Conceptualizing security in the Middle East: Israel and a Palestinian state

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IN A WORLD that has recently undergone seismic change with the collapse of the Cold War and is still uncertain as to the ramifications of the New World Order, it is scholars who have become of key importance to developing theories or paradigms to comprehend changing relationships in the international arena. Novel concepts gain acceptance within the academic community as they attract contributors to their intellectual development and proponents who urge their utility for policy makers. For the careful scholar, the worth of any new conceptualization must be proven through testing, typically by applying it to factual situations in defined periods, and comparing its explanatory power against competing theories. For the prudent policy maker, the validity of any novel construct or worldview lies in its utility for making effective choices among competing policy options. If ultimately successful, these analytical constructs will create questions and goals that develop agendas for both policy makers and academics.

The novel paradigm proposed for conceptualizing 'national security' uses an *integrated* approach that should prove useful for both academics and policy makers in one of the more turbulent regions in the world, the Middle East (Martin, 1999).¹ This chapter will outline the paradigm and apply it to a preliminary analysis of the national security of Israel and a nascent Palestinian state, *vis-à-vis* each other.²

The concepts

What is the new paradigm, and why call it an integrated approach? At the heart of every definition of national security is the concept of threat – and the concomitant three questions: what are the kinds of threats faced, what are their sources, and what are their targets? The two general approaches to answering those questions in the discipline of political science, or the subdiscipline of security studies, are those of the realists (or neorealists) and the liberals (or

neoliberals). For the realists, threats are predominantly military threats; their sources are primarily external states; and their targets are the state, either at its boundaries, i.e. its territorial integrity, or at its core, i.e. its very existence or sovereignty. For the liberals, the threats include military and non-military threats, indeed ranging widely to economic, environmental and ideological threats; their sources are external nations and transnational groups, as well as internal groups; and their targets are not merely the State, but its inhabitants as well.³

The problem with the realist approach to conceptualizing national security was vividly demonstrated by the implosion of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. None of these events had been predicted or were predictable from the realist focus on the military balance of power and the mutual deterrence policies of the global superpowers. The problem with the liberal theorists is that, by avoiding the realist practice of explaining too little, they seek to explain too much. There are too many variables, with inter-relationships too complex for policy makers and scholars to take into account and to prioritize in order to produce policy guidelines or powerful explanations.

Dissatisfaction with realism and liberalism led to the development of alternative approaches to conceptualizing national security (see Walt, 1998; Katzenstein, 1996).⁴ One of these third approaches has been favoured by scholars of developing-world international politics, who are aware of the inadequacies of the global or Western orientation of realism and liberalism. These include Ayoob 1995; Korany, Noble and Brynen 1993; Buzan 1991; Azar and Moon 1988. This third approach accepts the need for military security, but focuses on a few non-military factors that address the threats to the fragile economies and unstable internal politics of developing nations. Thus Buzan 1991: 116–34 offered five ‘sectors’ or types of threats: military, political, societal, economic and ecological (or environmental).⁵ Ayoob (1995: 8) emphasized ‘political security’, recognizing threats emanating from a range of variables.

Where the novel paradigm differs from this third approach is in its selection of a set of components of national security that can be treated as variables and integrated. Thus, national security is treated as a dependent variable – the result of the interaction of a set of five integrated independent variables. Integration is critical to deriving the explanatory power from the interactions of this limited set of variables. It is also necessary in order to derive policy prescriptions from an analysis of the consequences of these interactions. Without an integration of these variables, the analyst presents merely a list of ‘factors’ or ‘aspects’ of national security to the researcher or policy maker. This is much like giving a chef a recipe with only a list of ingredients but without instructions on quantities and how to mix them.

In creating a paradigm, one must first determine the level of analysis at which it will operate. The choices in the field of international relations are

global, regional, statal, societal and individual. The novel paradigm selects the state, still the predominant level of analysis within the field (Carlo, 1998).⁶ How then do we define the state? The state has three components: territory, society and regime (Halliday, 1987).⁷ Each of these components of the state can be the target of threats. National security, therefore, as a dependent variable, represents a continuum. At one extreme, a wholly insecure state faces threats to the continuing existence of its territory, society and regime – for example, Lebanon during the civil war in the mid-1970s and early 1980s, or Kuwait facing Iraqi attack in August 1990. At the other extreme, a more secure state has very few threats or it has the capability to deter most such threats – some would give the United States as the example; but, in any event, there are no such secure states in the Middle East today.

What, then, are the critical variables that enable a state to deter threats to its territory, society and regime, i.e. provide it with a greater degree of national security? Clearly a state needs military capabilities. It also needs four other types of capability: political legitimacy; ethnic and religious tolerance; economic capabilities; and available essential natural resources.

Why not include other variables discussed in the liberal literature, such as population growth rates, population migrations, environmental hazards, or even diffusion of knowledge and technology (Holsti, 1995: 43)? Certainly these variables contribute to the pressures on regimes and societies, and the territories they occupy. However much they affect human security, they are not independent variables that directly affect the national security of the state in the same way as the five variables selected for the paradigm.

On the other hand, there may be some regional bias in the selection of the five variables. States in other regions of the globe may not face threats to the same degree within certain variables, such as political legitimacy or economic capabilities in the established democracies in Europe. Only regional and ultimately global testing of the paradigm will provide a real measure of the value of the selected variables. In the meantime, their use at least for the Middle East region can be tested. What is the utility of the paradigm, accordingly, for security relations between Israel and a Palestinian state?

Applying the paradigm in the context of Israel and a Palestinian state

Adopting the state as the level of analysis creates a problem for exploring the national security of the Palestinian entity, which at time of writing has not achieved *de jure* recognition as a state. Still, the nascent Palestinian state, represented by the Palestinian Authority (PA), is clearly an international actor; however, the PA's status is uncertain in the face of the collapse of the peace process.⁸ The peace process reached a crisis in the latter part of 2000 and the winter of early 2001 when Palestinians and Israelis were unable to resolve

final status issues, and the second *intifada* broke out.⁹ If the peace process were to collapse completely, without likelihood of revival, it may still be possible to refer to a Palestinian state, even if there were no PA. However, it would be difficult to predict the territorial reach of that state. Similarly, it would be difficult to predict the nature of the regime that might emerge as a result of a final collapse of the peace process. Currently, the PA is governed by the autocratic regime of Yasir Arafat with the assistance of the ruling elite within his dominant party, *Fatah*, and within the larger Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) (Rubin, 1999: 4–26; Robinson, 1997a: 177–88). However, Arafat is over 70 and at times ailing. He has not formally designated a successor. And, although the likely contenders for power after Arafat are within the ruling elite of *Fatah* and the executive committee of the PLO, there is no assurance that one of the contenders, or a group of the elite, will come to power or will succeed in continuing in power in the face of strong challenges from outside the ruling elite.¹⁰

On the other hand, it is still reasonable to assume that at some point in time a Palestinian state will emerge within the territorial boundaries of the West Bank and Gaza. For the national security analyst, this hypothetical Palestinian state raises the issue as to how it will preserve its own security, and what will be the impact of a Palestinian state on Israeli national security?¹¹

The paradigm will be used to generate answers to those national security policy issues. First, however, let us explore how conceptualizing the national security of a proto-Palestinian state as well as Israel, *vis-à-vis* each other, can be used to demonstrate the utility of the variables integrated with the paradigm.

The five variables

Political legitimacy

Political legitimacy is defined herein as the willingness of the society to obey the authority of its regime. Regimes seek to inculcate legitimacy in a number of ways, most commonly by associating the regime with the state and inculcating loyalty to the state with the symbols of patriotism and nationalism, such as flags, anthems and political myths.¹² To maintain their legitimacy, all regimes must be viewed by the society as providing effective government, and, in the case of revolutionary regimes, as achieving the goals of social change. For example, a revolutionary regime would be expected to liberate its society from the vestiges of colonial or pre-revolutionary social oppression. There are multiple Middle Eastern examples here, from the revolutionary Arab nationalist regimes that replaced monarchies with autocracies in Egypt, Syria and Iraq, to the Khomeini regime that installed a theocracy in Iran, and to the Atatürk regime that installed democracy, albeit of a uniquely praetorian model, in Turkey.

If the society comes to view the regime as delivering ineffectual or corrupt government, or, as might be the case with revolutionary regimes, failing to achieve declared goals, the regime will face serious challenges from vocal critics and political rivals offering alternative theories of political legitimacy. To counter such risks, the regime may adopt even more authoritarian measures to suppress dissent and engage in more rampant corruption to sustain loyalty among its supporters and co-opt its opponents. Ultimately, without sufficient political legitimacy, regimes may collapse, revolutions occur, and states succumb to outside conquest.

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The Arafat regime, after the PLO's return from Tunis and the establishing of the PA after the Oslo Accords in 1993, faces substantial challenges to its political legitimacy. It has generated considerable criticism for ineffectual and corrupt government (see Robinson, 1997).¹³ The regime often seeks to defend itself for its inadequacies by laying blame on Israel for imposing restrictive economic measures and demanding the apprehension of terrorists. On the other hand, the regime depends for much of its income on foreign subsidies, some of which may be siphoned into private pockets; and it has organized its delivery of governmental services to maximize patronage and in ways that foster corruption. These include establishing governmental monopolies on basic commodities and requiring multiple licenses for goods and services, all of which lend themselves to exploitation for personal gain.

Furthermore, as the leadership of a revolutionary movement, the Arafat regime was expected through the peace process to fulfil the aspirations of the Palestinians for liberation from Israeli occupation and full sovereignty for a Palestinian state over all of the pre-1967 West Bank and Gaza. However, during the final status negotiations, the various compromises that would have been required to conclude peace looked to many Palestinians as if those goals would be thwarted (Shikaki, 1998). These compromises included the need to satisfy the Israelis' concerns for strategic access through the West Bank and Gaza through Israeli-controlled routes and the preservation of large swathes of Israeli settlements that would have undermined the full sovereignty of a Palestinian state. Other apparently intractable issues included the right of return for Palestinian refugees and the sharing of sovereignty over the holy places in Jerusalem. Palestinian opposition to the continuation of the peace process intensified, and Arafat may have held back from full participation in the process after January 2001 in order to shore up the legitimacy of the regime in the face of such opposition (Sayigh, 2001: 47–60).¹⁴

There are four principal sources of opposition to the Arafat regime that can take advantage of its ineptitude and corruption, or its failure to achieve Palestinian aspirations to build support within Palestinian society, and so

challenge its political legitimacy. One consists of factions inside of *Fatah* and the PLO that have rejected the peace process. Within *Fatah* these range from senior, old-line, officials, such as Faruq Qaddumi, who refuse to return to the West Bank and Gaza while any areas remain under Israeli occupancy, to more militant armed groups which seek to fill the vacuum of leadership in providing local security or attacking Israel (Robinson, 2000; Roy, 2001).¹⁵ Outside of *Fatah*, but within the PLO, the rejectionists include the leftist nationalist opposition consisting predominantly of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) (Shikaki, 1998: 30–1).

A second source of opposition to the regime consists of radical Islamists, primarily *Hamas* and *Islamic Jihad*, which also challenge its secularism and offer a competing set of legitimacy principles based upon Islamic precepts.¹⁶ A third source of opposition to the Arafat regime emanates from the so-called 'insiders': Palestinians who participated in the first *intifada* of 1987–93 before the return of the PLO from Tunis. Insiders who have not been co-opted by the regime resent its favouring the returnees from Tunis (see Robinson, 1997a: 19–37, 94–131, 174–88). Finally, there are challenges from those demanding increased democratization – Western educated or influenced elites (see Brown, 2000: 25–43).¹⁷

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The breakdown of the peace process and the second *intifada* has had a similar impact on challenges to the Israeli regime. Although Israel has a more entrenched democracy than the Palestinian state, the regime has been vulnerable to violent incidents initiated by political extremists opposed to the peace process. These are exemplified by the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin in November 1995 and ongoing settler violence against Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. Still, the divisions among Jews within Israeli society over the peace process that have led to a quick succession of coalition governments have not created fundamental opposition to the democratic regime itself.

On the other hand a potential source of opposition to the regime arises from the increased politicization of Israel's Palestinian population, almost 20 per cent of its total population.¹⁸ The political leadership within this population has been fragmented among the Israeli Communist Party, Arab nationalists, Islamists and others, and displays varying degrees of acceptance of the political legitimacy of a democratic regime that discriminates against Arabs in what is self-defined as the Jewish State (Rouhana, 1997: 94–107; see Stendel, 1996: 80–147). There have been occasional violent incidents from major Israeli Palestinian protests against governmental activities, such as in the general strike opposing land expropriations on Land Day in 1976 and demonstrations on subsequent anniversaries, or the widespread demonstrations in support of the second *intifada*.¹⁹ The Israeli use of bullets to suppress the Palestinians' October 2000

demonstrations symbolized for the Israeli Palestinians their second-class status within Israel and confirmed that the regime takes the same view of them as it does of Palestinians across the so-called Green Line. As this minority population grows it is likely to become increasingly dissatisfied with its second-class citizenship, in contrast to the full rights which they expect to be afforded to Palestinians in the Palestinian state. On the other hand, it is not clear what protection for personal rights the nascent Palestinian State will develop. Nor is it clear that the PA has any interest in encouraging disaffection of Israeli Palestinians with the Israeli regime (Amara, 2000).²⁰ So the Palestinian minority within Israel could become alienated from both political communities.

Ethnic and religious tolerance

National security does not require ethnic and religious homogeneity or cohesiveness. What it does require is that differentiated ethnic and religious groups avoid internecine conflict and practise tolerance of each other's rights to exist and flourish. Yet ethnic and religious tolerance is a somewhat scarce commodity in the Middle East. In addition to the religious intolerance encountered by Jews in most Arab countries, there are numerous examples throughout the region of intolerance, such as that for (Christian) Copts in Egypt, (Shiite) Alevis in Turkey, Shiites in Saudi Arabia, and Bahais in Iran; and there is considerable ethnic intolerance for Kurds in Iraq, and to a lesser extent in Iran, Syria and Turkey, as well as for Turcomen in Iraq. Without tolerance there will be ethnic and/or religious dissension, and threats generally to the security of the state from civil strife, demands for secession, or external subversion or intervention – as occurred with the Kurdish crises in Iraq and Turkey.

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In contrast to a number of Middle Eastern states that have serious ethnic divisions, the Palestinian state is blessed with a relatively homogeneous ethnic, i.e. Arab, population. Nonetheless, the Palestinian political community does encounter challenges to its mainly secular culture from the more Islamist groups. *Hamas*, in particular, has sought to Islamize Palestinian society, offering welfare and educational programmes and other communal services, thus competing with welfare programmes offered (or not) by the PA. *Hamas* receives support for its programmes from within the Palestinian population as well as from Islamic regimes outside of the State. Iran is a potential source of support, as is its client *Hezbollah* in Lebanon, and as also are the more radical religious groups and individuals in the Gulf.

There has been, as a result, a complex history in the co-operative and competitive co-existence of the Arafat regime and *Hamas* (Mishal and Sela, 2000: 3; Rubin, 1999: 114–37; Robinson, 1997a: 149–73). Consequently,

there is considerable ambivalence over the degree of tolerance for *Hamas* that the Arafat regime will permit. During the active first years of the peace process, the risk of radicalism from *Hamas* may have made Israel more willing to negotiate with the Arafat regime. Thus, before the second *intifada*, the regime was prepared to co-operate with Israeli authorities to thwart *Hamas* terrorist attacks in Israel.²¹ However, with the degeneration of the peace process, *Hamas*, as well as Islamic *Jihad*, have been freer to engage in suicide bombings and other terrorist attacks within Israel. These attacks have stimulated Israeli retaliation that has sought to assassinate the most militant leadership of *Hamas* and Islamic *Jihad*. As much as the Arafat regime might benefit from Israel's elimination of the more militant elements of the Islamic opposition, there is still the risk that suicide bombers and their assassinated leaders would become religious martyrs and their invocation of violent means to liberate Palestinians from Israeli occupation would generate greater popularity for *Hamas* and Islamic *Jihad* within the Palestinian political community. The call by a leading *Fatah* official for inclusion of *Hamas* and Islamic *Jihad* in a unity government lends some support for the reality of this risk.²²

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Although there are social tensions between Sephardic Jews of primarily North African and Middle Eastern heritage and Ashkenazi Jews of primarily European heritage, as well as between secular Jews and the Orthodox and Ultra Orthodox, none of them has erupted into riots and terrorist activities of a kind that might irreparably rend the social fabric of the Israeli political community. Nonetheless, there is potential social rupture from the political controversy over 'who is a Jew'? This has adverse social consequences for 'non-Jews', such as non-recognition of marriages. The more the regime favours the Orthodox Jewish precepts (which limit the definition to those born of a Jewish mother), the more it will alienate sectors of society, including large numbers of Russian immigrants (Lustick, 1999: 417–33).²³

On the other hand, Israel does face ethnic and religious dissension from the over one million or so Palestinians who are Israeli citizens. They may have political rights within Israel, but they also suffer from the indignities of official discrimination in the provision of social services, the promotion of economic development, and from other laws that favour the Jews in the officially Jewish State (Rouhana, 1998: 277–96). During the active years of the peace process, the Barak government had been willing to restore greater equality of rights for the Palestinian population by returning some expropriated land, allowing legal residency in East Jerusalem to be maintained by absentee Palestinians, proposing to establish new Arab towns, and to fund improvements to the infrastructure of Palestinian areas within Israel.²⁴ However, with the degeneration of the peace process, the tough response to Israeli Palestinians' demonstration of support

for the second *intifada*, Israeli rage at terrorist bombings, the discrimination experienced by Israeli Palestinians remains. Over the long term, the superior Palestinian birth rate,²⁵ and the growing political consciousness of the Palestinian population harbingers the likelihood of increasing demands for social equality, and a potential constitutional crisis for an Israeli society that struggles to balance its egalitarian democratic principles with a predominantly Jewish identity.

Economic capabilities

It is almost a truism that states need economic capabilities to preserve their societies and, by implication, their regimes, in addition to supporting a defence budget to maintain military capabilities. Without the economic wherewithal to provide for the welfare of its society, the populace would deny its rulers their political legitimacy. As already noted, if the regime lags in providing social welfare benefits, it provides opportunities for potential dissidents to fill the vacuum and garner support. Little wonder, therefore, that in the Middle East states with weak and developing economies radical Islamic groups can flourish.

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The Palestinian economy ranks among the poorer economies of the developing world, being even below the average for the Middle East and North Africa (Roy, 2001: 15).²⁶ The basic problem for the Palestinian state has been its dependence on the Israeli economy – particularly for employment and the income that employment in Israel generated, but also for trans-shipment of any exports.²⁷ Because of Israeli security measures, Palestinian exports are more costly and so less competitive.²⁸ The weak economy also makes the West Bank and Gaza unattractive to foreign investment and highly dependent on foreign subsidies. Domestic banks prefer to invest outside of the West Bank and Gaza; enterprises within those areas are relatively small, and the labour force has not been trained for an industrializing economy. Moreover, tax collection is low and birth rates are high (Kershner, 1999: 28–9).²⁹ As a result the PA has depended on customs duties and sales taxes that the Israelis collect from goods passing through Israeli ports and borders.³⁰ The PA also depends heavily on subsidies from foreign donors.³¹ Demand for welfare services increases with the population, and may potentially increase further if large numbers of refugees return as a result of final status agreements.

By all indications, the breakdown in the peace process and Israel's harsh economic responses to the second *intifada*, that included denying tax transfers and shutting down the points of entry into Israel for Palestinian labour and goods, have almost bankrupted the PA.³² As a result, the PA has become even

more dependent on outside subsidies from the Arab world, particularly the Gulf Co-operation Council states and the European Community.³³

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The Israeli economy stands in contrast as one of the strongest in the region.³⁴ During the peace process it benefited to some degree from Palestinian labour and the small Palestinian market. With the breakdown of the peace process, Israel has turned to other sources for manual and low-cost labour. The second *intifada* severely affected the tourism sector of the Israeli economy.³⁵ Generally, the Israeli economy relies on trade and investment with and from – and because of its special relationship to – the US and the EU.³⁶ Although during the peace process there were hopes that its successful conclusion would stimulate Israeli trade relations with a number of Arab states, the crisis in the peace process ruptured these relations.³⁷

Availability of essential natural resources

Critical to a state's economic capabilities is the availability of essential natural resources such as water and energy. Territorial conflicts sometimes erupt because of a state's felt need to secure its supply of one or more essential resources. Dependence on foreign suppliers of these resources renders a state vulnerable to threats of embargo or cut-off by the supplier or by third parties. The Middle East generally has much oil and little water. But the distribution of these resources is uneven, heightening the security concerns of those states which lack them. This is certainly the case with respect to Israel and a Palestinian state. Israel and the West Bank and Gaza share three natural sources of water: the mountain aquifer; the coastal aquifer; and the Jordan Valley basin. The mountain aquifer is recharged mainly by rainfall in the West Bank and flows naturally into three basins. Two of the flows go west and north-east into Israel, and the third goes east into the West Bank (Assaf, al Khatib, Kally and Shuval, 1993: 5). The Gaza aquifer is a continuation of Israel's coastal aquifer.³⁸ Because of serious over-pumping in Gaza, the wells have become overly salinated. The water from the Jordan River basin emanates from Lebanon and Syria and flows into Jordan and Israel as well as into the Jordan Valley in the West Bank.

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By comparison with most Middle Eastern states, a Palestinian state is the least endowed. It lacks most of its essential natural resources. Because Israel controls two of the three sources of water for a Palestinian state and the flow of the third (the Jordan River) until it reaches the West Bank, the Palestinians have charged Israel with unfair consumption or diversion of this precious resource.³⁹ For example, the Israelis use a larger proportion of the available water from the

mountain aquifer, including for Israeli settlements on the West Bank, than does the Palestinian population in the West Bank and Gaza (Isaac, 2000: 20; Shuval, 1999: 2B).⁴⁰

From the Palestinian perspective, the rain water that falls on the mountain aquifer in the West Bank is their water, is critical for basic human needs, and should be under their control. The Israelis point out that much of this water from the mountain aquifer flows naturally into Israel and is tapped from the 300 or so wells west of the Green Line (demarcating the 1967 boundaries of Israel) which date back in many instances some eighty years. Yet, after 1967, Israel dug new wells for its settler population on the West Bank, while restricting the amount of water that the Palestinian population could pump (Shuval, 2000: 34 and 39). These claims echo the international legal disputes between upstream and downstream riparians over 'historic rights' and 'prevention of significant damage' – the position taken by the Israelis – and claims of 'appreciable damage' from disproportionate use by the other side – the position taken by the Palestinians.⁴¹

The Oslo II Accord established a joint commission to determine a more equitable allocation of the shared water, but the commission still has much work to do to alleviate water shortages in the West Bank and Gaza (Rouyer, 1999).⁴² Part of the problem for the Palestinians remains their inefficient and localized system for accessing and delivery of water, particularly for irrigation uses (Trottier, 1999: 99–134). Severe droughts and the second *intifada* have exacerbated water shortages, due to closures that interfere with the transport of water by trucks, and also as a result of the uncontrolled drilling of private wells and theft of water from major pipelines.⁴³ Generally, for a Palestinian state to solve the problem of its dependence on Israeli controlled water, it needs to negotiate sharing arrangements for the West Bank and to build desalination plants for Gaza, a substantial investment and strain on its economy. Furthermore, the quality of much of the water for a Palestinian state has been compromised through salination and pollution by chemical fertilizers, the treatment of which needs to be negotiated with Israel (Isaac, 2000: 18 and 29–30).

With respect to energy resources, a Palestinian state may be only slightly more fortunate, as there have been discoveries of natural gas off the Gaza coast.⁴⁴ On the other hand, Israeli control of coastal waters and the breakdown of the peace process have made it impossible for the PA to exploit these discoveries.

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Approximately 25 per cent of Israel's water comes from the mountain aquifer; 33 per cent comes from the Jordan River basin; and 37 per cent from the coastal aquifer (Shuval, 1999: 3B). During the peace process, Jordan River water

became part of the complex negotiations with Syria (Omstead, Makovsky and Stroumsa, 2000: 32; Sher, 2000: 34). To conserve agricultural water, Israeli authorities have been encouraging investment in recirculation plants, and some advocate continued reduction of Israeli agriculture as well as its water subsidies.⁴⁵ Israel's economy can also provide the investment in desalination plants required for its population and for industrial growth.⁴⁶ Israel has also been negotiating with Turkey for the purchase of water from the Manavgat, which may be realized if the importation of water proves cheaper than the costs of desalination.⁴⁷

With respect to its energy resources, Israel depends generally on imported gas and oil from global sources. One of these is Egypt, with which Israel concluded a ten-year \$3 billion natural gas deal early in 2001.⁴⁸ As noted above with respect to a Palestinian state, there have been discoveries of natural gas off the Gaza coast. Israel could proceed to develop them in the absence of peace with a Palestinian state. During the first years of the peace process, there was speculation that, if it succeeded, Israel may be able to import energy from Middle East suppliers; however, the crisis in the peace process and the second *intifada* have dashed such hopes.

Military capabilities

A state's military capabilities provide a direct measure of its ability to withstand and deter military threats from its external enemies as well as threats from groups within the state seeking a violent overthrow of its government, regime and/or social elites (as in a revolution). There are also indirect measures of a state's military capabilities. These include the somewhat intangible determination of its society to withstand violent threats. Another measure is the capability of a state to form alliances and the willingness of its allies to provide deterrence or come to its defence. Ideological conflict, for example, restricts potential alliance partnerships. Finally, there may be a willingness of a state to limit its own tangible military capabilities, or to restrain an arms race, by engaging in arms control regimes.

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During the peace process many assumed that a Palestinian state would have no armed forces and only a limited internal security force. Indeed the only serious military threat facing a Palestinian state would be from re-occupation of the West Bank and Gaza by Israel. Even if there were remote threats from surrounding Arab states, Israel has a shared interest in deterring them. Notwithstanding limitations on an internal security force, there are reports that the General Security Service (GSS) has exceeded these limitations, and most of its

components do not engage in straight police work. These various components act against opponents to the regime, and oversee border security, as well as providing personal protection to Yasir Arafat.⁴⁹ During the second *intifada*, they also engaged in armed clashes with Israeli forces. Before the breakdown of the peace process in 2000–1 there was much speculation concerning widespread importation of mainly small arms weaponry into the West Bank and Gaza, and these suspicions increased with the outbreak of the second *intifada*.⁵⁰ It is also possible that the Palestinian activists of the second *intifada* will gain some tangible support from other militant opponents of Israel, such as *Hezbollah*.⁵¹

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Israel maintains, on multiple fronts, a multi-purpose military force to deter and defend against military threats from both conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction. Israel depends upon its alliance with the US for defence budget assistance as well as strategic support in meeting these deterrence and defence goals. In the 1990s Israel has entered into military co-operation agreements with Turkey to enhance its strategic capabilities in the Middle East.

One of Israel's key strategic resources is its well-provisioned army of conscripts that will stave off a conventional attack long enough to allow the mobilization of reserves to counter the enemy force. To what extent do even lightly armed forces of a Palestinian state have the capability to interfere with that mobilization and undermine that strategy? Part of the reluctance of the Israelis to concede full sovereignty over all of the West Bank and Gaza has turned on a hard-line concern that this could prove to be a problem. Hence the hard-liners assert the need to maintain certain strategically located Israeli settlements on the West Bank that would function as guardians of mobilization routes.

Another, longer-term, possibility that would affect Israeli military capabilities would be reduction of the risks of regional conflict by tacit arms control regimes or explicit agreements on the limitation of weapons, particularly weapons of mass destruction. On the other hand, there are difficult questions that need to be addressed before such a possibility would become evident (Evron, 1999).⁵² These include the role of weapons of mass destruction in limiting war or increasing the dangers of war, and how verification of reductions in such weapons would be conducted (e.g. international or mutual verification).

Integration of the national security variables

The ways in which the five variables in the national security paradigm integrate may be illustrated by assessing the extent of the national security of a Palestinian state and of Israel, and considering the policy implications that arise from their security relations.

Assessing the security of a Palestinian state and Israel

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How much national security would a Palestinian state have and how will this affect its relations with Israel? On all dimensions of the national security paradigm, a Palestinian state would appear to be tremendously insecure. There are multiple challenges to the *political legitimacy* of the autocratic regime of Yasir Arafat. These range from general claims of ineptitude and corruption to specific challenges from rejectionists of the Oslo Accords within *Fatah* and the PLO, as well as *Hamas* and Islamic *Jihad* who reject peace with Israel and decry the secularism of the regime. Challenges also arise from 'insider' resentment of PLO favouritism for the Tunis 'outsiders' and from democratic elite opposition to the authoritarianism of the regime. The more that the Islamist groups gain in popularity, particularly by supplying social welfare and educational programmes which the regime is incapable of providing, the greater will be the challenge to the society's *tolerance for religion*, in the sense of respect for flexible interpretation of Islamic doctrine, respect for secularism, and nondiscrimination against non-Moslems. Palestinian *economic capabilities* are feeble, which would leave the state dependent on foreign support and on Israeli economic co-operation that can be handicapped by Israel's security measures. This economic insecurity contributes to the inefficiency and corruption of the regime, giving all its opponents further opportunities to undermine its political legitimacy, and extending its Islamic opponents' opportunities to gain public support for a more religious polity. Furthermore, the lack of water and, to a lesser extent, of energy resources, both *essential natural resources*, would increase the economic burdens of a Palestinian state. In particular, a Palestinian state would be highly dependent on Israel's willingness to share control over water sources. And the feeble economic capacity of a Palestinian state would render solutions to its water dependence, such as desalination plants, unaffordable. The inadequacy of Palestinian water supplies will also inhibit development of its economic capacity through agricultural and industrial growth and will make the regime even more vulnerable to challenges to its political legitimacy as demands for water increase with population growth. A Palestinian state would have very limited *military capabilities*. Its feeble economy and its security relations with Israel hamper its ability to improve these capabilities or even to impede the distribution of arms to potential opponents of the regime.

In sum, a Palestinian state will be highly vulnerable to security breakdowns that involve civil strife. These would include violent succession struggles as opponents to the regime take advantage of its lack of political legitimacy to promote competing principles of legitimation in their struggle for power. Civil strife might also erupt as the regime seeks to repress challenges from more popular Islamic militants or through civil disobedience arising from economic

deprivations, including lack of water. The military capabilities of such a weak Palestinian state may be inadequate to effect the quick restoration of civil order.

ISRAEL

Even though Israel enjoys a far higher degree of national security than would a Palestinian state, in this Israeli–Palestinian context it also experiences an interactive set of security concerns that arise from the large group of Palestinian citizens within Israel and a Palestinian state across most of its borders. If discrimination against Palestinian-Israelis continues, this *lack of ethnic tolerance* will increase their dissatisfaction and encourage more extreme responses, including challenges to the *political legitimacy* of the regime as the proponent of the Jewish State. In its most extreme form, such dissension would also create a potential diversion of Israeli *military capabilities*. This potential diversion would become even more serious for Israeli security if it occurs at the same time as military conflict in the wider Middle East. Sharing its scant water supplies, an *essential natural resource*, with a Palestinian state increases the cost of alternative water sources, such as desalination or imports from Turkey, and will have an impact upon Israel's *economic capabilities*.

In reality, Israel possesses a substantial extent of national security, at least when considered in terms of its relations with a Palestinian state that Israel will clearly dominate by demanding the latter's demilitarization, controlling much of its water supplies and being able to impact upon its economy.

Policy implications

Generally, the policy implications of the integrated national security paradigm for any state require decision makers to integrate their domestic and foreign policies, as well as their defence policies. Devising national security policy that concentrates on military defence does not necessarily optimize the national security of a state (Martin, 2000). What, then, are the policy implications for the regime of a very weak Palestinian state that is vulnerable to social and political breakdowns, and for the regime of a dominant Israel in relation to such a weak state?

A Palestinian state

Even after the establishment of a Palestinian state, as posited in this paper, its regime is likely to face challenges from political segments that adamantly reject the peace and propose more militant relations with Israel. The regime will therefore need to shore up its political legitimacy, at least among the non-rejectionist segments of Palestinian society. To do so, it would need to

operate in less authoritarian ways, constrain corruption and increase regime effectiveness. By gaining more popular support, the regime could bid for better relations with its dominant neighbour without becoming vulnerable to challenges to its political legitimacy from rejectionist opponents. Improved relations would increase the state's economic capabilities and essential natural resources, particularly water, hence reinforcing the effectiveness of the regime and feeding back to bolster its political legitimacy. If the regime is incapable of ruling honestly and effectively, the state will be destined to suffer civil strife and potential collapse.

Israel

The prospect of civil strife and the collapse of a Palestinian state might, of course, be appealing to Israeli hard-line rejectionists of peace. On the other hand, that would be a highly shortsighted policy position, at least from the perspective of integrated national security for Israel. In its security relations with a Palestinian state, Israel will hardly benefit from handicapping the Palestinian economy, restricting its water supplies, or generally undermining the legitimacy of its regime. The consequences of the collapse of a Palestinian state include vulnerability to direct or indirect intervention by other Arab states, including those hostile to Israel, and the risk of a rejectionist regime being installed in the Palestinian state, be it a coalition of rejectionists or one dominated by Islamic militants. A rejectionist Palestinian regime might trigger renewed demands in Israel, particularly by its own hard-liners, for re-occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, or stimulate anti-Israeli disaffection among Israel's Palestinian population. In either situation, the diversion of military capabilities and the social disruption within Israel would undermine Israel's own national security.

NOTES

- 1 The contributions in Martin, 1999 (*New Frontiers in Middle East Security*) of many noted Middle East scholars illustrate the utility of each of the five variables used in the paradigm. More rigorous testing remains to be done.
- 2 This is the elaboration of an analysis presented by Martin as 'A Preliminary Approach to a Framework for Security for Israel and a Palestinian State' (unpublished paper), 15 April 2000, Harvard University Middle East Seminar. The paradigm has also been applied in an analysis of Turkish national security in the context of the Middle East. See Martin, 2000, and also Martin, (forthcoming).
- 3 For the most prominent advocates of the realist/neorealist and the liberal/neoliberal approaches, see Kegley, 1995.
- 4 Walt, 1998: 38, 40–1 discusses a third approach called 'constructivist' that analyzes the environment of international politics in which cultures and identity shape the development of national interests and international relationships. A limitation of the

constructivist approach is that, by focusing on ideas, it is unable to predict future ideas that may develop and shape policies and relationships.

- 5 In a later formulation, Buzan *et al.*, 1998 call the fifth sector 'environmental'.
- 6 There are international actors other than states, the most well-recognized of which are 'transnational actors' such as multinational corporations, non-governmental organizations, multilateral institutions, and organized crime. However, it is still the state that is represented in international institutions and remains the predominant actor in the international arena.
- 7 This definition follows the international relations tradition, as opposed to the sociological tradition that refers to the 'state' as the governing institution in society.
- 8 Uncertainty arises because the juridical legitimacy of the PA under the Oslo Accords was scheduled to expire in May 1999. If the authority of the PA were challenged internationally as a result of the collapse of the peace process, the Palestinians would most likely activate the self-declaration of statehood made by the Palestinian National Council in 1988. See Legrain, 1999: 6.
- 9 For the breakdown of peace negotiations by 2001 see Sontag, 2001; Malley and Agha, 2001.
- 10 See Legrain, 1999: 9–15; also Robinson, 2000: 77–90; Martin, 2002: 1–13.
- 11 A Palestinian state would also have an impact upon other states in the region, but this inquiry has been limited to the Palestinian–Israeli relationship.
- 12 For a Middle Eastern example of political myth making, in the form of a rewriting of history, see Al-Rasheed, 1999: 25–46.
- 13 One publicly highlighted articulation of such criticism appeared in the manifesto in November 1999 complaining of systematic corruption in the PA by twenty politicians and academics and stimulating an abusive reaction from the regime's security forces. See the *Mideast Mirror*, 29 November and 2 December 1999; *The Jerusalem Report*, 31 January 2000.
- 14 See also the letter of 13 January 2001 to Arafat from the National and Islamic Forces leading the second *intifada*, available online: <http://www.jmcc.org/new/01/factionlet.htm>
- 15 See Robinson, 2000: 79, referring to Qaddumi and other Fatah rejectionists; *New York Times* (hereafter NYT) 7 July 2001, A4, referring to armed groups of *Fatah* members, such as the Popular Resistance Committees; *Financial Times* (hereafter FT), 8 February 2001, describing the local anarchy and referring to Martyrs of *al-Aqsa* targeting PA officials suspected of corruption; and Roy, 2001: 17 referring to other *Fatah* militias, sometimes acting through the National and Islamic Forces that spearhead the second *intifada*.
- 16 See the Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement, 18 August 1988; Mishal and Sela, 2000.
- 17 Brown describes the frustrated efforts of this elite to write democratic principles into the new constitution for the PA.
- 18 Precise demographic statistics are difficult to obtain. Most observers consider the Israeli Arab population to be at least 1 million. See NYT, 26 January 2001, 1, referring to Israeli Arabs as 18 per cent of a population of 6 million; Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics projects an increase in the Arab population from 1 million (in 2000) to 1.4 million in 2005 out of a total Israeli population that may be 6.8–7 million, i.e. 20–20.6 per cent. Available online: http://www.cbs.gov.il/mifkad/popul00_051_e.htm (accessed 19 August 2001).
- 19 Six Arab Israelis were killed on Land Day in 1976 (Rouhana 1997: 100); and thirteen were killed in the October 2000 incident (NYT, 26 January 2001, 1).

- 20 See Internet version at <http://www.biu.ac.il/SOC/besa/meria/index.html>
- 21 NYT, 27 September 2000, 10.
- 22 FT, 7 August 2001, 3; NYT, 12 August 2001, 8.
- 23 The criteria for immigration from the former Soviet Union into Israel under the Law of Return have enabled a large number of traditionally non-Jewish immigrants to settle in Israel, which, to some, has diluted the concept of the Jewish State.
- 24 FT, 11 April 2000, 8; NYT, 7 April 2000, 1. The Israeli High Court has delegitimized the exclusion of Arab residents from Jewish communities built on state land (FT, 7 November 2000, 9).
- 25 Estimates of comparative birth rates in 1998 were: Palestinians, 4.76 per cent; Jews, 2.98 per cent. Central Bureau of Statistic, *Israel in Figures 1999*, 8.
- 26 In 1999, the figures for annual per capita GNP were \$1,600 for the West Bank and Gaza, \$2,000 for Middle East and North Africa (*West Bank and Gaza at a Glance*, 22 September 1999). One estimate for the spring of 2001 (during the second *intifada*) put Palestinian per capita income as \$1,060. A report of the United Nations special co-ordinator in the occupied territories for the end of 2000 described over one-third of Palestinians as living below the poverty line and claimed unemployment to be at 28 per cent (FT, 17 August 2001, 3).
- 27 Before the second *intifada* some 110,000 Palestinians worked in Israel, 60,000 of whom were legally registered, constituting 25 per cent of the Palestinian workforce (*Israel Line*, 23 December 1999). Because of the security measures by Israel, and from fear of being labelled as an Israeli collaborator, very few permits were given out or accepted after the second *intifada* (FT, 17 August 2001, 3).
- 28 In the first half of 2001, principally because of the second *intifada*, exports from the West Bank and Gaza shrank from over \$500 million in 2000 to practically none (FT, 22 June 2001, 7).
- 29 The population growth has been estimated as increasing from 3 million to 7.5 million in 25 years.
- 30 An estimated 60 per cent of the PA budget for 2000 (\$600 million) derived from taxes and duties collected by Israel (NYT, 6 December 2000).
- 31 Some \$4.1 billion of foreign donor support was pledged up to 1999, \$2.5 billion of which had been spent by the end of 1998; and another \$3.3 billion was pledged for the period 1999–2004 (Council on Foreign Relations Task Force Report, 'Strengthening Palestinian Public Institutions' 1999). The European Union provided more than \$1.5 billion to the PA from 1994 to 2000; the US (indirectly to Palestinian social programmes and not directly to the PA) approximately \$750 million; others, approximately \$750 million (NYT, 20 March 2001, A8). In addition, pledges were made in November 2000 by Saudi Arabia (\$250 million), Kuwait (\$150 million), the United Arab Emirates (\$150 million) and other members of the Arab League (collectively, approximately \$150 million) (NYT, 6 December 2000, A10).
- 32 *Wall Street Journal*, 20 February 2001, A15; NYT, 17 February 2001, A3.
- 33 The PA received promises in March 2001, from the Arab League, the Islamic Development Bank and the International Monetary Fund, plus transfers from Persian Gulf and other Arab states, of an aid package that would assist it to maintain its operations for six months (NYT, 20 March 2001, A8).
- 34 Israel's per capita GDP in 2000 was \$17,500 (Israeli Ministry of Finance, available online: http://www.mof.gov.il/beinle/ie/israe_1.htm).
- 35 FT, 16 March 2001, 5. Other factors impacting the Israeli economy included slowdown of the US economy and a slump in Israel's technology sector.
- 36 Israeli trade with the EU and the US represented 32 per cent and 30 per cent respectively

of its 2000 exports, and 22 per cent and 41 per cent respectively of its imports (*FT*, 16 March 2001, 5).

- 37 Oman, Tunisia, Morocco and Qatar all severed relations with Israel within two months of the start of the second *intifada* (*FT*, 10 November 2000, 8).
- 38 Assaf, al Khatib, Kally and Shuval (eds), 1993, 10.
- 39 *Ibid.*, 5–11. For the Israeli responses, see Shuval, 2000: 40–3.
- 40 Average Israeli consumption of water in 1999 was allegedly four times that of the Palestinians, and settlers in the Gaza Strip consumed seven times as much daily as did Palestinians there (*FT*, 17 July 2000, 3).
- 41 Shuval, 2000: 44–5.
- 42 See also Elmusa, 1994 for a discussion of applying international law to the negotiation of equitable sharing of water.
- 43 *Ha'aretz*, 23 May 2001.
- 44 *NYT*, 28 September 2000, A6.
- 45 *Ha'aretz*, 18 October 2000; *ibid.*, 20 March 2001.
- 46 Israel has approved the construction of two new desalination plants (*Ha'aretz*, 14 February 2001), and has contemplated investing in new reverse osmosis desalination facilities, which, although cheaper for processing water, costs three times more than natural water (*Ha'aretz*, 18 October 2000, 6).
- 47 *FT*, 7 November 2000, 4.
- 48 *NYT*, 1 February 2001, A3. Israel also has a \$300 million contract for importing Egyptian oil (*ibid.*). However, due to the second *intifada* these projects have been suspended.
- 49 Luft, 1999, 5–6.
- 50 *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 18 December 2000.
- 51 *NYT*, 15 October 2000, 11; *FT*, 13 August 2001, 2.
- 52 Evron (1999) discusses confidence and security-building measures that might be adopted to create a common security regime in the region, such as limitations on military deployments, restructuring military forces, improved communications, learning and socialization. He proposes the creation of a Centre for Conflict Management to aid this process. One of the preconditions for achieving an arms' control regime is implementation of the Israel–Arab peace process, a shared precondition for the creation of a Palestinian state.

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