palestinian state because their constituents support the issues. Any governing coalition with an Israeli Arab political party would therefore be certain to collapse before a term is complete. In order to prevent a failed government, a politician must then not consider an Israeli Arab political party as a possible member for a governing coalition.¹⁰³

The inability to enter a governing coalition has resulted in the Israeli Arab political parties to act much like Slovakia's SMK party when it was no longer in a

¹⁰³ Frisch. "The Arab Vote in the Israeli Elections: The Bid for Leadership." 156.

governing coalition by beginning to radicalize their campaign messages by the definition of radicalization formed by Bochler and Szocsik in their study of the Hungarian political parties in Slovakia. According to Bochler and Szocsik, radicalization is when an ethnic party promotes more ethnically based demands that stray from the political mainstream, but the radicalization in Israel is an adoption of a more ethnically based identity that strays from the political mainstream.¹⁰⁴ The phenomenon has been evidenced in more recent elections dating from 2003 onwards which can partially be attributed to the shift in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the nationwide political shift in recent years. After the Oslo Accords and the formation of the Palestinian Authority, the Israeli public began to believe it was beginning a post-Zionist age, and the Israeli Arabs began to believe they may play a more important role in Israeli politics. They began to be dissatisfied with the current Israeli politics when their prediction failed to occur. In the 1999 election, the Israeli Arab public believed that they would have the decisive role in the election for prime minister and therefore be included in a governing coalition. However, because the winner Ehud Barak won due to a large Jewish electorate, he did not include an Israeli Arab political party in the coalition. The omission left the Israeli Arab electorate feeling bitter.¹⁰⁵

In the 2006 elections, the political party Kadima gained control of the Knesset, marking the first time a party other than the dominant Labour and Likud ruled the Knesset. Kadima's win indicated a new political shift in Israel from a loose two party system to a weak central party system. In the former system that had existed since Labour lost the 1977 elections, Israeli Arab political parties were treated as balancers between the

¹⁰⁴ Bochler and Szocsik. 766.

¹⁰⁵ Frisch. "The Arab Vote in the Israeli Elections: The Bid for Leadership." 156.

two parties and were able to gain resources even though the parties were never accepted into a governing coalition. The new political system demands a greater emphasis on attracting potential coalition partners, so Israeli Arab political parties are unable to receive such resources.¹⁰⁶

This radicalization has appeared as a focus on a Palestinian nationalist identity instead of an Israeli identity. It can be illustrated by practices such as in the 2009 election with Balad only using Arabic in its campaign materials and highlighting Arab culture and Palestinian citizenship in them and UAL presenting an Islamic identity and Palestinian victimization by the Israeli government in its campaign materials.¹⁰⁷ By adopting a more radicalized message, the political parties provide a way for the Israeli Arab electorate to express their dissatisfaction with the current Israeli political system and Israeli society in general by differentiating themselves from the mainstream Jewish population while ensuring that there will be support for Israeli Arab issues in the Knesset.¹⁰⁸ These political parties' radicalized messages present the parties as bastions for the Israeli Arab ethnicity and present support for these parties as less of a political reason and more as an ethnic reason. To vote for an individual Israeli Arab political party now is to vote for the Israeli Arab community specifically and for how that party perceives the ethnic group.

A notable form of low grade radicalization amongst the Israeli Arab electorate is to not vote in the elections.¹⁰⁹ As Table A from Konan's election analysis of the 2009 election below reveals, the percentage of Israeli Arabs voting has been declining over a

¹⁰⁶ Frisch. "Stability Admistr Flux: Arab Parties Come of Age in 2006." 369-370.

¹⁰⁷ Konan. 127.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid. 131, 134-135.

¹⁰⁹ Frisch. "The Influence of the Al-Aqsa Intifada on the Arab Vote in the 2003 General Elections." 131

period of time as well. A decline in voting participation is occurring amongst the overall Israeli population as the voting population experiences voting fatigue from the five early parliamentary elections that have occurred in about a decade and the subsequent low opinion of Israeli politicians. For Israeli Arabs, this low opinion is a result of the marginal status of Israeli Arabs in the Knesset and the inability of the Israeli Arab political parties to unite and produce efficient results.¹¹⁰ The response is to not vote which can be perceived as a low grade form of radicalization amongst the Israeli Arab electorate.

Israeli Arab Voter Participation	
Year	Voting Percentage
1949	79
1951	86
1955	90
1959	85
1961	83
1965	82
1969	80
1973	73
1977	74
1981	68
1984	72
1988	74
1992	70
1996	77
1999	75
2001	18
2003	62
2006	56.3

* From Koren's "Arab Israeli Citizens in the 2009 Elections: Between Israeli Citizenship and Palestinian Arab Identity." pg. 130.

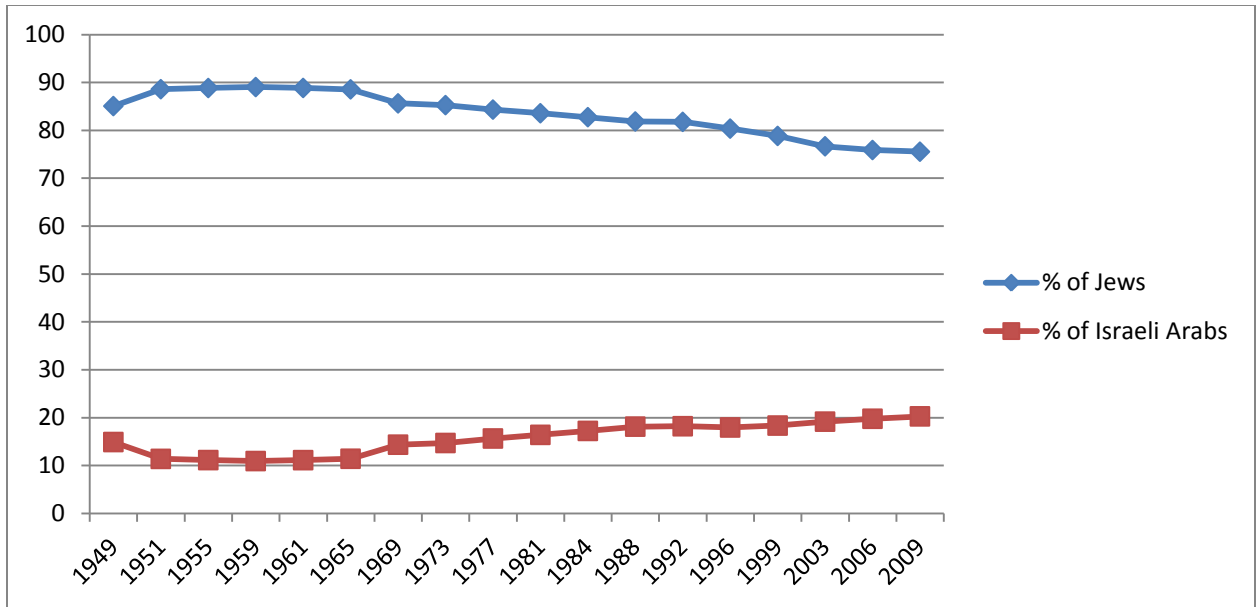
The decline in voting participation can also be attributed to mass boycotting of the elections that some Israeli Arab voters practice. To those who do boycott, the elections

¹¹⁰ Konan. 130.

and the Knesset overall are the components of the Israeli Zionist agenda and will only hurt Palestinians. To some, boycotting is the Israeli Arab public's way of protesting government actions against the Israeli Arab community and the Palestinian community at large. During the 2009 election, those in favor of a boycott used the 2008 Israeli attack on Gaza as a rallying point. The threat of boycotting is so strong that the Israeli Arab parties campaign for not only votes for their individual parties but the Israeli Arab community voting in general. In 2009, all three major Arab parties published a joint manifesto calling for Israeli Arabs to vote as a way to preserve Israeli Arab civil rights and protest actions such as the Gaza attack.¹¹¹

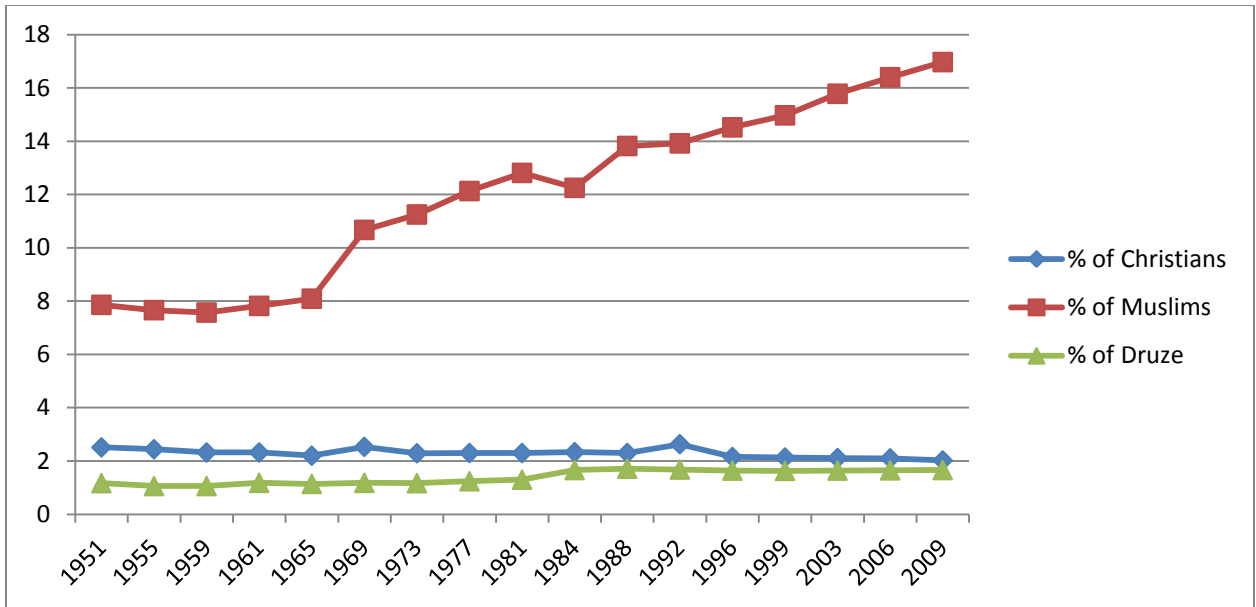
Another important factor to remember is Israel's demographics during these elections. As of 2009, the time of the last researched election, the total Israeli population was 7,485,600 according to the state census. Of this 7,485,600 people, 1,517,800 of these people were Israeli Arabs who constituted 20.28% of the population, and 5,655,400 of these people were Jews who constituted 75.55% of the population. As Graph A below reveals, these figures are part of a gradual demographic shift occurring in Israel. The graph is a comparison of the percentage of Jews and Israeli Arabs in the population in each election year. As time has progressed, the percentage of Israeli Arabs in the population has increased over time to about a fifth of the population by 2009. Along with this rise, the percentage of Jews in the population has decreased. This change in demographics influences the size of the electorate that could possibly vote for an Israeli Arab political party.

¹¹¹ Konan. 128.



Graph A: A Comparison of the Percentage of Jews and Israeli Arabs in the Population at Each Election Year

Within the Israeli Arab community, the ethnic group is divided by religion. A member of the ethnic group is generally a Muslim, a Christian, or a Druze. At the time of the last researched election, the Muslim population was recorded by the Israeli census as 1,270,300 or 16.97% of the population. The Christian population was 151,000 or 2.02% of the total population, and the Druze population was 124,000 or 1.66% of the population. According to Graph B below, the Christian and Druze populations have remained steady since the establishment of the state of Israel, but the Muslim population has grown exponentially. Therefore, within the Israeli Arab electorate, the Muslim population is the most prominent of the religious communities.



*1949 is not included due to a lack of data.

Graph B: A Comparison of the Percentage of Religious Groups in the Population at Each Election Year

Chapter 4: Analysis

4.1: The Data and Method

To determine the success of the Israeli Arab political parties, I will compare the percentage of Knesset seats of each Israeli Arab political party and the parties overall and compare these percentages to the percentage of the Israeli Arab population in the Israeli population in the year of each election. Overall success is if the percentage of Israeli Arab political parties Knesset seats is near the percentage of the Israeli Arab population. Individual success is determined by how many Knesset seats each party wins. The percentage of seats had been calculated from election data provided by the Israeli government on the Knesset official website. I took note of the total Knesset seats won by all the Israeli Arab political parties for each election year from the first election in 1949 to the eighteenth election in 2009 and calculated a percentage of how many seats each party won from the 120 seats available. I did not incorporate the most recent election from 2012 in my data set, for the Israeli government has not published census data for this year.

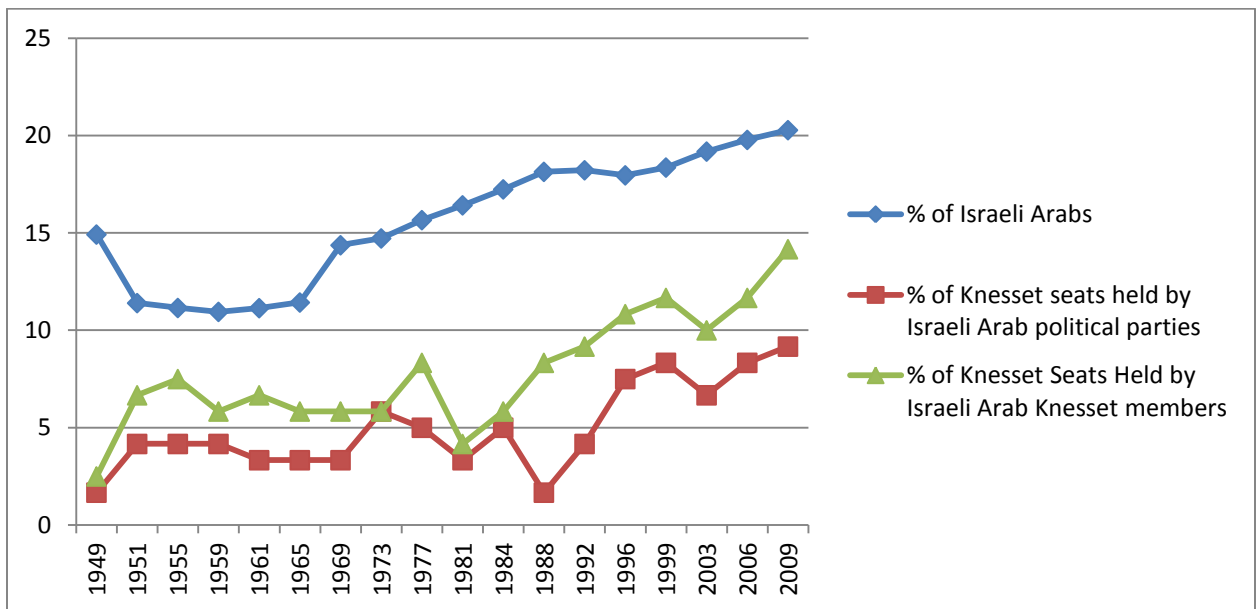
The percentage of Israeli Arabs in the population was determined by information provided by the Israeli Census Bureau. The census states the yearly average population. It is important to note that since the beginning of the census in 1949 until 1995, the Israeli census only differentiated the Israeli population as Jews or Arabs. Any member of an ethnic group that was not Jewish was designated as Arab until 1995 when the census added an "Other" section for those who did not identify as Arab or Jewish such as non-Ethiopian African immigrants or Filipino immigrants. While this means that the

percentage of Israeli Arabs could be slightly inflated, it also illustrates the view of ethnicity in Israel. Israel is an ethnic state designed for ethnic Jews, so the Jewish identity is the primary identity of the state. This explains why the census only provides one section for anyone considered a Jew even though the ethnic group is not homogenous. Amongst the Jewish ethnicity, there are subdivisions based on where each person originates. Ashkenazi Jews are from Europe with Jews from Russia forming their own subgroup. Mizrahi Jews are from predominately the Middle East and North Africa while Jews from Ethiopia are their own subgroup. Despite differences in origin, culture, and treatment by the Israeli government, these people are all the same in the eyes of the Israeli government because they are Jewish. However, the Israeli government perceives anyone inherently different from the Jewish population as an Arab, making Israeli Arabs the nation's Other.

Israeli Arabs are not limited to the Israeli Arab political parties but have also been Knesset representatives for Zionist political parties. To compare this phenomenon to the results of the Israeli Arab political parties, I calculated the percentage of the Knesset seats held by Israeli Arabs overall by election year. Data for this calculation came from the historical list of Knesset members provided by the Israeli government on the Knesset website. I calculated how many names on the list for each Knesset formation were Arabic in origin and therefore held by an Israeli Arab Knesset member. While this process may have created a false positive if a person with such a name was actually Jewish or another ethnicity from Israeli Arab, I believe the likelihood for a false positive is low and will not inflate my results significantly.

4.2: Israeli Arab Political Parties Overall in Terms of Percentage of Seats

The first two graphs in my analysis represents a comparison of the performance of all the Israeli Arab political parties in terms of the percentage of seats the parties hold in each Knesset and the percentage of the Israeli Arab community in Israel. Graph C has the percentage of the Israeli Arab population calculated from the Israeli Census's average population statistics whereas Along with a comparison between the population and the percentage of seats held by the Israeli Arab political parties, I have included in the graphs the percentage of seats held by all Israeli Arab Knesset members in order to compare this with the percentage of Israeli Arabs in the population.



Graph C: The Percentage of the Israeli Arab Population Compared with the Percentage of Seats Held by Israeli Arab Political Parties

As can be seen from the graph, the Israeli Arab political parties' representation in the Knesset is not equal to the Israeli Arabs' representation in the population. The

percentage of Knesset seats held by Israeli Arab political parties is significantly less than the percentage of Israeli Arabs in the population with the largest difference being 16.47 in 1988 and the smallest difference being 11.11 in 2009. The difference in 1988 can be attributed to a drop in Knesset seats resulting from the First Intifada which began the year before in 1987. The exact correlation between the First Intifada and the plummet in the percentage is unclear. The increase of Israeli Arab Knesset members between the 1984 and 1988 elections suggest that there was still political support for the Israeli Arabs even though the percentage of Knesset seats for the parties decreased between the same years. Israeli Arabs were still welcomed in the political process, just not in the guise that these political parties represented. With a voter participation percentage of 72% at that election, the possibility of a boycott being the reason is low as well. Israeli Arabs were voting but were not voting for the Israeli Arab political parties.

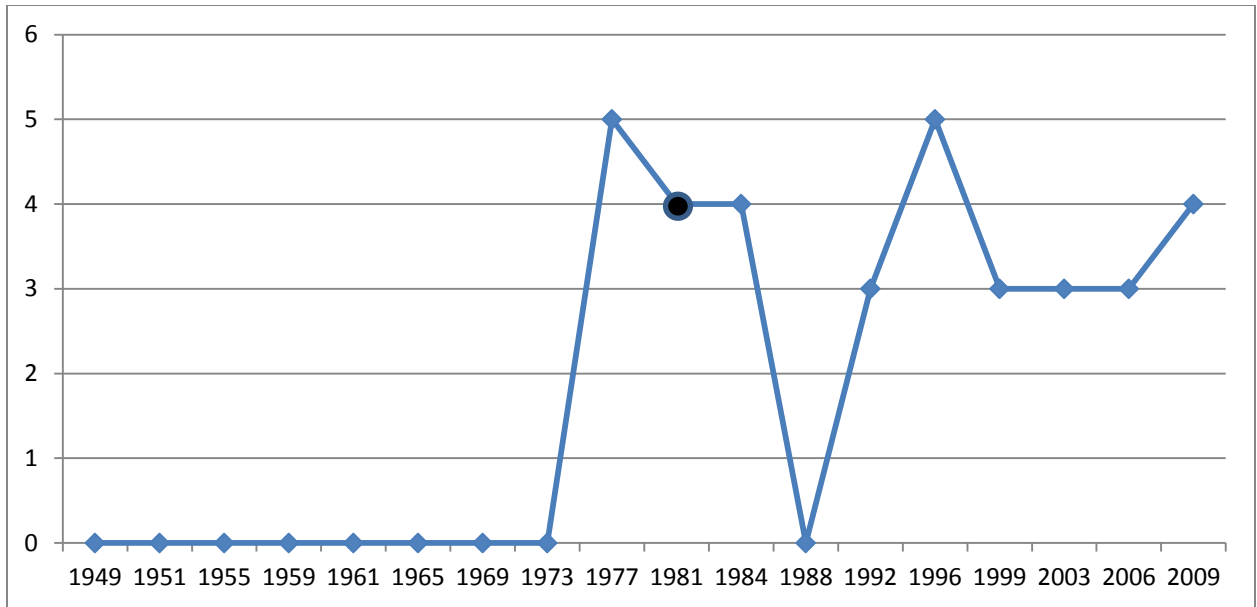
The difference in 2009 is part of an increase in Knesset seats that began after the nadir of 1988. The increase between the 1988 and 1999 elections could be attributed to a combination of new Israeli Arab political parties such as Balad and the improvements in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that occurred during the 1990s. The existence of new Israeli Arab political parties that represented different political ideas beyond those espoused by Hadash diverted Israeli Arab votes from Zionist parties that this group would normally support as an alternative to Hadash to these parties instead. The Madrid Conference and the Oslo Accords reversed whatever created the decline in Knesset representation for the Israeli Arab political parties that resulted due to the First Intifada.

The decline in the 2003 elections is related to the Second Intifada that began in 2000 and ended in 2005, but it is important to note that this decline is not as steep as the

decline following the First Intifada. Instead of a plummet, the drop is more of a minor fluctuation that naturally occurs in political systems. Whereas the percentage of Knesset seats was 1.67% in the 1988 election, the percentage was 6.67%. A large percentage of Israeli Arabs remained with the Israeli Arab political parties instead of boycotting or voting for Zionist parties. One such reason that the Israeli Arab political parties maintained support could be the Jewish population's radicalization against the Israeli Arab population as represented by actions such as the trial against Azmi Bishara and the temporary ban on Balad and UAL. This population's radicalization could have deterred the Israeli Arabs from voting for Zionist parties instead of Israeli Arab political parties. Another possible reason could be that the Israeli Arab parties started to radicalize their message in the 2003 elections and that this radicalization reflected the radicalization occurring within the Israeli Arab community. The radicalization encouraged the Israeli Arab population to still vote despite the political atmosphere caused by the Second Intifada and vote for the Israeli Arab political votes instead of the Zionist parties. It is too early to see the full effect of the parties' radicalization.

4.2.1: Hadash

For each individual Israeli Arab political party that I researched, I have composed a graph to illustrate the individual performance of these parties by the number of Knesset seats each party wins in an election. Graph D represents the performance of Hadash.



*At the 1984 election, ran with the Black Panther Party.

Graph D: Hadash's Performance by Knesset Seats

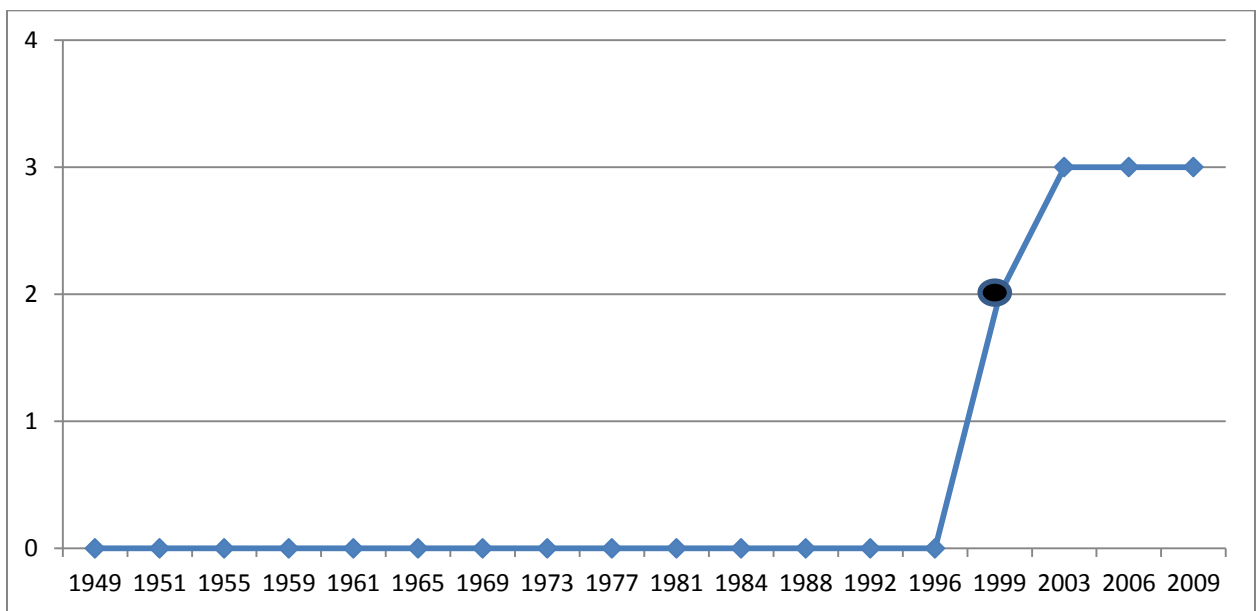
Unlike the other Israeli Arab political parties, the number of Hadash's Knesset seats has fluctuated considerably due to the party's longevity. The first decline between the 1977 and 1981 elections is connected to Hadash's decline in the 1980s as the party was unable to adapt to the changing political environment, but the plummet to zero Knesset seats can be attributed to the First Intifada. Hadash's inability to gain any parliamentary seats in that election explains why the Israeli Arab political parties' percentage of Knesset seats is so low in the 1988 elections. At the time of that election, Hadash was the only major Israeli Arab political party in existence; others may have existed but paled in comparison to Hadash. If Hadash did poorly in an election, the Israeli Arab political parties did poorly in an election.

I could not find any evidence that Hadash boycotted the 1988 elections, but there is a possibility that Hadash party leaders recognized that the political environment surrounding the First Intifada was not conducive for party success and did not strongly

campaign in the election. If the First Intifada did not encourage a boycott of some kind, then it was a shock that was so strong to the party constituents that they momentarily abandoned the political party. Hadash is a party that promotes Jewish-Arab solidarity, the antithesis of the First Intifada. Either way, it is telling that Hadash was able to easily rebound from such a defeat to a peak of five seats during the era of the Oslo Accords. Whatever the cause for the 1988 election results, it was temporary, and Hadash was able to adapt to the point that its election results remained steady during the Second Intifada.

4.2.2: Balad

The performance of the political party Balad is portrayed below in Graph E.



*At the 1999 election, ran with the Arab Movement for Change Party.

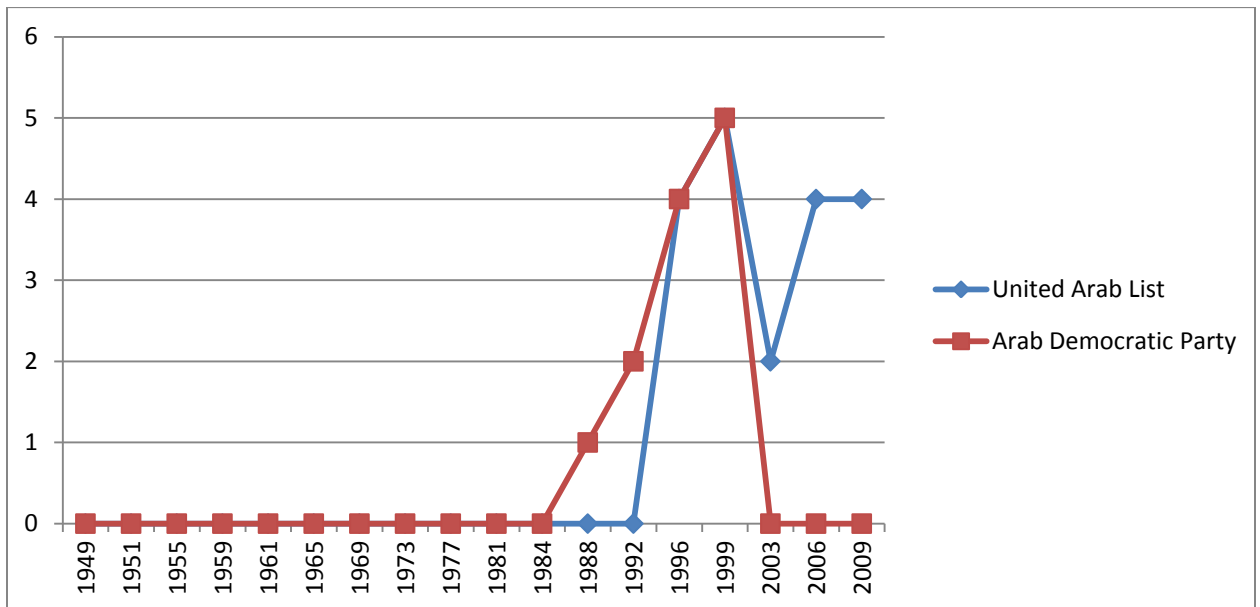
Graph E: Balad's Performance by Knesset Seats

Although Balad was formed in 1996, the political party is not mentioned in the official election results for 1996 because the party was running with Hadash. With its

breakaway from Hadash following the 1996 elections, Balad officially appears in the election results with two Knesset seats in the 1999 elections. The rise to three Knesset seats between the 1999 and 2003 elections is consistent with the rise in the party's popularity following the Israeli government's trials against Bishara and the Israeli Electoral Commission's temporary ban of the party. However, the interest in the party has been maintained long after the persecution of Balad with the party obtaining three Knesset seats in the two following elections.

4.2.3: Arab Democratic Party and United Arab List

In Graph F, the performances of both the Arab Democratic Party and the United Arab List are displayed. I have combined the trend lines for the Arab Democratic Party and the United Arab List because by the 2003 elections, the UAL absorbed the Arab Democratic Party and ran with the party in the 1996 and 1999 elections.



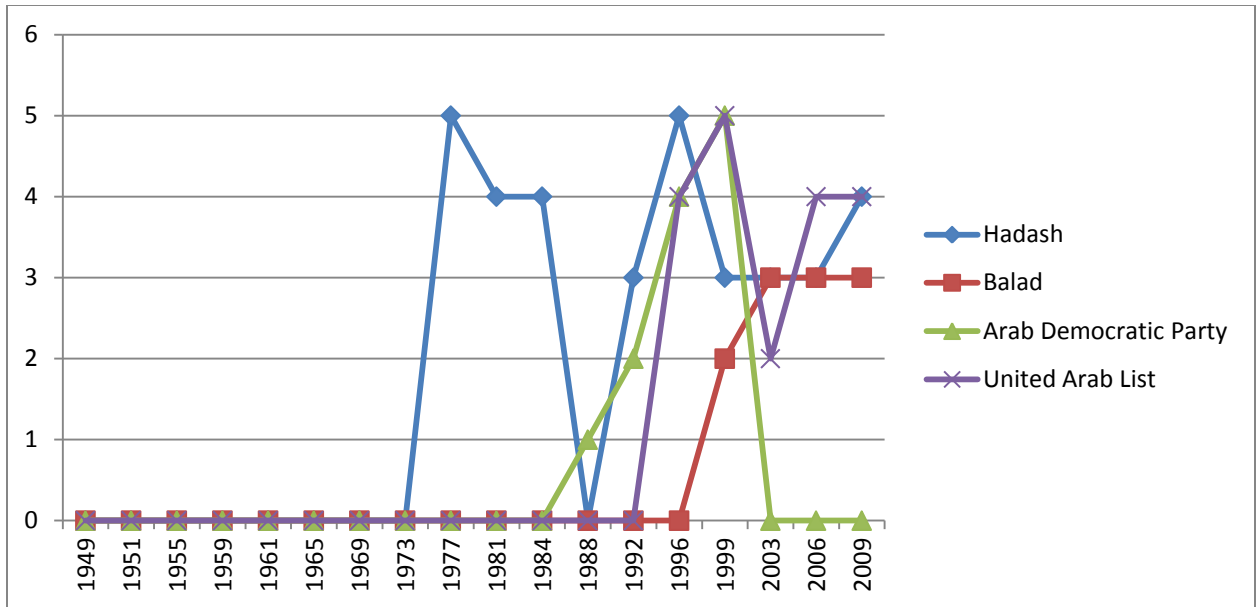
Graph F: Arab Democratic Party and United Arab List's Performances by Knesset Seats

The graph illustrates that during the 1990s when the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was improving, the Arab Democratic Party's number of Knesset seats was rising to a peak of five Knesset seats in the 1999 elections when the party ran with UAL. Before the 1999 elections, the Christian and Muslim communities were experiencing tensions due to the land dispute in Nazareth. Following the 1999 elections, the Arab Democratic Party is absorbed by UAL and no longer runs as an individual party.

Once the two party run as UAL, there is a drop to two Knesset seats. It was at this time that the party increased its religious rhetoric with the Second Intifada occurring during this election as well. The party maintained its religious rhetoric following the 2003 election, yet it has achieved equilibrium at four Knesset seats. Therefore, the political environment following the 2003 elections and the Second Intifada was more conducive to UAL's message.

4.2.4: A Comparison of Israeli Arab Political Parties by Seats

For someone to better observe how each party's electoral performance relates to the other political parties, I have combined the parties' performances in Graphs D to F into one graph. This combination is displayed by Graph G below.

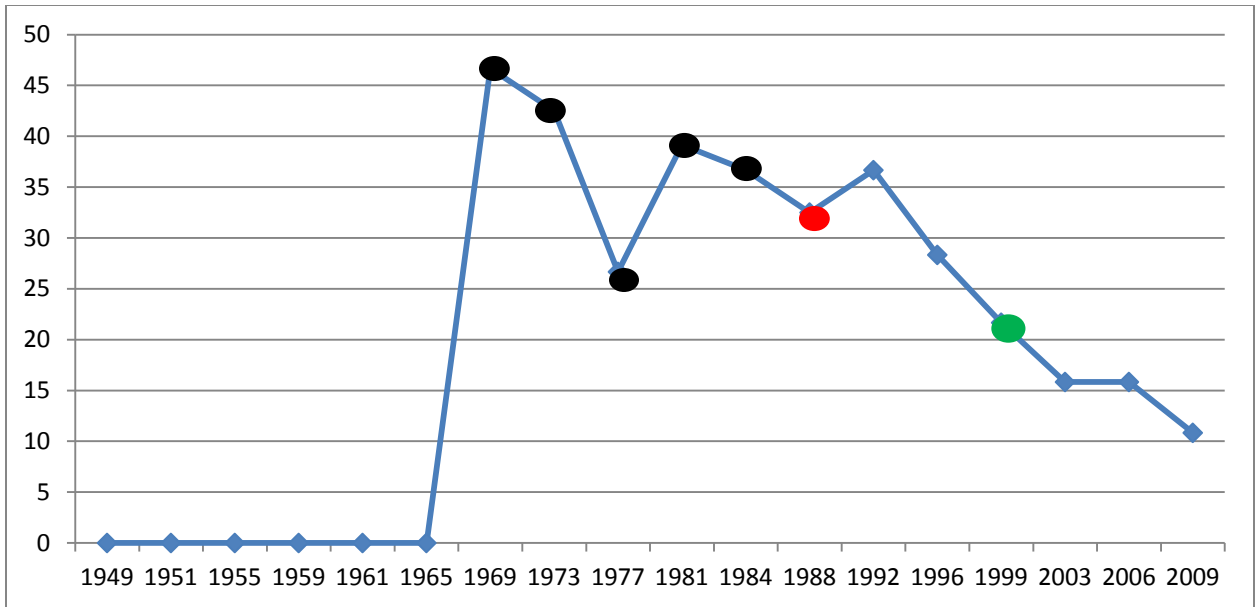


Graph G: A Comparison of All Israeli Arab Political Parties' Performances

The comparison of the Israeli Arab political parties' seats altogether reveals that each party's performance is dependent on the other parties as well as outside influences. In the 1988 elections, Hadash has zero Knesset seats, but Arab Democratic Party has entered the political system at this time as well. When Hadash decreases from its peak to three Knesset seats in the 1999 elections, Balad entered the political race, and UAL and Arab Democratic Party reached its peak of five Knesset seats. Hadash remains at this level as the other parties fluctuate. When UAL loses seats in the 2003 election, Balad gains a parliamentary seat. The political parties are not working in tandem but instead competing against each other, and this competition affects how well the Israeli Arab political parties perform in the elections.

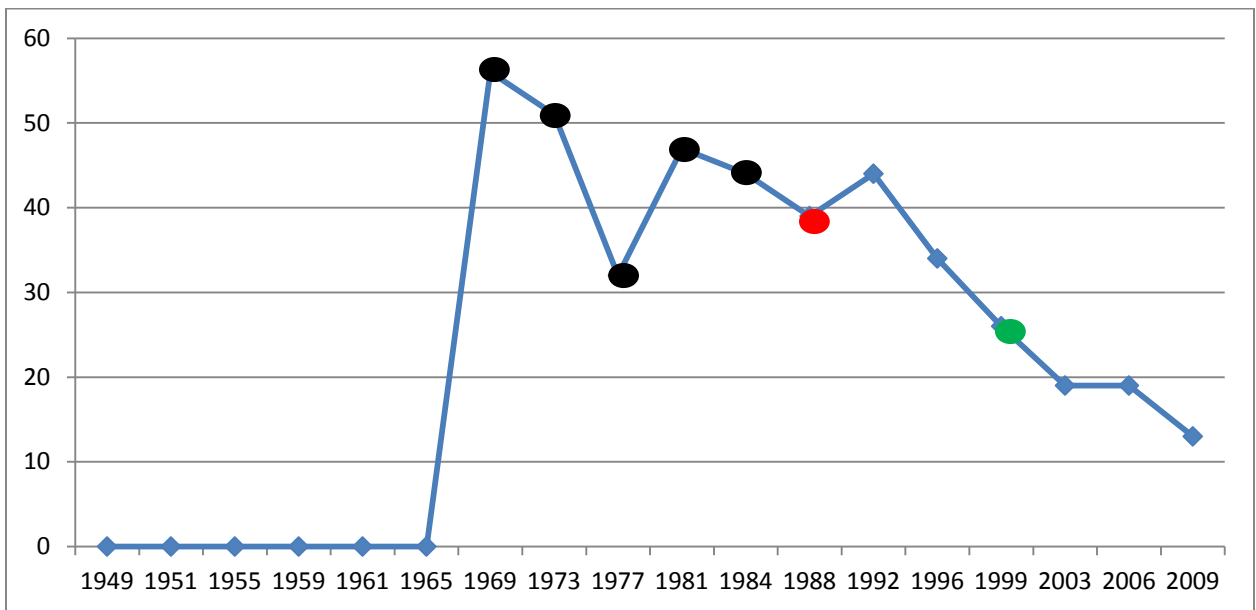
4.3:Labour: A Point of Comparison

The Israeli Arab political parties' performance results could possibly not be unique to these parties but actually representative of all Israeli political parties. In order to best understand how the Israeli Arab political parties' performances relate to general Israeli politics, I have included in my analysis two graphs representing respectively the percentage of Knesset seats held and the number of Knesset seats won by the major political party Labour. I have chosen to compare the Israeli Arab parties to Labour because for most of Israel's history, Labour has been the dominant political party and thus the quintessential Israeli political party. Labour also represents the political Left in Israel which is where the Israeli Arab political parties reside on the Israeli political spectrum. Therefore, Labour is the biggest Zionist competitor for the Israeli Arab political parties. Even though the elements of Labour have existed since the establishment of the state of Israel, I have started the graphs with the 1969 elections, for it is only at this time that the party officially runs in the election under the name of Labour. Below, Graph H represents the percentage of seats Labour has held in the Knesset, and Graph I represents the number of seats Labour has won in each election.



*Between the 1969 and 1984 elections, ran with the Mapam Party. In the 1988 election, ran with the Independent Liberal Party. In the 1999 election, ran with the parties Meimad and Gesher.

Graph H: The Percentage of Seats Held by Labour



*Between the 1969 and 1984 elections, ran with the Mapam Party. In the 1988 election, ran with the Independent Liberal Party. In the 1999 election, ran with the parties Meimad and Gesher.

Graph I: Labour's Performance by Seats

As the graph representing Labour's percentage of the Knesset seats reveals, not even a dominant party can achieve a majority of parliamentary seats in Israel. The highest percentage Labour has achieved is 46.67% in the 1969 election when the party singlehandedly dominated the political system. Besides the peak of that election, the party's percentage has ranged from the low forties to the twenties to the tens. The Israeli political system fluctuates so much that not even Labour can maintain equilibrium. The Israeli Arab political parties' variations between zero and five Knesset seats are therefore as much evidence of Israel's electoral chaos as any other causes and the ability to maintain any stability is remarkable. The low numbers signifies that achieving any significant percentage of seats is difficult for Israeli political parties, so a percentage that is less than ten percent may be good results for a minor party like the Israeli Arab political parties.

The graphs for Labour also hint at another phenomenon crucial to an understanding of the Israeli Arab political parties. As time has progressed, Labour's dominance has decreased with the decrease becoming continuous after the 1992 elections, the time that several Israeli Arab political parties enter the political field and gain more Knesset seats. The Israeli Arab political parties appear to perform better as Labour's hold on the Israeli political system loosens. This loosening breeds an environment where parties like the Israeli Arab political parties and ethnic parties in general can flourish.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

In order to better understand the Israeli Arab community in Israel, I have researched the Israeli Arab political parties that exist in the nation today. In particular, I have researched if the parties are successful in creating an accurate representation of the community in the Israeli parliament as well as display any considerable influence in the parliament or stability. I have also proposed the question of what triggered the creation of these parties and how they interact with one another in elections. In relation to H_1 , I concluded that the hypothesis is correct. The Israeli Arab political parties are not successful in a general sense of the term. The parties have consistently failed to achieve a percentage of Knesset seats that is similar to the percentage of the population that is Israeli Arab. As of the last researched election, the parties' percentage of Knesset seats is about half of the population percentage. The parties are unsuccessful as well in terms of power for the parties have been excluded in every governing coalition created.

However, as the graphs demonstrating the Labour Party's performance in these elections reveal, the Israeli political system creates difficulties for even a major party to achieve a significant number of parliamentary seats. The system's fractionalization that results from a low electoral threshold has made it impossible for even Labour to achieve a majority of the Knesset seats when the party had supreme dominance of the political system. If Labour was unable to obtain a percentage of Knesset seats that reflected its power, the smaller Israeli Arab political parties should be unable to obtain a percentage of seats that reflects the population. The parameters of success that I had originally

designed may be inaccurate for the Israeli system then. Since their creation, the parties have been able to maintain stability in the elections, something that Labour has failed to do. This stability could demonstrate a form of success for the parties' dominance of their constituents has been maintained for a long period of time and has ensured that the Israeli Arabs are a permanent fixture in the Knesset. The number of politicians may not best reflect the population, but their tenure could remind the Knesset of the Israeli Arab community's existence.

The detailed description of each political party shows that H_2 is incorrect. The parties are not a unified movement despite similar goals. Each party has a different perception on what the Israeli Arab identity should be. Hadash believes the Israeli identity is dominant Balad believes the community's identity is separate from the Israeli identity and is Palestinian identity, and UAL believes the dominant identity is an Islamic identity. This truth is further realized by observing the graph depicting all the Israeli Arab political parties' performances together. Each party's success occurs as another party fails in an election. The parties are not working together; they are competing against each other as well as against the Zionist parties.

As for the creation of the parties, it appears that H_3 is correct. The Israeli Arab political parties are conforming to Van Cott's theory of ethnic political parties. Three of the four political parties studied formed around the 1990s which coincides with the First Intifada and the temporary electoral reforms. The First Intifada encouraged the Israeli Arab community to become more politically engaged as a way to possibly prevent an intifada from occurring within Israel's borders and possibly as a way to protect the community from the growing prejudice caused by the First Intifada. While this result is

not exactly a creation of social movements, the atmosphere created by the First Intifada is very similar. The electoral reforms following the First Intifada decentralized the political system and created an environment that promoted fracturing, as evidenced by the record-breaking number of political parties that won seats in the 1999 elections. Together, the two events resulted in the phenomenon of multiple Israeli Arab political parties being formed that were strong enough to enter the Knesset.

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