



Islamic Movements in Lebanon

**A Study Designed and Implemented by
Masar Association**

August 2009

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However, Masar is fully responsible for whatever is in this study.

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I-General Introduction

1. Preamble

Throughout the last two years of our work with youths in North Lebanon, we, in MASAR, started noticing the impact of Islamic movements operating in this area on our work. That was felt when young men with beards in the Islamic fashion participated in our activities. An atmosphere of uneasiness would prevail amongst the other participants who would split up along confessional lines according to their ideological, religious and congregational affiliation. They would stop listening to each other due to these affiliations, or even ignore each other when performing a group work instead of collaborating on youth-bound issues of interest to them all.

In fact, Islamic youth tend to impose their views on developmental subjects, taking them for granted. The non-Islamic youth tend to ignore this and avoid interaction considering that the others' view is narrow-minded and intent on invalidating all that is different from it. This negative environment based on ignoring and rejecting *the other*, became an impediment to the developmental work we set out to perform.

Our work on community youth development in Masar aims at mobilizing youth and empowering them with developmental topics and skills in order for them to develop themselves and their communities. The most important thing we carry out in our association is to help young people in identifying and analyzing their needs and problems, then designing developmental projects addressing these same needs and problems.

The rejection of *the other* in the framework of a developmental project would negatively affect the participants, and hamper the smooth process of a sound youth development project. This is especially true if we bear in mind that this attitude is based upon insufficient knowledge of *the other*, upon prejudices that cast him in certain stereotypes. The Islamist, in the eyes of a great number of youth who participate in the activities of Masar, is he who wants to annihilate the non-Islamist, and to impose his doctrine and belief upon him/her. The situation that we are encountering in our projects in North Lebanon represents a miniature picture of reality. It ought to attract the attention of many, and induce them to make the necessary effort in order to understand these Islamic movements, their *modus operandi* in society, and their specific way of interacting with it.

Within this frame, we met with Friedrich Ebert Foundation with whom we share common interest and understanding of community youth development and we agreed to collaborate on a study on Islamic movements in Lebanon and their impact on youth. The title of the study in itself has been a kind of challenge; nonetheless, Friedrich Ebert Foundation took this challenge, and supported the concretization of the study. This deserves our thanking; especially that it is an unconditional support, far from any preconception of the outcomes of the study.

2. Preliminary on Islamic Movements in Lebanon¹

Organized Islamic movements appeared in Lebanon since the twenties of the twentieth Century. However, their emergence started gaining more visibility and their role became more active and more rapid in the political, social, and economic fields in Lebanon since the eighties of the same century.

The reasons of their increasing growth recently, as shown in the present study, are numerous, varied, and debatable. The most outstanding are: the decline of leftist and Pan-Arab movements in the Arab world; the prevalence of injustice, poverty, and oppression on the hands of Arab and Islamic regimes; the collapse of the Soviet Union, the waning of communism worldwide and, consequently, the regression of its influence on the Arab world. All the above compounded with the prominence of the Iranian revolution as a model of Islamic government; the hegemonic influence of the USA on the Arab and Islamic area and finally the unconditional American support to Israeli aggression.

In practice, as we learned from this study, Islamic movements adopt many tactics for recruiting members, supporters, and followers, and for influencing citizens living in their vicinity. They organize themselves through appropriate frameworks to fit the social and cultural context of the location they operate in.

¹ We rely here on general information gathered from websites such as Islam-online.net and similar website.

3. The General Attitude toward Islamic Movements in Lebanon

The surfacing of Islamic movements in Lebanon at such a fast pace provoked many different questions amongst Lebanese on the goals of these movements, and drove them to form diverse impressions and take a range of positions that vary from one Lebanese group to another. Some accept these movements for religious and confessional reasons; some reject them based on similar reasons. Some refuse them assuming that they lead Lebanon to obscurantism and backwardness, while others accept them as a part of the Lebanese social fabric, recognizing their role in public life in case there is a democratic accord on this role, though interaction with them remains rather limited. This variance in positions vis-à-vis Islamic movements cuts across the board of the Lebanese society in both Muslim and Christian communities, traditional and reformists.

In light of the above, the practical positions with regard to these movements in Lebanon fall into three major points of view. The first, considers them as terrorist organizations, as a result of the Western view of Islam and Islamists – represented in what is called *Islamophobia*. It is worth noting here that a segment of the Lebanese population and media embrace this view, and express it through stereotyping Islamists as terrorists when touching on the subject of Islamic movements.

The second position is isolation. Isolation here takes place in two ways: on the one hand isolation by political parties and forces of these Islamic movements, thus considering them alien to the Lebanese societal structure; on the other hand, self-isolation by these movements from other political forces as a means of closing ranks before getting involved in the political arena. The third is support provided by political forces in both the loyalist camp and that of the opposition to some of these movements with the aim of achieving some political gains in specific regions.

It is important here to shed more light on the increasingly negative viewpoint regarding these Islamic movements, and the buildup of isolation and counter-isolation in relation to them, coupled, by contrast, with building certain political coalitions with them for specific political ends. All this is resulting in a state of unease toward these and of social and political instability, in addition to weakening the sense of citizenship that guarantees an even relationship between citizens, law, and the state.

4. The objective of the Study

The study is driven by the spirit of civil society. We, in MASAR are keen on keeping it within the range of interests of civil society organizations. The general approach in this study does not alienate religion, nor does it submit to it. It rather focuses on bringing to light the reality of Islamic movements targeted here, their influence on society in general, and on young people more specifically, for these youth form the bulk of their followers and supporters.

This study also attempts to understand Islamic movements in Lebanon from the political, social, and economic standpoints, and to present them to people through the dissemination of the study's output. We do not aim, through this attempt, to delve into the principles of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), nor the history or ideologies of these groups and parties, but rather to reach only a general definition of the doctrinal affiliation of these movements.

The most important for us is to shed light on the present political, intellectual, and social positions of these movements, and to ascertain their opinions regarding civil society and their views on the political regime and the State. The present study also aims at focusing on the actual practice of Islamic movements covered here, and their ways of addressing the issues at hand *now* in the Lebanese political and social scene.

The claim of some segments of the Lebanese society that Islamic movements are willing tools of external powers, and that they are hence alien to the Lebanese society is absolutely not accurate, and does not apply to all Islamic movements active on the Lebanese soil. Some other denominations in Lebanon, possess huge religious endowments (*Waqf*) spread over a significant area of the country. These same denominations do not decide any transaction related to these endowments without referring to their external authorities. Can we say that these denominations act upon external agendas? The purpose of citing this instance is to discourage the judgmental attitude toward any group be it Islamic or other, without trying to fully understand it, for there are radical movements across the whole spectrum of leanings and denominations.

5. The General Environment in the country and in North Lebanon in particular before the Study and during its Implementation

The interviews upon which this study is based were carried out between September 2008 and February 2009, i.e. while the sectarian discourse witnessed an unprecedented escalation, especially in North Lebanon where several bloody incidents took place between the inhabitants of this area. Some of these incidents erupted as an upshot of the May 7, 2008 episodes in Beirut, and the armed clashes that ensued in North Lebanon; some were deplorable confrontations within Tripoli itself between Bab el-Tabbaneh and Jabal Muhsin. The latter skirmishes, even though resulting from longstanding conflicts predating the latest tensions between Sunnis and Shi'a, were fully exploited by some political forces by way of score-settling, or creating new balances of power with their counterparts through incitement in that area. Moreover, the sympathy shown by a number of Salafi* movements operating there toward Fatah al-Islam organization during and after the armed conflict between this organization and the Lebanese Army in 2007 resulted in tensions between the different groups active in the North Lebanon scene. On the other hand, and after the Doha agreement in May 2008, and on the backdrop of the Sunni – Shi'i antagonistic mobilization, one of these Salafi groups in Tripoli signed an understanding with Hezbollah. Other Sunni groups considered this as an infiltration of the Sunni camp. Despite freezing the implementation of this understanding, it showed clear differences in the inclinations of some Salafi groups from the prevalent sentiments of Salafism.

All these circumstances left a huge impact on the political attitudes expressed by those interviewed, and by some movements which consider themselves, in the first place, different from the mainstream of Salafism, and which generally share a Muslim Brethern, or *Jamaa Islamiya* (Islamic Community) background (such as *Da'iya* [herald] Fathi Yakan, the Islamic *Tawheed* [unification] movement, and others...)

* See brief definition of Salafism in Appendix no.2 --Translator

II-Methodology

1. The Sample

Twenty one Islamic movements, including parties, associations, schools, and personalities, were covered by this study. However, the president of one of these refused to publish his interview, and asked us to refrain from mentioning his name in this study. Upon his request, we deleted the interview. As a result, the study covers twenty such movements; these are: *Tayyar al-'Adala wa al-Tanmiya* (The Current of Justice and Development), *al-Liqaa' al-Islami al-Mustaqil* (The Independent Islamic Reunion Gathering), *al-Tayyar al-Salafi* (The Salafi Current), *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamy* (Islamic Unification Movement), *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady* (Islamic Unification Movement-the Leadership Council), *al-Jam'iyya al-Hamidiyya al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya* (The Hamidiyya Islamic Charitable Association), *Hizb al-Tahreer* (the Liberation Party), *Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami* (The Islamic Action Front), *Jam'iyyat Da'wat al-Iman, wal'Adl, wal-Ihsan* (The Association of Faith, Justice, and Beneficence), *Quwwat al-Fajr* (The Forces of Dawn), *Waqf al-Turath al-Islami* (The Islamic Legacy Endowment), *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya* (the Islamic Community), *Harakat al-Jihad al-Islami* (The Islamic Jihad Movement), *Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya-Hamas* (Islamic Resistance Movement-Hamas), *al-Haraka al-Islamiyya al-Mujahida* (the Islamic Holy Fighting Movement), *'Usbat al-Ansar al-Islamiyya* (the Islamic League of Partisans), *Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya* (the Islamic Association of Projects of Beneficence), Hezbollah (The Party of God), in addition to sheikh Maher Hammood, the imam of *al-Quds* mosque in Saida, and sheikh Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah.

The study did not cover all the Islamic groups and movements operating in Lebanon, but rather focused on a definite sample thereof, based on specific criteria. We chose the Islamic movements which are in direct contact with people on the ground, and which act through organizational frameworks and social institutions to spread their theses and mobilize followers chiefly amongst the youth, and through their visible and strong involvement in general civil and political action, especially within the operating area of MASAR.

Of the twenty movements, thirteen are Lebanese Sunni, these are: *Tayyar al-'Adala wa al-Tanmiya* (The Current of Justice and Development), *al-*

Liqaa' al-Islami al-Mustaqil (The Independent Islamic Reunion), *al-Tayyar al-Salafi* (The Salafi Current), *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamy* (Islamic Unification Movement), *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady* (Islamic Unification Movement-the Leadership Council), *al-Jam'iyya al-Hamidiyya al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya* (The Hamidiyya Islamic Charitable Association), *Hizb al-Tahreer* (the Liberation Party), *Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami* (The Islamic Action Front), *Jam'iyyat Da'wat al-Iman, wal'Adl, wal-Ihsan* (The Faith, Justice and Beneficence), *Quwwat al-Fajr* (The Forces of Dawn), *Waqf al-Turath al-Islami* (The Islamic Legacy Endowment), *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya* (the Islamic Community), in addition to one eminent Sunni personality, Sheikh Maher Hammood, the imam of *al-Quds* mosque in Saida. The latter was chosen because of his close contact and coordination with Sunni oppositional movements and the Shiite Hezbollah and some Palestinian factions. In this respect, he adds to the current study a viewpoint that is not available in any of the other movements that were contacted.

The study covered only one Shiite movement, Hezbollah, because it is a religious and political party that is forcefully present in various fields, including civil society. It also included sheikh Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah, not in his quality of head of an Islamic movement, or institutions, but rather as an influential, erudite religious authority. Both Hezbollah and sheikh Fadlallah are important components of the general Islamic trend in Lebanon.

The sample also covered four Palestinian Islamic movements; these are: *Harakat al-Jihad al-Islami* (The Islamic Jihad Movement), *Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya*- Hamas (Islamic Resistance Movement-Hamas), *al-Haraka al-Islamiyya al-Mujahida* (the Islamic Holy Fighting Movement), *'Usbat al-Ansar al-Islamiyya* (the Islamic League of Partisans). These were chosen for they are part of the general Sunni Islamic trend in Lebanon, and because of their connections with the Islamic resistance.

Most of the Lebanese Islamic movements interviewed are located in North Lebanon, with the exception of *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya* (the Islamic Community), and *Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya* (the Islamic Association of Projects of Beneficence), which are both based in Beirut; *Quwwat al-Fajr* (The Forces of Dawn) and Sheikh Maher Hammood, in Saida; Hezbollah and sheikh Fadlallah in Beirut Southern Suburb. One of the reasons of this choice is that society in North Lebanon is

considered more conservative than it is in Beirut and other areas. This in itself creates a more favorable environment for Islamic movements. Furthermore, Salafism is not foreign to society in Tripoli, for it was established there in the fifties of the past century.

2. The Geographic Location

Pursuant to what was mentioned above, the Islamic movements covered in this study are spread over four main geographic locations: Tripoli and Akkar, Beirut, Beirut Southern Suburb, and Saida.

<i>Location of Interview</i>	<i>Total</i>
Beirut Southern Suburb	4
Beirut	2
Saida	2
Ain el-Helweh, Palestinian Refugees Camp	2
Tripoli	9
Akkar	1
<i>Grand Total</i>	<i>20</i>

Upon putting the political stances of the Islamic groups and parties side by side with the location they operate in, we immediately notice two different patterns:

- Being influenced by their geographic location, so that the milieu imposes the political, social, and developmental logic they adopt. In the shantytown of Tripoli and Beirut Southern Suburb, for instance, both *Waqf al-Turath al-Islami* (The Islamic Legacy Endowment) association, and Hezbollah work on social assistance and providing aid in kind to the inhabitants.
- These movements' choice of location is in tune with their political tenets and stances, and thus provides them with the security cover they need, such as location of both Hamas and Islamic Jihad in Beirut Southern Suburb.

It is also worth noting that the headquarters of most of the groups that we have interviewed are located in poor neighborhood whether in cities or suburbs, with some extensions into rural areas (South, Akkar, Dinniya, etc.). As can be gathered from the *Map of Poverty and Living Conditions in Lebanon* issued by the Ministry of Social Affairs and UNDP in Beirut in 2008, and in the absence of accurate statistics on the Southern Suburb of

Beirut, due to its belonging administratively to the Baabda district, the area of Akkar- Minyeh, Dinniyeh is home to the second highest rate of needy families, and the highest according to the handbook of economic condition (77% needy families). As to the region of Saida- Jezzine, which includes the Ain el-Helweh Palestinian Refugees Camp, home to some Islamic groups, it takes in the third highest rate of needy people according to the same source (45%). The report points out that the governorate of the North contains the greatest share of very needy families (30%), followed by the governorate of Mount Lebanon with a share of 25.8%.

3. Research tool

The one and principal research instrument used in this study is individual interviews with official leaders of the above-mentioned Islamic movements, based on a structured questionnaire prepared by Masar. The questionnaire consisted of a number of questions aiming at determining the religious principles of these movements; their religious and political goals with an eye to correlations as well as differences; the projects being carried out on the ground; the methods of mobilizing people, the categories they target, and the number of members, and of beneficiaries from projects and activities; the positive and negative factors affecting their projects and field work; the way *the other* is viewed in Lebanon; their attitude toward diversity and their relationship with the Lebanese State, and the political regime; the confessional system; their struggle to win some representation in State institutions; their notion of homeland; their view on reform and change; and their opinion on the causes of the increase of Islamic movement of late.

Thus, the information gathered in this study is based on what the official representatives of these movement stated in interviews, regardless of previous or later positions, or of any additional information available through sources other than the interview. The content of the interview was shown to those representatives to ascertain that it is free from any misunderstanding or any unintentional mistakes. As to their providing information that we consider mere media manipulation, we shall address that later in the text.

4. Transcribing the Study

The information revealed by the interviews is the basis of this study. Upon concluding the interviews with the twenty Islamic personalities, the

information were sorted out in statistical tables, compared, and analyzed, with exclusive reference to the contents of the interviews. Some indicators were derived from the subjects touched upon in the interviews. The working team used many techniques such as tables, diagrams, and the like to bring out the major focal points of this study and enable the reader to compare various data.

The working group also consulted with resource persons knowledgeable in the field of Islamic movements in Lebanon, and discussed the first draft with them. As a result, the working team articulated some recommendations addressed to active youth, civil society organizations, and the like.

5. The Audience of this Study

This study is a source of information on Islamic movements in Lebanon. In general, it is addressed to everyone interested in collecting informed knowledge on these movements, and everyone who wants to refrain from harboring prejudices about them, because such prejudices might trigger biased practices toward these Islamists.

More specifically it is addressed to NGOs, and especially those working with young people in North Lebanon, and other areas where Islamic movements are active, and where they have followers, supporters, and beneficiaries, to acquaint them with the tenets and aims of these movements and assist them in choosing the best approach in dealing with the youth who are affiliated to or influenced by these.

6. Difficulties Encountered by the Working Team

- It took the working team quite a while before they could fix a date for the interviews, in addition to repeated postponement of these dates. The movements whose representatives we asked to meet took a long time to enquire about the aims of this study, about MASAR and the nature of its work, in addition to the political and religious preoccupations of the officials of these movements, and the occasionally unstable state of security in Tripoli.
- Departure from the subject by some interviewees during the interview, and their occasional indirect or unclear answers, so that our interviewers had to repeat the questions in many different versions to obtain clearer

answers. Despite all this, some interviewees did not answer all the questions.

7. Other Remarks

- The official representatives who were interviewed were very responsive. They even showed a clear desire to spread their ideas and communicate them to others; though they were sometimes harsh on those whom they call *the other*". We simply convey their desire and leave it up to the reader to judge.
- The personal security measures of most interviewees are ordinary, contrary to what we hear about them or view on Lebanese media.

III-Results of this Study

1. Doctrinal Categorization

As we mentioned in explaining our methodology, the aim of this study is not to read the ideological positions of the groups and personalities we have interviewed, but rather to focus on their daily attitudes and the ways of acting that they acquire through their (negative and positive) interaction with their environment. From this standpoint we shall focus in the analysis of the information that were gathered on the extent of their validity as compared to the actual political position of each of these movements, and not necessarily the extent to which these attitudes and practices conform to a certain conception of an authentic and valid Islam. This expresses our belief that the involvement of these Islamic movements in the domain of civil society work, which is multi-confessional, and spread over a variety of geographic locations, with a special focus on youth, dictated on the same movements some flexibility in dealing with certain ideological issues. This comes out clearly in the discussions and interventions on some debatable issues: they proved to be capable of some relative acceptance of *the other's* viewpoint.

The sample that we have chosen consists mostly of movements or personalities who classify themselves as affiliated to the Sunni Doctrine. Most of them have used this phrase to describe their affiliation (Dr. Fathi Yakan, Hajj Abu-Imad al-Rifa'i, sheikh Maher Hammood, Dr. Hasan al-Shahhal, sheikh Jamal Khattab, Mr. Khaled Daher, and sheikh Kan'an Naji).

Some of them added that they are Salafis, such as sheikh Safwan al-Zu'bi, *Da'i al-Islam* al-Shahhal, and Dr Hasan al-Shahhal. Others added what follows:

"We are *Ash'arite Sufis* [mystics] and we follow the *Shafi'ite* doctrine in jurisprudence. Our Way is not a new one, and the Sheikh Abdullah² did not establish any doctrine, it is just a continuation of the creed and an integral part of Islam's Way since the Prophet."

"We are Sunni Muslims with a mystic tint, after the manner of Sheikh Khaled bin Sa'id al-Zu'bi "The Educator", the leader of the Qadiriya Way.

² i.e. sheikh Abdullah al-Harry, the founder of what is now known as al-Ahbash, or the Association of Islamic Charitable

We follow the Imams *al-Shafi'i* and *Abi Hanifa*." (Dr. Muhammad Khaled al-Zu'bi- Al-Hamidiya Islamic Charity)

"We follow the Hanbalite doctrine [of Islamic Jurisprudence]; we adopt the preponderant [view]. If we refer to the Holy *Qur'an* and the Prophet's *Sunnah* [righteous way] we find what is called the presumptive denotation, that is, the conceivability of interpreting the [Qur'anic] text in more than one fashion, that is why, of course, we find some differences in details between the different doctrines". Abu Shareef- '*Usbat al-Ansar* (the Islamic League of Partisans).

As to the *Jama'a Islamiya* (the Islamic Community), sheikh Faysal al-Mawlawi defined it as "an Islamic Lebanese movement of *Ahl al-Sunna wal-Jama'a* (Sunni), and hajj 'Abdullah al-Teriaqi preferred to add that "*Quwwat al-Fajr* (The Forces of Dawn) are a Sunni *Mujahid* (Committed to Holy Fighting) Islamic movement."

For purposes of comparisons, and to emphasize the fact that this study has no intention to research any specific doctrine, but rather to introduce many political movements interacting in a wider environment, the sample also includes two (Ja'fari) Shi'ite authorities, Hezbollah and Sayyid Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah, and three other groups that claim to have no specific doctrinal affiliation, in the sense that they accept the membership of non-Sunni Muslims *Hizb al-Tahreer* (the Liberation Party), the two factions³ of *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami* (the Islamic Unification Movement).

As an example, sheikh Bilal Sha'ban expressed the non-doctrinal leanings of *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami*: "we belong to authentic Islam, i.e. the Islam which encompasses this life and the next, the Islam which addresses Man as Man regardless of differences in religions, confessions, or denominations. We do not require any specific *Fiqhi* (jurisprudential) school. The important thing for us is that the ritual worship between Man and God reflects an interactive relationship between Man and his brother Man. We emphasize the point that the root of religion is one; based upon the two important

³ Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami (Islamic Unification Movement) under the leadership of sheikh Bilal Sha'ban, the son of the founder of this movement Sa'id Sha'ban, and Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady (Islamic Unification Movement-the Leadership Council) under the leadership of Hashim Minqara.

Qur'anic verses "the true religion with God is Islam", "and I have approved Islam for your religion".

<i>Doctrinal Categorization</i>	<i>Total</i>
Ahl al-Sunna wal-Jama'a (Sunni)	15
No Doctrinal Categorization	3
Ja'fari (Shi'ite)	2
<i>Grand Total</i>	<i>20</i>

This is the general categorization. However, these groups subdivide into several schools, according to their own description, the most important are:

A. The Salafis

1. Dr. Hasan al-Shahhal, *Jam'iyyat Da'wat al-Iman, wal'Adl, wal-Ihsan* (The Faith, Justice and Beneficence)
2. Sheikh Safwan al-Zu'bi, *Waqf al-Turath al-Islami* (The Islamic Legacy Endowment)
3. Da'i al-Islam al-Shahhal, *al-Tayyar al-Salafi fi Lubnan* (The Salafi Current)
4. Sheikh Kan'an Naji, *al-Liqa' al-Islami al-Mustaqil* (Independent Islamic Gathering)
5. Abu Shareef, *'Usbat al-Ansar al-Islamiyya* (the Islamic League of Partisans)
6. Sheikh Jamal Khattab, *al-Haraka al-Islamiyya al-Mujahida* (the Islamic Holy Fighting Movement)

B. Muslim Brethern and the Jama'a al-Islamiyya

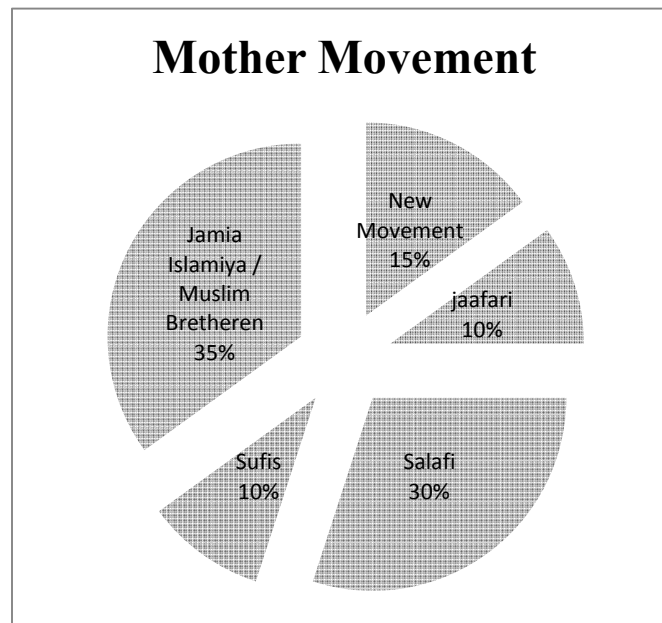
1. Dr. Fathi Yakan, *Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami* (The Islamic Action Front)
2. Hajj Abd al-Baqi Teriaqi, *Quwwat al-Fajr* (The Forces of Dawn)
3. Sheikh Maher Hammood, Imam of *al-Quds* Mosque in Saida
4. Mr. Khaled al-Daher, *Tayyar al-'Adala wa al-Tanmiya* (The Current of Justice and Development)
5. Mr. Usama Hamdan, *Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya-Hamas*(Islamic Resistance Movement-Hamas)
6. Hajj Abu Imad al-Rifa'i, *Harakat al-Jihad al-Islami*(The Islamic Jihad Movement)
7. Sheikh Faysal Mawlawi, *al-Jama'a al-Islamiya*

C. The Sufis (Mystics)

1. Sheikh 'Abd al-Qader al-Fakhani, *Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya* (the Islamic Association of Projects of Beneficence)
2. Dr. Muhammad Khaled al-Zu'bi, *al-Jam'iya al-Hamidiya al-Khayriya al-Islamiya* (Al-Hamidiya Islamic Charity)

D. A New Movement, Parties and Movements who decline to adopt doctrinal categorization

1. Mr. Ahmad Qassas, *Hizb al-Tahreer* (Liberation Party)
2. Sheikh Bilal Sha'ban, *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamy* (Islamic Unification Movement)
3. Hajj Jameel Ra'd, *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady* (Islamic Unification Movement-the Leadership Council)



2. Political Categorization

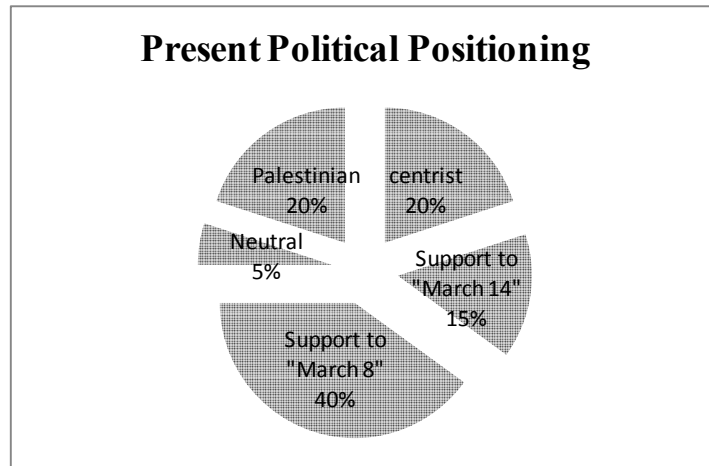
In addition to questions on the manner they categorize themselves from the doctrinal viewpoint, and within the Islamic movement in general, we asked each one of them about their position with regard to the present political divide, and came up with the following categories:

- “March 14 or 8”: when they expressed their support to the loyalist or opposition camp.
- Centrist: if they stand between both “March14 and 8”
- Neutral: they do not categorize themselves politically.
- Palestinians: groups working within the Palestinian milieu and do not "interfere" in the present local political divide.

Remarkably, and despite the overt relationship between *Tayyar al-Mustaqbal* (March 14) and Islamic movements, and despite the support they receive from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, for example, only three answers openly expressed their affiliation or support to the “March 14” camp, which represents the Sunnis in the present political divide in Lebanon. These are Da’i al Islam al-Shahhal, Khaled al-Daher, and Kan'an Naji. This might reflect the divergences between the international backers of Salafi movements (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Qatar). By contrast, and in addition to the Shiite parties, eight answers expressed their support to the “March 8” camp, three of whom did so openly: Fathi Yakan, Maher Hammood, Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-Bilal Sha'ban.

It is to be noted that affiliates of the same religious doctrine or school- such as Salafism, for example- do not align themselves in the same political line. This might be attributed to financial and political connection of many such movements to different sponsors (states, mother movements, general Islamic trends), their attitudes usually being influenced by the political alignment of these sponsors.

<i>Present political positioning</i>	<i>Total</i>
Support to “March 14”	3
Support to “March 8”	8
Neutral	1
Palestinian	4
Centrist	4
<i>Grand total</i>	<i>20</i>



The Salafis

- Two centrist movements who signed an understanding⁴ with Hezbollah: Dr. Hasan al-Shahhal, *Jam'iyyat Da'wat al-Iman, wal'Adl, wal-Ihsan* (The Faith, Justice and Beneficence), and sheikh Safwan al-Zu'bi, *Waqf al-Turath al-Islami* (The Islamic Legacy Endowment).
Said they:

"Hezbollah benefited from this environment and from many other slogans such as Jihad, fighting the occupier, and liberating Palestine and *al-Quds* (Jerusalem), and this has met with great approval on the Arab street." (Dr. Hasan al-Shahhal)

"We are among those who signed the understanding with Hezbollah. The reason was that some tried to use us in order to scare Hezbollah, which is why it was imperative to contain civil strife. We consider that the understanding achieved its goals, despite freezing it." (Sheikh Safwan al-Zu'bi)

- Two movements with the March the camp: Da'i al Islam al-Shahhal, and Sheikh Kan'an Naji- *al-Liqa' al-Islami al-Mustaqil* (Independent Islamic Gathering)- Tripoli.

⁴ On August 18, 2008 some Salafi movements signed an understanding with Hezbollah in order "to contain the discord and civil strife, and limit the difference between Sunni and Shi'a within the theoretical frame". The document was signed by Dr. Hasan al-Shahhal for the Salafi, and Ibraheem Amin al-Sayyed for Hezbollah.

- Two of the Palestinian groups theoretically and ideologically support the resistance and Hezbollah, but with some political reservations: *'Usbat al-Ansar al-Islamiyya* (the Islamic League of Partisans) and *al-Haraka al-Islamiyya al-Mujahida* (the Islamic Holy Fighting Movement)-'Ain el-Helweh.

"As to the Shi'ite Crescent we, in 'Usbat al-Ansar, reject this designation. The ideological divergence must be postponed. Today we face one enemy, and we have informed the leadership in Hezbollah that the *'Usbat* is with them in fighting Israel." (Abu Shareef-*'Usbat al-Ansar*)

"I was brought up on the idea of the Iranian revolution, in its beginning it helped giving a boost to the youth, and The Revolution is not only communist." *al-Haraka al-Islamiyya al-Mujahida* (the Islamic Holy Fighting Movement)-'Ain el-Helweh.

The Muslim Brethren and the *Jamaa Islamiya* (Islamic Community)

- Three movements considered themselves with "March 8": Dr. Fathi Yakan, *Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami* (The Islamic Action Front), hajj 'Abdallah Teriaqi, *Quwwat al-Fajr* (The Forces of Dawn), and sheikh Maher Hammood.
- One movement with "March 14", Mr. Khaled Daher, *Tayyar al-'Adala wa al-Tanmiya* (The Current of Justice and Development)
- Two pro "March 8" Palestinian organizations: Usama Hamdan, Hamas; Abu Imad al-Rifa'i, *Harakat al-Jihad al-Islami* (The Islamic Jihad Movement).
- One movement considered itself as centrist: sheikh Faysal Mawlawi, *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya* (the Islamic Community), despite the fact that before and during the parliamentary campaign, in the spring of 2009, *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya* sided with "March 14", and it had no direct negotiations concerning the candidates but with *Tayyar al-Mustaqbal* (The Current of the Future).

"Iran, today, is supporting the Sunni and Shi'i resisting movements as a part of its ideological project to liberate *al-Quds*, which is a general Islamic aim". Sheikh Faysal al-Mawlawi, who is considered a centrist within the *Jama'a Islamiyya*.

The Sufis (Mystics)

- A movement that considers itself close to “March 8”: sheikh Abdel-Qadir al-Fakhani, *Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya* (the Islamic Association of Projects of Beneficence)
- A movement that considers itself neutral, Dr. Muhammad Khaled al-Zu'bi, *al-Jam'iyah al-Hamidiya al-Khayriya al-Islamiya* (Al-Hamidiya Islamic Charity), (despite the fact that this association is receiving financial support to build a school from *Tayyar al-Mustaqbal* (March 14), as he himself stated.)

A New Movement (factions that do not adopt any doctrinal categorization)

- Centrist: Mr. Ahmad Qassas, *Hizb al-Tahreer*, the Liberation Party.

"We accuse Iran of complicity with the West, and this is treason, because Iran is thinking on the basis of the "Persian nation", not the Islamic nation, or even the Shi'ite Nation. As to Hezbollah, we support his resistance against Israel". Mr. Ahmad Qassas, *Hizb al-Tahreer*, the Liberation Party.

- Pro “March 8”: both wings of *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami*, Islamic Unification Movement (sheikh Bilal Sha'ban and Hajj Jameel Ra'd)

"Our differences with Hezbollah are complex but the priorities today determine the relationship. We did not accept what happened in Beirut⁵ but we cannot attack the Resistance (Hezbollah)... a reaction surfaced within the ranks of the Sunnis as a result of the defeat of *Tayyar al-Mustaqbal* (Current of the Future) and the complaint. However the Sunnis should not have anything to fear because of the Sunni environment". Jameel Raad, *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami- al-Majlis al-Qiyady* (Islamic Unification Movement-the Leadership Council).

“We do not coordinate with the Party of the Lebanese Forces, for example, we disagree with “March 14” but I have some connections with individuals within this bloc”. Bilal Sha'ban, *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami* (Islamic Unification Movement).

⁵ In reference to the events of May 7, 2008, when the armed forces of the opposition stormed Beirut against the forces of the loyalists (14 March), the confrontation left sectarian repercussions between the Sunnis and the Shi'ite.

It seems that those who describe themselves as affiliated to Salafism (six movements out of 20) are, in general, also pro-loyalist or centrist. That is, they approve of some stances of “March 8” especially in what concerns the struggle against Israel, but have a number of reservations some of which are related directly to Hezbollah or to Iran and its interference in Lebanese politics.

"They (the Shi'ite and Iran) try to export their revolution... and the offensive they launched is against us on both the religious and political levels." Da'i al-Islam al-Shahhal

"The ideological disagreement must be postponed, today we face the same enemy, and we have informed the leadership in Hezbollah that the *Usbat* (League) is with them in fighting Israel". Abu Shareef, '*Usbat al-Ansar* (Islamic League of Partisans)

On the other hand, the groups, which revolve in the orbit of the Muslim Brethren, (seven out of 20), tend in general to lean toward the oppositional camp, especially as far as resistance is concerned. Some of them consider that they are directly concerned by resistance, such as *Quwwat al-Fajr*⁶ (The Forces of Dawn), and are in direct contact with Hezbollah resistance fighters.

3. Practical Positions on Ideological Issues

Our research was restricted to practical issues and to the viewpoint of these groups as regards issues being debated at present, such as the Caliphate, and the call for *Jihad* and the like, regardless of fine points relating to the details of religious sects and their disagreements and the various jurisprudential schools they belong to.

a. The *Da'wa* (The Call)

Most of these movements rely on the *Da'wa* in their daily work, but fall into three main categories as to their practice:

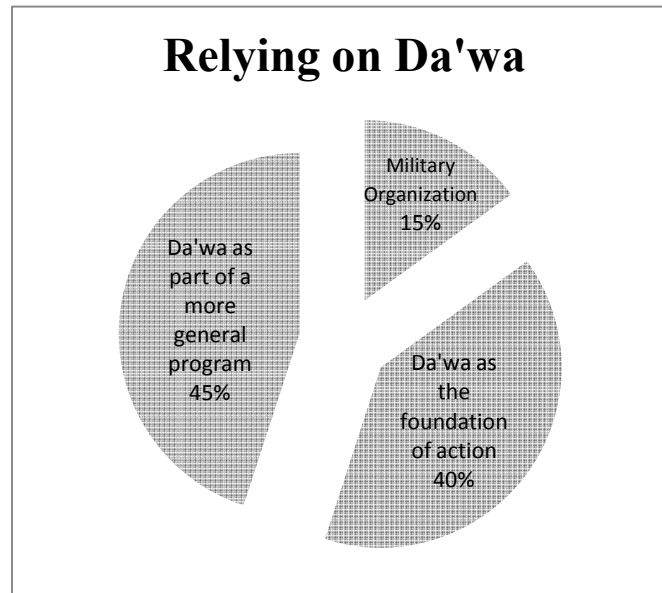
- One category adopts the devices of "propagating the call" as a means of ideological recruitment; this propagation is the foundation of their work, and they possess cadres for such work: *Jabhat al-'Amal al-*

⁶ A part of *Jabhat al-Amal al-Islami* (the Islamic Action Front) which was reinvigorated by Fathi Yakan after he succeeded in reintegrating some splinter factions who seceded from the *Jama'a Islamiyya* in Saida.

Islami (The Islamic Action Front), *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya* (the Islamic Community), sheikh Maher Hammood, Da'i al-Islam al-Shahhal, *Waqf al-Turath al-Islami* (The Islamic Legacy Endowment), *Jam'iyyat Da'wat al-Iman, wal'Adl, wal-Ihsan* (The Faith, Justice and Beneficence), sayyed Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah.

- The second category adopts *Da'wa* but within a more general multifaceted activity: *Hizb al-Tahreer* (the Liberation Party), *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamy* (Islamic Unification Movement), *Tayyar al-'Adala wa al-Tanmiya* (The Current of Justice and Development), *al-Liqaa' al-Islami al-Mustaqil* (The Independent Islamic Reunion)-Tripoli, *al-Jam'iyya al-Hamidiyya al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya* (The Hamidiyya Islamic Charitable Association), Hamas, Islamic Jihad, Hezbollah, *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady* (Islamic Unification Movement-the Leadership Council).
- The third category has military resistance formations, such as: *Quwwat al-Fajr* (The Forces of Dawn), *'Usbat al-Ansar, al-Haraka al-Islamiyya al-Mujahida*. All these, of course, are religious organizations but they grant military matters a priority in action, and rely more on mass mobilization than on proselytism or *Da'wa*.

<i>Relying on Da'wa</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Da'wa</i> as the foundation of action	8
<i>Da'wa</i> as part of a more general program	9
Military organization	3
<i>Grand total</i>	<i>20</i>



b. The Caliphate

In addition to the *Da'wa*, the issue of the Islamic Rule and the form of the political regime sought by Islamic groups is one of the most controversial matters in Lebanon and the Arab world. The Islamists dealt with in this study disagree on this issue, and each group has his own agenda.

<i>Position on the issue of the Caliphate</i>	<i>Total</i>
All-encompassing Caliphate	7
Transitional Caliphate	4
Islamic State	7
No answer	2
<i>Grand Total</i>	<i>20</i>

There are, as the table indicates, four main conceptions of the systems of governance that they have proposed comparing the Islamic Caliphate and the modern state:

- All-encompassing Caliphate: the advocates of this choice believe that the Caliphate should cover all the lands of the Muslims, and it could not be established in one state or limited region: *'Usbat al-Ansar*, *Harakat al-Jihad al-Islami*, *Quwwat al-Fajr*, *al-Haraka al-Islamiyya al-Mujahida*-Ain el-Helweh, *al-Jam'iyya al-Hamidiyya al-*

Khayriyya al-Islamiyya, Jam'iyyat Da'wat al-Iman, wal'Adl, wal-Ihsan.

"The Caliphate is one of our strategic aims, but the beginning must come with the destruction of Israel which is tearing the people apart" Abu 'Imad al-Rifa'i, (*Harakat al-Jihad al-Islami*)

"The Caliphate is the system of governance in Islam. It is a fundamental thing because the ruler is one for all Muslim lands" sheikh Jamal Khattab, (*al-Haraka al-Islamiyya al-Mujahida-Ain el-Helweh*)

- Transitional Caliphate: the advocates of this idea believe in the possibility of establishing the Caliphate on any place on earth, including Lebanon (Da'i al-Islam al-Shahhal, sheikh Safwan al-Zu'bi). They belong to the Salafi school, so does Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya, which adopts the Sufi doctrine, and the "unconfessional" *Hizb al-Tahreer*.

"We believe in establishing the Islamic Caliphate in Lebanon through preparing the society to accept the idea" sheikh Safwan al-Zu'bi (*Waqf al-Turath al-Islami*)

"We do not see today that the Caliphate or Islamic rule is possible in Lebanon. But, of course, if the conditions for establishing a full-grown Caliphate in some part of the *Umma*^{*}, it is not necessary to encompass the whole Muslim *Umma*. Sheikh 'Abd al-Qader al-Fakhani, (*Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya*)

- Islamic State: the advocates of this idea call for the establishment of an Islamic State and not a Caliphate. This state can adopt any civil system of governance on condition that legislation is Islamic. *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya, sheikh* (Faysal al-Mawlawi); *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamy*, sheikh (Bilal Sha'ban); *Tayyar al-'Adala wa al-Tanmiya*, (Khaled al-Daher); sheikh Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah;

^{*} This is an Islamic concept that is sometimes understood as "nation", but is in fact closer to the concept of "Community of Believers"—The translator.

Hamas, (Usama Hamdan); Hezbollah, (Mahmood Qmaty), *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady*, sheikh (Jameel Raad)

"I have no objection against the term '*Ra'ees*' (President) or any other term instead of '*Khaleefa*' (Caliph), if there be a just system built on consultation and alternation of responsibilities", Usama Hamdan, Hamas.

"We think that Islam can be through any modern system of governance, as long as it abides by the rulings of Islam and Islamic '*Shari'a*' (Law). We also think that the people is the source of power, and Islamic rule should not be imposed upon the people, it must be through their own choosing". *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya*, (sheikh Faysal al-Mawlawi)

- No answer: when asked about it, both Maher Hammoud and Kan'an Naji did not express any opinion on the shape of Islamic Rule.

c. Armed *Jihad* (Holy War)

In principle, no Muslim can decline this, nor can any association stand against the principle of *Jihad*. For it is, under certain circumstances and at specific stages, a duty to the Muslim. The occupation of Muslim lands requires *Jihad*. Therefore, *Jihad* as such is not an issue, but the timing is debatable.

We must also clarify that the purpose of the question was not to ascertain the ideological stance concerning *Jihad*, but rather to gauge the degree of the actual responsiveness to *Jihad*, and shed light on their position regarding *Jihad* today, and especially military *Jihad*. Out of twenty movements, three declined to give a clear answer on this issue, in addition to one educational institution (al-Jam'iya al-Hamidiya al-Khayriya al-Islamiya) which considered itself unconcerned with military *Jihad*.

<i>Position on Jihad</i>	<i>Total</i>
Pro Jihad	9
Pro Jihad, but lack a military apparatus	6
Are not pro Jihad today	1
No clear position	4
<i>Grand total</i>	<i>20</i>

The only "different" position was that of Da'i al-Islam al-Shahhal who considered that *Jihad* is not in the order of the day. He stated that "we, as a Salafi current, do not see the necessity of, nor the capacity to confront the American line, my house is occupied—and I have a priority to confront the Shi'ite Crescent locally...As to America she is opposed to Muslim rights in general."

Fifteen leading figures from among those interviewed affirmed that *Jihad* is an integral part of the Muslim creed, nine out of which have a military organization (of which are the Palestinian organizations who consider that *Jihad* within Hamas and *Jihad Islami* Movements is taking place in Palestine). The rest of the conversation revolved primarily around *Jihad* for Palestine and fighting Israel.

"Our call is to face up to the Americano-Israeli agenda. Military action only takes place where Islamic lands are occupied". Abu Shareef, (*'Usbat al-Ansar*).

"Our utmost priority is fighting the Israeli enemy. We want our youth to bear the concepts of religion and the principles of worship. That is why we believe in educating the Muslim individual to obey God so that his *Jihad* is coupled with religious awareness". *Quwwat al-Fajr*, hajj 'Abdullah al-Teriaqi.

d. The Relationship with the Other, and the Position on Diversity in Lebanon

The lawfulness of dealing economically with non-Muslims is one of the unanimous issues with those covered by this study. They unanimously took it for granted, because there is no prohibition of dealing commercially and professionally with them in all spheres.

"We have been dealing economically with all people, and we rely on the most perfected work regardless of the person's religion. This office furniture, for example, was bought from a Christian retailer." (Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami, Dr. Fathi Yakan.)

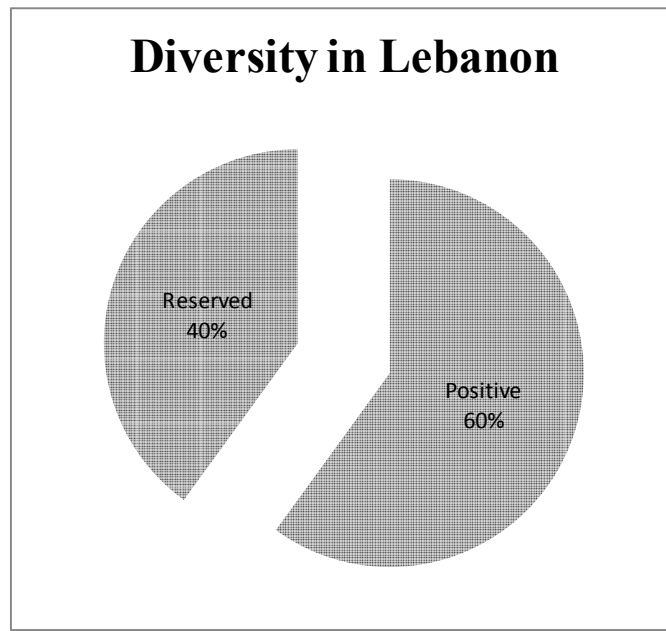
However the positions vary when scrutinizing the relationship with Hezbollah (and the Shi'ites, in general). Some have a positive attitude vis-à-vis Hezbollah, these are: Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami, al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya, 'Usbat al-Ansar, Harakat al-Jihad al-Islami, Quwwat al-Fajr, sheikh Maher

Hammood, *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami*, *Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya*, *Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya-Hamas*, *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady*.

Those who had a negative attitude directly with regard to the Shi'ites were only three, (Da'i al-Islam al-Shahhal, Khaled al-Daher, and sheikh Kan'an Naji). This might be a political stance, or a justification of a political stance adopted by the three of them against Hezbollah. As to the others, they preferred either restraint (*Hizb al-Tahreer*, *Waqf al-Turath al-Islami*, *Jam'iyyat Da'wat al-Iman*, *wal'Adl*, *wal-Ihsan*) or declined to answer, al-Haraka al-Islamiyya al-Mujahida Ain el-Helweh).

To be more precise, the attitudes toward *the other* (especially the Shiite) were not hasty or emotional, but rather associated with the present political circumstances. For instance, *Hizb al-Tahreer* whose membership was predominantly Shiite in the beginning of its activity in Lebanon, and whose literature rejects the traditional division of Muslims into Sunnis and Shiite, expressed their viewpoint as follows:

"In the relationship with *the other*, our priority is given to the intellectual aspect. The non-Muslim holds a different set of thoughts; we look at all humans as potential audience for our discourse. We do not address Muslims only, and we do not consider our project to be directed against non-Muslims but against Western hegemony (political, cultural, and educational). Non-Muslims are part of our project. We strive for a State that looks after people, all people. This is part of Islamic jurisprudence, and not only of our philosophy. In other words, we do not view non-Muslims as our foes. Our intellectual opponent is he who promotes Western culture. What is meant by *Hizb al-Thareer* (the Liberation Party) is the liberation of the nation from the systems imported from the West...the armed Sunnite movements in North Lebanon are a counterbalance to the Shiites who are armed and represented by Hezbollah. But these Sunnite movements have no political agenda, and are a mere tool in the hands of some regional powers." Ahmad Qassas, *Hizb al-Thareer*.



However, it appears from comparing the answers of those who pronounced their positive posture toward the Shiites and Hezbollah with their practical attitudes on the ground, that these were rather diplomatic answers not necessarily reflecting their real point of view. In other words, these may have been tactical stances related to the political situation or to the alliances that were made then. Examples on that are abundant.

"We support them (Hezbollah) as a resistance movement, but they are a political party represented in state institutions, and they can not ask us to deal with them as resistance only." Ahmad Qassas, Hizb al-Thareer.

"We are one of the parties that signed the document with Hezbollah, the reason is that there was an attempt by some to use us to scare Hezbollah. That is why we had to prevent the civil strife." Sheikh Safwan al-Zu'bi, *Waqf al-Turath al-Islami*

"Due to its structure, affiliation, and connections Hezbollah has managed to derive some advantages, while the Sunni Movements were used more than they were able to derive any advantage." Sheik Jameel Ra'd, *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady*.

On the other hand, most movements considered diversity in Lebanon a positive trait, and a force for Lebanese society. Despite the fact that they do not generally approve of political confessionalism, they insisted on the advantages provided by the nature of the confessional system in Lebanon. This indicates some contradiction in their positions.

Add to this that some groups do not agree that Lebanon is final homeland (Fathi Yakan, Bilal Sha'ban, Muhammad Khaled al-Zu'bi...), they consider that Islam is wider than the narrow concepts of borders; it even transcends the concept of Pan-Arabism. All lands are God's.

"Lebanon is my homeland; however it is not a final homeland. I have a vision of the whole world being one homeland." Fathi Yakan

"There is a real disagreement around the final status of the [Lebanese] entity." Jameel Ra'd, Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady

"Accepting the [Lebanese] entity is acquiescing in the Sykes-Picot Agreement, Islamists cannot accept it. Mahmoud al-Badhn, Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady. [p.32]

Despite the fact that some of the interviewees declined to give a clear answer on the finality of the homeland (Hajj 'Abdallah Teriaqi, Da'i al-Islam al-Shahhal, sheikh Jamal Khattab...), we felt in them the same general orientation (see following table). They all talked about issues such as reform and the State, and discussed various related concepts; which mean that they are practically involved with this homeland.

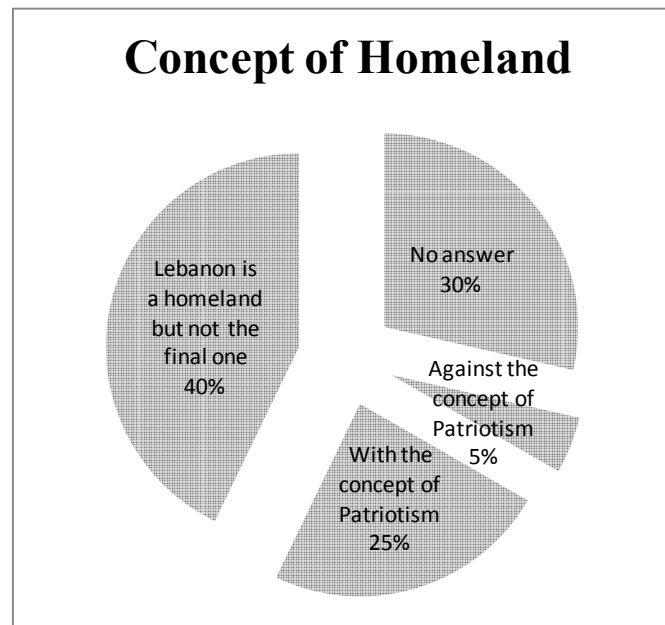
Five out of twenty interviewees considered Lebanon a final homeland, though this position is in contradiction with their claims about the Caliphate or the Islamic State (Safwan al-Zu'bi, Hasan al-Shahhal, Maher Hammoud, Muhammad Khaled al-Zu'bi, Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah).

"We recognize Lebanon as a homeland, it helps us to disseminate our call, and enjoy freedom of expression." sheikh Safwan al-Zu'bi

"Homeland is a land inhabited by a people. Lebanon is undoubtedly our homeland." Hasan al-Shahhal

"We believe in the *Umma*, its reality is divided into homelands, and we love Lebanon our homeland." Muhammad Khaled al-Zu'bi

<i>The concept of homeland</i>	<i>Total</i>
Against the concept of patriotism	1
With the concept of patriotism	5
No answer	8
	6
<i>Grand Total</i>	<i>20</i>



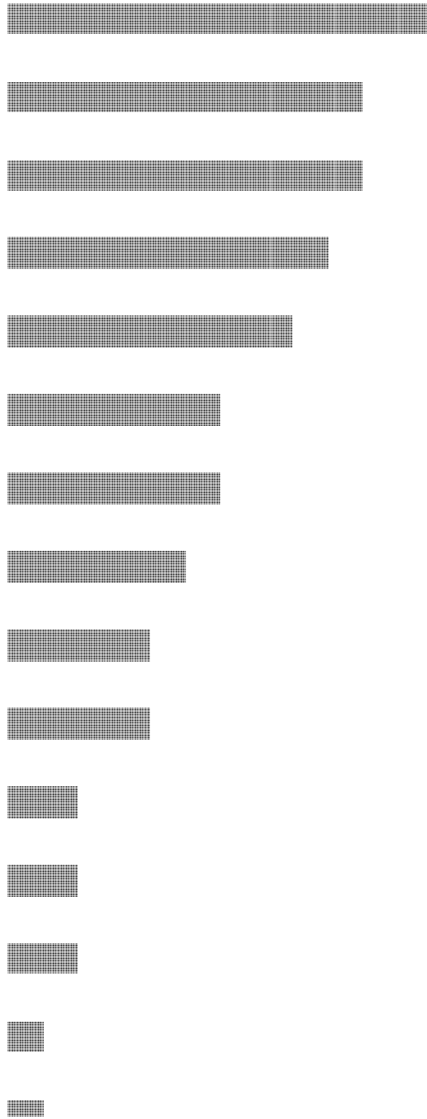
4. The Reasons behind the Proliferation of Islamic Movements

The reasons behind the proliferation of Islamic movements were very close to each other. They all focused on external causes such as the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the American thrust; and internal ones related to the Islamic surge, and the social evolution of Islamic movements, especially in the absence or the failure of alternative ideas.

"There is a growth in these movements after the fall of communism and Nasserism, and the disgrace of Western Capitalism." Safwan al-Zu'bi

"The failure of others' ideas such as nationalism and Marxism, the injustice and failure of regimes, and the American thrust." Sheikh Maher Hammoud

"It is linked to the collapse of the Soviet Bloc, and emerging conflicts in the region and especially the American thrust." Sheikh 'Abd al-Qader al-Fakhani



We can cluster these reasons in three groups based on the number of those who expressed them:

- The first group (between 8 and 12 answers, about half the answers) identified the following reasons:
 - Collapse of the Soviet Union/Fall of Communist Ideology: Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami, al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya, 'Usbat al-Ansar, sheikh Maher Hammoud, Da'i al-Islam al-Shahhal, Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamy, Waqf al-Turath al-Islami, al-Haraka al-Islamiyya al-Mujahida-'Ayn el-Helweh, Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya, Jam'iyyat Da'wat al-Iman, wal'Adl, wal-Ihsan, Hamas, Hezbollah.
 - Internal reaction to the Shi'ites: Hizb al-Tahreer, Quwwat al-Fajr, Da'i al-Islam al-Shahhal, Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamy, al-Haraka al-Islamiyya al-Mujahida-'Ayn el-Helweh, Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya, Tayyar al-'Adala wa al-Tanmiya, al-Liqaa' al-Islami al-Mustaqil-Tripoli, al-Jam'iyya al-Hamidiyya al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya, Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady.
 - The American thrust/rejection of the World Order: al-Jamaa Islamiya, 'Usbat al-Ansar, Hizb al-Tahreer, sheikh Maher Hammoud, Waqf al-Turath al-Islami, Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya, Tayyar al-'Adala wa al-Tanmiya, al-Jam'iyya al-Hamidiyya al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya, Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya-Hamas, Hezbollah.
 - Iranian Revolution as a model of Islamic Rule: Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami, sheikh Maher Hammood, Waqf al-Turath al-Islami, Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya, Dr. Muhammad Khaled al-Zu'bi, Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya-Hamas, Hezbollah, Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady.
 - Injustice of Arab and Muslim Regimes/ Dictatorial Regimes: al-Jamaa Islamiya, 'Usbat al-Ansar, Harakat al-Jihad al-Islami, sheikh Maher Hammood, al-Jam'iyya al-Hamidiyya al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya, Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya-Hamas, Hezbollah, Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady.
- The second group (between 4 and 6 answers, about a quarter) identified the reasons of the upsurge of Islamic movements as follows:

- Islamophobia/Stigmatization of Islam: Hizb al-Tahreer, Quwwat al-Fajr, Da'i al-Islam al-Shahhal, Waqf al-Turath al-Islami, Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya, Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady.
- Resisting Israel/ Zionism: Quwwat al-Fajr, Sheikh Maher Hammoud, Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami, al-Haraka al-Islamiyya al-Mujahida-'Ayn el-Helweh, Hezbollah, Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady.
- Exploitation of these Movements by the USA: Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami, Harakat al-Jihad al-Islami, Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamiyya, Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya, Hezbollah.
- Internal Dissentions/Divisions which led to the multiplication of groups: Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami, Harakat al-Jihad al-Islami, Quwwat al-Fajr, Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady.
- Failure of Previous Experiences (Left/Nationalism): 'Usbat al-Ansar, Waqf al-Turath al-Islami, Jam'iyyat Da'wat al-Iman, wal'Adl, wal-Ihsan, Hezbollah.
- The Third group (between one and two answers)
 - Wahhabism: Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami, Jam'iyyat Da'wat al-Iman, wal'Adl, wal-Ihsan,
 - Syrian Hegemony: Da'i al-Islam al-Shahhal, Tayyar al-'Adala wa al-Tanmiya
 - Filling the void: Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami, Hezbollah
 - Impoverishment and Ignorance: Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya
 - Absence of any Caliphate: Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady

Based on what precedes, it appears that the number of reasons varied between three and eight. Moreover, as the above table shows, the reaction against the Shiites and Iran is one of the major reasons that some considered positive and some others negative. We shall detail these in what follows because of the sensitivity of the present confessional relationship, and the Islamic division amongst those who support Iran and those who oppose her.

a. The Reaction against the Shi'ites

The position of Sunni groups as regards the Shi'ites varies from alliance to absolute enmity, with many shades of fine differences, and it intersects in some cases with the attitude regarding Iran and the role it plays on both the Arab and Lebanese scenes. Dr. Fathi Yakan, their ally within the resistance project, thinks that the Shi'ite role today is positive, especially as concerns Hezbollah, for resistance is the priority.

In contrast, we have the attitude of Da'i al-Islam al-Shahhal who has a totally opposite view: "We as a Salafi current see that there is no necessity and no capability to challenge the American policy, my house is occupied- and I have a priority, which is confronting the Shiite Crescent locally."

For sheikh Faysal al-Mawlawi, the present Shiite question is only a political ploy: "The Shiite Crescent has no role in the proliferation of Sunni movements, it is only a political project not a religious one, and it is used as a scarecrow just as are the other Islamic movements used."

From a different perspective, Dr. Hasan al-Shahhal considers that the fundamental problem is the absence of a "Sunni Project" for resistance. This absence has allowed Hezbollah to play such a role on the Arab scene. "Hezbollah took much advantage of this atmosphere. They exploited many slogans such as Jihad, fighting the occupier, and liberating Palestine and al-Quds (Jerusalem). All this has met with great approval in the Arab 'street', so much so that Hasan Nasrallah's picture was hoisted in al-Azhar. This issue concerns the Umma as a whole, and what is wanted is a Sunni plan to liberate al-Quds (Jerusalem).

b. The Iranian Revolution

Attitudes also differ in this respect. Some consider that Iran plays a positive role (Faysal al-Mawlawi, Maher Hammoud, 'Abdallah Teriaqi), since it supports Shiite and Sunni resistance movements such as Hezbollah and Hamas, and contributes greatly in this respect. Add to this that the success of the Iranian Revolution has, to a certain extent, played a part in encouraging the Islamic upsurge in the world and especially the Arab World.

Some others (Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady, for example) think that the Iranian agenda is different from the Shiite issue and

Hezbollah, and that it has its own political considerations that converge with some and diverge with others.

"Iranian ambitions may have negative influences... we can not attack [Hezbollah's] Resistance." Hajj Jameel Ra'd

Yet still others (Da'i al-Islam al-Shahhal, Hizb al-Tahreer) believe that Iran represents an immediate threat and that she is in collusion with the West, or that at least she has her own Persian colonialist agenda.

"Before Khomeini launched his slogan of 'exporting revolution' there was nothing between us and the Shiites." Da'i al-Islam al-Shahhal

5. Relationship with the State

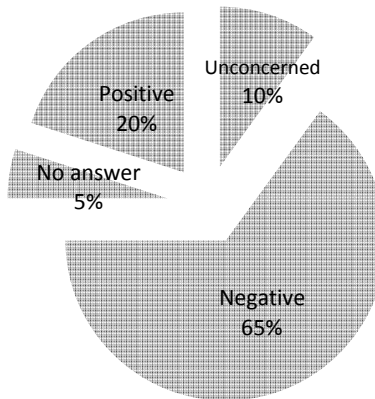
The predominant attitude was negative on the issue of the confessional structure of the Lebanese polity. Overall, the Ta'if Agreement was the ceiling of their demands. In their statements on the abolition of confessionalism, some were keen on rejecting secularism as an alternative, since it would block or limit religious influence. Incidentally, they did not articulate the form of the State they opt for as a transitional structure, of course, since the issue, here, is not that of the Caliphate or the Islamic State. It is remarkable that on the subject of abolishing confessionalism they do not offer any alternative transitional form.

"We support the abolition of political confessionalism, but without reaching excessive (sic) secularization." Dr. Hasan al-Shahhal

"The confessional system is outdated. It was devised when the Maronites were a majority. Changing the system should not be through secularization". Sheikh Kan'an Naji

Thus, we conclude from some pronouncements that the problem according to them lies in the corrupt form of the present regime that covers itself under the cloak of the confessional system. The latter system guarantees protection of the leaders' control over their confessions, hence the recurrence of some expressions such as "the hegemony of some over the decisions of the Sunnites", or "dragging the Sunni religious group into battles that are not theirs"

Attitude concerning the Confessional System



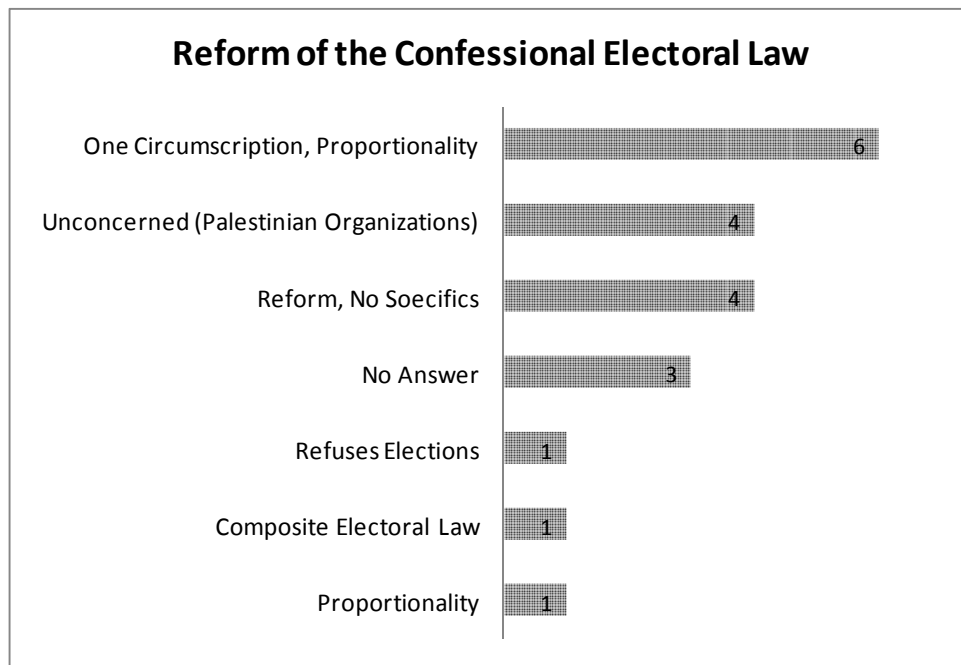
However, some others (Quwwat al-Fajr, sheikh Maher Hammoud, Da'i al-Islam al-Shahhal, Waqf al-Turath al-Islami) were more plain-spoken in their approach, and considered that the confessional system is better than any other system, for it guarantees the rights of each religious group and their followers.

"Lebanon has been founded on his religious denominations, and the confessional system is less harmful than the unconfessional system" Da'i al-Islam al-Shahhal.

"I do not believe that Lebanon can be put together with anything other than this confessional system, after the Ta'if Agreement, the Sunnites achieved a better position, and the Sunnite has gotten a bigger share in power." Hajj 'Abdullah al-Teriaqi.

As to reforming the confessional system, many of them suggested reforming the electoral law. The proportion of those who supported adopting proportionality with one circumscription was the highest. Their suggestion was so clear and explicit because proportionality would give them better chances in representation, especially that some of these groups are spread over many locations, and would transcend small circumscription. The answers were as follows:

- Adopting proportionality in the electoral law: Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya
- A composite electoral law, proportional in the bigger circumscriptions, and majoritarian in the smaller ones (close to the proposal of Mr. Fuad Boutros Committee): sheikh Maher Hammoud
- Against elections: Hizb al-Tahreer
- No answer: Waqf al-Turath al-Islami, Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamy (Hashem Minqara), despite the fact that this movement stands against the confessional system.
- Reform without specifications: Tayyar al-'Adala wa al-Tanmiya, al-Liqaa' al-Islami al-Mustaqil-Tripoli, sheikh Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah, al-Jam'iyya al-Hamidiyya al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya
- Lebanon as one single circumscription with proportionality: Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami; al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya; Quwwat al-Fajr; Jam'iyyat Da'wat al-Iman, wal'Adl, wal-Ihsan; Hezbollah; Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami, al-Majlis al-Qiyady.

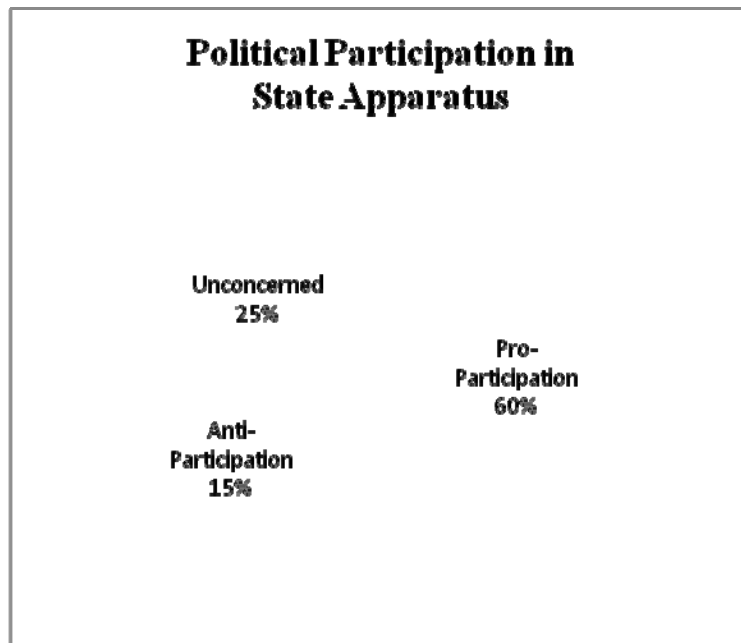


As to political participation in State institutions in general, there are different Shari'a (Islamic Law) interpretations on this issue. Some consider that participation is possible in all fields whether in the legislature, the

executive, or the judiciary, while others consider that this is contrary to Islam, for they can only participate in Shari'a (i.e. Islamic) judiciary only.

As the following diagram shows the greatest proportion of the interviewees (11 out of 20) support participation in all positions, whether as members of Parliament or ministers, or functionaries, these are: Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami; al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya; Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamy; Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya; Tayyar al-'Adala wa al-Tanmiya; Jam'iyyat Da'wat al-Iman, wal'Adl, wal-Ihsan; al-Liqaa' al-Islami al-Mustaqil, Tripoli; sheikh Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah; al-Jam'iyya al-Hamidiyya al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya; Hezbollah; Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady.

Sheikh Maher Hammoud; sheikh Safwan al-Zu'bi; Da'i al-Islam al-Shahhal expressed their refusal to participate politically in State institutions. As to Hizb al-Tahreer, they refused to participate in the executive because it is "corrupt and un- Islamic", but "we may enter the Shari'a judiciary not the civil one. We may also enter the parliament on certain conditions that are: not participating in legislation, not granting confidence to the cabinet, not electing nor approving budgets, but simply act as custodians on behalf of the people who voted us to this office."



6. Economy

The economic crisis is one of the topics on which all agreed, but they disagreed on how to analyze it. Many causes were alleged: the nature of the confessional system that protects corruption within State institutions; economic policies that tremendously contributed to the crisis; to squandering resources, money embezzlement, and absence of accountability. All these problems were linked to the dissolute political system, according to both the loyalist and oppositional camps.

Dr. Fathi Yakan, for example, straightforwardly expressed his denunciation of the official economic policies, and reminded of his stances when he was a member of parliament in 1992-1996. He affirmed that "since the beginning I did not give my vote of confidence to the Hariri Cabinet because of the political way, and the economic plan that gave priority to the luxurious rather than to the essentials, then privatization came to wipe out what remained of the State's capabilities."

This is quite close to the viewpoint of Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya who claimed that "the economic situation is bad and there are big mistakes whose price we are paying, and we believe that Lebanon needs planning for the future so that it will overcome its crisis". They expressed their participation in trade unionism "as an attempt to contribute in betterment and change."

By contrast, Tayyar al-'Adala wa al-Tanmiya state that they opt for "free economy but not with monopoly, or wild capitalism, we do not approve of command economy. The vital interests should be in the hands of the State, we do not wish to see the privatization of the major institutions".

As to Jam'iyyat Da'wat al-Iman, wal'Adl, wal-Ihsan, they pointed at the injustice which is endured by peripheral regions "most of the public debt was spent in Beirut only and there is no balanced development." So did the al-Jam'iyya al-Hamidiyya al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya who pointed out to the "great number of Lebanese Army employees in the Akkar region who benefit from scholarships for their children, and were it not for these our schools would shut down. Farmers, workers and even merchants have no means to pay the schools tuition fees."

Only Hizb al-Tahreer (Liberation Party) had an elaborate economic view different from both capitalism and socialism, which is Islamic economy

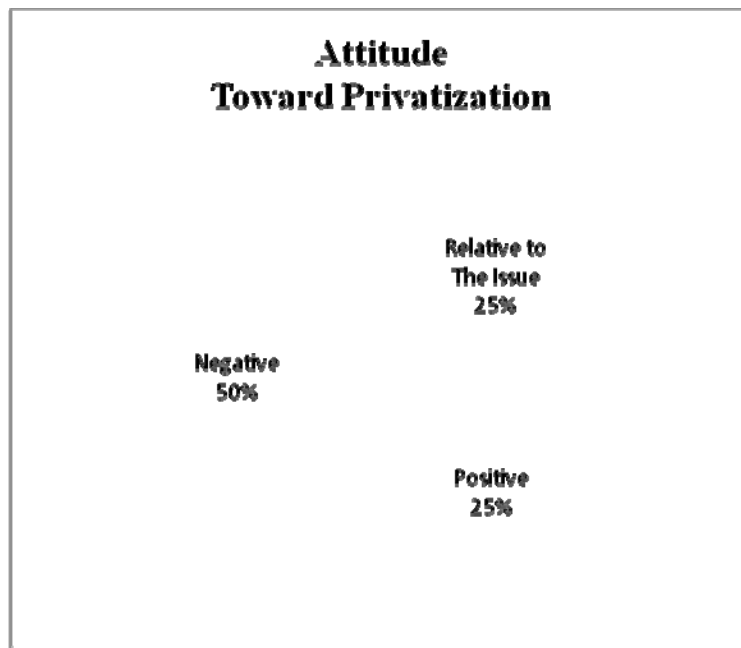
"interested in the distribution of wealth... and capable of providing people with the necessities of life and offer them the possibility to develop their wealth." The same party expressed his views of "the welfare state and opposition to privatizing public assets, such as water, pasture, and fire..." The same terms were used by Khaled al-Dhaher and Kan'an Naji. [p.44]

The Palestinian groups confirmed the difficulty of the economic situation in the Palestinian society for "there is a great deal of misery and neglect", according to Usbat al-Ansar al-Islamiyya who pointed also to "the absence of human rights such as the right to work" which prevents Palestinians from practicing 73 professions in Lebanon".

The most salient topics that emerged throughout the talk on the economic situation were three: privatization, globalization, and monopolization. These also recurred with some interviewees and their reactions varied between acceptance, rejection, and reservation.

It is to be noted that two interviewees who spoke on privatization (Fathi Yakan, Ahmad Qasas) linked it to religious prohibition based on a Hadeeth (Prophetic tradition) that states: "Muslims are partners in three: water, pasture, and fire". Meaning that there are certain facilities that are not to be privatized for doing so is religiously illegal and harmful to people's common interest.

Both Quwwat al-Fajr and al-Haraka al-Islamiyya al-Mujahida considered privatization a positive development in general. Four other groups considered it a negative one (Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami; Hizb al-Tahreer; Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya; Hamas) whereas Hezbollah, sheikh Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah, and al-Liqaa' al-Islami al-Mustaqil (IIG) took a middle way: they supported it while pointing to some exceptions related to the necessities of life.



As to their views concerning monopolies, they believe that all that leads to oppressing common people or to controlling their needs is prohibited and rejected in Islam (*Hizb al-Tahreer*; *Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya*; *Tayyar al-'Adala wa al-Tanmiya*; *al-Liqaa' al-Islami al-Mustaqil*

"We are against monopolies and exclusive agencies, and we favor opening up the gates of competition"- *Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya*

"We opt for free economy, but not with monopolies or savage capitalism. We do not favor command economy"- Khaled al-Dhaher

"Islam prohibits monopolies"- *Hizb al-Tahreer*

As to globalization, some considered it negative (*Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami*; *Hizb al-Tahreer*; Hamas) because of what it entails by way of introducing foreign concepts into our society on the one hand, and because of its savage domination on economically poor countries, on the other.

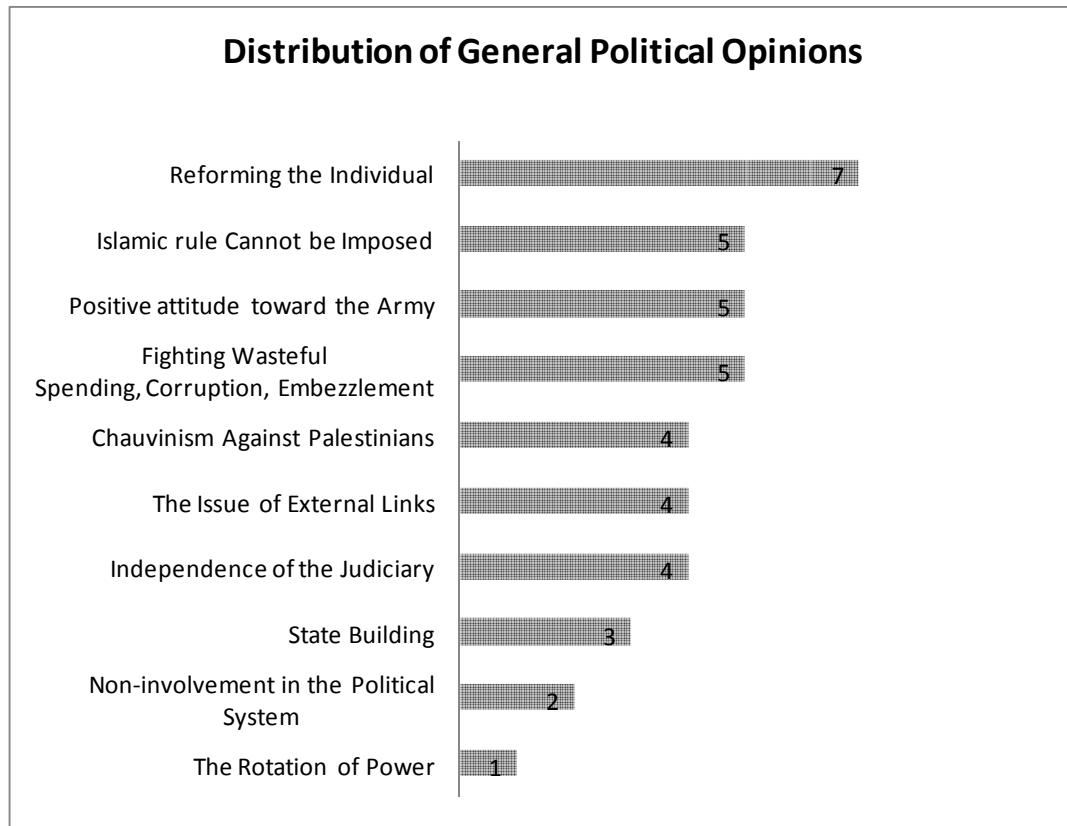
"Globalization takes over the assets of States through privatization, and States crush their people through huge corporations"-Hamas

"We are against everything bad and detrimental to Islam that comes from the external world, for example the waves of moral corruption that we faced since a long time"- *Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami*

By contrast, Hezbollah's view of globalization is neutral, that is, it may be positive or negative: "We can not have a blanket positive or negative stance on globalization. It has some positive aspects such as cultural and technical exchange, and conveying your culture and ideas to the other. You can as well fortify your society."

7. General Political Opinions

During the interviews, many political opinions of a general nature kept recurring and shed light on various issues such as the State, the political system, and the relationship with State institutions, and the like.



Chief among the issues that were raised was **wasteful spending and corruption**. Some went as far as calling it 'plundering' (sheikh Jamal Khattab), and considered the present political system as a degenerate one, plagued with so many ills that are sometimes covered for confessional reasons. Politicians predominate in their own confessions and confiscate their political options.

"In general, Islam is against monopoly, but there is no problem with privatization. If the State decides to sell its possessions, this is its right. However, in Lebanon the situation is different because of absence of accountability, corruption and plunder." Jamal Khattab

Many considered that the state of **the judiciary** is not satisfactory (sheikh Maher Hammoud, sheikh 'Abd al-Qader al-Fakhani, Faysal Mawlawi, Ahmad Qasas). Its independence should be preserved. Some considered that the beginning of reform is the reform and independence of the judiciary.

"We call for reforming, and strengthening the judiciary, and to enhancing accountability" sheikh 'Abd al-Qader al-Fakhani

"In my view of reform, the judiciary is the foremost priority, then comes the educational system" sheikh Maher Hammoud.

"The judiciary should be independent, especially from confessional allocation" Faysal Mawlawi

Ahmad Qasas got into the subject in an indirect manner. He alluded to the issue of Dinniyeh and considered those who were apprehended as 'detainees'. We hold the rulers accountable, for instance, through organizing a sit-in in support of the detainees of Dinniyeh.

Among the ills of **the internal situation** of the Lebanese society are linkage and vassalage to external powers. All parties expressed this concern. Accusations of vassalage were addressed to all, be they allies or foes. However some interviewees (Hasan al-Shahhal) emphasized the point that the relationship with the external powers is not evil in itself, but rather needed. It even bolsters the strength of the State if we know how to utilize it profitably, without taking advantage of it to overpower other internal partners. Therefore institutions should be built within the State, away from confessional allocations, and the like. "Lebanon is a small country

considering his land area, but hosts multiple intellectual currents and denominations, and this makes him vulnerable to regional and international ebb and flow. The Sunnites for instance are influenced by Saudi Arabia and Egypt, the Christians by France, and the Shiites by Iran. It is possible to harness these connections to Lebanon's interests, and to transform them into a positive factor, instead of being detrimental." Hassan al-Shahhal

"The [Lebanese] State does not possess the power of making its own decisions. The major and decisive decisions are made in the Pentagon." Bilal Sha'ban.

As to the Palestinians, three interviewees (*Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya*, *Tayyar al-'Adala wa al-Tanmiya*, *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady*) spoke about a good **relationship with the Palestinians**, and about the necessity of treating them fairly. The Palestinian interviewees complained of the 'racism' they face and the discrimination they suffer from, especially with regard to the labor law, the law on property owning, and the blockade imposed on the refugees camps. It is worth noting that if the other interviewees did not mention the state of the Palestinians in Lebanon, it is clear that the issue of hostility to Israel and the rights of the Palestinian people are taken for granted with them.

"We are on good terms with the Palestinian brethren and we have a number of brethren who are followers and disciples of late Sheikh al-Harary." sheikh 'Abd al-Qader al-Fakhani, *Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya*

Noteworthy is the fact that many interviewees expressed support to the **Lebanese Army**, its patriotism, and the uniting role it plays. All interviewees considered it the only institution that stands at the same distance of all parties, and sets a good example. Many pointed out the great and positive transformation in the Army's doctrine, especially in what concerns resistance against Israel, and support to all resistance.

"Our relationship with the State is a good one, especially with the President of the Republic and the Army, for we consider it a guarantee for our homeland". Sheikh 'Abd al-Qader al-Fakhani, *Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya*

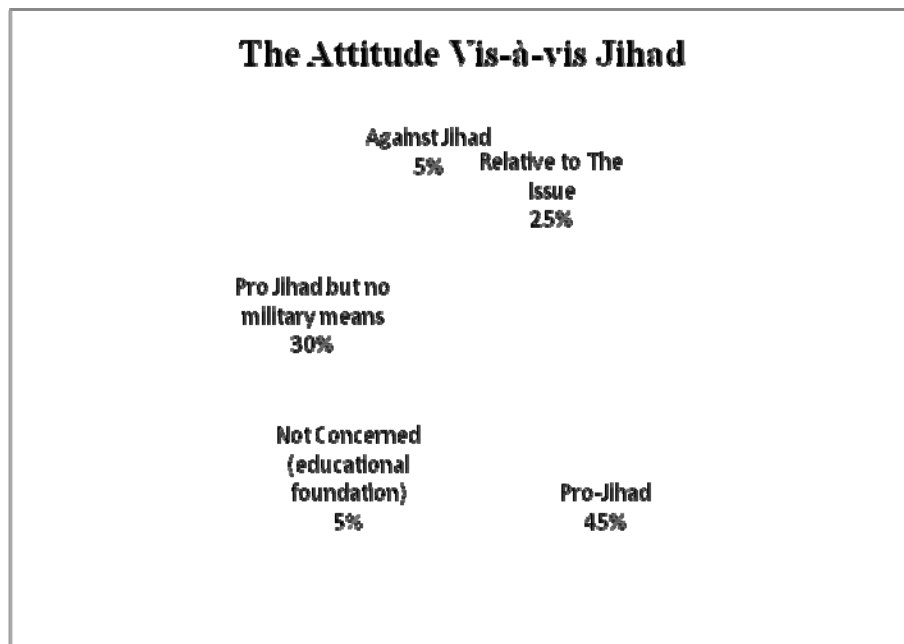
"Our relationship with the State is a good one; it is based on mutual respect and responsiveness, especially with the Army which adopts now the doctrine of resistance." Sheikh Maher Hammoud.

As to the issue of **Islamic Rule**, our interviewees unanimously affirmed that it is impossible to impose it by any means. It must be a choice made by society, one that is democratically adopted. Hence, here comes the importance of reforming the individual and working on raising people's awareness on religion and *Shari'a* (Islamic Law) and the importance of the Islamic System.

"We seek to participate in political power through the Parliament or otherwise. We view everything in the light of Islam. What we deem *Haram* (prohibited by Islamic Law) we give our advice to the responsible people in order to change it. What we deem Halal (permissible according to Islamic Law) we agree to. In general, we support all that is not against *Shari'a* and all that is of interest to humans. We cooperate in view of righteousness and God-fearing with whomever wants, even non-Muslims. The Muslim can not be neutral, he sides with the good against evil, even if perpetrated by another Muslim." Dr. Hasan al-Shahhal

"The Muslim can only call for the establishment of the Caliphate. But the *other* imagines that this is going to be imposed by coercion and violence. The Islamic Caliphate can only be established through the concurrence of all people. It will not be imposed on anyone. The existence of the Caliphate does not annul the Lebanese entity within the Islamic polity." Sheikh Maher Hammoud.

8. Jihad

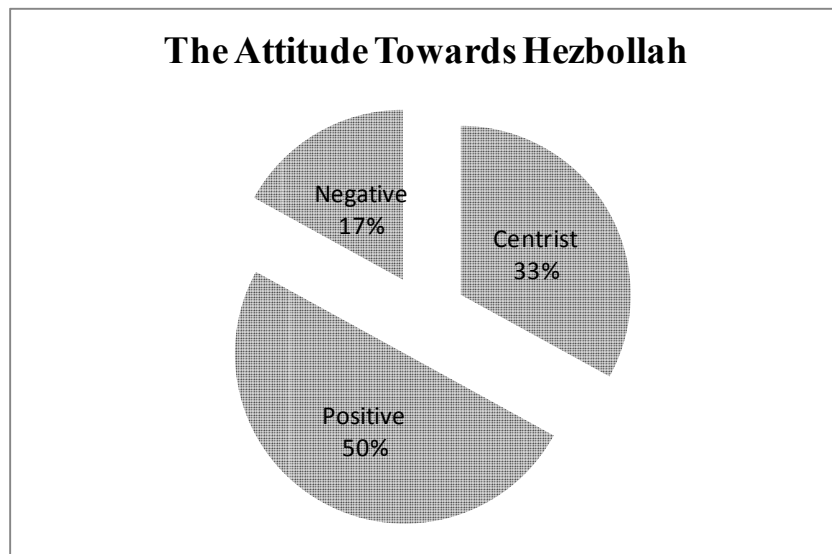
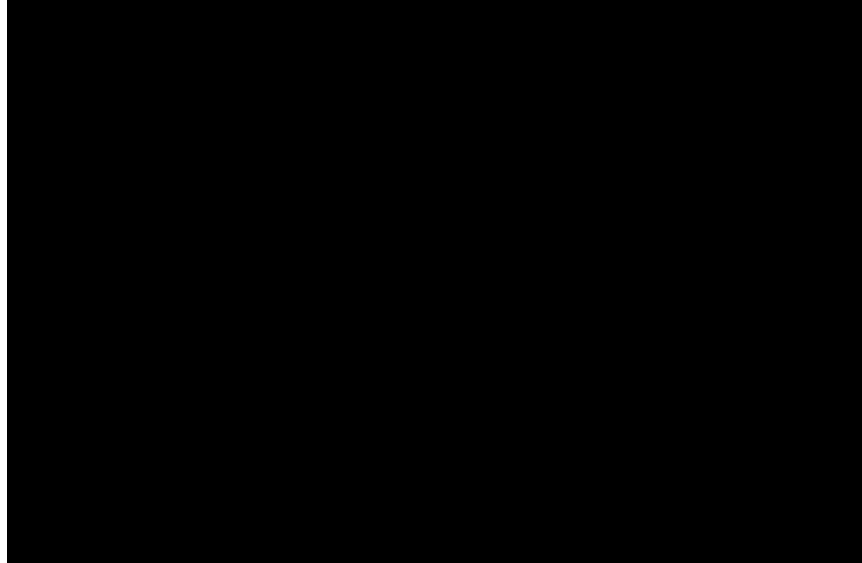


Fifteen interviewees expressed their opinions on *Jihad*, fourteen of which had a positive answer, meaning they are pro *Jihad* against Israel even if they lack the wherewithal and the military might. Only Da'i al-Islam al-Shahhal took a different line and considered that the priority today is to counter the Iranian Shiite expansion in the region.

Ten interviewees stated that they have active resistance on the ground including the Palestinian movements and Hezbollah. They consider resistance activity an integral part of the Islamic creed: *Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami*, *'Usbat al-Ansar*, *Harakat al-Jihad al-Islami*, *Quwwat al-Fajr*, *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamy*, *al-Haraka al-Islamiyya al-Mujahida*, Hamas, sheikh Maher Hammoud, *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady*.

The Islamic Palestinian groups and movements interviewed affirmed that they have no military forces in Lebanon. They only provide support and assistance to resistance in Occupied Palestine. They carry out no military resistance operations from the Lebanese territory, and their weapons are only individual ones inside the Refugees Camps.

Upon comparing the attitude toward Hezbollah and that toward the *other* and participating in resistance, we found that the numbers are compatible, i.e. the correlation between the three is clear. Groups that expressed a positive or centrist attitude toward the Shiite and Hezbollah were in their majority among those who participate in or support resistance against Israel.



9. Recruitment

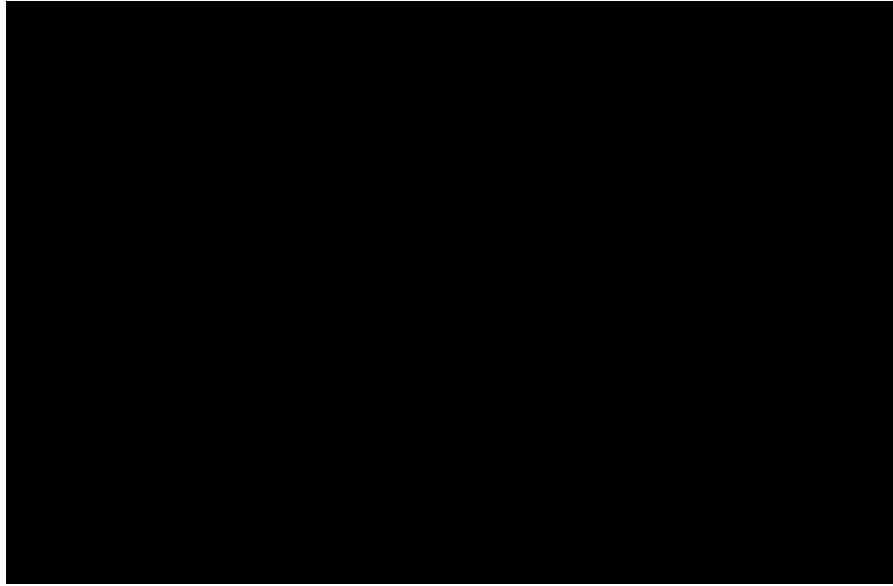
We focused in this study on elucidating the methods of Recruitment adopted by the Islamic movements to communicate with society and win over more supporters. Upon asking about the methods of recruitment they adopt five of them declared that they have organizational recruitment, i.e. they have organizational institutions specifically devoted to mobilization and recruitment. The groups who, in addition to the call (i.e. proselytizing), adopt organizational partisan methods are: *Hizb al-Tahreer*, *Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya*, Hamas, Hezbollah, *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady*. As to *Harakat al-Jihad al-Islami*, and *Quwwat al-Fajr* they have none because both are purely military.

Eleven movements considered themselves as representing popular sentiments, and therefore do not adopt any organizational mobilization. They rely more on "popular support" away from any organized outreaching call, these are: *Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami*, *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya*, *'Usbat al-Ansar*, Da'i al-Islam al-Shahhal, *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami*, *Waqf al-Turath al-Islami*, *al-Haraka al-Islamiyya al-Mujahida*, *Tayyar al-'Adala wa al-Tanmiya*, *al-Liqaa' al-Islami al-Mustaqil-Tripoli*, *al-Jam'iyya al-Hamidiyya al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya*, in addition to sheikh Maher Hammoud, and sheikh Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah.

"We do not look for organizational mobilization, and we have no specific activities in this regard, but only schools, and in the North [of Lebanon] through the Iman boys' scouts. The Youth are in general those who are active on the ground." Sheikh Faysal al-Mawlawi, (*al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya*)

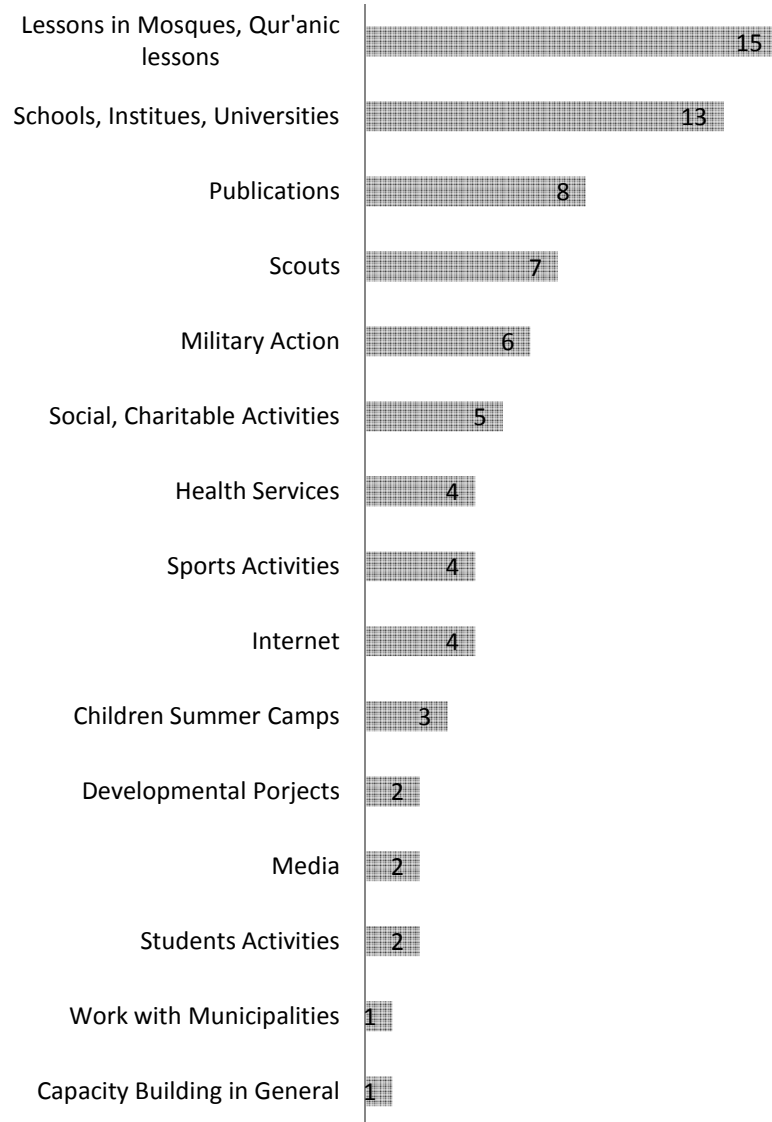
"If we talk about the Salafi current to which we belong, it counts many thousands. As to the associations, they differ from one to the other. As far as we are concerned we have no definite number". Dr. Hassan al-Shahhal, *Jam'iyyat Da'wat al-Iman, wal'Adl, wal-Ihsan*

The nature of recruitment	Total
Within organizational frameworks	7
Popular sentiment	13
Grand total	20



The methods used in recruitment/ mobilization were inferred from their discourse on this subject. They are ordered according to frequency of usage.

Distribution of General Political Opinions



The above table clearly shows that the most frequently adopted method in mobilization is that of mosques. This is natural, since each of these groups has one or more mosques that are used as basic headquarters they rely upon to spread their call and communicate with people. In the same degree, we find teaching the Holy Qur'an and Shari'a. They rely upon sessions held in some centres or lessons given in houses or public places. In a lesser degree, we find schools, institutes and universities. Noteworthy is the fact that less than half the interviewees rely on other means of mobilization, these are: publications, scouts, military action, charitable activities. Less than a quarter rely on health programs, sports, internet, and summer camps, etc.

"We mobilize through the individual call. We pay house visits to whom we presume is good enough or whom we suspect with some odd behavior whether male or female in order to give advice and show what God requires of us."- Abu Shareef, *'Usbat al-Ansar*.

In the second level of the means of mobilization, we have schools, institutes, and universities. This might seem a rather high rate for reasons related to the nature of our interviewees. The study targeted some groups who rely on educational institutions in their general work. This, however, does not minimize the importance of this means; many of them widely use it.

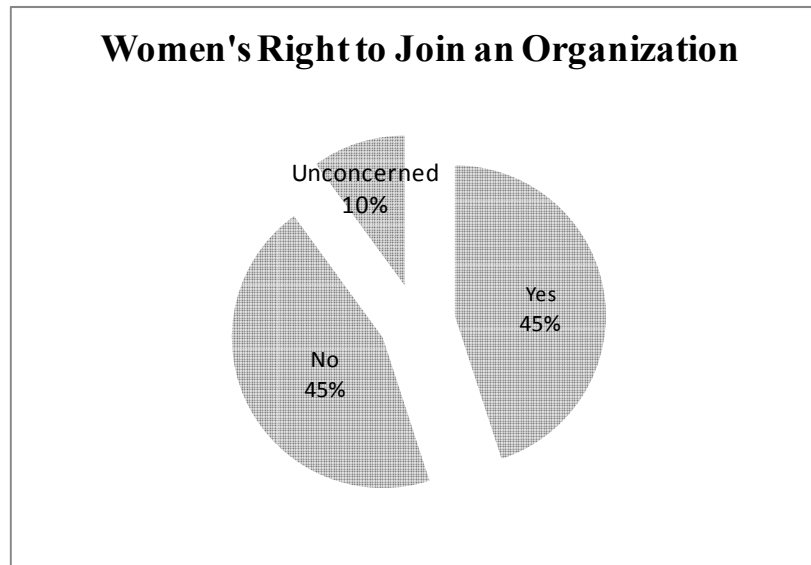
"We have schools in almost all the Lebanese regions; we also have a kindergarten in Ain-el-Helweh. We rely on people's needs in the distribution of our schools. These are not religious ones, and our catechism is part of the official curriculum."- Sheikh 'Abd al-Qader al-Fakhani, *Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya*

The various other means of recruitment are publications, youth organizations, scouts. Charitable activities and social assistance are more common in impoverished areas where needs are urgent and their fulfillment leaves a deep impact in people. The most advanced methods are the use of internet facilities, and NGO-style capacity building workshops, even if on a limited scale.

"We recruit people through lectures, conferences, publications, books, internet, and satellite time when possible." Ahmad Qasas, *Hizb al-Tahreer*.

10. Women

We did not get into a fiqhi (Islamic jurisprudential) discussion of the status of women in Islam, but rather the interview revolved around three main subjects: their right to join an organization, the right to wage military *Jihad*, and the nature of the roles she plays within the community.



<i>The right to join an organization</i>	<i>Total</i>
No answer	2
No	9
Yes	3
Yes/No segregation	3
Yes/with segregation	3
<i>Grand total</i>	<i>20</i>

The proportions of the groups who have an organizational structure for women and those who have no such framework were equal. However, and despite the absence of any organizational framework, this does not mean that these groups do exclude women from any activity today. There are many roles that they can play, but without doing so within party organizations. Most of these women work in social work and proselytizing (the call) especially with other women or children. This role, even if it has an Islamic jurisprudential background in the minds of Islamists, it does not exceed, generally, the traditional role of women in political activity in

Lebanon. They are usually absent from the organizational frameworks of political parties, especially at the level of cadres and leaders; women's role remains confined to feminine organizations or similar ones dealing with children.

Nine movements voiced their rejection of women's membership in such organizations, these are: *Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami*, *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya*, *'Usbat al-Ansar*, *Quwwat al-Fajr*, *Da'i al-Islam al-Shahhal*, *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamy*, *Jam'iyyat Da'wat al-Iman*, *wal'Adl*, *wal-Ihsan*, *al-Liqaa' al-Islami al-Mustaqil*-Tripoli, *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady*.

By contrast, the movements who possess an organizational framework for women, or agree to women's participation fall into three equal categories:

1. A women's organization overlapping in educational institutions, but separate from other fields: *Waqf al-Turath al-Islami*, *Tayyar al-'Adala wa al-Tanmiya*, Hamas.
2. A separate organization having its own structure: *Harakat al-Jihad al-Islami*, *Hizb al-Tahreer*, *al-Haraka al-Islamiyya al-Mujahida*-Ain el-Helweh.
3. Women are part of the general organization and not separate. They play their natural role within the organization (while remaining bound by Islamic regulations): *Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya*, sheikh Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah, Hezbollah.

b. Women and Armed Jihad

<i>Women and Jihad</i>	<i>Total</i>
pro	1
contra	8
<i>Grand total</i>	<i>9</i>

Only nine movements out of twenty agreed to talk about *Jihad* and women's right to take part in it. Da'i al-Islam al-Shahhal considered that *Jihad* is not required of women, and they do not have to participate in it.

"As to our sisters (i.e. women) they can give (lessons) to other (women) when they have the leisure and the capacity. The door is wide open in matters related to the call." Da'i al-Islam al-Shahhal.

The others (*'Usbat al-Ansar*, *Harakat al-Jihad al-Islami*, *Quwwat al-Fajr*, *al-Haraka al-Islamiyya al-Mujahida*- Ain el-Helweh, *Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya*, sheikh Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah, Hezbollah) considered that there is no legal (Islamic) reason why women should not take part in *jihad* when and where needed. However, there is no actual need for them to take arms, and their role might be limited to help on no less important other matters.

"Women participate in most activities in Hezbollah, except those activities that are incompatible with femininity and respect of women's status, such as doing battle on the ground despite the absence of any legal impediment for their participation in *jihad*. Simply there is no need for that today." - Mahmood Qmaty (Hezbollah).

As to *jihad* activity, we did not feel yet the need for women's participation. They raise resistant generations. We have no objection for women's participation in doing battle on the ground. Should we need this then we have no problem legal (Islamic) or otherwise: women took part in *jihad* in the time of the Prophet" hajj 'Abdullah al-Teriaqi, "*Quwwat al-Fajr*

c. Roles Played by Women within the Movement

Three roles are played by women within these movements: political, social, and religious/ proselytizing roles, according to nine out of sixteen answers. The groups who agree to these three roles are: *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya*, *Harakat al-Jihad al-Islami*, *Hizb al-Tahreer*, *Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya*, *Tayyar al-'Adala wa al-Tanmiya*, sheikh Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah, Hamas, Hezbollah, *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady*.

Five other groups allow women to play social and religious roles away from politics, these are: *'Usbat al-Ansar*, *Da'i al-Islam al-Shahhal*, *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamy* Bilal Sha'ban, *Waqf al-Turath al-Islami*, *al-Haraka al-Islamiyya al-Mujahida*-Ain el-Helweh.

Women, thus, participate in most of the Islamic movements' activities. However, their role is mainly centered on social work, including teaching in schools, and institutions affiliated to each group, and proselytism. Their exclusive audience is feminine especially when it is about teaching in private houses.

11. Education

A substantial number of Islamic groups rely on educational institutions, either in establishing these or providing them with teachers, especially catechism. Add to this Islamic Law institutes and the inculcation of the Qur'an. Many methods are adopted in this respect:

<i>Methods of teaching</i>	<i>Total</i>
Unconcerned	7
Inculcation	1
Modern	5
Composite	7
<i>Grand total</i>	<i>20</i>

- Seven are not concerned with teaching and have no educational institutions: *'Usbat al-Ansar*, *Quwwat al-Fajr*, Sheikh Maher Hammoud, *Hizb al-Tahreer*, *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamy*, *al-Liqaa' al-Islami al-Mustaqil*.
- One institution adopts the method of traditional inculcation in teaching: *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady*
- Five fully adopt modern educational methods including Legal education: Hamas, Hezbollah, *Jam'iyyat Da'wat al-Iman*, *wal'Adl, wal-Ihsan* (Catechism), *Tayyar al-'Adala wa al-Tanmiya*, *Waqf al-Turath al-Islami*
- Seven prefer a composite formula of education. These fall into two categories. The first adopts this formula in all fields, the second adopts modern education in teaching the official curriculum, but prefers the traditional method in catechesis: *Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami*, *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya*, *al-Jihad al-Islami*, Da'i al-Islam al-Shahhal, *al-Haraka al-Islamiyya al-Mujahida*- Ain el-Helweh, *Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya*, *al-Jam'iyya al-Hamidiyya al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya*.

Sheik Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah did not tackle this issue, despite the fact that he oversees several educational institutions (al-Mabarrat), and *hawzat* (sites of traditional Shi'ite learning), and orphanages.

12. Funding

The issue of funding is one of the sensitive issues for which we could not gather much information, some interviewees preferred not to touch on all its aspects for many political or security reasons. However, we managed to collect some very general data through what the interviewees mentioned during the interviews.

- Funding through external sources (9): *Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami*, *Harakat al-Jihad al-Islami*, *Quwwat al-Fajr*, *Da'i al-Islam al-Shahhal*, *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamy*, *Waqf al-Turath al-Islami*, *al-Haraka al-Islamiyya al-Mujahida-Ain el-Helweh*, *Jam'iyat Da'wat al-Iman*, *wal'Adl*, *wal-Ihsan*, *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady*.
- Funding through sources inside Lebanon: *Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami*, *al-Haraka al-Islamiyya al-Mujahida-Ain el-Helweh*
- Self-Funding through:
 - Donations from members (10): *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya*, *Hizb al-Tahreer*, *Sheikh Maher Hammoud*, *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamy*, *Jam'iyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya*, *Tayyar al-'Adala wa al-Tanmiya*, *al-Liqaa' al-Islami al-Mustaqil*, *al-Jam'iyya al-Hamidiyya al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya*, *Hezbollah*, *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady*.
 - Investments (3): *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya*, *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamy*, *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady*.

IV- Conclusions and Recommendations

1. Conclusions

This study provided information about Islamic movements in Lebanon, more specifically about their doctrinal affiliation, their viewpoint on economy, participation in state institutions, on their relationship to the concept of homeland, and diversity. The study also provided information on their methods in field work within their environment, their manners of mobilize and recruiting people and winning their support, public opinion, in addition to their methods of dealing with women, children, and youth, on Jihad and to what extent they are influenced by the prevailing political situation in Lebanon, and their support of the present loyalist or the oppositional camps.

We shall summarize the way and extent to which these movements affect Lebanese society in a few principal ideas that help develop an informed opinion about them:

- a. The basis of attempting to understand Islamic movements is to recognize its radical difference from others. First, they have their own special culture. Parallel to painting they have calligraphy and arabesque; parallel to singing they have recitation; parallel to philosophy they have jurisprudence and interpretation... Therefore, they have, even on the general level, mechanisms that differ from the Western style and imported ones that we have in civil society organizations. We do not call here for a comparison between East and West. That is required but on a different level. We are simply insisting on the importance of initiating a wide discussion around Islamic culture and the possibility of its intersection with Western culture that is spreading in our countries. We have to allude here, as civil society, to the difference between 'difference' and 'conflict'. Difference in thinking and culture is acceptable and a source of richness if we know how to deal with it. Moreover, the practice of good citizenship involves, in one of its aspects, openness to *the other* and accepting him/her within the framework of what is stipulated by the law. Difference when not dealt with appropriately leads to conflict.
- b. Islamic movements have a big size and possess an integrated structure that includes social, educational, media institutions, and

recruitment mechanisms. They weave very solid relationships with their environment, and use modern tools in working with children, youth, and women, such as collective seminars, workshops, and the like. It is important not to view the means used by Islamic movements from an ideological standpoint only. These means are derived from the social culture where these movements operate, and are therefore social means not foreign from the local environment. We are fully aware that Islamic movements are trying to impose their beliefs and lifestyle on the neighboring milieu. They strive to disseminate and implement Islamic thinking in society, each according to their concepts and manners. Nevertheless, even if we do not agree with this, we should not ignore their existence. They are around and in relatively great numbers; they are organized within operating frameworks and effective in society; and they possess several means to communicate with their surrounding and influence it.

The divergence between civil society organizations and Islamic movements ranges between what is religious, ideological, and what is political. Despite this fact, the leaders of these movements did not refuse to meet and talk with us, knowing that we represent the secular civil society. This is a proof of their desire to open up to *others* in the homeland. This desire may aim at recruiting *the other* and influencing him. We, in turn, welcome this and try to profit from it.

- c. Islamic movements rely on the method of “mass mobilization” in order to recruit supporters while civil society organizations look for “empowering” to achieve change. While mobilization leads to fast change and recruitment, empowerment requires a rather longer period because it works on building the capacity of individuals to become the decision makers of their own issues, to persuade them of the concepts advocated by civil society, to internalize those concepts and practice them in dealing with *others*. We are not concerned with evaluating which approach is best (mass mobilization or empowerment). We only want to point out the difference in the means of recruitment with both civil society organizations and Islamic movements. We would also like to shed light on the fact that each of these two parties has his way of working for change, and this way is derived from their principles and intimate convictions. If mass mobilization for the sake of recruitment is stronger than

empowerment, then civil society organizations have to invent new ways compatible with their principles.

- d. Some Islamic movements live in closed societies and quarters, but it is possible to open a "hole in the Islamic wall" through political, social, cultural, philosophical dialogue with them to drive them out of their isolation and make them look for ways of coming to terms with the different reality that surrounds them. Direct and practical dialogue with them will present them with additional problems for which they have to find solutions and compromises. It also contributes to finding common grounds with *others*.
- e. Most Islamic groups work in areas and suburbs suffering from extreme deprivation and the absence of economic development projects or public services. Hence, working on improving the economic conditions of the deprived areas may be a starting point for common work with a number of Islamic groups, of different leanings.
- f. We emphasize again that this study is an initiative to break the isolation wall between Islamic movements and us as civil society organizations. This isolation works both ways. We isolate them in considering them as alien to our social fabric, and accusing them of trying to impose their principles and lifestyle upon us. Islamic movements, on the other hand, isolate themselves in view of closing ranks and preparing for general political action. Hence, this study is an attempt to break this isolation. A similar initiative is required of our counterpart.

2. Recommendations

We believe that it is important to come up with practical recommendations to build bridges to communicate with these movements, and widen the common area with them, to neither change them nor include them in the secular civil society, nor to be influenced by them and adopt their creed. We have to identify common grounds to build upon them, and differences to understand them and avoid conflicts. Therefore, we recommend the following:

- a. Organizing dialogue sessions between civil society organizations and Islamic movements around developmental concepts and human rights, such as: sustainable development, participation, leadership, gender, transparency, conflict analysis and transformation, accountability, evaluation, advocacy& lobbying, etc. When we discuss such concepts and both the civil society organizations and Islamists views are heard, it is possible that this will lead to developing common concepts and a common area of understanding that can be invested in communal development to the benefit of all.
- b. Calling upon the Islamist to participate in civil society organizations' activities and projects, and not keep communication only on the level of dialogue with them. It is necessary, when civil society organizations plan for communal programs and projects in the Lebanese regions, to be aware of the fears of the Islamists who are on the ground, and take them into account while structuring these programs. For example, if the Islamist do not accept the idea of organizing a mixed youth seminar on the importance of the secular system, it is necessary to accommodate them lest the activity will fail. We do not advocate here giving in to these movements desires, but emphasize the importance of working on issues that are palatable to both parties. As to the 'the sensitive' issues it is possible to tackle them after a while of cooperation.
- c. Working on producing communication tools with the "religious" communities, in general, based upon the experiences of the Islamic groups and their ways of operating, especially those that seem to be compatible with the reality of conservative societies, and finding common and open grounds. These can be inspired by developmental concepts such as solidarity and participation.
- d. Working on producing common interpretations of developmental issues such as privatization, the environment, or human rights. The cultural heritage will be used to explain some developmental principles based on the collective memory, to achieve consensus on working priorities, etc. It is possible here to profit from international experiences that tried to bring the Islamic viewpoint closer to the mechanisms and regulations of human rights, or vice versa.

- e. Working on curtailing racism, hate under all guises, class-bias, sectarianism, regionalism, ethnicism, Islamophobia and the attempt to import it to Lebanon. On the other hand, changing the stereotyped image of secularism or civil society (linked in reality to its milieu) prevailing in the circles of the Islamist groups, and work on bridging the conceptual gap created by the unscientific separation between the so-called "native society" [N.B. by the translator: the Arabic word '*Ahli*' translates "civil" in English, as the phrase '*harb ahliyah*' translates into civil war. So for all practical purposes both Ahli and Madani amount to the same translation unless you agree to native or indigenous] and the concept of 'civil society' in its elitist form.
- f. Changing the negative reaction of some Islamic groups and communities to the notions of human rights, because of the connection of some of these rights with the mechanisms of Western domination. This should be done through linking the struggle to implement human rights with daily life issues, and through the full participation of the local community in the process of identifying priorities, planning, implementing, controlling, and decision making...
- g. Starting joint projects inspired by people's needs and aspirations. Focusing on this will help minimize the distance between Islamic movements and civil society, because people's needs and aspirations are closely similar despite differences in creeds.
- h. Islamic movements resort to mobilization. Civil society organizations resort to empowerment for change. The two ways are radically different, because each is predicated on different principles. If mobilization is stronger in recruiting people, then civil society organizations must look for ways of democratic recruitment compatible with their principles, and they must not consider the other way hostile to them.
- i. Development can not take off the ground nor get near to completion if we do not consider the Islamic movements as partners, because first, their size is considerable, and they are part of the Lebanese fabric. We have, as civil society organizations, to deal with them as we do with any other group without hesitation. Instead of

considering their size as daunting, we have to get to know them first, then look at them as providing access to a considerable number of Lebanese people in view of achieving development, justice, and rights.

- j. Working on concepts such as citizenship, patriotism, homeland, citizen, state, freedom, democracy; comparing these with Islamic doctrine, Islamic state, Muslim, *Shura* (consultation); then researching all these notions to find what is common to build upon it, identify the different and strive to deeply understand the difference in order to build one state for all, a state capable of housing this diversity. Even the ideas that are spelled out in this paragraph and that might be controversial might only be so in form because they were all ideas meant to build a state and these are scientific. Thinking deeply and open-mindedly will enable us to reach common grounds.

V- Appendices

Appendix no.1: List of the Islamic Movements Covered by this Study, and the Names of the Interviewees following the chronological order they were conducted.

1. *Tayyar al-'Adala wa al-Tanmiya* (The Current of Justice and Development): Mr. Khaled al-Dhaher
2. *al-Liqaa' al-Islami al-Mustaqil* (The Independent Islamic Gathering): sheikh Kan'an Naj
3. *al-Tayyar al-Salafi fi Lubnan* (The Salafi Current): sheikh Da'i al-Islam al-Shahhal
4. *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamy* (Islamic Unification Movement): sheikh Bilal Sha'ban
5. *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady* (Islamic Unification Movement- the Leadership Council): sheikh Jameel Ra'd, with sheikh Mahmoud al-Bodn
6. *al-Jam'iyya al-Hamidiyya al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya* (The Hamidiyya Islamic Charitable Association): Dr. Muhammad Khaled al-Zu'bi, with Mr. Khaled Muhammad al-Zu'bi
7. *Hizb al-Tahreer* (the Liberation Party): Mr. Ahmad Qasas
8. *Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami* (The Islamic Action Front): Dr. Fathi Yakan
9. *Jam'iyyat Da'wat al-Iman, wal'Adl, wal-Ihsan* (The Association of Faith, Justice, and Beneficence): Dr. Hassan al-Shahhal
10. *Quwwat al-Fajr* (The Forces of Dawn): hajj 'Abdullah al-Teriaqi
11. *Waqf al-Turath al-Islami* (The Islamic Legacy Endowment): sheikh Safwan al Zu'bi

12. *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya* (the Islamic Community): sheikh Faysal al-Mawlawi
13. Sheikh Maher Hammoud, the imam of *al-Quds* mosque in Saida
14. *Harakat al-Jihad al-Islami* (The Islamic Jihad Movement): hajj Abu Imad al-Rifa'i
15. *al-Haraka al-Islamiyya al-Mujahida* (the Islamic Holy Fighting Movement): sheikh Jamal Khattab
16. *'Usbat al-Ansar al-Islamiyya* (the Islamic League of Partisans): Mr. Abu Shareef
17. *Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya*- Hamas (Islamic Resistance Movement-Hamas): Mr. Usama Hamdan
18. *Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya* (the Islamic Association of Projects of Beneficence): sheikh 'Abd al-Qader al-Fakhani
19. Sheikh Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah
20. Hezbollah: Hajj Mahmoud Qmati

Appendix no.2: A Brief Definition of some Islamic Concepts

Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimeen (the Muslim Brethren)

Is a group founded by Hassan al-Banna in Egypt in 1928, as an Islamic movement. The ideas of this group soon spread into many countries. Today it is operating in 72 countries including all Arab countries and some Islamic and non-Islamic countries. Al-Banna set forth ten tenets: understanding, loyalty, work, jihad, sacrifice, obedience, constancy, impartiality, brotherhood, trust. The main traits that set the call of the Brethren apart are:

- Steering clear of controversial issues.
- Steering clear of the domination of the notables and eminences.
- Steering clear of political parties and authorities.
- Caring about formation and gradual promotion
- Preferring the practical productive aspect to propaganda and advertising.
- Intense youth responsiveness
- Speed of propagation in towns and cities.

al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya (the Islamic Community)

Branched out from 'Ibad al-Rahman (the worshippers of the Compassionate) affiliated to the Muslim Brethren movement. The most eminent of its founders in Lebanon is Dr. Fathi Yakan, Justice sheikh Faysal al-Mawlawi who is currently the general secretary, Mr. Ibrahim al-Masri who is the deputy general secretary, and the Islamic writer Ali al-Dinnawi. *Al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya* was officially licensed in Lebanon in June 18, 1964. They adopt the bulk of the Muslim Brethren ideology though they disagree on some organizational and political details.

Salafism

Salafism is a controversial term. Originally it refers to the doctrine of *Ahl al-Sunna wal-Jama'a* (Sunnites in general), and requires emulating the good predecessors, i.e. the generation of the earliest good Muslims. Today, the term has come to be used in reference to the Wahhabis, i.e. those who are ideologically and practically affiliated to the Wahhabi doctrine, the official one in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Wahhabism, in turn, was established by Muhammad bin Abdel-Wahhab (1703-1791) an ally of the Saud clan against the Ottoman Sultanate.

Jihadi Salafism is a branch that was founded by al-Qaeda, after blending the Wahhabi doctrine with that of the Muslim Brethren. This blend has tremendously affected Salafi thinking in general.

Wahhabism

Wahhabism is the doctrine founded by Muhammad bin Abdel-Wahhab in the Arab Peninsula in mid-eighteenth century. This doctrine calls for a return to the purity of Islam according to the good predecessors, rejects the heresies such as intercession by saints, visiting tombs, and cursing the Sahaba (Prophets Companions), and relies on the authority of the four Imams of Islamic jurisprudence in addition to Ibn Taymiyah. This doctrine proliferated in the Arab Peninsula after the alliance between its founder and the Al Saud clan (Muhammad bin Saud)

Jihad:

Jihad falls into two parts:

Jihad al-talab (offensive Jihad): waging war in this case is a collective duty, and therefore not mandatory for all Muslims. The least of this kind of jihad is to fill the strategic inlets with believers in order to scare God's enemies; and sending an army once a year, at least, to fight the enemies of the Muslims (under the Caliphate or a Muslim State), for it is the duty of the imam to send such an army once or twice yearly and his subjects must help him.

Jihad al-daf' (defensive Jihad): is an individual, if not the most important, individual duty. It is mandatory for each Muslim; it is imposed in the case of the infidels' incursion into a certain Muslim territory. In that case, jihad is an individual duty to all the inhabitants of that territory and to all those in their vicinity: the son may wage jihad without his father's permission, the wife without her husband's permission, the debtor without the permission of his creditor.

Ja'fari doctrine

The Ja'fari doctrine is that of the Imami Shi'ites, or duodecimal Shi'ites. It is attributed to Ja'far al-Sadiq, whose genealogy goes back to the Caliph Ali bin Abi Taleb. It is the second Islamic denomination after the Sunnite.

The Islamic movement

Is a contemporary intellectual and political term, generally used to denote the factions, organizations, and groups whose activity is based on their own understanding of the Islamic doctrine, and who adopts Islam as an all-encompassing system for all aspects of life: political, economic, social, and legal. These groups view Islam as an ideology as much as they view it as a religious creed. They view it as the sole solution to the problems that assailed the Islamic community. It alone can lay the foundation for a revival of the community and lead her toward advancement and glory. The term used to be applied loosely to the Muslim Brethren movement which had been the first Islamic movement based on this ideas in 1928. For this reason, the Brethren are viewed as the mother movement from which all the other groups and movements branched out. The latter are variously called the movements of political Islam, Islamist movements, and activist Islam.

Appendix no.3: Interviews' Template

1. Name of the Islamic movement and the position of the interviewee

2. The doctrine

- Main tenets
- Political and religious goals, any difference between them?
- Viewing *the Other* in Lebanon/ diversity/ commerce with non Muslims
- Change and reform

3. Political

- The Lebanese reality and the relationship with the State: political system, confessionalism, economy, globalization, privatization, seeking official representation, viewing the homeland
- Relationship with non-Lebanese.
- The positive and negative factors that impact action and movement

4. The work on the ground

- The activities and projects aiming at propagating the doctrine and the call/ identifying the activities to target children, women, youth, and men.
- The status of women within the Islamic movements
- Educational curricula adopted by the movements (curricula, relationship between student and teacher, memorizing the Qur'an)

5. The Reasons of the proliferation of Islamic movements.

Appendix no.4: The Twenty Interviews of this Study, presented according to the chronological order they were conducted⁷.

Mr. Khaled al-Dhaher

President of *Tayyar al-'Adala wa al-Tanmiya* (The Current of Justice and Development)

Interviewed on August 23, 2008 in the region of Bibnin, in Akkar.

Founded by Khaled al-Dhaher in 2006, himself a former member of al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya (the Islamic Community) up till 2000; thereafter Mr. Dhaher joined al-Liqaa' al-Islami which was established in 2007.

Doctrine

We belong to the doctrine of *Ahl al-Sunna wal-Jama'a* (Sunnites in general). We founded *Tayyar al-'Adala wa al-Tanmiya* (The Current of Justice and Development) to deal with the need arising from Syrian security pressures, in addition to the need for a Lebanese reawakening Islamic political project, after the visible failure to realize such a project.

We are not a separate Islamic movement, but a part of a political Islamic action that accommodates reality. The main principles according to which we operate are:

- Preserving doctrine, freedom, rights, and respect of the performance of the rituals guaranteed by the constitution.
- Mutual respect and coexistence.

We also act through *al-Liqaa' al-Islami* (The Islamic Gathering) which aims at fortifying the Sunnite front, and preventing any penetrating it, and containing any attempt to involve it in harmful reactions, especially after the Syrian secret services interference in Nahr el-Bared became all too clear. I think that all Muslims support the project of peace, national unity, and coexistence.

The relationship with *the other* for us is based upon right and dignity "***we have honored the Children of Adam*** ", dignity is God-given. Man's origin in the religious viewpoint is one.

⁷ Qur'anic verses are adopted from Arthur J. Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted*, London, Oxford University Press, 1964.

We consider that diversity is an expression of God's will. But it must rely on cooperation. *"Help one another to piety and god-fearing"*; the basis is cooperating for the good. Human rights must be guaranteed for all people, oppression is prohibited. Dealings with *the other* are based on creed; some creeds allow being aggressive to those who follow a different religious faith. We have no problem with difference. We have a plan to meet with some Christian and 'Alawite personalities. There are some political relationships and commercial cooperation.

The foundation of reform is political stability. Our view of reform is based upon a civil system, the bolstering of justice, the building of the state institutions, relying on merit in official appointments, and treating all citizens fairly. The people of 'Akkar, for example, are unfairly dealt with in official appointments, due to the regional quota adopted nowadays. We wish for changing reality into the best, to build an effective state that guarantees freedoms, equality of opportunity, and human rights.

We prefer free market economy, but not monopolies, or savage capitalism. We do not support command economy. However, the vital issues must be in the hands of the state. We hope that the major institutions will not be privatized.

Politics

We all support the state, and do not suggest an Islamic state. The political system needs improvement, and there are rights and freedoms that must be acknowledged. We think that the reason of malfunctioning in the system is the Syrian secret services. And there is oppression too.

The Doha Agreement in 2008 was an "equal finish", but it was not implemented. And here we are now opening new unnecessary issues because of the upcoming elections (alluding to the prerogatives of the deputy prime minister).

We support the abolishing of political confessionalism. Relationships with non-confessional political parties will be within the framework of cooperation for national interests. This is something required for the common good and by religion as well, *"Help one another to piety and god fearing"* and *"No compulsion is there in religion."* We support the civil state, with justice, equitable opportunities, institutions, and women's rights.

There is a major crisis, which is poverty. We need a comprehensive plan in light of the political and security crisis. We also need an emergency plan, and to create a network of security, such as a security for unemployment, and decent living.

We participate in political life, and seek to enter the official institution naturally to become mouthpieces of Sunnite Muslims, and the people of Tripoli. We hold on to the state of institutions and are keen on preserving the state. The present circumstances of the country have led to a negative balance.

Our homeland is Lebanon; we still support the idea of Arab and Islamic union- the civilized union, not the coercive one. We consider the model of the European Union a good one.

We seek to deal with backwardness in the Islamic World, the backwardness caused by dictatorship and coercion. We demand:

- The right to choose and the respect of freedoms
- Human rights within the Islamic rules are based on respect and dignity.
- A dignified living opportunity for people
- focus on the issue of the judiciary
- Rejection of any resort to arms, we reprove the parties who do not act to support the state.

We believe that reform is feasible through political action. There is a political crisis because of the interference of the Syrian regime in our internal affairs, the intensified regional crisis, the Arab-Arab and the Iranian-Arab tension.

As to the security issue in North Lebanon, we think that terrorism is imported from across the borders with regional facilitation, and it targets the Sunnites. Some Islamic and Salafi associations provided a cover for the Lebanese Army's operation in Nahr el-Bared in 2007.

Work on the ground

Our action is rather more political than religious. We rely on thinking, teaching, reason, logic, and proof. This is a peaceful open action. We rely on the following means in our action: ceremonies, seminars, meetings, orations

in mosques, conferences, publications, intellectual documents, academic (non-religious school), we try to recruit supporters through ideas, and carrying the call and defending it.

We have no party enrollment; we have a wide current in all the Lebanese areas. Recruitment is only popular, through "symbols".

We adopt "positive discrimination" toward women, through allocating a quota for them in our Current.

We have no other source of financing than the schools owned by Khaled el-Dhafer and his relatives. This school (where the interview took place) is a private educational, curricular one having nothing to do with political action.

As to the Palestinians in Lebanon, we have to deal positively with the Palestinian reality; the Palestinians have been oppressed. We do not work with the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, but there are some communications with some Palestinian personalities.

Proliferation of Islamic Movements

The emergence of Islamic movements is not accidental, heralds and associations, appeared since Independence time (such as 'Ibad al-Rahman') that used to carry out charitable, intellectual, cultural, institutional work.

Political activity was carried out through our presence on the ground and the wide audience, and was never against the state. There is now a campaign against the Islamists orchestrated by the Syrian regime in order to picture Sunnite Muslims as terrorists, with the aim of propagating confusion and reinstate their domination over Lebanon. It seems that Hezbollah is going to assume the policeman role in this reinstatement.

There are also some local sectarian calculations to prevent Sunnite Muslims from being the show window of Lebanon, despite the fact that Saad al-Hariri (Current of the Future) is dealing with all authorities from within the state project. Some elements have been sent from the outside to carry out sabotage actions.

Islamic movements, when in the face of certain threats, are more capable to confront Hezbollah than the Current of the Future which is a political authority.

We harbor no ill will against the American people. We differentiate between the people and the unfair Administration. The proof is that what is going on in Palestine and Iraq was a disservice to the American, it even distorted their image. We have no problem with the Americans, but rather they came over to our land and assailed us. It is our right to face any invading power.

Sheikh Kan'an Naji

***al-Liqaa' al-Islami al-Mustaqil* (The Independent Islamic Gathering)-
Tripoli**

Interviewed on August 28, 2008 in Tripoli

The Gathering was first launched in 2006. It includes a number of personalities and sheikhs, chief among whom are Kan'an Naji, Khaled al-Dhafer, Zakaria al-Masri (Ulema' al-Sahwa "the Doctors of Reawakening"), Bilal Baroodi (Sheikh al-qurra' "the Chief reader", Fawwaz Hussein Agha (al-Shabab al-Islami "the Islamic Youth") and a number of other doctors of faith and Sheikhs.

Doctrine

We are Sunnite Muslims, and make no differentiation between political goals and religious ones. A Muslim is required to preserve his religion "***See that you die not save as Muslims***", and to subsume politics, opinions, and interests to this faith. We support the Ta'if Agreement, and deal with Lebanon the homeland as an accomplished fact.

We learned a lesson from the civil war, and we know today that we can live with *the other* in Lebanon. I belong to the generation that paid the price of the civil war; and I will devote my life to say: Do not fall into a civil war again in Lebanon.

I graduated from school in 1972. Instead of going to college, I entered the war with those who entered it. A great number of youth got involved in the civil war. They either died or broke up and flew apart. The War was a crime and it proved to be futile.

Diversity in Lebanon is a double-edged sword. That is why people have to accept each other to move ahead with our homeland. During the (civil) War, I used not to talk with the Christian; today this is over. Tripoli is diverse; you have the Maronites, the Alawites, the Greek Orthodox, and the Sunnites. The problem with the Alawites is their attempt to reinstate the ghetto, i.e. self-isolation.

We consider that elections are the basis of reform. We prefer the circumscriptions that do not form "steamrollers", and do not impose their representative to a certain denomination. However, it is possible to adopt

comparison. I opt for the choice of their representatives in the parliament by the various denominations, and not only their own representatives but those of the whole nation if possible. Reform can also take place through accessing the various state apparatuses.

Politics

The Lebanese system is ruled by heredity, since before Independence. This kills ambition in citizens. When the Syrian regime seized Lebanon it had to seize it as it is, i.e. with the leadership of the local heirs of political leadership. We stand against hereditary political feudalism, and we consider that the confessional formula is in need of modification. Confessionalism is one thing and religion is another.

The Lebanese reality is confessional, we did not invent it. The confessional formula is outdated; it was shaped when the Maronites were the majority in the country. Changing it now cannot be done through secularization, but through abolishing political confessionalism, and appointing people to official positions on merit. If political confessionalism is abolished, Lebanon will become a majoritarian regime. Here sheikh Naji gave an example of his own experience, when he took part in a scout contest when he was 15 in 1968. Despite his getting the first rank, he was told to talk to ex Prime Minister the late Rasheed Karami to join the session. The division that is taking place is confessional, sectarian, regional and leadership-bound. 90 officials accompanied the 90 participants in the said session, as he recalls.

As to economy, the best economic system according to religious Law is economic liberalism on condition of prohibiting monopoly. Exclusive agency is prohibited in Islam.

The economic situation is a hard one. A recent research on living conditions in Lebanon performed by one research institute showed that the average family income in Tripoli is 900,000 LL, while the average family income in Beirut is 1,400,000 LL. According to Mayor of Tripoli, the rate of unemployment in the city is close to 53%. This creates social problems such as the availability of low-priced narcotic pills (100pills for 5000 LL) that are sold openly on the streets.

In a composite system like ours in Lebanon, it is important to work on ensuring food security, housing, life necessities, health services, education,

and a fair rate of rents. However, the widespread corruption in the public sector prevents achieving this, of course. We demand the establishment of processing industries in North Lebanon. For example, there are three canning factories in the Beqaa Valey, but there is none in Akkar.

We demand a welfare state, especially in health care, social security for the elderly, and education. As to electricity, water, and telephone we support privatization and competitiveness.

As to the Lebanese State, there are three or four states within the State. These are the state of Hezbollah, the state of Saad el-Hariri, and now the state of President Michel Suleiman. And you have security apparatuses for each one of these states.

If there is one state, we seek to be part of it and to be represented in its cabinet. We believe in reform through representation in the Parliament, sound and clean appointment in State departments.

We do not look at Lebanon from a narrow viewpoint. The world is now a small village. As we look at the model of the European community we see that we cannot move backward with Lebanon, i.e. to achieve pure "Lebanonity."

We look forward to the achievement of something similar to an Arab common market, one currency, abolishing custom fees, and even an Arab common military force.

As to diplomatic relationship with Syria, it is good in its form. Geographically, Lebanon is part of *Bilad al-Sham* (of which modern Syria is a major part), but Syria is not all of *Bilad al-Sham*, for the latter extends until the bank of the Euphrates, Fallujah, and Ramady (in modern Iraq).

Work on the ground

al-Liqā' al-Islami al-Mustaqil is a new front work. Recruitment is performed through the ten articles of the Gathering. On the popular level, we are a "setting" among many. As to political recruitment, it is done for Hariri's Current (of the Future).

We were not able to operate before the Syrians withdrew from Lebanon, and we had not formed a setting yet. As to organization, we have no definite or

final numbers. We organize rehabilitation sessions for Shari'a (Islamic Law) leaders. We have now 17 young men, who pay house visits, go to mosques and shops to disseminate awareness through open sessions for modest fees. The other day, for instance, a gathering of 80 persons took place in one shop.

As to women's role in Islam, their legal capacity is similar to the legal capacity of men, and women can play a splendid role. However, the exploitation of women as sex commodities is an insult. They can play an essential role in ads just like men, but without exploiting their bodies.

We notice that women outnumber men in our society today. If women do not perform their role in society, this means that more than half of society is unproductive.

We do not need enormous amounts of money. Yet, there is a modest budget for the front. We receive aid from a few people, I am well off and I can help. Each member in this front has his connections, history and institutions.

We have no educational institution, but it is important to educate our children into getting to know the *other* objectively. This is something enriching for me. Why should I gather my knowledge of Christians through hearsay instead of reading their books? We, the Sunnites, have no hidden stuff. Everything is debatable, and there is no shyness in religion. If you have a belief in something, make it public!

Proliferation of Islamic movements

The extremist position is ephemeral, for it will not succeed in the Lebanese reality. A year ago, the organization of Fatah al-Islam came from Syria, but the group that was in Nahr el-Bared was not a Salafi one. These evil models were with the Syrians, while the Syrian regime stalked and hunted us.

One of the factors that helped the emergence of Islamic movements is Hezbollah's occupation of Beirut in May 7, 2008. The Sunnites in Tripoli and the Beqaa Valley did not accept that. Then the actual state of these movements came to the surface. More than 140 Sunni military personnel were killed in the fierce battles fought by the Lebanese Army against Fatah al-Islam organization. Were it not for the Sunnites' support and assistance of the Lebanese Army, the latter would not have defeated Fatah al-Islam. The

Salafis played a part in getting rid of Fatah al-Islam even if the Current of the Future made the greatest profit from that.

As to the war between the Sunnites and the Shiites, sheikh Naji said: "God willing it will not happen. No one of us will win"

He concluded with the following remark: "fear from the Islamists is justified, due to the image conveyed of them, and due to the misdemeanor of the radicals and the role of the security apparatuses." He gave the example of the image of the Ahbash (*Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya*) and the cleavers they brandished.

Sheikh Da'i al-Islam al-Shahhal
President of Jam'iyat al-Hidaya wal-Ihsan (Association of Guidance and Charity)
Interviewed on September 1st, 2008 in Tripoli.

He is the son of sheikh Salem al-Shahhal, who was a herald. His name became prominent of late as an authority of Salafism in North Lebanon.

Doctrine

We belong to the Prophet's school. What is meant by the term salafism is taking guidance from the way of the good predecessors, the Companions, and their followers, in knowledge and in practice. Those predecessors were closer to the Prophet's time. They were more versed in the language and religion because of their accompanying him and the closeness of their time to his, and that before the expansion of the lands and the penetration of philosophies and other creeds that influenced the minds of some Muslims and the purity of Islam and its correct understanding.

We rely on reform in belief, worship, conduct, and all aspects of the individual's, the families', and society's lives. Salafism is the right and pure Islam.

We think that Islam encompasses religious and State lives, and all the fields, and subjects and specializations. It founds and builds relationships within society on justice and beneficence.

The most important principles are preserving the purity of Islam and defending it against any attack whether it is of media or military, and disseminating this Islam because we consider it true happiness for people in this life and the next. The loftiest aim is to get people to become God's worshipers, and to be free so that no one is enslaved to any creature, or money.

We call on people to be free and refer their judgments to God's laws. That is the way for them to be free and true worshipers of God, because it is in man's nature to worship one God.

We make no difference between religious goals and political ones. The lofty human goal proceeds from religion, because the mighty imposes the law and the constitution, and things are toppled down.

Present political practice is unprincipled. It is interest-bound, and the force of right does not prevail. The force of right is with the righteous people.

In our relationship with *the other*, we wish that he treated us as we treat him, but we think that this is his choice and we leave him alone. We wish they treated us the same way. There is always some exaggeration and a lot of slanderous propaganda against us.

Diversity is a weakness if misused, or used for the sake of power. However, if it is based on fairness, then it will not be harmful, and will become positive; unlike the reality that we live in and the external interference that do not take place without internal interaction.

We act according to what we view as realistic and beneficial; that is reforming people to preserve the country from the standpoint of values. It is also important to reform conscience, because there is no live conscience, Lebanon has become a farm for all. We see the solution in Islam because it holds me back if I rule, but *others* will not do that.

In our relationship with the *other*, we adopt the prophet's saying "***you have your own religion, I have mine***". We have good relationships with many Christian personalities, such as Nayla Mu'awwad (Member of the Lebanese Parliament).

Many are conspiring against the Sunnites in this phase. That is why all felt that the Salafi current is an important factor and any conspiring against it is a conspiracy against the Sunnites. When it was given the chance to defend itself, it turned out to be a fair current. That is why it scares foes and enemies and those who have no interest in letting the Sunnites have any influence.

We never used force to impose domination, but we are defending ourselves when necessary, and self defense is legitimate in religion.

Politics

In our relationship with the State, we did not enter the public life from the wide door because our priorities are focused on what is more important. That is better than jumping in the air and making unsuccessful attempts. We give good advice, guidance, and contribute in public life; we focus on the Sunnite community and reforming society. The first priority for us is to preserve the Ta'if Agreement, and achieving justice for all.

The abolition of political confessionalism is an ideal demand and all are ashamed of rejecting it. Lebanon is built upon his confessions, and the confessionalist formula is less harmful than the unconfessional formula, because the latter means the supremacy of a certain faction under an unconfessional guise.

Pressure on Lebanon is still being exerted even after the Syrian withdrawal. We do not seek to enter the Parliament. Even without this attempt, we are accused of seeking to establish an Islamic State, so what if we do enter it. Despite the fact that we know that this is our right, we are renouncing it and we strive to put our people out of harm's way. We accept reality and interact with it, we would like Lebanon to be better, and ask the State to be fair with its citizens.

As to the economic situation it reflects the dominating state of affairs, the mighty prevails over the weak.

Work on the ground

We rely in disseminating our call on direct projects, such as the radio, catechism, good advice, the general motto of our work is truthfulness, and this has earned us credibility.

There is no membership in our institutions. Mass mobilization is necessary to preserve the path and the line, but it is not the priority. We are numerous but our numbers vary in the degree of conviction, and we have no precise statistics.

We target the children in our activities, and when they get distinguished, we let them teach other children. As they grow older, we open for them more opportunities.

As to our sisters (i.e. women) they can give (lessons) to other (women) when they have the leisure and the capacity. The door is wide open in matters related to the call.

The method used in teaching is closer to the traditional way, and the relationship between the teacher and the student is often built on a kind of brotherliness, companionship, and shedding obstacles.

There are no projects of self-sufficiency up until now. Because of attempts to blockade our Salafi current, whatever money we get is almost enough to satisfy basic needs, and most of it comes from friends of ours inside the country and outside it.

Proliferation of Islamic Movements

Our institutions started in 1995-1996 during the Syrian presence in Lebanon. We played a positive role during the episode of Dinniyya, but we were not treated nicely. However, the sun rose and the light emerged from behind the clouds. The reason is people's thirst for light, rightfulness, and truth. They found purity, determination, and credibility in the Salafi movement, despite the strong Syrian domination. The steadfastness of our current in the face of this domination gave us credibility with people, even if the circumstances did not allow them to stand with us.

I endured injustice, and did not flinch, until the time was ripe and people were capable of expressing themselves. New circumstances allowed us to act according to our convictions, and then we found that people are with us. In a matter of months, our current witnessed remarkable acclaim due to its old and new history that did not change.

This belongs with confronting oppression, and being true with others, and equitable. During the last few years American interests converged with our (i.e. the Sunnites) interests. We think that the stronger partner defines the nature of interests, and for that reason, America exploited the Sunni parties. Some were agents and some needed to deal with her.

We, as a Salafi current, do not see any necessity or capability to counter the American policy. My house is occupied- and I have a priority to confront the Shi'ite Crescent locally...As to America, she is opposed to Muslim rights in general.

As to the relationship with the Shiites, there was no problem between us and the Shiites before Khomeini launched his motto of "exporting the revolution". The Shiites are trying to export revolution, and the attack on the Sunni today is religious and political. If they cease we cease.

As to Hezbollah's use of hostility to Israel in order to recruit some Sunnites, the reason is the weakness of the Sunnites. But who introduced the Americans to Afghanistan? Who is dealing with them in Iraq? And, who is America's ally here? This is an allusion to Iran. The issue here is an issue of interests and the enmity is one of interests.

Sheikh Bilal Sha'ban

General Secretary of *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamy* (Islamic Unification Movement)

Interviewed on September 4th, 2008 in Tripoli.

The movement was founded in 1982 by sheikh Sa'id Sha'ban in Tripoli, especially during the Tripoli war. Then the movement imposed its domination over the city before the return of the Syrian Army into it. Today the movement is split into two factions: Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamy led by Bilal Sha'ban (the son of Sa'id) and of Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamy -al-Majlis al-Qiyady (Islamic Unification Movement-the Leadership Council) led by Hashim Minqara.

Doctrine

We belong to authentic Islam, i.e. the Islam that encompasses this life and the next, and that deals with man as man regardless of religion or denomination or creed. We do not impose any specific jurisprudential doctrine on anyone. What counts is that the ritualistic worship between man and God reflects itself in an interactive relationship between man and his brother man. We emphasize that religion in its origin is one, based upon the Quranic verse that says "***The true religion with God is Islam***" and "***I have approved Islam for your religion***".

The most important principles in *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamy* are four:

- Popularity that is reliance on mass constituencies and not on the elite, and that because of the importance of the mass factor for change.
- Jihadism, i.e. the continuous presence and resilience, and resistance to oppression. Hence the idea of opposition is a live and human idea in the essence of our principles.
- Holding high the idea of right, through implementing God's Law on earth.
- Consultation and deliberation, and that within an inner circle comprising the Islamic settings, and an outer circle comprising some settings of non-muslims. The setting of consultation and deliberation is necessary to avoid individualism which is more likely to lead us into error. The Community as whole is infallible; individuals are not.

On the religious level, we seek to apply genuine Islam under the Lebanese State.

We have a strategic objective and a tactical one. The first is to establish God's justice amongst all people, Muslims and non-Muslims; that is the state of justice, and the state of prophets not of the mighty. The second is to find a common focus around a common political thought among the Islamic movements, such that it would restore the Community's dignity.

I am for Lebanon as homeland and ready to defend it, but nothing is a definitive homeland. No one can impose geography on me. The Sykes-Picot agreement made Lebanon, and its constitution was inspired from the Third French Republic, which today is a part of the European Union. There is no room for small states today. You have to be part of a larger whole to be able to exert influence and change. Lebanon is a part of a whole; this whole is the Arab world. I think "four million Lebanese within 300 million Arabs", and "small sticks if gathered cannot be broken, but they will all break if taken one by one". Add to this that the Zionist entity is linked to Arab disunion. Our priority is to fight the Jews in Israel. The Salafist priority is to fight the Shiite, the Persians, and the Safavids.

The difference between us and the *others* is a political difference, and especially those who are allied to the American Zionist project, it is not a religion-based difference "all of you are Adam, and Adam is dust", and **"either a brother in religion or a peer in creation"**. This difference in politics should be a motive to launch a political dialogue.

The difference is one of complementarity not of annulment. *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamy* (Islamic Unification Movement) did not take part in the war between Tripoli and Zgharta, for instance, on a Muslim-Christian basis during the civil war. Our armed conflicts were with parties on the basis of political disagreement. **"Had thy Lord willed, He would have made mankind one nation"**. Multiplicity is God's wisdom. Civilization is a result of a common and diverse human cumulative process.

As I mentioned before, we have no problem in dealing and communicating with the *other* who differs from us in religion. However, the regrettable attacks on the homes of the Alawites in Tripoli indicates the desire of some (in reference to the Islamic movements supporting Saad al-Hariri's Current of the Future) to annihilate the *other* who is different from us in religion and politics.

Reform for us means serving man. Therefore, all laws and legislations must converge on this goal, away from the bureaucracy and routine that prevail in State institutions. Let us take an example, securing dignified living for the Lebanese citizen, through fighting the policies of starvation and pauperization. These policies have excluded citizens from participation in decision-making on all levels, and driven them to pant behind bread only.

We hope of course to cause change through political and social action, by means of disseminating the project of change and the popular setting, by means of resisting the Zionist project...and by means of the Radio of the movement, and the medical services in the movement's infirmaries, and other means...

We hear today of what is called Islamophobia. It is a western concept having its roots in the distant past, when the orientalist believed that Islam was spread by the sword, i.e. by force and intimidation. This is a misunderstanding. The rule of Islam is the rule according to God's Law on a human not an Islamic background.

Politics

Arab regimes are clones of European models; however, they are clones of poor quality. The system in Lebanon is fragile, and the citizens have no faith in the State and the politicians who run it. The situation is very bad. It results from corruption, squandering, embezzlement, and starvation policies. The only relationship with the state is through tax payment, and nothing else. State institutions do not have the power to make their own decisions. The major and fateful decisions are made in the Pentagon. We in *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamy* do not fool ourselves into thinking that change will start in the Parliament. It can only come from the popular setting I already mentioned.

The difference in denominations is good but confessionalism is a very bad formula. The belief that "my denomination is always right" is a wrong one. It is important that all denominations be partners in the same homeland on the principle of fairness, so that we will not entertain grudges and the tendency for revenge. The oppressed cannot defend their country. The political authority oppresses all today.

On a different level, no group in Lebanon can annul another group. Foreign colonization of our country and the war on terrorism has created deep seated

hatred not between Muslims and Christians, but between the North and the South. The democracy brought by the North to our countries is just a "rubber band" that they manipulate as they want.

The style of policy practiced by politicians in North Lebanon is "Starve them, and they follow you". North Lebanon society, in the image of the Lebanese society, lacks any culture of citizenship in choosing their candidates in elections.

We definitely intend to being represented in State institutions. Today we are a large voting constituency, and we can influence the results of the elections. We hope that we will have our own candidates, but elections need large budgets, and our means are modest.

Some factors have a positive impact on us such as:

- Stability in the country that is a positive factor for acting
- Freedom of expression that is enshrined in the Lebanese Constitution

Some other factors influence us negatively:

- the security factor and instability
- the confessional and sectarian divide (here the sheikh expressed his wish for a meeting between MP Saad al-Hariri, head of the Current of the Future and Hezbollah, to diffuse the tension between the Sunnites and the Shiites in Lebanon). Mass mobilization in Tariq al-Jadida in Beirut and Bab el-Tabbaneh in Tripoli, both of which are Sunni, may entail a civil war.

Work on the ground

Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamy is an integrated movement. We have the following frameworks:

- Call and Guidance Bureau: it includes sheikhs in many areas of Lebanon
- Political Bureau: its function is to coordinate with the different Lebanese political strata, but we do not coordinate with the Lebanese Forces Party, for instance. We have differences with March 14 Movement, but I have relations with some individuals within it
- Educational Bureau: to organize summer sessions and scouts activities for youth in the North (Tripoli and Dinniyeh), and the South too

- Infirmaries: the main one is located in al-Qubba in Tripoli. These infirmaries include clinics, a laboratory, and Xrays section. They provide good medical services for symbolic fees
- A sports' committee with 16 sports teams, they organize a sports' program in Ramadan after the *Taraweesh* prayers
- Radio al-Tawheed, which is a licensed radio.
- A local newspaper called "*Sawt al-Haq*" (the voice of truthfulness), but it is not functioning currently.
- A website
- A women's committee that coordinates activities with women
- A media office whose role is to coordinate with all the above-mentioned bureaus and committees

Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamy is a mass movement. It relies on a political engine, which is made up of five major bureaus and committees to deal and work with people. We set the arena in motion and do not work within definite frameworks. *Harakat al-Tawheed* cannot be counted in numbers. Islam is a sea that cannot be bottled in small bottles. We enlarge the engine as needed. In working with people within committees, we open opportunities for outstanding young males and females, to join the committees in the movement and take leading roles. The mass setting with which we work is great, and it is subject to an ebb and flow like the reality of the country in general. Nevertheless, we earned people's respect, because our sheikhs are truthful and their relationship with people is not stained by any contradictions in stances.

The youthful stratum is part of the people we address, but we address them also through the sports and scouts events.

As to women, we address them through special events. They also have an effective role in the "engine" setting that I mentioned before; but the male setting prevails, naturally. (P94) The Sha'bans own a private school, but it is not affiliated to *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamy*.

As to religious education, the movement, i.e. *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamy* organizes session to teach the Qur'an and the Islamic Law based on Sakhr program; a CD includes 12 thousand volumes. The movement also uses computers and our radio to teach Islamic Law.

As to the relationship between the teacher and the pupil, it is one of peers and brothers, and has no hierarchical undertones. We have changed the title of *Ameer* (Commander, which used to be the first leader in the movement) to Secretary General.

Our sources of funding are local: they come from advertisements in the radio, revenues from medical clinics (the visit fees range between 15 and 20 thousand LL) *Zakat* (alms tax) monies, membership fees, and donations from friends and supporters overseas. Our present financial capacity represents about 10% of our ambitions.

Proliferation of Islamic movements

We were always present but the emergence of some international and regional factors made us more visible under the microscope of late. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Islam and Jihadi thinking became the first foe of NATO. On another level, both Hezbollah's involvement in a confrontational war against Israel and its success led to arousing the Jihadi setting in Islamic movements. In opposition to that, some Sunnite movements defined their fundamental role in containing Hezbollah's influence and aura. It is obvious for everyone that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the CIA back these Sunnite movements.

A propos of the Salfists, their size is not that big in Lebanon despite the multiplicity of their association. They dispose of a variety of funding sources since the days of Salem al-Shahhal. They are known for their theory of *ijtihad* (independent judgment in legal or theological questions), and this is scary because it makes *takfeer* (charge of unbelief) part of religion. They are a part of the CIA, and in close coordination with Bandar Bin Sultan (the Saudi Ambassador in Washington), they were used in Afghanistan to serve American and Western interests, not religious ones. Nevertheless, the Salafists are not scary in Lebanon, and that is because of Lebanon's pluralistic nature. Pluralism in Lebanon breaks sharp angles.

Sheikh Jameel Ra'd

Member of *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady* (Islamic Unification Movement-the Leadership Council), and the chairman of the political bureau of Hashem Minqara

(Sheikh Mahmood al-Bodn also participated in the interview)

Interviewed on September 20, 2008 in Tripoli

The movement is a splinter group from the mother movement founded by sheikh Saeed Sha'ban in 1982. The leader today is sheikh Hashem Minqara, and he has an alliance with Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami (Bilal Sha'ban), both have joined Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami (The Islamic Action Front).

Doctrine

The Islamic movement in Lebanon and the region is a result of the absence of the Islamic Caliphate. When there is no possibility for the Caliphate, the Islamic decision-making is scattered amongst a group who agrees on God's existence, and some jurisprudential matters, and disagrees in principle on the political orientation. That is why the Islamic movement has become a predicament.

We understand the community of interests between the Islamic movements and the others (for example the religious Hezbollah and secular Syria), but there is no theoretical basis for consensus. There is always an opposition between secularism and religion especially that the Syrian regime is a Baathist one.

We have no problem in dealing with any believing person. Anyone who believes in God and in his prophet is one of our bretheren, and anyone who believes in the constants, "***The true religion with God is Islam***".

We seek to establish the Caliphate (in principle) like any other Islamic movement.

Intervention of sheikh al-Bodn:

We believe in establishing an Islamic political entity on Islamic bases. Just as the National Syrian Party, for example, seeks to realize Greater Syria, we wish to have the Caliphate. However, there is no stable vision of what the Caliphate could be like. [The Caliph] Omar bin al-Khattab, for example,

stopped cutting hands; Iran established a Republic. We aspire at union with diversity. There is the Caliphate and there are the Governorates.

The difference with the *other*-due to Lebanon's structure-is not religious but political. I am against any person who is with the American scheme, even if he is a coreligionist, and the converse is true...the Qur'an recognized the existence of Christians, how can I not?

Most politicians theorize about diversity and plurality. I deal with this idea as a matter of fact. It is not necessarily richness, but it is real. The Constitution preserved the role of each denomination; we have many relationships with Christians, and the frameworks of political coordination are open.

As to reform, there are many writings and theories, but when we abolish confessionalism a host of reform issues would be settled.

As to the electoral law, serious representation will materialize when proportionality in one single circumscription is adopted. This move might lead to an alliance between the various factions of the Islamic movement in Lebanon.

Politics

The political system is backward because it does not adopt merit but confessionalism. The Constitution which created the fifty- fifty formula and "6 and 6bis" will not be profitable. De facto, we have connections with most religious institutions but it varies according to political differences.

The worst basis on which to build any political system is confessionalism. On the other hand, secularization is not acceptable. There is something that must be tempered, such as adopting the right person in the right position. The most important improvement is the abolition of political confessionalism and building a civil society that does not contradict the Islamic Legal provisions.

As a result of the confessional structure; and as a result of the imbalance and withholding roles there has come to be something complex. Confessionalism affects economy 100 percent, because in the past "Political Maronitism" led to giving priority to Maronites. The general economic reality is getting worse because of the country's political structure.

The nature of governance is very backward, and if political confessionalism remains with us, it will be impossible to build the country. We must stabilize civil life. In general, civil life is a means and not an end; it is a means to export the idea that we believe in. We are not against participating in the government but the position is not the aim.

Because of our presence in Lebanon, we cannot say that we are outside this country. I vote, hold a Lebanese identity card, and my driving license is Lebanese... I cope with reality, and abide by the State's laws. However, Lebanon is not my definitive homeland, we support the central idea related to the possibility of a political reality that realizes a definite aim. The Arab Nation is my nation, and the Muslim in Indonesia is my brother.

Due to political alliance, it is possible to hold you accountable for your ally's discourse (such as Syria's talks of peace with Israel). We are against this but we are ascribed to this relation, because there is a general Arab trend toward peace.

Intervention by sheikh al-Badn: “the confessional reality in Iraq is adversely affecting the national cause. The Muslim Brethren in Syria have a negative stance on the main axis of the conflict, but when the Muslim Brethren are persecuted, we side with them. In Egypt, we have a positive relationship with them. Another example, there are interests with the Venezuelan President Chavez (the polytheist). I cannot be against him because he is against America. The Arab countries' abandonment of their duties toward their people adversely affects, in addition to the constant Arab fear, and the Arab dictatorial political system. Iran's ambitions may have a negative influence. The origin of the scheme is struggling against the American, and as long as the Syrians are against this scheme, I side with them, but we are against the Syrians when it comes to peace, dialogue with Israel is impossible for it is a malign cancer”.

Recognizing the definitive character of the Lebanese entity, as *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya* (the Islamic Community) says, is a matter of serious disagreement, despite the fact that the Americans refused that one of them run in the parliamentary elections on the Hariri list.

Sheikh al-Bodn: "Recognizing the entity status is recognizing the Sykes-Picot agreement, and the Islamists cannot accept that."

The most important concern for us is to get the Islamic movement out of the circle of the futile tug of war; otherwise, the movement would be serving others instead of serving itself. The Islamic movement should not be a scapegoat. It is necessary to identify a common vision for this movement, identify the basis of the struggle, organize the inner house, and open up to the Islamic movement in all its factions.

On the Lebanese level:

- There is within the Sunni community a dialogue that started in 2005 with Saad al-Hariri; we care that the Sunnites are not exploited, because they were kidnapped in the last while, i.e. after the assassination of Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri in 2005. The element of the Sunnites' force lies in their constants.
- As to the other denominations, whoever deals with Israel is not like he who protects the Resistance.
- With Hezbollah, we have complicated disagreements, but the priorities define the relationship today. We did not accept what happened in Beirut in May 7, 2008 when Hezbollah stormed Beirut with arms, but we cannot attack the Resistance.

We started internally some discussions on the level of relationships, that is weaving relationships with all the movements we disagree with, even the Current of the Future, whether on the level of Tripoli (with MP Samir al-Jisr), or Beirut (with MP Ghinwa Jalloul, through her relatives who are Sufi [mystic] sheikhs. There is an open dialogue but it is subject to God's gracious success.

Work on the ground

We have no constraint on the way a human learns his religion. We work on disseminating the doctrine through institutional work, for the institution of Tawheed started to work within Harakat al-Tawheed, and now in *Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami* (The Islamic Action Front) especially after sheikh Hashem Minqara got out of prison.

The events of 2005 upon the assassination of Hariri made them reshuffle their cards. We started now to put together a general foundation, for scouts, a foundation for resisting Israel. We work with students through educational and specialization sessions. We also work on capacity building to enable them to hold leading roles...but this is very expensive.

Sheikh al-Bodn: we use all sorts of means, and we have managed to impose catechism in schools. We use all instruments, but we disagree on the fact that we do not follow one single *fiqhi* (jurisprudential) school. We have a women's bureau, and women associations, and institutions for *Jihad* mobilization, but no definite jurisprudential school.

We have an informative publication called "al-Nashra", and a weekly one called "*Sawt al-Jabha*"(the voice of the Front).

We have different programs that vary with the type of the audience. Recruitment differs between men, youth, children, and women.

As to membership, and after we got the license for *Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami*, we started to put together a mechanism. There is a decision to regulate everything to avoid any attack; we are a mass movement to which we have added specialization. We do not believe in taking a party oath.

In the past period, there was a serious mobilization when the general Sunni mood went in a direction opposite to the principle that we adopt, such as hostility toward Israel and the Syrian oppression that we suffered.

Mobilization can take the youth to dangerous places. That is why we started putting together a mechanism direct and compelling (sic) through intensifying political and mobilizatory sessions. We are considering a mechanism for *Jihad* to exit the internal strife [and focus] the central conflict in Palestine and Iraq. We are thinking, in *Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami* of a way to carry out a *Jihadi* operation in Palestine.

As to women, we address them through educational issues, such as lectures, and subjects of interest to them. We try to benefit from Hezbollah's experience, such as paying home visits to martyrs' mothers.

As to women's role on the national level, we started women's action in the political arena, and we play a role in the Women's National Gathering that includes women from all oppositional camp leaderships (Marada Current, Free National Current, *Harakat al-Tawheed*, *Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami*...)

There is an objection in the general Islamic reality against women's involvement in politics, but women have started to play a role and we have to admit to that.

One of the problems that we are suffering from is the absence of any serious sponsorship of the Islamic movement in Lebanon. The most important thing that we are thinking of now is income-generating projects that employ youth and accrue some income to the movement. We are planning to run a supermarket, and a school to insure funding and employ cadres.

As to full-time work, most of us have their own jobs and we earn no salaries from the movement or the Gathering.

We came back to the social institution, and it is called now, "*Mu'assasat al-Riyada* [the Leadership Foundation]" (it was called "*Mu'assasat al-Shaheed*" [the Martyr's Foundation] and it was financed by Iran, but the latter stopped the financing after the Ta'if Agreement in 1990). We have a plan for a foundation for the poor, and we have laid down the main components of this project.

As to educational activities, we have no special method; we rather adopt the conventional books in interpretation, i.e. those about which there is no controversy.

As to the relationship between the pupil and the teacher, we rely on women to teach children (because they are mothers) and they are effective at this.

Moreover, the same applies to educational activities. We started organizing educational sessions; the teachers provided an evaluation of their work with students, each teacher is following up on a student, and there is a possibility to develop their role. The teachers chose a group of 100 students (out of 700) in the age group of 14-15 years to follow up in their homes with the provision of necessary stationary. In the coming stage we will have scouts, since scout work will qualify them to enter political action later.

We think that it is good for students to know about all religions, and the basis for that is guidance at home and within the family.

Proliferation of Islamic Movements

Both *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islami-al-Majlis al-Qiyady* (Islamic Unification Movement- the Leadership Council), and *Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami* (The Islamic Action Front) emerged in a specific circumstance. The basic thing for us is the project. We could converge with any project that

holds to the same principles, such as the culture of hostility to the USA and Israel.

I can not say that there is anything stable in politics when I talk about relationships. For example, I was against the Syrians when they dominated Lebanon. And the conflict then led to a famous war in 1985, but now Syria changed its attitude.

The political and security circumstances have buoyed up the Islamic movement, including what is called radical movements. When political tension arises there is a tension in the language, and extremism arises on all levels. Extremism then increases with the increase of political turmoil.

Presently we have witnessed the phenomenon of the waning of *Tayyar al-Mustaqbal* (Current of the Future) and his inability to manage the folder, precisely at a time where the Sunnites have bestowed their leadership upon this Current. Because of this Current's political and military failure, there was a reaction within the Sunni community because of the misdeed, despite the fact that the Sunnites should not harbor any fear of the environment. The crux is in the unsound performance of Tayyar al-Mustaqbal. This has entailed what is now known as extremism that is pictured larger than it really is. There is no problem between me and the Salafi, the divergence is political. I move around the city without any bodyguards; the one who is intent on killing you is not the Salafi and the one who killed Hariri is not from here. One of the objectives is to make the Shiites fear the Salafis who might be sacrificed, and butchered to get rid of them.

As to Fath al-Islam, we do not think that Shaker al-Absi is the one who masterminded what happened, but rather the regional channel, i.e. Abu Hurayra, got him implicated.

As to the Palestinians, the Palestinian factions should resort to dialogue, but they have no unified vision of how to play the game as Palestinians. Practically, we reached some solutions with them such as organizing a common activity in Ramadan. Nevertheless, there is a problem in the Palestinian leaderships. The problem today is that historically the Palestinian has been viewed as a support to the Sunni. That is why it is required today to keep the gap between us.

As to the Muslim Brethren, I might disagree with them in performance but any Islamic movement is organically part of me. There is no disagreement on the essential principles the essentials are a red line.

In my view, one of the most important dilemmas of the Muslim Brethren is elitism, because they never got active on the level of the masses that is the basis of change. Change comes from people. But take for example Hizb al-Tahreer who proposes the Caliphate system, without having the capability to manage such a slogan. Elitism does not give you the opportunity to express your opinion.

As to Hezbollah, it managed through its structure, affiliation, and connections to profit, while the Sunnite movement is used more than it benefits. The most important movement is that of the Muslim Brethren represented today by the *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya* (the Islamic Community) in Lebanon. Historically, only the latter is licensed in Lebanon, and this is the difference between traditional Islam and activist Islam. Moreover, *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya* is one of the most important schools. It has its organizational and hierarchical structure. What are the reasons for its being excluded from the equation (sic) today? The reason is that there is no serious sponsorship for the Sunnite Islamic movement. Sponsorship is the factor that can build an establishment. There is no Sunnite Caliphate to take care of the general Islamic reality. The reality of the Islamic movement says that any movement without a ceiling that fully protects it in the cultural, educational, religious, and security sense, will reach the situation that the Muslim Brethren have reached today.

The second reason is the struggle waged by Islamic movements one against the other. We must agree on a unified vision capable of preserving the reality of the movement and of setting the Caliphate as a target right before our eyes.

Dr. Muhammad Khaled al-Zu'bi, Chairman of *al-Jam'iyya al-Hamidiyya al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya* (The Hamidiyya Islamic Charitable Association), and Mr. Khaled Muhammad al-Zu'bi, General Secretary, and Director of Abu Bakr Secondary School.
Interviewed on September 8, 2008 in Akkar.

The association is an educational foundation having a group of schools in Akkar, North Lebanon. It focuses on education in addition to catechism.

Doctrine

We belong to the wide-open Islam that encompasses the Muslims who have no narrow background. We love all, and reject sectarianism and extremism in the ranks of Muslims. We are Sunni Muslims with a mystic tint, after the manner of Sheikh Khaled bin Sa'id al-Zu'bi "The Educator", the leader of the Qadiriya Way. We follow the Imams *al-Shafi'i* and *Abi Hanifa*.

al-Jam'iyya al-Hamidiyya al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya is an educational institution aiming at providing education for the underprivileged layers in the Akkar region, including catechism. We have no religious, political aims, or otherwise.

We wish for the return of the Caliphate, because it brings the Community together. But is that possible? Do the conditions of the Caliph obtain? Will he be a Hashemite Arab from Quraysh, as the tradition stipulates? The Caliphate passed, with the passing of time, to the dynasty of Osman until AtaTurk, the Jew, came and abolished it.

Coexistence with *the other* is necessary, and the Nasara (the traditional designation of Christians) in the Akkar region will witness to that for us.

We believe in the [Muslim] Community. Today its reality is partitioned into homelands, and we love Lebanon our homeland; but we wish to see the unification of the Community. We are fanatic about Arabism "if Arabs are exalted, Islam is exalted". We view Arabism as a circle that encompasses a people, and view Islam as a bigger circle encompassing the Community. We love the Arabs because the Prophet said: "I love Arabs for three reasons: because the Qur'an is Arabic, and the language of the Paradise people is Arabic, and because I am an Arab."

However, we despise politicized narrow-minded Arabism. We love Arabism as an affiliation, and we do not hate other ethnicities, there is a Turkish Muslim, and the Indonesian Muslim, but we are not permitted as Arab countries to unite.

We despise extremism and narrow-mindedness, because this might morph into a grudge against *others*. We do not believe in partisanship, partisans view things with only one eye, the party's eye.

We do not call off *the other*. Each human has the freedom of expression and belief. We do not get sectarian; we love *others* and preserve our religion. Our slogan is "no harm, and no harmful retaliation".

Politics

The most important thing in reform is individual reform. It is also important to reform the electoral system in order to propel competent people into the Parliament, then reform the State completely. "When the individual is reformed, society is reformed." Reform should touch on all aspects of political, economic, social, educational, psychological, and religious life, and struggle against bribery and corruption.

Change is the aim of reform. It is important to reform the Lebanese constitution in a way that accommodates the nature of the Lebanese citizen. It is equally important to reform the educational programs, in order to build the good citizens. We seek change through our educational work with children and youth in the Association schools.

The economic situation is bad for all categories. Were it not for a great number of the Lebanese Army employees in the Akkar region, and other beneficiaries of scholarships for their children, our schools would have been closed. The laborer, the worker, and even the merchant cannot pay the school tuition. We suffer in schools from lack of liquid money, and this is hampering us from honoring our commitments to teachers.

I ran for the membership of the Parliament in the 1996, 2000, and 2005 elections then I withdrew my candidacy in the last one. I ran because I believe that political action is part of man's daily work in life. As an Akkari citizen, I feel deprivation while Members of Parliament have no other concern than reaching for power and wealth.

Today's Member of Parliament in Lebanon does not play his role as representative of the people, and an observer of the Government work. He does not demand income-generating projects to improve their lots. I wanted to enter the Parliament to serve my fellow Akkari citizens to the limits of my capability. I ran not on a religious platform, but rather from a purely patriotic standpoint. Had I won a seat in the Parliamentary elections I would have sought to develop and activate the institutional functioning, and develop the quality of their services.

Lebanon is an existing homeland, with clearly defined borders, flag, constitution, and institutions. I want to preserve its sovereignty and independence, but this does not contradict establishing good relations with the Arab States. Israel's existence prevents the establishment of an Arab economic union.

Work on the ground

The *al-Jam'iyya al-Hamidiyya al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya* (The Hamidiyya Islamic Charitable Association) was established in 1990 for many reasons, first of which to provide openings for the Akkar region students under the existence of Missionaries' schools with exorbitant schooling tuitions that the parents cannot afford. Second, because these schools have proselytizing purposes (such as prohibiting *hijab* [women's veil in Islam] in schools). Third, because of the lack of government schools with a good academic standard in the Akkar area. The association was born out of the womb of suffering in order to provide instruction to all inhabitants of Akkar with the minimum possible cost, and to create a means of disseminating the teachings of Islam in the appropriate way.

The schools of our Association are academic schools that follow the curricula of the Ministry of Education, in addition to religion as a subject taught twice a week for all classes. This subject is graded and is part of the school exams. We seek through this subject to initiate children and adolescents into morality and the right religion, the love of *others* and the righteous conduct.

We do not bar non-Muslim students from our schools, but they do not apply. Nevertheless, we have Christian employees, and the females from among them do not wear the *hijab*, nor do we force them to do so.

As to extracurricular activities, the Association cooperates with some institutions in this regard, but within limits. Last year we cooperated, for example, with "Inma" association to manage a green lawn, toys for children, and an internet room. Our Association organizes various activities addressing children in our schools, such as Qur'an inculcation sessions in cooperation with the Iman School, and Qur'anic contests, and sports events with other schools. The Association's schools participate yearly in the Great Blue Campaign to clean the Lebanese beach.

The total number of students in our schools is 3000. We do not adopt the method of recruitment or advertisement in our schools. The latter are known in North Lebanon. Our media are the high rates of success at the official exams, the way our students and their parents talk about the level of the Association's schools and their performance in the official exams. We work according to the educational standards not the commercial ones.

The school tuitions are a source of revenue for the Association. They are rather modest, knowing that the Association runs several free of charge schools, and the government did not pay us the tuition fees that were overdue since four years. One of these free of charge schools is rent by schools of the Shiites.

The community of *al-Jam'iyya al-Hamidiyya al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya* is a big one, including students, teachers, employees, and workers. It includes 3000 students, of which 200 free of charge, and 255 monthly salaried persons.

Here we want to point to the fact that 75 percent of our school employees are women. Education is important for women, and the appropriate work is essential, but of course within the standards of respectability, and conservation of this framework. There is no objection, according to us, against women's work, especially when we know that the requirements of decent living are many and require more than one breadwinner in the household.

In our schools, we rely on the curricula introduced by the Lebanese state. As to the methods of instruction, they are a blend of many such methods that rely mainly on the teachers' expertise, inculcation, dialogue between students and teachers, and the students' interaction in the classroom. Our teachers are chosen from University degree holders. And the results of the

official exams are amazing compared to North of Lebanon region (100% in General Sciences, Life Sciences, and Economics and Sociology sections; and 90% in the Brevet official exam; results are equally good in the “Siddiq” Technical Institute).

We avoid hitting the student or humiliating him/ her, save in exceptional cases when talking him/ her to reason leads nowhere, as in few cases. We call the guardians when needed to contribute in solving their children's educational and social problems. Consequences often consist in depriving the student of enjoying recesses or the PE period.

The instructing cadres participate in several career development sessions according to a plan set forth by subjects' coordinators. Publishing houses send specialists to explain the content of newly published books. The sheikhs who teach catechism are Islamic Colleges graduates.

We have Shiite students, and no obstacles. They can join the government schools, but they stayed with us because they suffer no discrimination. For example, the Abu Bakr Secondary School is the only one in Akkar that the Shiite children attend. Discrimination is proscribed in our schools.

Proliferation of Islamic Movements

The emergence of Islamic Movements is a reaction to the oppression that has befallen this community. These movements lack structure and organization. They are spontaneous and poorly thought out. They are a reaction to the wantonness and greed shown by the West and principally the USA toward the riches of this community. It is also a reaction against the wild war that is waged against the Muslim Community, and more specifically the Sunnites through propelling non-Sunnite minorities into power in the Arab countries. All the above led to the emergence of underground Sunnite movements to deter oppression.

The emergence of Islamic Movements also represents a force to counter the expanding Shiite influence in the region. The Americans intentionally and premeditatedly have contributed in the appearance of the "Shiite Crescent" in the Arab World. However, they might have made some miscalculation. Iran helped them in a way that enhanced her position, and provoked the decision to strike against it. The USA has the habit of making use of peripheries and then striking at them. The greatest error the Americans have committed in my view is the war on Iraq. The USA was entangled in the

moving sands of Iraq, giving Iran the time to bolster its influence. Add to this the effeteness of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Community and their failure to defend the Sunnites.

Mr. Ahmad Qasas

Chairman of the media Bureau of *Hizb al-Tahreer* (the Liberation Party)

Interviewed on September 8, 2008 in Tripoli

Hizb al-Tahreer was founded in 1953 by Judge Taqiy el-deen al-Nabhani. The party calls for the restoration of the Caliphate in the Muslim World, and for keeping the whole Muslim Community clear from doctrinal categorization. Today it is spread in most Muslim nations and Muslim communities in the world.

Doctrine

We do not classify ourselves on any doctrinal line. We are a political party based on Islam as a principle and a way of life. That is because Islam can build a political system and a way of life. We include all doctrines and denominations, and have no room for sectarianism. We steer clear from such terms as "Sunnite/Shiite" because they have a rather political than jurisprudential connotation. Members of *Hizb al-Tahreer* have one common culture. The chairman of the central committee of *Hizb al-Tahreer* in Lebanon, for example, is Ja'fari (Shiite).

Islam, in itself, is a principle, and its aim is the Muslim society. That is why we strive to restore the all-encompassing Islamic State. We do not recognize the political borders that were set by colonization. *Hizb al-Tahreer* is spread from Indonesia to Morocco.

Restricting the Caliphate to the Bani Quraysh is not definitive. The candidacy for the Caliphate is open to any Muslim who fulfills the Islamic legal conditions chief of which is competency. The Salafists admit to the Caliphate as one of their basic postulates, but fail to do anything to make it come true. Most of them await the "Savior Mahdi", and in that, they relatively agree with the Shiite.

There is no difference between religious and political aims for us. The principle of the separation of the religious from the political is alien to Islam. We regret the fact that some sheikhs admit to this principle. Islam is a political thought, and part of the Prophets' job was to run the people's affairs. The Prophet Muhammad said: ***"The prophets used to rule Bani Israel, each time a prophet died another would succeed him, there is no***

prophet after me, and there will be many Caliphs''. Islam is a way of life through which people's affairs are run. Nevertheless, some try to promote the idea of separation between what is religious and what is political from within the Islamic culture.

Jihad is legitimate in the presence of an Islamic state or in its absence. In principle, *Hizb al-Tahreer* is a political not a fighting party; but when fighting is necessary, the party's youth will join in the fight as Muslims and not as party members. We have no military wing. The political party should not have a military wing according to us. We believe that change in the reality of the countries that are not occupied militarily does not pass through fighting.

In the relationship with *the other*, we give priority to the intellectual aspect. The non-Muslim person holds a different thinking; and we consider that all humans are the audience for our discourse. We do not address Muslims only; we do not view our project as opposed to non-Muslims; it is opposed to Western hegemony in all its forms (political, cultural, educational, economic, media related and even military domination in some Muslim countries). Non-Muslims are part of our project, we look forward for a State that manages peoples' affairs, all peoples, and this is part of Islamic jurisprudence, and not just our own culture only. In other words, we do not view non-Muslims as our foes. Our foe in thought is he who propagates Western culture and politics even if he is a Muslim. What is meant by *Hizb al-Tahreer* is the liberation of the Muslim Community from non-Muslim thoughts and systems, especially those imported from the West.

Diversity in humans is natural. The diversity of colors, peoples, and languages is spontaneous. However, we do not believe that the confessional diversity in Lebanon is capable of helping this entity succeed. The success of the country needs a system that is good for man, and this is represented in Islam according to us. The Islamic state does not annul *the others* nor does it interfere in the practices of non-Muslim religious rituals. It also guarantees for them their own marital status laws and courts according to their religions. As to the ruling class, they talk about the necessity of a pluralistic system in Lebanon, but in fact, they compete for spoils with each other.

We do not struggle for partial reforms. Corruption is entailed by the very nature of the existing regimes. Getting involved in reforming specific aspects would be like doing a favor to these regimes. The change that we

aspire at is the establishment of an Islamic State; but until we can achieve that, we, in *Hizb al-Tahreer*, hold the rulers accountable. For example a sit in to support the detainees of Dinniyeh; retort to the project of the "Islamic Document" which stipulates that Lebanon is a definitive homeland, and issuing an alternative document.

Politics

The political system in Lebanon is one of the worst in the world, because it cares for denominations and not for people. Denominations and confessions, according to us, are religious, not political entities. We, in *Hizb al-Tahreer*, differentiate between Islam as a political system and confessionalism. Muslims in Lebanon are a part of a world community, and we do not accept to categorize them as a confession, but Muslim political leaders in Lebanon based political action in Lebanon on a confessional basis. Allotment of shares is a bad thing. Politicians have transformed the state of guardianship of people into the state of good deals between confessions.

This has provoked strife between various confessions on the one hand, and setting these above the law on the other. Whoever does not follow a certain confessional leader and take refuge with him, may be downtrodden by the law today. We view political confessionalism as a curse on people, it is regrettably enshrined either in the constitution or in custom, and that is worse.

There is no stable state in Lebanon so that we describe our relationship with it. We deal with political parties, neither as foes nor as allies, for we have no allies in political life. We address all in order to convey our idea, and we rely on questioning and advice in our relationship with *others*, it is an objective relationship with all.

We do not participate in the executive for it is all corrupt and alien to Islam. We may join the judiciary (as an Islamic judge, not a civil one). We may enter the Parliament on certain conditions: we do not take part in legislation, we do not vote confidence, we do not elect a President of the Republic, and we do not approve budgets. Rather we will be custodians for those who voted us to office on an Islamic platform, because we do not consider the Lebanese State good enough to participate in building it.

The term "patriotism" does not exist in Islamic culture. This term has a modern denotation that was imported with the Western culture. With the establishment by the West of artificial statelets in our region, homeland as a political term was imported.

We adopt the term "Islamic countries" and "Non-Islamic countries". We also use "Dar al-Islam" (Land of Islam) in every country that is under Muslim sovereignty and where Islamic Law is applied; and "Dar al-Kufr" (Land of Infidelity) the country where sovereignty is in the hands of non-Muslims and where the Islamic Law is not applied. We believe that the political systems in the Arab countries are secular, and that the confessionalism that is widespread in these countries does not annul its secularism.

We believe that capitalism, on the economic level, is a curse for humanity. It only cares about increasing riches, while Islamic economy, if adopted, cares about distributing riches. The fair system provides the basic necessities for humans and enables them to increase their riches. In Lebanon, over and above what has been said, corruption and confessionalism are part of the bad economic system, for there is for each denomination its share of the State's general budget. They also split the various funds among themselves (the fund of displaced people for the Druzes, the Council of the South for the Shiites, and the Council for Development and Reconstruction for the Sunnites). Add to this the vassalage of local fiscal policies to the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization. We, in *Hizb al-Tahreer*, opt for the welfare state and the non-privatization of public properties, and the state ownership of (all properties based on water, pasture, and fire, and the minerals mines and petroleum...). Islam outlaws monopolization.

Security wise, the situation of *Hizb al-Tahreer* today is better than it was. The party is not tracked down since 2006, after the Lebanese State signed the notification letter when Mr. Ahmad Fatfat was Acting Minister of Interior. We had submitted a notification letter in 1959 but we received no reply from the Lebanese State. In 1961 both the Syrian Social Nationalist Party and *Hizb al-Tahreer* were outlawed because they "contradict the Lebanese Constitution".

From the negative side we see the following:

- The sectarian conflict: sectarian chauvinism replaces intellectual dialogue. We, in *Hizb al-Tahreer*, suffer from being accused of leaning to the Shiite side by the Sunnites, and leaning to Sunnite side by the Shiites, because our language is not sectarian, but emanating from an intellectual starting point.
- The domination of the media by a handful of people: this makes people live in an artificial reality, because the image of reality is drawn through the media. Our discourse seems strange because it is not common in the media outlets and the lexis of Lebanese politics. We suffer from lack of media coverage. When light is focused on us, it is to bushwhack us. (Such as media coverage on LBC as an incitement to ban *Hizb al-Tahreer*)

Work on the ground

Our modus operandi differs from that of other parties. We do not indulge into services and material benefits. We believe that societies are made up of a culture and rules. The [Muslim] Community exited Islamic life when the Western culture invaded us. Today the emergence of an Islamic public opinion is a fundamental condition for the emergence of the Islamic State. In order to achieve that we, in the party, prepare a group of deeply versed persons in the Islamic religion. The role of this group is to address society, interact with it, change its ideas, and strengthen Islamic culture on the rubble of the Western one. All this is meant to pave the way for the establishment of the Islamic State. We disseminate our ideas in society in order to shake people's trust in the existing regimes that are contrary to Islam and linked to Western politics. We rely on "political struggle" as a way to topple the regimes that are contrary to Islam, in addition to the "intellectual struggle" to counter the culture coming from the West.

We recruit people through lectures, seminars, publications, books, conferences, internet, and satellite coverage when possible. We have a monthly magazine called "al-Wa'y" [awareness]; the other publications come according to events. By the way, the media blockade against us is tightened; this translates through the Lebanese media boycott of our conference this year (2008). We also rely in recruitment on direct human contact through infiltrating society and intellectually influencing people.

As to the organizational form, we have a hierarchy of people who are activists or supporters, it is made up of party members, learners (being prepared to become members, but they may not become so), and supporters (who respond to actions demanded by the party), in addition to public opinion represented by the extent to which society accepts our culture. Recruitment of members is not required in itself. We rely more on quality than on numbers. He who understands Islam the way our party understands it and agrees to act accordingly will impose himself in the party. What we care for is to provide people with the party's culture as the culture of Islam and Islamic society.

The recruitment means are persuasion in the intellectual aspect. We do not count on winning people over by financial assistance and services. Looking after people's affairs is the duty of the state. Our providing such services, in case we did, would be tantamount to acquiescing in political corruption in Lebanon, and that is what we shall never fall into.

We have no programs that address children. That is an educational action having its own institutions. We have no such institutions. We work on generalizing a certain culture in society. We do not concentrate on the intellectual aspect exclusively, but also on the spiritual basis. We do not differentiate practically between men and women; we have a special organization for men and another for women. Both sexes take part in our seminars, but there are special places for men and other places for women. We also have an internal administrative structure for women. In Bangladesh, for example, we have an official spokeswoman for our party. On another level, we do not differentiate between Lebanese and non-Lebanese.

Our projects need no considerable financing, because we provide no services. There are some financial commitments provided by the party's youth according to their capabilities. We do not accept donations from outside the party, but only from members and learners. Our financial means are limited but they suffice.

As to the way our responsible people treat youth within the party, it is not characterized by haughtiness. Conduct is based on teamwork, even if there is a leader who has the last say. We act according to jurisdiction and term in office; elections are periodical. We also have advisory and electoral councils that advise, supervise, and hold people accountable. We adopt accountability, and sometimes our youth question their leaders harshly.

Proliferation of Islamic movements

Islamic movements proliferated in Lebanon since a rather not short period. However, they have come under intense light after the withdrawal of the Syrian army from Lebanon in 2005. By then some prominent personalities have been thrown into the mêlée of money and weaponry with the aim of the power contest in Lebanon. Today, part of political decisions in Lebanon has come to take place through mobilization in the street alone. Numbers in the street reflect the force of leaders on the Lebanese arena.

Some Sunnite armed movements were created in North Lebanon in order to establish a balance with the armed Shiites represented by Hezbollah. However, these Sunnite groups have no political project, but are mere pawns in the hands of some regional powers. On another level, some movements came as a reaction to the American attacks on the region. We, in *Hizb al-Tahreer*, accuse Iran of complicity with the West, and this is treason, because Iran thinks in terms of the "Persian Nation" not the Islamic Community, nor even the Shiite Community, so to speak. As to Hezbollah, we support it when it attacks Israel; but it is a political party and has its representatives in State institutions. Hezbollah cannot get our commitment to deal with it as a resistance only. In general we can say that some fighting movements arose as a reaction to both threats, especially after Iran's complicity with the USA upon the latter's invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq.

Da'iya [herald] Fathi Yakan
Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami (The Islamic Action Front)
Interviewed on September 9, 2008 in Tripoli.

The front was founded by Da'iya [herald] Fathi Yakan after his separation from al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya (the Islamic Community). The front includes a group of Islamic movements in North Lebanon and other regions.

Doctrine

We are Sunnites and we seek to exalt Islam, this religion that came to take people out of worshipping other people to worshipping the Only Overwhelming God, and take people out of the narrowness of this life to the wideness of the life to come. After the situation has regressed to something similar to the Jahiliya [Pre-Islamic era] there is an urgent need to guide people from the injustice of religions and parties into the justice of Islam.

These are the basics that we aim at, especially the third point. Partisan life today is built upon calling off *the other*; while Islam seeks to annul no one. For "***No compulsion is there in religion***" and "***Wouldst thou then constrain the people until they are believers***"?

It is important here to clarify the issue of terrorism and Islam. Islam differentiates between two sorts of terrorism: the first, terrorizing the innocent and the society, and this is rejected and prohibited; the second is terrorizing the terrorist. For example, a thief entering my house necessitates my terrorizing him, and if someone tries to kill me, it is natural that I defend myself. In other words terrorizing the murderer, the aggressor, and the oppressor is a duty.

That is why our conception of politics does not differ from the religious conception. Politics for us is the management of the peoples' and the community's affairs. Religion came to care for the community's affairs and politics too. Politics as it stands today justifies the means by the ends. There are increasingly more lying, treachery, and the like. Our practice when we entered the Parliament (1992-1996) was an attempt to make political practice more ethical.

We believe that reform is an embellishment of a reality that you do not like, and that Islamic reform is difficult in Lebanon, but it can be done in the

spirit of Islam. The basis is to change the individual and build people not stones. This can be done through the school and the university, and the civil institutions. It is pointless to attempt change without changing the human being, and this is what Islam and other religions focused upon.

Lebanon is a diverse country. Diversity may be a curse if ruled by clannish mentality, and may be a blessing. Regrettably, we did not know how to use diversity or deal with it in Lebanon. In our actions, we have relations with all layers of the Lebanese society. We are open to all and to a very large extent. We believe that this relation must be even regardless of the religion, or the race of these other layers. We do not differentiate in our dealings between this one and that one; we have traditionally dealt with all people on the basis on who provides the perfect work.

Politics

Lebanon is my homeland, but it is not a definitive homeland. My horizon is to have the whole world as one homeland. I do not view a revival of Lebanon except on changing the system as a whole, away from any "Troika" or otherwise. I have no objection to the principle of rotation at the helm. We suggested earlier the abolition of political confessionalism from top to bottom, and appointing the fittest and worthiest, despite some who claimed that the Sunnites would suffer. We think that when Lebanon improves all confessions would improve. We must get rid of the constant fear of ruination because of the confessional composition and the system of allotment.

We notice that the State is politicized and the relation must be with its politicians. We also notice that the State's policy is not patriotic. It is biased and linked to external interests. It is not self-deciding, and does not care for Lebanese interests.

As to building the State, it begins from Parliamentary elections and reforming the electoral law against political money. For if, corruption touches MPs it will touch the whole State.

We seek representation as a "Front" of course, and we support our allies and similar forces to run for the legislative elections. We do not care if we are not personally represented if the way that we believe in wins.

Economically, we did not give the Rafiq al-Hariri Cabinet our vote of confidence in the first place because of their line and their economic plan which gave priority to the luxuries over the necessities, then came privatization to devastate what remained of the State's assets (such as selling treasury bonds to foreigners. We consider it as selling Lebanon; I accuse Hariri of destroying Lebanon). I am not a socialist but I am not with savage capitalism either.

We believe in what we call the norm of mutual shoving (sic). Life in its entirety is a struggle, without which things lose their value. Struggle between right and wrong, oppressor and oppressed, and the like. We are against everything that comes from abroad and is detrimental to Islam, such as the waves of moral corruption that we face since a long time.

Work on the Ground

We basically rely on institutions away from ostentatious appearances such as letting one's beard grow, or wearing the *jilbab* (gown). We also do not content ourselves with sermonizing alone. Our conception of Islam covers all areas of life that is why we have sports, education, and social institutions. For Islam is not just a ritual or worship in the mosque. We must carry its principles into the society and translate our religion and creed on the ground.

We communicate with people and call them through our institutions, Friday sermons, publications and books. We deal through many fields with all categories of people with no exception. We look at society as an integral whole.

As to women, regrettably Islam was misunderstood with regard to women. Islam considers woman as a hundred percent partner for man. Even in reward and punishment they are equal, for both are legally obligated to observe the precepts of religion. Women have the same right in commerce as men, the Mothers of Believers, for example, had their own commerce. "Women are men's full sisters"

There is no difference between man and woman except in capabilities and in the issue of guardianship. That is why Islam appreciates woman's bodily capability to work in certain fields, without implying that this is mandatory or totally prohibited.

We, in the Front attach much importance to the feminine side, but we do not have female members in the organizational framework.

The issue of funding is the capital one. We fundamentally refuse any funding that leads to affect our decision or orientation. This, of course leads to narrowing the area and the capability. Our alliance with Hezbollah, notwithstanding, we never received a dollar from Iran.

Despite all that, our educational institutions are superior to many others in Lebanon and elsewhere. We have attempted to blend two methods in teaching; these are the textual and the instructional. I have written for these institutions books that consider the pupil's interest. These books have been marketed even outside our institutions.

We attach great importance, in our institutions, to the relationship between teacher and pupil. But frankly it is not even between all teachers and all pupils; this depends on the teacher's capacity and the difference in level between one pupil and another. Add to this the general moral environment's influence on the young, for many notions have changed and withered away. That is why we focus on raising the academic level of our faculty.

Proliferation of Islamic movements

Proliferation started after the collapse of the Soviet Union that left a huge intellectual and ideological vacuum. This led Islamic movements to come forth and fill this vacuum. Since these were not ready for the task, a plethora of movements and splinter groups arose. The Iranian Revolution also played an important role even on the Sunnite arena. This influence exerted by the revolution drove the Wahhabites or the Salafists to reactions that were reflected in the birth of new movements and trends. This chaotic situation enabled some powers, such as the USA for example, to infiltrate some weak currents and penetrate the Islamic arena, and in many cases without full knowledge of the leaders of these movements.

I have relations with the Salafists, and I meet with them and discuss our differences. There may be a group who stop at some formalities and disagree with others on the length of beard and the gown, and fight battles on such things. But we stay in touch even if we disagree.

As to resistance, we are among the first who participated in resistance in 1982 through the Forces of Dawn, even before the appearance of Hezbollah. However, after the withdrawal of the Israeli enemy to the borders strip and due to the demographic nature (sic) resistance declined. Nevertheless, we now coordinate with Hezbollah and have freedom fighters on the ground. We do not know whether we are listed on the black list of the USA or not, but personally I am not allowed to travel there.

Dr. Hassan al-Shahhal

President of *Jam'iyyat Da'wat al-Iman, wal'Adl, wal-Ihsan* (The Association of Faith, Justice, and Beneficence),

Interviewed on September 15, 2008 in Tripoli

The Association was founded by Dr. Hasan al-Shahhal in 1994. It follows the Salafist method and is concerned with teaching the religious sciences.

Doctrine

There is something conventionally known now as the Salafist Current. A great number of groups and currents having nearly similar approaches are subsumed under the denomination. Salafism means following the good predecessors. We founded in 1994 *Jam'iyyat Da'wat al-Iman, wal'Adl, wal-Ihsan* (The Association of Faith, Justice, and Beneficence that I personally chair. It supervises our religious institute that teaches Islam.

We believe in dialoguing with *the other* especially in a country like Lebanon, because of religious and intellectual diversity. Religion for us is not separate from politics, because we strive politically to reach decision-making positions, and seek to participate in power through the Parliament or otherwise, and this is a right for us and for others.

We look at the *different* from us through God's words "***We have honoured the Children of Adam***"; He did not say Muslims only. The Children of Adam are honored and each one of them has the right to choose his creed. Those who enter Islam by force will not hold to their Islam and will leave it; that will reflect badly on Islam, and make it appear as if unsatisfactory for those who enter it. We are not preoccupied with increasing the number, but rather care for persuading people without coercion. As to those who disagree with us in politics or religion, we try to reach common denominators with them, so that no party would annul the other.

Lebanon is one of the best countries that can be given as an example on dialogue between religions and civilizations, especially to the other Arab countries. Some of them thought that dialogue between Sunnites and Shiites is impossible; the document that we signed with Hezbollah came as a refutation of this claim.

Reform is beyond our capacity we must cooperate all to make it happen, especially that the country needs reform in all fields. We have an Islamic background, and our religion gives us a wide margin for discussion with *others*. As a Muslim, my aim is to establish the Caliphate as a uniting framework for the community, and this is a legitimate right. However, Lebanon is part of a whole and we do not struggle to establish the Caliphate in it. There is a verse in the Holy Qur'an that says: "***Dispute not with the People of the Book save in the fairer manner***". We think that the greatness of Islam lies in that it possesses the arguments that prove that it is the right religion, and disproves the arguments of *others*, that is if Muslims understand their religion and grasp it.

Politics

Whatever God does not reveal is debatable. I, for one, am against the electoral law of 1960, because it enhances regionalism and sectarianism. We opt for proportionality and one circumscription based on electoral programs, for it is the only way for valid representation. We want to build a homeland for all, one that does not annul my creed, and I do not annul the *other's* creed.

We support the abolishing of political confessionalism but without reaching excessive secularism; that is, I want a protection for my right to practice my creed intellectually and politically, and on condition that programs be based on justice.

We are good and reforming citizens, God willing; we look for a good relation with the State, and think that the State must seek our participation because it strengthens the State. We believe that we have what is required to help doing that. We can make use of the relations that we have with the outside for Lebanon and not at Lebanon's expense.

Politically we seek to take part in power through the Parliament or otherwise, and view all things in the light of Islam. What we consider *haram* (prohibited) we give advice to the officials to discard it, and what we consider *halal* (permissible) we agree to it. In general we give our support to all that does not contradict Islamic Law and is beneficial to people. We cooperate on righteousness and God-fearing with anyone who wants, even with non-Muslims. A Muslim can not stand in the middle or take a neutral attitude; he is with good against evil, even if the evil comes from Muslims.

Lebanon is a small country as to area, but it contains numerous intellectual currents, and diverse denominations; and this makes it liable to multiple regional and international tug-of-wars. The Sunnites, for example, are influenced by Saudi Arabia and Egypt; the Christians by France; and the Shiites by Iran. It is possible to use these connections in the country's best interest, and transform them into a positive factor, instead of being detrimental to the country.

The economic situation is bad. We feel that the areas lying outside Beirut have been unjustly treated for the sake of the Capital. All the public debt that we suffer from was spent primarily in Beirut. There is no balance development in Lebanon.

Work on the Ground

The Salafist movement to which we belong counts many thousands. However, the associations vary from one to the other. As to us, we have no definite number, but the religious institute that we have operates since twenty years and educates young men and women. And you can imagine the numbers that graduated from it. We are a countless popular setting.

Sometimes we invite lecturers and heralds from outside Lebanon, but without being affiliated to the association. As to the students in the institute, that is a possible matter, on condition of getting the approval of the security apparatus concerning the foreign students. Our call centers on:

- Catechism through the Institute of the Call and Guidance.
 - Fridays' sermons
 - Publications and a magazine
 - Lectures for common people.
 - Charitable actions and social assistance
 - Home seminars
 - Summer sessions and camps to entertain and catechize children.
- Youth have a full regular curriculum in the Institute.

As to women, they form the majority of the students of our Institute. The role of females is to contact other females as heralds. Some of our female graduates work in private and government schools, in coordination with the department of Islamic Endowments, in addition to activities inside houses such as seminars, and the like. However, we do not have female members, despite the fact that we do not have any objection to that.

As to the teaching methods, I am principally a teacher, and I have practiced teaching at all levels, from school to college. I am against instructing or lecturing. We seek to make the student participate and discover. We do not consider him a blank slate on which we write, but teach him how to teach himself. The relationship with our students is one of brotherliness, learning, and cooperation. We are against making the student a copy of his teacher, we rather seek to develop the critical sense in him and encourage him to discuss and even disagree with his teacher, and prefer creativity to imitation.

We rely in funding our institutions on assistance from some charitable persons in the Gulf, and we try to start income generating projects for self-reliance.

Proliferation of Islamic Movements

There are many reasons, chief among which is the Islamic awakening world-wide. Our constituencies were taken for a long time somewhere else by what used to be called progressists. However, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, people distrusted political parties, and had nothing save Islam. Add to this that Salafism proved itself over a long period of time, especially in Tripoli.

Of course, the wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, and what is happening in Palestine provoked a reaction in the direction of resisting the occupier. People found in Islam what they needed by adopting *jihad* and fighting the occupier.

The aim of distorting the image of Salafism is to prevent Salafists from playing their role in the upcoming political life, so that others can play it on the Sunni arena, such as the Current of the Future or others. We think that we have a priority to represent our denomination.

Doubtless, Hezbollah has taken advantage of this climate, in addition to other slogans such as *jihad*, and fighting the occupier, and liberating Palestine and al-Quds (Jerusalem). All this was warmly welcomed on the Arab street, so much so that Hassan Nasrallah's photos, Hezbollah's Secretary General, were hoisted in al-Azhar. This issue concerns the Community as a whole, and what is required is a Sunni scheme to liberate al-Quds (Jerusalem).

Hajj 'Abdullah al-Teriaqi
Leader, *Quwwat al-Fajr* (The Forces of Dawn)
Interviewed on September 17, 2008 in Saida

Quwwat al-Fajr is a Sunnite resistance movement that started in Saida since 1982. It was first started by a splinter group of the Jamaa Islamiya, and today it is part of Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami (The Islamic Action Front).

Doctrine

We are a *Mujahid* Islamic movement that adopted fighting Israel since 1982, we are also cofounders of *Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami* which was established on four parties: *Harakat al-Tawheed al-Islamy* (Bilal Sha'ban and Hashem Minqara), and *Quwwat al-Fajr*, and other Islamic personalities chief of whom is sheikh Fathi Yakan. Nevertheless, our presence preceded the emergence of *Jabhat al-'Amal al-Islami* and our background is the *Jamaa Islamiya*.

Our main objective is to fight the Israeli enemy, and to enable our youth to carry the concepts of religion, and the principles of worship. That is why we believe in educating the Muslim individual in God's obedience so that his *jihad* combines with religious awareness. In other words, we aim at nurturing the youth on Islamic principles and resistant thinking. We deal with whoever holds the same creed, thought, or policy that we hold regardless of any background. We work together on what we agree upon, and excuse each other in what we disagree about.

Diversity in Lebanon is a healthy sign, and represents a particularity, and a guarantee. It helps correct the trajectory and the path. Were it not for this diversity in denomination, no one of them would have reached their rights. It makes people feel comfortable within their denomination.

As to the Palestinians, Saida has its particularity in this respect. You might find in a building outside the Refugees Camp five apartments for Palestinians and two for Lebanese. Intermarriages made relationships between us overlapping, and there remains no big difference between the two societies. This goes back to the fact that Saida was historically linked to Akka (Acres), and the relation between the two cities is an old one. Economically, we have no problem in dealing with any one confession.

We believe that there is plenty of empty talk about reform and change. It requires a great effort; it is difficult under the present circumstances. In general, we opt for proportionality and one circumscription. We also consider our cultural work and call a reform. Like any Muslim we consider that the Caliphate is the dream, but it too cannot be achieved but after a long cumulative work. It is not a matter of imposition on *others*. We consider Lebanon a part of a whole within a general Islamic scheme.

Politics

Before 1982, the Lebanese regime was a vassal to the USA. However, after the Lebanese Army adopted the concept of resistance in 1992, and shifted from a defender of Israel to a protector of resistance, we started to have a good relation with the State. Today and after the assassination of Rafiq al-Hariri there is a return to dragging Lebanon into the American axis. Nevertheless, the Army was not dragged, and remained rooted in the resistance culture. Today we have a certain distance from this State.

I do not think that the Lebanese system can be other than the present confessional formula. After the Ta'if Agreement, the Sunnites became in a better position and the Sunnite got a bigger share of power. We prefer that the situation be better, but we do not think it possible. It needs the cooperation of all Lebanese political forces and concession on the part of all to build the State.

Of course, we want a State that does not touch religion and Islamic Law; we want an unconfessional state that provides equal opportunities to all. We also believe in Lebanon as a homeland, but not a definitive homeland, for we have an extension into the entire world.

The factors that exert a positive effect on us are external support in all its forms, moral and material. This support gives us comfort and strengthens us; especially that resistance needs a considerable support in terms of material and human assets. Had the Arab States extended their support to us, we would have been much stronger and would have been more effective through resistance.

The sectarian war is the most difficult and most dangerous threat we face today. It is far easier for us if the Zionist enemy entered Lebanon, than to fight each other as Muslims, whether we are Sunnites or Shiites. What is

taking place today is a step within the American Zionist scheme especially after it succeeded in Iraq. But thank God, they could not achieve it in Lebanon.

Like any other organization, we have political aspirations. Resistant action today is a political action; the call is also a political action. Our political project is resistance, and all that is related thereto, or serves it, through culture, sports, education.

The economic situation is bad. Nevertheless we are not against the general State policy, be it privatization or what not. We are against the huge corruption inside the State. Privatization may be the solution.

Work on the Ground

We started our action when we were only three young men. We broke away from *al- Jamaa Islamiya* and a considerable number of youth sympathized with us, especially when we practiced resistance. We are one of the symbols of resistance in Saida. Now we have supporters all over Lebanon from Akkar to the South. Today, we have a great power to strengthen our position.

Today, we try to communicate with our society through the call based upon culture, ceremonies, individual gatherings, and lectures. We also have a sports project that includes many activities. We rely on various means for recruitment, such as scouts, sports, summer sports programs to recruit children and youth. As to senior adults, we address them through publications and lectures.

As to women, we consider them the third of society, because of the important role they play on more than one level. We are working to establish a female organization. As to *jihad* activity, we did not feel yet the need for women's participation. They raise resistant generations. We have no objection for women's participation in doing battle on the ground. Should we need this then we have no legal (Islamic) problem or otherwise: women took part in *jihad* in the time of the Prophet".

As to funding, we used earlier to rely on support from our brethren overseas, and some support from some organizations on the Lebanese arena. However, after September 11, 2001 all manners of support from overseas

were cut, especially from the West. That is why we try to start private investment projects, the sports club is the beginning.

Proliferation of Islamic Movements

I repeat. We are an Islamic *Jihadi* movement that adopted fighting Israel since 1982. This setting emerged after the Israeli Army invaded the Lebanese territories. I do not think that there is today a leading role for the Islamic movements; they rather are on the wane. The multiplicity of these movements is a proof of disorderliness and weakness, in spite of the big media noise about them. There are two main factors for their emergence:

- An external factor seeking to frighten people with Islamists and trying to depict them as scarecrows
- An internal factor linked to the plurality of groups that seek to show off and rely on the media empty form.

As to the relation with Hezbollah, it began before Hezbollah took its current organizational form. It was with some resisting youth. The relation then evolved, what brings us together today is the fight against the Zionist enemy and the defense of homeland.

Sheikh Safwan al-Zu'bi
Chairman of the board of trustees of *Waqf al-Turath al-Islami* (The Islamic Legacy Endowment)
Interviewed on September 23, 2008 in Tripoli

It was established in 2004 by Sheikh Safwan al-Zu'bi who currently chairs its board of trustees. It is concerned with educational and social development. The Waqf established several schools, and is founding a university that is in the process of being built. The Waqf also provides social assistance. The major support granted to Waqf al-Turath al-Islami comes from the Kuwaiti Hay'at Ihya' al-Turath al-Islami (Agency for the Revival of the Islamic Legacy)

Doctrine

We belong to the Salafi doctrine, the doctrine of basic Islam in the time of the Prophet and the first Companions, before the emergence of any definite doctrine. Our ultimate authority today is in Saudi Arabia where our greatest sheikhs live. We strive to disseminate God's religion, and raise people's awareness of truth. As to the relation with the ruler, we recommend no rebellion against the ruler even if he is an infidel. There are degrees of infidelity according to us, and fighting the infidel is not lawful unless he sets out to fight us.

We do not mix the call with politics. However, we seek to establish the Salafist Caliphate, through building the Muslim society and laying the foundation for it, and not through imposing it on people. People must first agree to it. We believe in establishing the Islamic Caliphate in Lebanon through preparing society to accept the idea.

Lebanon is a confessional and racial mixture. We respect *the other* and seek to guide him, especially those different from us. We should not disagree with him in order to keep the call acceptable with him.

We consider diversity in Lebanon a good thing, and it is a sample of the world. Success in Lebanon proves that success is possible anywhere in the world. We try as much as we can to help on reform through ideological reform, and through politicians by guidance and good counsel.

We have no problem with those ideologically different from us, and we cooperate with them. I hired for the organization of our Association the services of a company whose owners are Christians.

Politics

We are not a political party, but we have our supporters whose estimate we place at twenty thousands. This is a result of our work in the institutes and institutions, which are three schools in North Lebanon. We are striving to found a university, and thirteen mosques. In addition to that, we are about to build an agricultural refrigerator. We also provide help in kind to our deserving people in North Lebanon.

Most of our activities are centered on training sessions, religious awareness-raising through the call and the mosques. We also have a women's committee that works in an excellent and organized way in help to orphans sessions, and in the call especially in private houses. The beneficiaries of our schools are numerous.

In educational matters, we adopt the official program with some additions. As to catechism, we are against instructing. We rely on the learning process, building the individual, and helping him to develop his skills. The relationship between our teachers and students is good but we still seek to achieve the best.

As to funding, the main source is the Kuwaiti *Hay'at Ihya' al-Turath al-Islami* (Agency for the Revival of the Islamic Legacy). But we are striving to ensure autonomy through income generating project that we are in the process of establishing (our budget this year is around \$5 million).

Proliferation of Islamic Movements

The truth is that talk about Islamic movements and their proliferation is a bit exaggerated. Nevertheless, these movements have witnessed proliferation after the fall of communism and Nasserism, and the unmasking of Western capitalism, especially after the wars that it launched in the name of democracy. I believe that there is a media and political discourse that contributed in the prominence of Islamic movements.

We are parties to the document signed with Hezbollah, and the reason is that there is an attempt by some groups to use us as a means to scare Hezbollah. That is a way of preventing the scheme of civil strife. We consider that the document served its purpose despite freezing it.

Sheikh Faysal al-Mawlawi
General Secretary of *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya* (the Islamic Community)
Interviewed on October 6, 2008 in Beirut

Al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya branched out of 'Ibad al-Rahman' (Worshippers of the Compassionate) an affiliate of the Muslim Brethren. Most eminent amongst its founders in Lebanon were sheikh Fathi Yakan, and Justice Faysal al-Mawlawi (the current General Secretary) and Mr. Ibraheem al-Masri (deputy General Secretary), and the Islamic writer Muhammad Ali al-Dinnawi. The Jama'a was officially licensed in Lebanon in 1964, and they adopt the major tenets of the Muslim Brethren, with minor organizational or political details.

Doctrine

We are a Lebanese Islamic Sunni movement; we seek to enable Muslims to live with their fellow citizens without abandoning their Islamic values, or their commitment to the Qur'an and Sunnah.

The *Jama'a* seeks to disseminate the religion, the creed, and the commitment to Islamic ethics in our relations within society even with non-Muslims, and to live with *the other* in harmony and peace.

As Muslims, we call for building a society that is in agreement with all without contravening or contradicting our Islamic principles.

The Caliphate is an historical appellation given to a system of governance that came after the Prophet. It is not God's Deputyship on earth, but the Prophet's Successor-ship in governance, since he acted as ruler too. After that came numerous forms of governance, some were called Sultanate, or republic, or what not. The Caliphate is not a definite form of governance, and we think that Islam can be through any modern system of governance as long as it abides by the rulings of the Islamic Sharee'a (Islamic Law). We think that the people are the source of power, therefore Islamic rule cannot be imposed upon them, but it must come as a result of their choice.

In the relation to *the other*, we owe each other duties and rights. We have no problem whatsoever with those *different* from us. We buy, sell, and cooperate in all the daily chores, and despite these bad circumstances, we

stayed in touch with all, including Hezbollah. Political or intellectual disagreement should not lead to rift.

Diversity is a matter of fact, but the important thing is how we deal with it. Lebanon is until now a federation of denominations; it did not reach the status of a homeland yet. Religious affiliation prevails sometimes over the patriotic affiliation; sometimes the opposite takes place. We must reach a balance between the two.

We view the possibility of reform through the call, the persuasion, and the peaceful means. We think that change today is difficult and it needs time. We seek a form of governance built on Islam. As to the regime, when there is a real Parliament it is possible to reach reform and change through dialogue and agreement, away from confessional balances. As to the judiciary, it must be independent and free of confessional distribution.

Politics

There is no logical thinking, and the system in Lebanon is a compound whose main element is confessionalism and the struggles between foreign powers through these denominations on our soil. Our democracy is a patchwork system. Confessionalism is the root cause of ruin in Lebanon. The two most important things are the Parliament and the electoral law, for they are the foundation of a just State. Right after that comes the abolition of political confessionalism; but we think that this is difficult today. As to the electoral law, we opt for one circumscription and unconfessional proportionality. We seek to be represented in the Parliament and think that this is our right.

I recognize that the Lebanese homeland is a definitive one but not the entity. That is, I recognize the political homeland, and we have no problem in changing the entity in the future. We consider that accepting the definitive status of the entity is anti-democratic, for we have no right to confiscate the decisions of future generations. The homeland is a territory and a people who might be a co-religionist or different; Lebanon is our homeland.

As to the economic situation, it is collapsing. Were it not for some expatriates and the support of some States for their own interests, the collapse would be total. This is because of the instability, the confessional

system, and the absence of planning. We think that corruption broadens more under confessionalism.

We suffer from the security systems that hamper our work. What suits us is a strong, just, and democratic State. Political stability helps us more, bearing in mind that our movement is an intellectual one, and needs a calm atmosphere to operate.

Work on the Ground

To disseminate the call we rely on mosques, Friday sermons, and schools that are affiliated to us or to associations that are affiliated to us, or to individuals affiliated to the *Jama'a*. We also disseminate the call through sessions of memorizing the Qur'an, teaching the Islamic Law, lectures, and through issuing some publications.

We are widely spread amongst the Muslims, and popular presence in all the areas.

We are represented in numerous municipalities and trade unions, but our organization is smaller than that. We do not seek organizational recruitment, and we do not have special activities, save through schools and in the North where we have the Iman Scouts. The youth are in general those active on the ground.

Women do not differ from men save what God distinguished them with. Man and woman are the two pillars of society, and are equal in everything. We consider that the fundamental role of women is the family, but we do not have any objection to her participating in all other activities.

In general, we deal with all. As to organizational work, it is restricted to Lebanese.

In educational methods, we adopt the Lebanese official curriculum and we add to it catechism related subjects such as memorizing the Qur'an, Islamic Law. All our schools have an Islamic background. We adopt modern educational methods in our schools and send our teachers abroad to be trained in these methods. We also care about acquainting our students with other varied schools to expand their knowledge and information.

Funding is secured through membership fees, supporters' donations, investments in Islamic banks, and shares in successful corporations.

Proliferation of Islamic Movements

The proliferation of Islamic movements is linked to the bankruptcy of ruling regimes that oppressed people, and repressed them. It was also linked to the American assault on Islam specifically. Add to this the fall of communist thought, and people's rejection of the savage Western capitalism. People found relief in Islam.

Upon asking him about the Shiite Crescent, sheikh Mawlawi said that the Shiite Crescent has no role in the proliferation of Sunnite movements, and that it is merely a political and not a religious one. It is used as a scarecrow exactly as the other Islamic movements are used. Today, Iran is supporting resistant Sunni and Shi'i movements within its ideological project to liberate al-Quds (Jerusalem), which is a general Islamic aim. If the Arab States had fulfilled their obligations toward the common central issues, Iran would not have had this influence.

Sheikh Maher Hammoud
The imam of *al-Quds* mosque in Saida
Interviewed on October 9, 2008 in Saida.

Doctrine

Today I am an independent, but I am a cofounder of *al-Jamaa Islamiya* and *Tajammu' al-Ulama' al-Muslimeen* (Gathering of Muslim Scholars), and have relations with Hamas and the Islamic Jihad, and numerous other Islamic groupings. I allow many groups to teach in the mosque of which I am the Imam.

What I care for most is basically and generally the call for Islam. Currently I instill ardent zeal to fight Israel and wipe it out of existence. And for this reason I have come to agree with Iran and Hezbollah, and helped to found *Quwwat al-Fajr* (The Forces of Dawn). I consider *al-Jamaa Islamiya* regrettably unconcerned with the subject of *Jihad*. I consider myself one of the Muslim Brethren systems, but I wonder how an important intellectual system that I greatly respect could abstain from becoming active on the ground. The reason may be that there are no historic leaders today.

All my political stances derive from a religious jurisprudential option, similarly to my attitude toward struggle against Israel, in which I am allied with Hezbollah because of the service it provides today to Islam.

To be a Muslim is no easy thing. You have to be clear in the issue of right and wrong, faith and infidelity. The clash with *the other* might happen in the time of intellectual adolescence; but after experience, and in practical life, man discovers that he is not alone, and that he has to accept dialogue and the call in the fairer manner. If it fails, he must not resort to force. The guide and the scholar must be cautious in his talk so that it may not be used out of its context, and be thus transformed from a talk of truthfulness to one of falsehood.

As to diversity, it is important. One Shiite scholar once said in the seventies: "I found Muslims in Lebanon more aware and more understanding because they live in a diverse country". I think that had I not lived in Lebanon I would not have had this flexibility and feeling of complementarity. The absence of diversity in some Arab States makes Muslims less knowledgeable of *the other* and more credulous in taking lies. Add to this that all have their shortcomings; but we have to focus on the positive things.

When it comes to daily life chores, we deal with all *the other*; we buy and sell, except those who were agents of the Israeli occupation.

As to reform, the judiciary is what must first be reformed, then the educational system. As to the electoral law, proportionality is theoretically good but empirically it might cause some problems. It is possible to blend proportionality with the electoral law of 1960.

As to change, the Muslim can only call for the establishment of the Caliphate but the non-muslim *other* thinks that it will be by coercion and violence. However, the Islamic Caliphate can only be established by the agreement of all people and will not be imposed on anyone. The existence of the Caliphate does not annul the Lebanese entity within the Islamic structure. Lebanon is part of whole and the Caliphate cannot be declared in it alone.

Politics

I think that, within what is possible, the Lebanese system is good especially when compared with the neighborhood, and despite all the shortcomings, including corruption. Corruption is universal in numerous states, and it is difficult to change it today; it needs an inspired patriotic leader who topples the regime, or to major external changes that restructure the regime. Nevertheless, Lebanon still enjoys a large range of freedom, it is bliss and it is due to diversity.

The confessional system must evolve. If confessionism is abolished, and this is rather improbable, that would be a great improvement. However, it might lead to a demographic imbalance especially that there now is a great decrease in the number of non-Muslims.

Our relationship with the State is good and based on mutual respect and responsiveness, especially with the Army who has now adopted the doctrine of resistance.

As to being a Member of Parliament, I do not seek that, but I support any straightforward person even if non-Muslim. Personally, I do not intend to enter the Parliament. I support all the faithful persons that we deem straightforward, and that through our daily work and stances.

As to patriotism, I view the homeland as made of two parts: a place where you live and have memories, feelings and relationships; and a political homeland that you love or hate. At a certain stage, the Lebanese flag on some people's tank used to provoke hate. Today the alliance of the Free Patriotic Movement with the Resistance provokes a positive effect among the Lebanese. It has abolished the image of the Christian who was considered unconcerned with the Arab-Israeli conflict, or as an agent. It was, of course, a false image.

Economically, we are in an exceptional situation. We rely totally on revenues from abroad. This makes the situation artificial. However, in a country such as Lebanon, this is the best that you can get.

I would like to add that my relationship with the Palestinian society is direct and excellent, and it is almost better than it is with the Lebanese. Here I would like to say that the law preventing the Palestinians from owning any property in Lebanon is an unjust law, and it is contrary to Islamic Law according to me.

Work on the Ground

Personally, I do not get in keeping with collective work. I am an individual who has his own personal attitude that I express in the mosque, and I aspire at the unity of Muslims.

We cannot neglect the issue of women. The woman is the foundation of society, and she must be active within the Islamic legal constraints. As to the sources of funding, they are personal and small. I have no institutions, and I prefer not to be linked to any conditional funding.

Proliferation of Islamic Movements

The failure of nationalist and Marxist ideas, the injustice and failures of regimes, the American thrust on our region, and the success of the Iranian revolution, all these factors combined led to the emergence and plurality of Islamic movements.

As to the project of the Shiite Crescent, it is political stupidity. The Shiite project is a political and not a religious one. Politically I consider myself more Shiite than the Shiites themselves.

Mr. Abu Imad al-Rifa'i
Representative of *Harakat al-Jihad al-Islami* (The Islamic Jihad Movement) in Lebanon
Interviewed on October 14, 2008, in Beirut Southern Suburb

It is an Islamic resistance movement. It was founded by 'Ali Fathi al-Shiqaqi in the seventies of the 20th century. It has a military wing under the name of Saraya al-Quds. The movement carried out several jihadi operations inside Palestine.

Doctrine

We are a fighting Islamic movement that came into existence in the eighties of the 20th century. The main reason for our existence is the Israeli occupation. We want to be part of the Palestinian struggle. We start from the principle that Islam has to mobilize the Community against Israel because it is the spearhead of colonization in the Arab World; and of course we are an Islamic movement having Islam as a starting point.

Our view of politics and religion is one and clear. We start from Islam which rejects injustice and aggression and calls for confronting the aggressor. We consider that Israel is a usurping aggressive entity. That is why we refer to Islam in our political stances. As to the Caliphate, it is a strategic objective, but the beginning must be the destruction of Israel that is shattering the Arab world.

Our relationship with *the other* is based on the human vision. We are the first to advocate that there is no contradiction between Arabism and Islam. We have coupled patriotism with Islam and this makes us freer in our relationship with *the other*. What can change our view is the attitude of *the other* toward Israel, regardless of his religion. Islam, Palestine, and Jihad are our criteria with the *other* whether he is Muslim or non-Muslim. Some Christian youth were killed in the ranks of our *mujahideen* in Palestine. Here in Lebanon, we deal with them in many daily affairs such as selling and buying and the like.

God's kindness has made Lebanon diverse. This diversity has made Lebanon a model in his vicinity, and kept the Palestinian Cause going.

Politics

Our relationship is good with the governments and the Lebanese Army, especially after this Army adopted the resistance doctrine. We also notice a little positive transformation in the attitude toward us within most of the Lebanese political forces that were against the Palestinian people. The last few governments were open to political dialogue with us despite the fact that this dialogue did not produce until now much of a tangible result on the ground.

We suffer, just like all the other Palestinians in Lebanon, from some laws and the blockade of the Refugees Camps and their transformation into security sore spots. Add to this the deteriorating standards of living, and what afflicted us because of the Lebanese conflict, even if we had some old role in some cases. Today we, as Palestinians, have steered clear of the internal Lebanese game.

As to the economic situation, Lebanon is in a bad state of indebtedness. It does not affect one religion or one confession, or sect, not even the Lebanese alone. It impinges on the Palestinians in Lebanon too.

You ask me how I look at Palestine. The Prophet brought a universal message for the entire globe, but he used to say that the loveliest place to him is Mekka. All the Arab and Islamic World are our homeland, but Palestine is our motherland, and I consider that Lebanon is the closest to it. Lebanon is my second homeland, I am keen about it, and care for it.

Work on the Ground

Our role, in *Harakat al-Jihad* is not restricted to military operations. Our theatre is only against Israel. As to our second role, it is to help our Palestinian people, so we have social, medical, and educational institutions. We receive a great deal of assistance from the Arab civil society, especially in the societal and developmental aspects. We are also concerned in all categories of the Palestinian people, and in raising an educated Islamic generation through our work in schools and the boys' scout association and the like.

As to women's work, we have a women's commission that caters for people's needs in the social sphere. We also organize religious sessions for inculcating the Qur'an, so that women will have a cultural level that enables

them to raise their children. As to women's participation in *jihad*, there is no Islamic legal handicap. Women in the time of the Prophet took part in *jihad* that is a duty on both men and women. Women in our ranks have a special role of their own. They are independent in organization, they make their own decisions, and define the projects they work upon, and they have a direct contact with the highest leadership.

We also have a students' commission that helps pupils in their schools through reinforcement sessions. On the Islamic legal side, we have schools that teach the Holy Qur'an, *Hadeeth* (Traditions), and the Islamic Law. We use both instructing and learning.

We are keen on keeping the relationship between the teacher and his pupils' one of loving-kindness and sympathy on the part of the adult and respect on the part of the child. The teacher should also take into consideration the circumstances especially that our people are suffering enough. On the other hand, the pupil is a link between the teacher and the parents.

Proliferation of Islamic Movements

The relationship amongst the Islamic movements obeys to objective as well as subjective reasons. The subjective ones are related to the split in the Salafi current especially between what is called the "Jihadi Salafi" and the "Dealing-with-the-[Arab] regimes Salafi". Most Islamic movements are today split from the Salafis. The objective reasons are related to the way the [Arab] regimes deal [with their people], and the absence of democracy. This is leading to an extremist setting. There are also some [security] apparatuses that exploit some [Islamic] movements in activities that serve their interests.

Sheikh Jamal Khattab

***Al-Haraka al-Islamiyya al-Mujahida* (the Islamic Holy Fighting Movement)**

Interviewed on October 20, 2008 in Ain el-Helweh Refugees Camp, Saida

The movement started in 1973 from the Palestinian Refugees Camps in Lebanon based on Islamic thought under the slogan of "the Call for Jihad". Today it is the biggest Islamic movements in Ain el-Helweh Refugees Camp, Saida.

Doctrine

We are an Islamic movement that adopts Islam as a principle. We started as a movement to liberate Palestine, based on an Islamic perspective, especially when other organization had a Marxist character. Muslims had to wage *jihad* within an Islamic framework.

Islam is an all-encompassing principle, where there is no difference between political and religious objectives.

There are intellectual and ideological differences in our relationship with *the other*. We work for their guidance in the fairer way and through dialogue. The principle is that "No compulsion is there in religion" and no imposition in Islam, so much so that the wife can belong to a religion different from that of her husband. In matters of selling and buying, we choose the most convenient regardless of religious affiliation.

We consider that diversity is a natural thing since the existence of mankind. However, there are limitations to prevent diversity from causing imbalance in society and handicaps for reform and the establishment of the State.

The Caliphate is the system of governance in Islam; it is something essential, for in it the ruler is one for all Muslim lands. We strive for that, just as there are nationalists and communists who seek to seize power. We consider that the Caliphate is general, and that the Islamic and Arab States are part of a whole. We believe that the divisions that take place today are meant to prevent the establishment of the Caliphate.

As far as we, Palestinians, are concerned, the reform that we wish for within the State is to stop treating us with discrimination, especially in matters of right and judiciary matters.

Politics

We deal with all outside the Palestinian society; these divisions resulted from colonization. Islam does not differentiate between people, and work is done with all.

One of the positive factors that affected our activities is the fall of most of the ideas that were glamorous in the past, especially Marxism, and people's return to Islam for solution. As to the negative factors, there is the distortion of Islamic groups; light is never shed on the positive sides in them. There is also chaos in the Islamic street; and that is throwing the youth into perdition.

The nationalist movement is the first one to have fought Israel, but it failed; then headed toward Marxism that failed in its turn. We as Muslims believe that Islam gathers many nationalities, and unites them toward a common objective.

Diversity has made the State more like a corporation in Lebanon. It is true that there is freedom in Lebanon, but it is fragile and threatened. The political system in Lebanon is built on unsound foundations based on confessional allocation that leads to many problems. It exists even at the level of appointing a low-level civil servant. All this is hampering development in the country.

This confessional situation has a grave impact on the Palestinians in Lebanon. We pay the price of confessional balances, so that we have been deprived of all human rights, such as the right to ownership and work. This has also affected Palestinians holding other nationalities' passports; and it reflects itself negatively on all aspects of the Palestinian daily life in Lebanon. In addition, this might lead the Palestinian youth to radical and violent attitudes, and adversely affect our educational and *jihadi* work.

In our relationship with the State, we try to please both camps, i.e. the loyalist and the opposition. We also try to preserve the [Refugees] Camp and get as much as we can of Palestinians' rights.

We insist on clarifying here that the situation in Ain-el-Helweh differs from the situation in Nahr el-Bared camp in North Lebanon, where a group of intruders infiltrated the latter. It was not a tightly held camp, but one open to all, it paid the price of a Syrian-Lebanese conflict. Here in Ain-el-Helweh, there is a unanimous agreement on preventing anything similar to Nahr el-Bared.

The economic situation is generally bad for all, and does not differentiate between Lebanese and Palestinian. Salaries are not enough for employees, and the class differences are aggravated. Before 1982 the PLO was pumping considerable amounts of money into Lebanon, and that kept the economic cycle kicking. On another note, Lebanon's economy relies on services and tourism only, and that makes it open to shocks because of the state of political and security instability.

Add to this that the new world economy or globalization caused an economic collapse in the USA; so what about a small country like Lebanon? If this system remains unchanged, this might lead to a complete fall down, because it is a system based on usury, with firm foundations.

Generally, Islam is against monopolies, as to privatization there is no problem with it. If the State decides to sell its properties, it has the right to do so. However, the situation differs in Lebanon because of corruption, plunder and absence of accountability. In this case, State ownership of public facilities is better than privatization.

Work on the Ground

We have a Shari'a Institute and sessions in the call that include students and women's action, and teaching in mosques. We address all categories according to age and gender.

Women are like youth, they work for religion's sake in carrying the mission and the call. In women's sessions, women take care of everything.

As to funding, we basically rely on donations. We also have some income-generating projects that provide us with some returns.

As to the numbers of members, that is of no interest to us. We care for education. In education, we try to join modern sciences and Shari'a

Sciences. For example, the modern *mufti* (official expounder of Islamic Law) who issues a *fatwa* (formal legal opinion) must be conversant in the current time and context. That is why we teach the youth the various sciences in addition to the religious matters.

As to the modern method of teaching, we think that it is difficult to adopt fully today. We are trying to bring together the two methods (instruction and analysis) so that we will not lose the capability to retain (the Qur'an). However, we strive to teach students analysis too. The relationship between our students and their teachers is one of friendliness and respect. We reject the use of beating, and adopt the method of attraction.

Proliferation of Islamic Movements

We think that the Islamic setting started in the late seventies, with the Iranian revolution, and the success of the Islamic (Shiite) line in seizing power, in addition to the collapse of other projects, especially Marxism. I believe that the Iranian revolution gave stamina to the youth through demonstrating that revolution, any revolution is not necessarily communist, but it can also be Islamic. As to the negative reactions to the Shiite presence, they came late, and there are some problems with the current Iranian orientation.

Mr. Abu Shareef

Official spokesperson of 'Usbat al-Ansar al-Islamiya (the Islamic League of Partisans)

Interviewed on October 20, 2008 in 'Ain el-Helweh camp, Saida.

Usbat al-Ansar was established by Sheikh Hisham Shraydi since more than 25 years in Ain el-Helweh, Saida, after he was released from Israeli detention in 1982, when he became its ameer (Commander). The commandership of 'Usbat al-Ansar is today in the hands of sheikh Mahmood Mustafa "Abu Ubaida".

Doctrine

We follow the Hanbalite doctrine, and adopt the most probable. If we refer ourselves to the Qur'an and the Prophetic *Sunnah* (the Prophets Sayings and doings) we find what is called presumptive meaning, that is the permissibility of interpreting the text in more than one way, that is why we find some differences in the details between the known doctrines.

The most important principles of the 'Usbat are those that were brought by the Prophet, ***"I came to accomplish the noble deeds of morality"***. Our mission is to complete what the Prophet brought about and call for it. We want to free people from worshipping worshipers and get them to worship the worshipers' God; from the injustice of religions to the justice of Islam; from the narrowness of this life to the extensiveness of this life and the next. The Muslim must deal with all God's creatures, to guide the rebellious into Islam, and the infidel so that he gets to know the true religion. He must love goodness in religion for others as he loves it for himself. If the Muslim errs in his religion, he repents and asks God's forgiveness. If he errs in his relations to another human, this *other* human has to forgive him so that God will forgive him too.

We think that the diversity that enriches Lebanon helped keep democracy in it. We do not differentiate between God's creatures, because we believe that all humans have one Creator, and that all people are born Muslims. As to the People of the Book, our religion permitted us to eat from their food, trade with them, and marry from them.

Politics for us is part of religion. The jurists have subsumed whatever is related to it under the heading of [Islamic] Legal politics. The 'Usbat works

for calling people to God; all the 'Usbat's policies are aimed at this great objective.

In our Shari'a (Islamic Law), if a Muslim country is aggressed, the people of this country are supposed first to defend it. We as the people of Palestine have the obligation to defend its territory and recover it. Now we are working on establishing a foothold, and building a military wing inside Palestine. Thank God, we have made major strides in this direction.

It is part of our creed to work for the Islamic Caliphate, but this work is not linked to a narrow place but rather universal and it must take place with people's approval, for "No compulsion is there in religion". A number of Islamic rulings, such as the *dhimmiya* (the status of free non-Muslim subjects living in Muslim Land) and the practice of *hadd* (Islamic Legal punishment) cannot be implemented unless the Caliphate is there. We can always demand at some point, if we can of course, the implementation of Islamic Shari'a (Law).

Politics

Islam does not discriminate between nationalities, but the majority in the 'Usbat are Palestinians.

We, in the 'Usbat have decided not to interfere in the Lebanese affairs, save from the vantage point of the call. Our military work is directed toward the Zionist scheme exclusively. I hope this will not be misunderstood as it happened in Nahr el-Bared, where considerable damage befell the Muslims. We call to confront the American-Israeli scheme, and refrain from any military action save where there is an occupied Islamic country.

The Lebanese confessional composition reflects negatively on us, especially because of the weakness of the confession we belong to. For although this group reached the decision-making position, its leaders are weak.

Our relationship with the State is not one of enmity, even if we were accused in the past with some unjust accusations, such as killing the four judges in Saida, and elsewhere; even if we were prevented from defending ourselves. Today all this changed, and we can talk, defend ourselves, and find a certain room for communicating with *others*, even if it is a narrow one.

As to the economic situation, it is generally bad, and it is miserable in the Palestinian society. There is great misery and neglect. This is due to the absence of rights for Palestinians, and primarily the right to work.

In general, Islam is against monopoly, it is considered prohibited and unlawful. We view globalization as an attempt by the West to impose their ways and culture on us, and refuse that of course; but frankly, we would have done the opposite if we were able to. As to privatization, it is a Lebanese issue with which we have nothing to do.

Work on the Ground

'Usbat al-Ansar carries on the call on two tracks. The first one is through mosques and Shar'ia institutes under the name of "the Islamic Center for Reviving the Book and the Sunnah", and the "House of the Paradise Gardens" where the call is directed to all regardless of age or sex. The second, is through individual call where we pay house visits to those whom we expect to positively respond, or those males or females whose behavior is not in conformity with religious teachings, we give them good counsel and show them God's obligations. In addition to that, we organize summer activities that include religious awareness raising for children, and reinforcement in the regular school program.

We do not seek to recruit people and organize them in political or organizational cadres, but rather carry out the call and those who want to join us and we judge them fit for that, we accept them. We have already repudiated some young people because of some immoral conduct in the name of Islam or of *'Usbat al-Ansar*.

As to the role of women in our work, it is basically in teaching in Shar'ia Institutes, and in house visits; we do not have a special organizational framework for them. Women are legally capable in Islam just like men, even in *jihad* but they do not participate today because of many circumstances related to the nature of work on the ground.

As to our method of addressing our students in institutes, it is done through Islam that we consider a religion for all times. We strive to teach Islam through the spirit of the time and its requirements. In our opinion, two things must bind Islamic legal judgments: understanding the legal text, and understanding the current age. These judgments must also be realistic and

compatible with the time; this is called the jurisprudence of reality. A *fatwa* (formal legal opinion) might be good in Iraq, and not good in Lebanon.

In our teaching of religion, especially the Holy Qur'an, we consider that the learner has not only to retain the verses, but act upon their content; because these verses were not revealed for being read or recited only but for people's good and instruction.

Proliferation of Islamic Movements

In times of tribulations, people usually return to God. Today, their governments oppress people, and we are suffering successive defeats since the abolition of the Caliphate in 1924. We have tried nationalism and Marxism, and both failed. The collapse of the Soviet Union is another cause of the emergence of Islamic movements. That is why people went back to Islam. God willing the USA will be defeated in Iraq and Afghanistan.

As to the issue of the Shiite Crescent we, in *'Usbat al-Ansar*, reject this designation. We believe in the necessity of postponing the ideological difference, because today we face the same enemy. We have informed the leadership in Hezbollah that the *'Usbat* stands on their side in fighting Israel.

Mr. Usama Hamdan

Representative of the Movement of Islamic Resistance- Hamas

**Interviewed on two occasions on October 29th and November 6th, 2008
in Beirut Southern Suburb**

The establishing of Hamas was declared in 1987 in Palestine. It obtained official representation in Lebanon in 1993, but it was restricted to official political activity, and building relationships with the Lebanese State and the political parties. Hamas started working with the Palestinians in the Refugees Camps in 2001. Hamas has official representatives in 17 Arab States and Iran, in addition to covert representation in a number of Islamic States, but overt to the governments of these countries, and that for security reasons.

Doctrine

Hamas is an Islamic movement that belongs to Islam in thinking and behaving; more specifically, the centrist Islamic thought that leans towards reform in society, and not judging society, and that according to the Qur'anic verse "*and dispute with them in the fairer manner*". We seek to achieve this reform through all possible positions within society.

Society in Palestine is characterized by a Muslim majority, but we offer through our understanding of Islam a social, economic, and political vision, and we hope that a greater percentage of Palestinians support this vision. The area of homeland can house many political parties including Islamic movements without implying that there is absolute rightness or absolute error.

The Islamic method adopts *ijtihad* (independent judgment in a legal or theological matter) in religion, and this is a human role that is liable to correctness and incorrectness. "My opinion is a right one that may be wrong" (Imam Shafi'i). Consequently, the programs established by Islamic movements may be right or wrong. The important thing is that these movements call to commitment to God's religion without compulsion for "*no compulsion is there in religion*". Therefore, there must not be any compulsion in politics and social behavior.

We, in Hamas, think that our program is right; it may be wrong, and it is debatable with people. We seek to disseminate thinking amongst people in

the fairer way, and to protect people's right to choose. Society is diverse, and Islam has protected people's right to their religion throughout the centuries.

Hamas is also a national movement, with regard to the Israeli occupation of Palestine. Most ideologies in the Palestinian milieu held the concept of resistance. Hamas struggles for the liberation of Palestine and the protection of Palestinians' rights so that they might not be lost. That is why Hamas organizes programs on the political, the social, and the military levels.

We do not disagree with *the other* about religion and confession, this is an option. More difficult is dealing with those who disagree with you in politics and party affiliation, for here difference morphs into partisan struggle, and the space gets narrower.

Political difference is a natural thing in principle, for you cannot paint all of society in one color. There is no society where all are honorable and good. As to the Palestinian case, and despite the existing political disagreement, the Cause remains greater than anything else does. In Lebanon, our relations with the other Palestinian factions belong to this framework. We strive with all others to socially develop the Palestinian community, even if things do not evolve smoothly sometimes.

Diversity is a natural human condition ***"but they continue in their differences [excepting those on whom thy Lord has mercy] to that end He created them"***, were it not for that life would have been static. Diversity may be a privilege or a curse depending on how we deal with it. The important thing is to find areas for dialogue, and try to benefit from all that is good. "Wisdom is the object of the faithful's persistent search."

In Lebanon, diversity is a privilege. In Hamas, we have no problem with any intellectual thesis, and we adopt the principle of dialogue. We do not deal with others according to the principle that says, "If you are not with me, then you are against me".

As to commerce with non-Muslims, we deal with morally good people regardless of religion or confession.

The confessional situation in Lebanon does not affect the Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon. However, the problem lies in the way to approach the

issue of Palestinian civil rights from a confessional viewpoint. There are Muslims and Christians among the Palestinians. They do not classify themselves along religious or confessional lines, but rather along political ones.

I do not want to get into discussing the Lebanese system and the way of changing it. As to Palestine, change is necessary for the sake of reform. This requires a long struggle.

Politics

Our relationship with the Lebanese State stems from the reality of the Palestinian Lebanese relationships, and I would describe them as positive on both the official and popular levels. The Palestinian Lebanese relationships are not in total harmony, but we are striving to be a helpful party to improve these relations on the political level.

The structure of the political system in Lebanon allows a great deal of democracy and public freedom, regardless of the politicians' practices and behavior. Theoretically, this system is a model in the region. As to performance, I am not here to evaluate it; but I think that the Palestinians may have been influenced by the Lebanese experience.

The value of any political system derives from two points: first, it must come from the people and be acceptable to all people; second, it must be able to evolve.

The economic condition of the Palestinian Refugees is very pressing. The Palestinian is not allowed to work in Lebanon, according to the Lebanese law. Nevertheless, he represents an economic force if this force is well exploited. On the social level, there are family relationships and intermarriages between the Palestinian society in the camps and the Lebanese vicinity. However, there is a negative image of the camps. They are always depicted as security sore spots and hotbeds of terrorism...

As to globalization and privatization, anything balanced is acceptable. Privatization without State protection of the middle and lower classes is dangerous and harmful. Our society is being transformed into a minority of rich people and a majority of downtrodden ones, and this leads to a state of social instability. In my opinion, it is important to set the economy free

while providing State protection for the basic needs of society, and safeguarding public money.

Today, globalization is taking over the capacities of states through privatization. States smash their peoples through big corporations without securing the development of local economic situation, which in turn leads to further pauperization.

We, in Hamas, opt for the welfare state, and this does not contradict liberal economy. We encourage NGOs to provide services to people and raise their awareness as to their rights. I am not calling NGOs to play the part of the State in providing services, but a part that complements that of the State.

The negative factors that affect Hamas:

- The attempt to accuse Islamists of being terrorists, especially through the American propaganda against Hamas and al-Jihad al-Islami produces false stereotypes. The latter cast us in a mold for people to judge us through without trying to know us or getting to know us closer. Many foreigners are surprised positively when they meet with us and get to know us closer.
- The Palestinian history in Lebanon that was plagued with some negative manifestations during the civil war, left negative traces on the relationship between the Lebanese and the Palestinians in Lebanon; hence the necessity of building a new culture between the Lebanese and the Palestinians.

The positive helping factors:

- The evolution of the role of Islamic movements and thought in the Arab societies helps support Hamas.
- The shocks and setbacks that befell the American scheme in the region prove the rightness of our thinking in Hamas; that is increasing our credibility and support to us.

Work on the Ground

Islam is a way of life, and not mere thought and worship. That is why our programs encompass all aspects of life.

Hamas has many social programs having a relief and charitable character, to cope with the circumstances of occupation in Palestine. We also have

cultural projects that focus on preserving the Palestinian heritage, making it known, and spreading the Arab books and culture.

Hamas also has sports institutions that cover the Palestinian Refugees Camps in Lebanon, and boys' scouts, for youth where they learn the values and regulations of discipline and respect. We also have institutions for women, and one for political news work. Add to all this the dissemination of Islamic thought through mosques and religious institutions.

As to schools, Hamas has kindergarten spread in the Palestinian Refugees Camps in Lebanon. As to UNRWA schools, Hamas is trying to strengthen instruction there, in cooperation with other Palestinian factions. We also organize reinforcement classes for the elementary, the secondary, and the graduating classes.

We, in Hamas, rely on attractive means to recruit the various social categories.

Militarily, Hamas resistance structure operates inside the Occupied Territory. In Lebanon we have no military body. Women have a role in resistance, many women performed operations against the occupier, and we have no problem with that, in principle. The crux of the problem is the estimation of interests. Women would do better to care for their family and children.

As to membership in Hamas it is open for all Palestinians inside Palestine to join the movement, including Christian Palestinians. As to host countries, membership is open to Palestinians exclusively. We respect the laws of each country and we do not want to cause problems related to this.

Hamas is larger than an organization; it is an intellectual and political current that encompasses the efforts of numerous loyals.

There are no sources of funding in Lebanon. As to Palestine, this is a military secret.

We strive to implement the new teaching methodologies in our programs for children and youth, through introducing interactive means in dealing with children. This requires training the teachers. We are aware that implementing methods that motivate the participation of children helps in creating creative mental capabilities in them.

In the classes of memorization the Qur'an, for example, we strive to make the pupil understand the Qur'anic text before memorizing it; i.e. understanding the general meaning of the verses and not the detailed one.

We have a large audience in Lebanon- we are always told that. However, I do not like to say that my audience is larger than the *others'* audience is. Some see in Hamas a model, and this gives us popularity. In Lebanon, we have preserved the coherence of the Palestinian people, and we do not seek to annul *the other* or exclude him.

As to the Caliphate, there is no theological state in the Islamic understanding, meaning that no one has the right to say that he rules in the name of God. There is an Islam that tries to seek independent judgment in legal and theological questions to implement religion. The existence of a power and an opposition to this power is an acceptable principle. Some imagine a certain mold for Islamic rule, i.e. the Caliphate; however, the most important is the setting of regulations for that rule, and these are justice, consultation, and the rotation of tasks. Consultation is wider than the democratic process. It obligates the ruler to consult all the inhabitants of the land whether Muslims or non-Muslims. The term Caliphate is an expression of a form of governance, "*I am setting in the earth a viceroy*", and that to develop life on earth and this is a great responsibility. I have no objection against the term "president" or any other term instead of "Caliph", if there is a just system that adopts consultation and the rotation of tasks. I do not accept the theory that accuses the State of infidelity. The State is from the people, and I am the son of this people. We are responsible about our society; we do not annul it, and the world cannot be one-coloured.

I dream of the union of the Nation in one political entity. What unites us, Arabs, is more than that which unites the Europeans. We must remember here that the Arab Nation is the unique model in history where many races and religions live with no strife despite the existence of some rancor.

Proliferation of Islamic Movements

Islamic movements emerged since the beginning of the last century and took on a reforming character that evolved with time. In the Nineties of the 20th century Islamic movement entered political life. Many factors facilitated their entrance, chief of which: first, direct confrontation with Israel and their feeling that struggle against Israel is the only choice; second, the external

aggression by the USA and its attempt to control the Nation's assets; third, fear generated by the entrance of Islamic forces into political life, this fear grew because of lack of dialogue about this new reality. This situation led to a confrontation having a security dimension leading to an explosion (meaning bloody confrontation) in some Arab countries, and to the exclusion of Islamic movements. Nevertheless, this gave these movements greater chances in other countries.

Today, it is more profitable to reach a new social contract that guarantees the smoothness of life for all, and the interest of society. It is wrong to ignore the status of these movements in the regional political map. Fourth, the collapse of the Soviet Union offered a chance to look for alternative forces in society. The absence from the political scene of big players pushed these movements to fill the space evacuated by others. The forces of the Left and the Islamists agree on reform in society. Fifth, the Iranian setting, this is the first Islamic model to provoke a change that is built on Islamic thought. Today Iran is supporting resistant Islamic movements. However, Iranian support did not create these movements from ex nihilo. Iran is supporting movements that created themselves from within their own societies, including Hezbollah. This is creating fears in the ranks of Sunni Islamic movements. Here, I call for dialogue in order to dispel these fears and discuss the interests of the region and the relations between all political and Islamic parties. Sixth, and last, the revolution in communications contributed in the growth of political forces of all sorts, including the Islamic forces. However, the West sheds a negative light on Islamic movements, so that they come into view starkly.

**Sheikh 'Abd al-Qader al-Fakhani,
Chairman of the Information Bureau in *Jam'iyyat al-Masharee' al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya* (the Islamic Association of Projects of Beneficence)**

Interviewed on November 6, 2008 in Beirut

The Association was established in Beirut in 1983 by sheikh Nizar al-Halabi who chaired it since its inception until his assassination in 1995. It is a Sunnite movement, currently headed by Dr. Husam el-Din Qaraqira. Some people call it Jam'iyat al-Ahbash (The Association of the Ethiopians) because of its spiritual guide for a long period the Traditionist Abdullah al-Harrari, known as al-Habashi (the Ethiopian).

Doctrine

We are Sunni *Ash'arite Sufis* [mystics] Muslims and we follow the *Shafi'ite* doctrine in jurisprudence. Our Way is not a new one, and the Sheikh Abdullah did not establish any doctrine, it is just a continuation of the creed and an integral part of Islam's Way since the Prophet.

Our main aim is to disseminate the religious science and show what God has revealed, and defend the doctrine which is being targeted by distortion through the totalitarian thought that accuses others of infidelity, chief of whom Sayyid Qutb (of the Muslim Brethren) who accused the regime and society in general of infidelity. This has hatched several extremist groups such as al-Takfeer wal-Hijra (accusing of infidelity and emigrating). Here I want to point out that the Muslim Brethren suffer from schizophrenia or a kind of duplicity. They accuse the regime, the people and the society of infidelity, and at the same time, they deal with, and participate in it.

We also aim at fighting the accusation of infidelity and extremism, especially that kind that takes the false guise of Islamic awakening. For us, awakening is the guidance of the individual and society to what is best and not killing people in the name of religion.

We seek to disseminate the culture of moderation. Our moderation is jurisprudential, ideological, and practical. Our method and that of sheik Abdullah is characterized by this moderation. We refused to give in to the prevailing trend despite many attractions. The stance of ours costed us calumnies from others, these accusations ranged from licentiousness and

neglect of religion sometimes, to zealotry some other times. The moderate way does not only serve us as an Islamic society, but all the homeland, and good coexistence amongst the fellow citizens. We preferred to stay distant of the street tensions of late.

We are amongst the most open Islamic association to *the other*, no matter how different he is from us. We have relations with numerous political parties, and we work toward finding common denominators for us to reinforce conviviality. We spent many efforts in this work away from slogans. The diversity in Lebanon might lead us to perdition or to finding common political denominators that help in building the homeland.

We think that reform must take place on the cultural, religious, and intellectual level in society. Efforts must be made to deal with any imbalance that might lead, if untreated, to extremist cases in society.

Politically we look forward for the enactment of an electoral law based on proportionality, where representation would be better. We are against the majoritarian law. We call for the reform and improvement of the judiciary, and the enhancement of accountability.

We do not believe today that the Caliphate or the Islamic rule is possible in Lebanon. However, if circumstances help to establish a mature Caliphate sometime, then of course we would look for it, and believe that it is possible to establish the Caliphate in any part of the Community. It is not necessary for the Caliphate to encompass the entire Islamic Community.

Politics

Our relationship with the State is good, especially with the President of the Republic, and the Army that we view as a guarantee for the homeland. We got involved in this system despite its being strange and odd, especially its political confessionalism that we consider to be the root cause of the problem, and call for abolishing it. Let the right man or woman be in the right place. What good is it for me to have a corrupt Sunnite who takes bribes?

Government in Lebanon did not reach yet a mature form. What annoys us most is politicians' exploitation of sectarianism to pluck some other benefits that might not exceed their own private interests.

We participate in political action, but through the wide national perspective, and our vision of the greater interest. Hence was our participation in the Parliament in 1992 when we represented a large social stratum. This helped us to extend some services to people, and we try as much as we can to contribute in state building.

We may be closer to the opposition but we are open to all. We are not centrist, we have our stances that may concur with some and differ from others. We act according to our slogan "we do not sell principles for positions".

Of course, some circumstances affect us such as the general situation in the country, instability, and the attempts at provoking civil strife, add to this the systematic campaigns to bring disrepute to us, despite the fact that their impact is not considerable.

On the other hand, we keep clear from the current conflicts, and this sets us in a better position.

We are on good terms with the Palestinian brethren, many of whom are amongst the novices and disciples of late sheikh Abdullah. In general we have no problem with anyone, and we have a large following in many countries where the teachings of sheikh Abdullah are spread and he has disciples.

Our relationship with Syria was on a national and patriotic level, and not by way of personal interest. We never sought to intimidate others with this relation. We think that there is no contradiction between nationalism or patriotism and Islam.

The economic situation is bad, and there are big mistakes whose price we are now paying. We believe that Lebanon needs planning for the future to get out of the crisis. We participate in trade unions to contribute in change and improvement. We are against monopolies, and exclusive agencies. We favor competition. We think that privatization in a country like Lebanon where there are no controls or constraints may be a danger, and may make us a tasty mouthful in the jaws of the beast.

As to globalization, our opinion falls into three themes:

- Economic: we must be immune or else we would be lost especially with the huge changes in the world.

- Cultural: we are cautious and refuse to melt or give up our culture
- Scientific: we are for the maximum in cooperation and benefit.

Work on the Ground

We believe in action through institutions. We have schools in almost all the Lebanese regions and a kindergarten in the Refugees Camp of Ain el-Helweh in Saida. We rely in the geographic distribution of our schools on people's needs, these schools are not religious, and our catechism is part of the general curriculum.

We also have a university, and we strive to improve it and expand work in it. There may be many branches of it if possible. We also have infirmaries in Beirut and Tripoli through which we try to extend as much assistance as we can, in addition to some social benefits especially scholarship grants. In the University we adopt the method of college loan that helps the student graduate then reimburse the loan when he gets a job. The loan is of course a facilitated one.

In addition to that, we have a boys' scout group that takes care of juniors through summer sessions, we also have a recitation and panegyric band that celebrates religious and private events such as marriages, festivities, and even funerals, free of charge of course.

Generally, and as it is clear we care for all age groups. We take into consideration the peculiarities of each group. We communicate with people through many channels, such as lessons in mosques, and in houses, and these are basic, some are for family and some for women, and some in public places.

As to the subject of women, we do not see any reason for a separate organization. They work within the Association like others with due respect of Islamic legal constraints. Numerous activities rely on women, especially in schools. Women are an essential part of the general functioning within the Association, and outside of it, and they are in all administrative sectors.

As to the educational methods, we rely on both the old and the new one together; i.e. instruction and learning, because we think that memorization is important in addition to analysis and other teaching materials. The aim of school for us is to train the pupil to teach himself. We care for a serious

relationship between pupils and teachers. We reject severity because it defeats the object of learning. We strive as much as we can to achieve integration and cooperation, without abolishing the teacher's role, but of course, he is not alone on the stage, and he has to involve the pupils.

As to catechism, we have no institutes teaching Islamic Law. In our schools, we teach the rules of *tajweed* (recitation) and the pronunciation of letters in whatever time is available.

As to funding, the Association relies basically on membership fees and regular donations, or donations for specific projects in some of our institutions. It is all self-financing.

As an Association we are spread, by the thousands, all over Lebanon and outside of it. We have numerous supporters in all corners of the globe. We discovered, for example, that our supporters who vote for us in Beirut are twenty thousand.

Proliferation of Islamic Movements

We think that the reason for the appearance of several movements dubbed "Islamic", especially the Salafist, originates in two reasons that are:

- A subjective reason arising from poverty, general ignorance, and religious ignorance too, and from lack of interest in people on the part of [political] regimes and clerics, add to this the suppression which is coming late to stem these groups, and which these groups are exploiting as being suppression of Islam;
- An external reason linked to the collapse of the Soviet Bloc, and the conflicts that flared in the region especially the American assault, in addition to the raising of the issue of the Shiite Crescent which is a political rather than a doctrinal one.

There are also many movements that are financed and manipulated from the outside, and act as a front for other things.

Sheikh Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah

Islamic erudite and Shiite Authority

Interviewed in two stages on November 18, 2008, and December 22, 2008 in Haret Hrayk in Beirut Southern Suburb

His opinion on the doctrine that should be adopted by the Islamic movements

It is natural to attribute the Islamic quality to any movement whose method is supposed to commit and open itself to the fundamental terms in the Islamic constants. In this light, when we study the Islamic texts in the Book (Qur'an) and the Sunnah (sayings and doings of the Prophet), we notice that the Islamic line affirms the recognition of *the other*, hence the verse that asserts the "word common" with the people of the Book, and that emphasizes the points of agreement with the people of principle Say: ***"People of the Book! Come now to a word common between us and you, that we serve none but God, and that we associate not aught with Him"***. Despite the fact that the people of the Book and the Muslims disagree on God's attributes. Trinity and unity are both faith-bound matters that are unfathomable to reason. The Islamic principle exists based on the common basis and ground. As to details, they must be discussed through dialogue ***"Dispute not with the People of the Book save in the fairer manner"***. Islam means surrendering reason, heart, and feeling to God.

The clearest verse in giving us an idea about the Qur'anic manner and method is ***"Not equal are the good deed and the evil"***, the good deed is the peaceful manner, and the evil is the violent one.

"Surely either we or you are upon right guidance or in manifest error".

The truth is lost between us, I mean between the People of the Book, and we have to accompany each other to unravel truth, this state is the highest reached by the manner of dialogue.

"And dispute with them in the fairer manner". When we call for dialogue, we do not impose our view on *the other* by violence, as Islam is accused. Islam asserts on the basis of word, i.e. the word in its [right] place and the stance in its [right] place, and giving the idea in the way that opens up your mind and heart.

As to the way of the Sunnah (the Prophet's sayings and doings), the Prophet said, "Gentleness was never put on anything without embellishing it, and never pulled away from anything without disgracing it".

The Qur'an and the Sunnah open up to the *other* in the sense that it (sic) aims at the peaceful manner that tries to attract *the other* by opening his mind and heart and respecting his humanity in the human elements where a human can meet a human. Numerous Muslims do not live this method, because they choose the verses that talk about violence, and specifically about the details of combat, and do not understand these verses. The latter verses incite Muslims to use all available instruments to overcome the infidels "***And fight in the way of God with those who fight with you, but aggress not: God loves not the aggressors***". Muslims who adopt violence misunderstand Islam.

His opinion about the discrepancy between the political and religious objectives of Islamic movements

The crux of the problem is the existence of many Islamic *ijtihad* (independent judgment in legal or theological questions) in understanding the texts, on the one hand, and understanding reality, on the other. Islamic movements may differ in their *ijtihad*; some consider that the peaceful manner may be expressed in the political manner in solving a problem, such as solving the problem with Israel with peaceful means.

From the religious standpoint, the aim is the same with all Islamic movements; it is defending Islam, and the lives of Muslims in the economic, political, and security aspects. The *ijtihads* are in the means not in the principle.

His opinion in viewing *the other*

It is very natural that the basis from which the Islamic movements must start is the Book (Qur'an and the Sunnah), because both represent the two fundamental sources in giving Islamic thought, and in the relationship between man and himself, and his Lord, and *the others*. Man's view of *the other* moves in two circles that are: the circle of recognizing *the other* and opening up to him through the line of dialogue, meeting, and standing on the same ground, and this is what we read in the verse "Say: "***People of the Book! Come now to a word common between us and you [...] and do not some of us take others as Lords, apart from God***". There are minor

differences between the People of the Book and the Muslims about the details of the issue of [God's] Unity. However, the above verse focused on the general line that is [God's] Unity. It also considered that man cannot be another man's Lord, and that man by the status of his humanity cannot elevate himself above the other man. And the following verse *"Dispute not with the People of the Book save in the fairer manner, except those of them that do wrong"; and say, "We believe in what has been sent down to us, and what has been sent down to you; our God and your God is one"* confirms the matter of dialogue between Islam and *the other*, even of those who are not the People of the Book *"Surely either we or you are upon right guidance or in manifest error"*. The second circle when he enters with others in tracing the genealogy of the idea. In this respect comes the issue of knowledge. This is what we notice in the verse *"They are unbelievers who say, God is the Third of Three, no god is there but One God. If they refrain not from what they say, there shall afflict those of them that disbelieve a painful chastisement."* *"The Jews say, Ezra is the Son of God, the Christians say, The Messiah is the Son of God"*. The issue is in defining your view of *the other's* thinking, as is his view of your thinking. Islam recognizes Judaism and Christianity as two religions. It considers that they perverted the Book. Islam asserts the issue of dialogue for those who have different viewpoints so that they achieve mutual understanding and unity in attitude. On this basis the relationship between the Muslims and the people of the Book was realistic even on the legal level. When The Prophet entered the Medina he made a treaty between the Jews and the Muslims (Medina Document) that asserts the rights and obligations of both Muslims and Jews.

His view of diversity in Lebanon

In Lebanon, there is no religion in the religious-political conception, but there is confessionalism and that is tribalism. There are atheists, in the Christian community, and there are atheists in the Muslim one too. That is why I consider that this reality, whether we call it diversity or otherwise, is linked to the political aspect more than it is to the religious one. The dialogue between the Sunnites and the Shiites is not in the principles of theology (sic) but in the rights of this [or that] confession in the political or administrative positions. It is meaningless to talk about a Christian-Muslim, or Sunnite-Shiite dialogue; [it must] be a Lebanese-Lebanese one. Dialogue is centered on specific position in the administration.

His View of Reform and Change

I called and still am calling for citizenship as being the principle that rules the system. The Lebanese individual should live his humanity in his country, and have the attribute of citizen, and be equal to the other citizen despite the pluralistic differences as to region, party, and religion. Citizenship makes all equal and living in a present that brings them together and a future that they make for themselves. It seems to me that there is a controversy between the confessional leaderships about numerical democracy and consociational democracy. Some of these leaderships support this and reject the other according to their political interests.

Several confessional leaderships try to play on words when they oppose the numerical democracy in the name of the consociational one, but do not commit to it. Democracy is not the best system but it is the least bad one. The issue that we must focus upon is not which of the above-mentioned democracies we want, but the issue of right and the general interest. The vote alone does not achieve the positive results for the homeland; but we have to study the truth of this vote and that it is the falsity free rightness.

His view of the Caliphate and to what extent it can be realized today

Some Islamic political parties speak about the general Caliphate. However, we do not find the adequate or objective circumstances that allow enough room to realize the idea of the Caliphate. Muslims disagree on this field. Some of them adopt the theory of *shura* (consultation/deliberation); some others choose a leader according to the majority rule; some adopt "wilayat al-faqih" (the higher jurisdiction of the Islamic jurist) i.e. he who has the experience in fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) and the economic vision to be in charge of Muslims' affairs; and some disagree with this completely. There is a controversy amongst the Muslims on the Caliphate issue.

His opinion on the political system in Lebanon

The confessional formula is the one that destroyed Lebanon and transformed it into closed positions for each denomination. The way each denomination practices its subjectivity is in having some specific clerics who move to guard the denomination in the political lines of their confessional group, so that we do not find clerics here and there through the religious values they start with from their official positions. Each denomination has a specific region, and considers the interference of the other category an intrusion in

their internal affairs. I have called the denominations in Lebanon the "Ununited States". In Lebanon we have no federation on the level of homeland, but it exists on the confessional level. And these are not organically linked to the State.

His opinion on the socio- economic situation

There is no socio- economic system in Lebanon, but there is in the mentalities of the leaderships in Lebanon a chaos that moves and tries to siege the social economic situation, especially that, in Lebanon, we lack security and the rights of poor classes. Taxes are imposed on the poor not the rich who benefited greatly from exploiting public places. Some of those who gave birth to those who are leading Lebanon today have worked to improve their wealth through exploiting their political positions and subjecting the laws to their corporations and properties. This is something that not many people talk about.

His opinion on globalization and privatization

Privatization necessitates consideration, for it may have its positive aspects. Privatization may make any project more profitable for people because it enters commercial competition. However, we fear that it sieges the needs of the Lebanese people and neglects to consider their circumstances. The official public situation might attenuate the burdens of livelihood, and that is something that private companies are not likely to do in case privatization is implemented.

We must remember here that corruption is the large sweeping title of all issues in Lebanon, whether they are religious, economic, or social or other...

As to globalization, I believe that there is no globalization system in Lebanon. Globalization has extensions in the economic reality in which great powers set out to exploit the resources of smaller countries. The political domination is one tool of economic domination. Lebanon is a small dot and has no natural resources.

His opinion on the concept of homeland

It is very natural, in the human sense, for man to live the commitment to his homeland since it represents the motion of his life in the domains provided by this homeland, whether in his geographic affiliation or life conditions. There is a saying by Imam 'Ali, "No land is worthier of you than your land, the best land is the one that shoulders you." Homeland is a mission that we have to implement so this will be a homeland for man, and not for those who exploit homeland's resources for their own calculations.

His opinion on non-Lebanese Muslims

As to non-Lebanese Muslims, when we adopt Islam as a way and mode of action, we must move Islamically worldwide "*we have sent thee not, except to mankind entire, good tidings to bear, and warning; but most men do not know it.*" But we must start from an objective consideration of the reality of the motion of Islam on the ground in each country, and not restrict it within the boundaries of a specific territory. It must be considered according to the world line from the standpoint of the general lines, and then consider each Muslim country.

His opinion on the positive and negative factors affecting the action of Islamic movements in Lebanon

In Lebanon the factors are diverse. Some Islamic movement got lebanonized to the extent that they forgot the Islamic rule in the method by which they take their stances, for they adopted the sectarian viewpoint. In this, they departed from the general Islamic horizon and started to view things from a narrow angle through the sectarian setting. We have noticed that some of these movements try to confer legitimacy on the Arab dictatorships that provide them with money, while they pressure the peoples' freedom and exploit their resources.

His opinion on women's condition

I do not believe that there is any difference between man and woman in the human faith-bound dimension. Woman is a human being having a mind that she can develop and surpass man. She can also have the culture to understand the Qur'an and the Sunnah, and acquire the means of *ijtihad* (independent judgment in legal or theological questions). Women's mental capacities do not differ from men. A woman can lead a movement and not

just join in as member. Ever since I began my work, my primordial mission was to raise women's level and especially the Muslim ones so that they may attain their human right.

His opinion on the Islamic movements' method of teaching

The issue of criticism is one of the basic things in the Islamic way. The Qur'an is the book whose verses start from criticizing other ideas and other religions, and the Islamic reality, as is the case of pointing out the weak points that preceded the battle of Badr. The Qur'an encourages the issue of criticism. We have no objection to raise discussions on what Muslims consider as constants in order to confirm constants through discussion. There are no sanctified things in dialogue.

About inculcating the Qur'an, what is required in the Qur'an is to educate the Muslim with the Qur'an in all its beliefs, concepts, and laws. What is required in the Qur'anic culture is not to memorize the verses only but to understand them too. As to the focus on memorizing the Qur'an, the aim is to introduce the Qur'an in man's memory to enable him to follow it in his public life.

His opinion on contemporary Islamic movements

The Islamic movement, any Islamic movement, must understand Islam in a civilization grounded way that is open to the whole world. It must seek to transform the world into something similar to paradise on Earth, and to realize a just peace where all human capabilities may bloom to produce what is beneficial for man on Earth and in space. Islamic movements must stop living the traditionality of historic thinking and develop *ijtihadi* thinking that is open to the culture of the Book (Qur'an) and the Sunnah.

Islamic movements must refrain from imprisoning themselves in the undersized cell of sectarianism, and recognize the *other* whether Muslim or non-Muslim so that they become a cultural movement opened in the line of the call, and to move politically to know well the position of the Islamic World in the international overbearing positions, and the influence of the latter in the security, culture and economy of the Islamic World. However, many of these movements live in a narrow scope and limit their activity in this narrow scope.

Hajj Mahmoud Qmaty
Member of the Political Bureau of Hezbollah
Interviewed on January 30, 2009 in Beirut Southern Suburb.

Hezbollah is a Shiite political- military organization, launched after the Israeli invasion of Beirut in 1982. It managed through its military activity to force the Israeli Army to withdraw from South Lebanon in May 2000. It is represented in both the legislature and the Cabinet.

Doctrine

We are an open and flexible Islamic religious movement that participates in politics and consider the Lebanese system as a viable and cooperative one, contrary to other Islamic movements that consider joining a non-Islamic system as *haram* (prohibited). We have a large supportive popularity.

We have relations with different states, both Arab and non-Arab, but these relations preserve autonomy and freedom of decision. All this is not contrary to our tolerant Islamic principles that drive us to dialogue with, meet, and accept the *other*. It also drives us to the kind of action that leads to stability, and guarantees rights, and free, honest, and dignified life, and to what is called peace, but as we view it and not as the West views it a title for colonization.

A great deal of our work is mobilisatory, and an ideological and intellectual call to our Muslim and general milieu so that people understand our ideas, and enlightened and open-minded Islam, not the closed up and radical. Ours is the Islam that rejects accusations of infidelity and the use of blood shedding and violence as a means to achieve its ends. There is no incongruence between our political and religious courses at all.

Politics

Politically, we call for the freedom of decision and the respect of peoples' will in what is called democracy. The USA and the West in general heavily pressured our peoples to spread democracy. However, when this democracy propels Islamic parties to power, we see them strike at them and booby trap them (as is the case of Algeria and Hamas in Palestine...). We believe that the peoples of this region must be left to freely decide and freely choose their rulers and leaders.

As to the membership of non-Lebanese in Hezbollah, we have no objection on condition that they are present on the Lebanese arena. We do not operate on foreign arenas, and consider that popular support abroad without organization is better than it would be with an organization, because organization creates handicaps, problems, and complication with the foreign arenas and other state.

We operate on the Lebanese arena; as to the persons present on the Lebanese territory and holding non-Lebanese nationalities, we have no objection against their joining Hezbollah if they are compatible with our political and intellectual leanings. Our composition is Islamic, for that reason we created for those Lebanese who do not embrace Islam and want to contribute in resistance with Hezbollah, a special way that is the Lebanese Squadrons.

One factor that affects our action is the fact of being exposed to multiple external pressures, chief of which is the mobilization of the regimes and some parties in Lebanon against the setting of resistance without any objective, national, or logical justification. However, we deal with this fact in a flexible way sometimes and in a harsher way when things get to the red lines. As long as things do not reach the point of confronting the resistance weapons, and the resistance body, we deal with openness, flexibility, patience, and tolerance to safeguard the continuation of the project. Another negative influence, for example, is the harassment of our brethren abroad, especially in the expatriate Lebanese communities to stop them from supporting resistance financially or organizing any supportive event. These things increase our readiness and popularity. The most important thing that we faced was the attempt to ignite civil strife. But, thank God, it failed and finished and we managed to overcome it in Lebanon. Any other attempt to reignite it will also fail.

There are also some positive factors, one of which is the support provided by some states to resistance, either because they have an interest in it, or because they believe in the project. In addition, there are the free peoples of the world and the Arab and Islamic masses, even some Jews support the resistance and respect it. This is something very positive, because it makes the Arab and world public opinion pressure the government having the official decision.

As to the relations with *the other*, we respect the *other's* opinion and believe in dialoguing with him no matter how much he disagrees with us in belief, politics, an intellectual understanding. We in Hezbollah believe that we are amongst the most flexible and open to *the other* in Lebanon.

As to diversity in Lebanon, this is the typical thing about it. We respect diversity in Lebanon, value it and consider it a wealth. It is important to exploit this diversity for Lebanon's benefit, if we can reach- on the Table of National Dialogue- to common denominators and shed aside foreign custody in all its forms. Then, I believe that we can succeed. We deal in commerce with all people and not only the Muslim or the Shiite.

As to the relationship with the State, the Lebanese system is a faulty and decaying one. We call for building the strong, just State that relies on constitutional institutions that respect laws and regulations, and where the citizen is respected as such, and not due to any other reason. We are against the existence of the Lebanese entity as a confessional entity.

There is an imbalance in the emergence of Lebanon because it was established by a foreign colonizing power on the basis of confessional entities that are the cause of the recurrent instability and wars in Lebanon. Regrettably, this system requires modification through an internal consensus free of external interferences. But we still have mentalities that still hold on to confessional entities, because they think that they would have no role without these confessional entities. I believe that we need a long time to reach a system with a new form.

As to the homeland, we believe, from an Islamic perspective in the international homeland, but the reality is that there are homelands. When you join the Lebanese system -a non-Islamic system- you believe that Lebanon is a definitive homeland for all Lebanese, unless there are new circumstances, outside the Lebanese arena, which may lead to a certain union, then we opt for any project that proposes a larger State.

As to the Caliphate, we call for an Islamic State. Today there are two such states in Iran and in Sudan. We see that these two models work on developing the concept of an Islamic State, and they do not seek to expand or to impose this system on *others*, because no Islamic State can be established but according to the wish and agreement of people, and not through imposition. As to Lebanon, we cannot establish an Islamic State

because of the existing diversity and the agreement of the Lebanese people on the form of the system in their homeland.

As to reform and change, we opt for the abolition of the confessional system, and of political confessionalism, but gradually and without causing a civil war. As to reform, all State institutions need reform, including the judiciary. As to the present electoral law, i.e. that of 1960, it does not fulfill our ambitions, we call for proportionality in the Muhafazat (Governorate) for the time being, provided we reach one single circumscription with proportionality, and lower the voting age to 18 years.

Economically, the situation is bad because of the indebtedness that we live in Lebanon, and because of the wrong policies that led the situation to a very bad state of affairs. But the Lebanese citizen is patient and steadfast and is still resisting despite all the pain. We try to provide as much social and educational assistance as we can, but the whole people are regrettably subject to a very bad economic condition.

Corruption is protected by confessionalism. When you try to fight corruption and hold a certain personality accountable, this personality takes refuge in his confession, even if he committed all sorts of corruption.

As to globalization, we cannot take a sweeping positive or negative stance. Globalization has its positive aspects such as cultural and technical exchange; it also has some negative aspects such as the things that come to us from outside and are contrary to our beliefs and traditions.

As to privatization, we are neither for nor against in general. We have a stance concerning each case, and our standard is its compatibility with the interest of the Lebanese people and State. Water and electric power cannot be privatized because they are for all people.

Our relation to the State depends on the project of the latter; we define our attitude regarding it accordingly. We think that the State must be strong, stable, and immune, and its laws respected. As we take part in the State today, we work for achieving such a State through the Table of Dialogue and consensus building amongst the Lebanese.

Work on the Ground

Our educational institutions work earnestly, and they possess a great experience not only with Hezbollah, but also among most Islamic schools, and our institutions cover most of the Lebanese territory. We adopt modern methods in teaching in addition to catechism that occupies 10% of the entire school curriculum, and that is in keeping with our Islamic line. There are sessions for habilitating and training teachers, and dealing with other non-Islamic institutions for cooperation in the educational field. There is also conversance in the latest educational ways abroad. Religion calls for science, nay for the latest scientific achievements. A number of our schools and Islamic schools in general rank first in the official exams. We adopt the centrality of the student in teaching. Our schools do not rely on instructing; and our teachers take special sessions on how to deal with students, and we achieve great success at that. We adopt sound educational psychology that we consider essential in teaching and education.

Even in catechism and memorizing the Qur'an, we adopt the modern ways in addition to retention and instruction. From the religious viewpoint, we can adopt any method that leads to the desired result.

As to recruitment, we have media outfits, such as a TV channel, newspapers, magazines, and a broadcasting station, in addition to internal mobilization in mosques, Husaynias, and cultural centers. We also have educational mobilization in universities and schools, in addition to sports teams and boys scout. We use all mobilization means to convey our idea.

We address each category in a way and a discourse that is compatible to their age and sex.

As to women, they participate in most Hezbollah's activities, except those that are incompatible with femininity and the respect due to woman's status, such as doing battle on the ground, despite the fact that there is no Islamic legal impediment to women's participation in *jihad*, but there is no need for that today. Apart from that, women take part in all cultural, media, social, economic roles side by side with men.

As to funding, we rely on income-generating projects. We started that a long while ago. More than 70% of these projects are very successful and yield good returns to the party. Add to this donations and contributions from supporters and people.

Proliferation of Islamic Movements

We believe in the necessity of Islamic- Islamic dialogue amongst all, including the Salafists. This dialogue has begun indeed. If we are open to non-Muslims then a fortiori should we be open to Muslims, including the *Takfeeryin* (accusers of infidelity); by the way, we are absolutely against the accusation of infidelity, the Muslim should not be accused of infidelity.

The present Islamic setting is due to despairing about the other theses. This drove people to Islam as a savior, but regrettably some of them went astray, and some understood the crux of things while taking the right path. We summarize the causes of the proliferation of Islamic movements as follows: the disappearance of the Soviet Union, the Islamic Revolution in Iran, and the American assault on our region. Today we are witnessing the golden age of the Islamic movements.