

# ***Zürcher Beiträge***

*zur Sicherheitspolitik und Konfliktforschung Nr. 70*

Doron Zimmermann

## **Tangled Skein or Gordian Knot?**

**Iran and Syria as State Supporters  
of Political Violence Movements  
in Lebanon and in the Palestinian  
Territories**

Hrsg.: Andreas Wenger

Forschungsstelle für Sicherheitspolitik  
der ETH Zürich

# Contents

Preface	5
Abstract	7
List of Terms and Abbreviations	9
<b>I SETTING THE STAGE: IRAN, SYRIA AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE MOVEMENTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST</b>	<b>11</b>
1.1 General Background on Support for PVMs by Iran and Syria	15
1.2 Background on Iranian support for PVMs Since the Revolution of 1979	15
1.3 Background on Syrian support for PVMs under Hafez and Bashir al-Asad	18
1.4 Geo-strategy and Power in the Middle East: Iran and Syria Between Regional Aspirations and Isolation	22
1.5 The Palestinian Territories and Lebanon as Operational Theaters of Iranian and Syrian Supported PVMs	33
<b>2 IRAN AS A STATE SUPPORTER OF PVMs</b>	<b>57</b>
2.1 Iranian State Institutions Tasked With Implementing Policy Involving PVMs in Lebanon and the Palestinian Territories	58
2.2 Iranian PVM Clients: Who's Who?	63
2.3 The Nature and Extent of Iranian Support for PVMs	67
2.4 The Long-Term Strategic Objectives of Iranian Support for PVMs	71
2.5 U.S. Policy on Iran's Support for PVMs	74
2.6 Israeli Policy on Iran's Support for PVMs	78
<b>3 SYRIA AS A STATE SUPPORTER OF PVMs</b>	<b>83</b>
3.1 Syrian State Institutions Tasked with Implementing Policy Involving PVMs in Lebanon and the Palestinian Territories	87
3.2 Syrian PVM Clients: Who's Who?	90

3.3	The Nature and Extent of Syrian Support for PVMs	95
3.4	The Long-Term Strategic Objectives of Syrian Support for PVMs	98
3.5	U.S. Policy on Syria's Support for PVMs	102
3.6	Israeli Policy on Syria's Support for PVMs	108
4	THE LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES OF IRANIAN AND SYRIAN SUPPORT FOR PVMs: TANGLED SKEIN OR GORDIAN KNOT?	113
	Bibliography	119