Changing Israeli Security Perspectives

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Introduction

Since Israeli's founding nearly 65 years ago, its perspectives on threat and security have evolved along two meta narratives. The first was ushered in by Ze'ev Jabotinsky in the 1920s and focused on the need to defend itself from Arabs, by way of an "iron wall," and the creation of overwhelming deterrence power in order to survive. The second meta narrative, while existing in thought for some time, was more recently championed by Yitzhak Rabin in the 1990s and envisioned compromise and peace with Arabs no longer as a luxury but as a necessity with such factors as the intermingling of Israelis and Palestinians in the West Bank, Iran looming on the horizon, and a changing world order following the Cold War. The ideological tug of war between these narratives of residual Jabotinsky and residual Rabin form the basis for how Israel has perceived threat and will continue to view it in the future.[1]

Three general periods of strategic thought on Israel's national security have existed since its founding. The first period from 1948 to the early 1990s focused on the notion that overwhelming power equals security. This was the idea that security could be achieved by strength and deterrence, projection of force, technological superiority, and military force. This notion was reinforced by the belief that Israel could not rely on collective security as demonstrated by the lack of direct international military action in 1948, 1967, and 1973. The first period also included the importance of territory as a strategic buffer which was encapsulated by Moshe Dayan's famous phrase "better Sharm el-Sheikh without peace than peace without Sharm el-Sheikh." Then, with the end of the first intifada and the warming of Israeli-Palestinian relations that led to the Oslo Accords in the early 1990s, the Israeli perception of security began to equate compromise with Palestinians to security. In this second period, the idea of security through accommodation and peace reigned supreme. Notions of mutual-benefit security emerged for Israelis and Palestinians as well as security through dialogue and an ability to expand the metaphorical pie of security. The mantra became security comes through peace. Finally, the collapse of the 2000 Camp David Accords and the second intifada ushered in the third period and signaled the return to the framework of power equaling security. This guiding notion of "security without peace" returned to prominence with the idea that Israel's enemies would be forced to sue for peace due to Israel's force projection and deterrence. Israel's current conception of power and overwhelming defensive measures equaling security is premised today on a zero sum notion of security (i.e. Israelis either have security or their rivals have it). This concept can be seen through the hardening of borders and augmentation of security barriers which have, to a degree, helped Israeli security by physically keeping would-be attackers away.

This essay will analyze the dichotomy in Israeli strategic thought of security equaling strength and deterrence vice security derived through peace. It will evaluate Israeli security perspectives in the last twenty years by way of popular discourses of insecurity in the following periods: 1) early 1990s to 2000 and 2) early 2000s to today. With a finite number of security discourses applicable to Israel, the general security concepts are usually refurbished and repackaged slightly to nest in contemporary times. The narratives are showcased to the Israeli public by way of moments of illumination either in the form of major military escalation or via the debates surrounding public elections. A goal of this paper is to address how these security discourses fall from favor while others become more popular over time and how threat narratives can either anchor discourse stability or usher in new discourses. The significant changes in Israeli threat narratives today and similarities to those dramatic changes in the early 1990s could potentially point to a shift in security thought and strategic decision making. Before launching into the substance of

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Israeli threat perceptions and its application to the various security discourses, a brief introduction to this methodology is necessary for context.

Discourses of Insecurity

True to all states, threat is perceived through a prism of general security discourses. Since threats are derived from perceived weakness, it is appropriate to view these security discourses in which threats are located as discourses on insecurity. The application of this discourse taxonomy is valuable in identifying changes in threat perceptions over time and in examining multiple threat narratives within the discourses.

The five broad discourses of insecurity at the national level are: 1) invasion vulnerability which inspects the question of defense, 2) international anarchy focusing on the question of the changing international system, 3) national decline and the question of relative power or influence, 4) the clash of ideas, both internal and external, and 5) globalization and the question of control, movement of people, and technology. This taxonomy of security discourses outlines how states can perceive threat. Within each of these discourses, narratives develop over time and are anchored by specific threats. The threat narratives within the discourses of insecurity influence the perception of security within states. By examining Israel's threat narratives within the construct of these security discourses, the perceptions of threat and reasons for changing perceptions can be teased out by viewing them in context to other threats.

If a security discourse is the overarching body of discussion on a particular national security arena, one threat narrative or multiple narratives can inhabit and prop up this discourse by providing context to that discourse. Furthermore, within a threat narrative, either an individual threat or multiple threats may constitute that narrative. For example, in the globalization security discourse, issues such as states relinquishing control of technology, their borders, and the movement of people have all introduced security implications for the welfare of the state. One particular threat narrative within globalization is how military grade technology is flowing faster than ever across borders and into the hands of non-state actors. Deconstructing this threat narrative further, multiple threats exist to states within this narrative such as long range missile technology, drone capabilities, and even the possibility of nuclear weapon know-how.

The value of these five security discourses lies in how they encompass security arguments both past and emerging and allow for further examination of threat location with respect to a particular discourse. The first security discourse, centered on invasion, is the most traditional in security and threat concerns and characterizes the "enemy at the gates" conceptualization of danger and vulnerability. While geographic notions of invasion have changed with shrinking conceptions of space thanks to faster ships and planes and ballistic missiles able to strike well within a state's borders, the basic notion of an outsider entering sovereign land remains. Second, the international system provides a significant security discourse both in how states view the system and norms in which they operate and also on the types of entities with whom they interact. This systemic conceptualization of threat revolves around state interaction and alliances with other states and non-state actors. The third security discourse is concerned with the relevant standing of a state in relation to other states in the system. This could be evaluated through a series of variables such as influence, power, economics, and military force. Rise and decline of states over time has long been a source of threat as noted in power transition theories. The fourth security discourse, which is also not new, is that of competing ideas and can manifest itself both in internal disagreements such as Protestant versus Catholic religious differences in the Holy Roman Empire during the 30 Years' War and also, more globally, American capitalism versus Soviet communism during the Cold War. Finally, the newest security discourse of globalization is generally a category for emerging threats based on softening borders, a growing global economy both with respect to products and workforce, and a free flow of technology. While these five security discourses may not capture all threats that states face, they form a starting point by which to evaluate states' perceived threats based on security discourses. The balance of this essay will examine the past two decades of Israel's threats within these security discourses.

Application of Security Discourses and Changing Threat Narratives

Early 1990s-2000

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In the early 1990s, the complexion of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict changed with the growing idea that security could only be achieved through compromise. The prior mantra within Israel of security through power and deterrence was losing steam and the new approach of security through compromise and peace led by Rabin signaled a thawing to the posture of separation, unilateralism, and overwhelming power. This was a difficult break from the past for Israelis since Israel had survived and even handily defeated its aggressors while employing this security approach. However, rising challenges in the democratic administration of occupied lands, the Palestinian population rising as a source of threat, growth of powerful non state actors, increasing reach of long range missiles, and a changing international system all pointed to the necessity for compromise with the Palestinian Authority (PA) and Arab states on a Palestinian solution. Thus, the primary discourses of insecurity during the 1990s were: 1) a radically changing system and 2) the question of ideas and values.

The threat narratives of the 1990s for Israel can be attributed to a dramatically changing geopolitical and geostrategic landscape. Rabin understood that security would be achieved by a combination of peace through compromise with the Arab world and economic growth emerging from the peace dividend of new markets. These new markets such as Turkey, India, and China could be expanded to include opportunity for marketing military technology. Rabin's compromise approach was aimed at taking away Palestinian grievances and also putting the responsibility on the PA to prevent attacks on Israelis. Arafat would in effect serve as a "sub-contractor" for Israeli security.[2]

This concept of security through peace and hope for increased economic development stood in direct opposition to the desire for the expansion of Greater Israel. The settlement boom in 1991 signaled a rapidly approaching point of no return with 13,000 Israeli settler housing units built in comparison to only 20,000 units from 1968-1990.[3] Rabin understood this external environment as well as in internal, expansionist shift and demonstrated an urgency and desire in the Oslo process to seek peace and hence security through compromise. He paid for this pursuit of compromise with his life at the hands of an assassin who held the previous security vision of power, identity, growth, and separation. Rabin's peace initiative was in direct opposition to certain values of a Jewish identity which believed that giving up the West Bank meant a loss of history and rights.[4]

Question of the System: The Rise of Non State Actors and the End of the Cold War

Two primary threat narratives emerged in Israel with respect to the changing international system in the late 1990s. The first was the growing strength of non-state actors such the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), Hezbollah, and Hamas. This development provided Israel with adversaries who fought an asymmetric style of warfare. While non-state actors consolidated in the 1970s and 1980s, they achieved increased potency following the Cold War as the international system began to change. The founding of Hezbollah in 1982 and Hamas in 1987 furthered the non-state threat narrative established by the PLO and culminated with the first intifada in the late 1980s.[5] These non-state actors, while not a true force until the late 1990s, arguably posed more significant threats to Israel because they were operating within occupied territories while the IDF, like other Western Armies of the times, was better equipped to confront state actors and not an asymmetric fighting force. With the advent of the first intifada, the Palestinian people were seen increasingly as a threat due to these militant non state actors living among them.

The second threat narrative in the space of *the system* was the collapse of the Soviet Union and its impact on the Cold War alliance system and the possibility for a loss of nuclear materials. As a key ally of the United States in the Cold War, Israel was one of the most important states in the world at the time and it was treated as such. With the Soviet Union supporting Israel's Arab neighbors, the United States sustained the viability of Israel with various measures of political will and resources. Israel was arguably more powerful during the Cold War than after it ended primarily due to the loss of the Cold War chessboard on which it is was a key piece. The perceived lack of accountability of nuclear weapons in the former Soviet Union provided the systemic threat narrative where not only did the risk of loose nuclear weapons spur threats of nuclear weapon smuggling across Israel's border, but it also increased the Israeli resolve for preemptive attacks on hostile nuclear programs that may have benefitted from exiting Soviet fissile material or nuclear know-how. Whereas in the past Israel could control the development of nuclear technologies in Arab countries through kinetic attacks on facilities, the threat transitioned to that of a nuclear surprise based on lack of state accountability of nuclear stockpiles spread across former Soviet states.

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Question of Values regarding Occupied Territories

Since 1967, Israel's control of occupied territories introduced the issue of repression of Palestinians and the inherent contradictions to Western democratic values. Under Rabin, this discourse grew around the apartheid similarities of the occupied lands in Israel to that of South Africa. The prolonged control of these territories raised the problem of a clash of values between democratic principles of rights and sovereignty of non-Israelis in Israeli controlled territories on one side and the realist notions of security through increased power and expansion on the other. These disparate views on values forced the country further into disarray by, as Daniel Levy noted, viewing Palestinians through the "framework of occupation rather than human dignity," and an "ethnocentric Israel over a democratic Israel."[6]

As a growing threat to Israel, the occupied lands introduced the risk of a democratic state without a Jewish majority or, at the very least, radical transformations of the quality and character of Jewish life. The possibility existed following the 1967 War that newly acquired land could become part of Israel proper and that the inhabitants would become Israeli. If the populations in these areas comprised non-Jewish, Israeli citizens, the character of the Israeli state would change dramatically. In fact, until relatively recently, the bi-national solution was the popular solution for the land of Palestine which would have made a less-Jewish Israel a reality.

The irony of the Greater Israel movement was that the more land that fell under Israeli control, the greater the chances for non-Jews in the region living within Israeli borders. In addition to the increased likelihood for non-Jews living in this expanded Israeli space, many of the Jewish settlers moving into the West Bank in the 1990s were Soviet Jewish immigrants taking advantage easing Russian travel restrictions. The changing demographics of Soviet Jews and inclusion of Palestinians in Israeli administered lands dramatically altered the quality and character of Jewish life in the West Bank.[7] These changing demographics represented a possible threat by running contrary to the founding principles of Israel as the homeland of Jews and possibly introducing competing values.

Early 2000s-today

The past decade can be viewed as a microcosm of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict with episodic fits of violence and attempted peace. The second intifada flared up and following a period of intense fighting, Arial Sharon and Ehud Olmert began the evacuation of Israeli settlements from Gaza and parts of the West Bank in 2005. However, shortly thereafter, Hezbollah attacked Israeli troops in 2006 and started the Israel-Lebanon war. Two short years later, Israel and the PA met at the peace table again at Annapolis. This attempt failed to reach fruition partly because of the Hamas attacks in late 2008 which derailed the process and continued Israeli settlement growth. Since the Hamas attacks in 2008, and more recently in 2012, the peace process has stagnated and continued along the cycle of provocation, escalation, and delicate cease fire.

With this setting of rapidly escalating violence between Israel and the Palestinians (and their allies), several threat narratives have emerged for Israel during the last decade within the security discourses of: 1) globalization, 2) changing international system, and 3) relative Israeli decline. These narratives are, respectively, increased diffusion of technology for violence and connectivity, a vastly changing international system to include new actors, and finally, the move towards inward looking policies by Israel signaling its decreased influence on the world stage.

Question of Globalization: Technology

Globalization presented several threat narratives for Israel during the last decade. The technological threat became more acute with globalization based on the rapidity of emerging technologies. First, technology growth and exchange allowed states and non-state actors to gain access to military technology previously restricted to a few states. This new military technology in the form of long range missiles and drones allowed strikes formerly prevented by geographic distance. Only recently, Hezbollah managed to fly a drone 25 miles into Israel before the IDF was able to destroy it. While it was only a reconnaissance drone, future drones equipped with a payload of any size could increase this technology enabled threat.[8] Furthermore, Hamas recently gained the capability to hit Tel Aviv through its acquisition of smuggled long-range missiles.[9] In this sense, globalization and the rapid transfer of technological ability has substantially increased the threat by diminishing Israel's ability to control these dangerous technologies as

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it had in the past.

The qualitative technological gap has also narrowed recently to include nuclear weapons, and the Arab states and non-state actors in the region are obtaining better weapons "ironically in part facilitated by Israel's campaign against Iran."[10] This realization that the entire region is caught up in an arms race with very rich players highlights the fact that the US-Israeli qualitative military edge (QME) of the 1970s and 1980s has been obviated by money and multiple weapon producers today. While the Jabotinsky narrative pushed for a powerful Israel, the increasing strength of Israel has resulting in an arms competition by Iran which has in itself triggered an arms race by Iran's own enemies in the Middle East.

Second, this diffusion of technology in the form of social media has limited states' abilities to shape public opinion and control how people interpret reality. A more diffuse base for shaping opinion has opened a new front for Israel in the realm of international legitimacy. While international legitimacy has been a concern for Palestinians in the past, the increasing view of Zionism as racism in the international court of public opinion has been something that Israel has more recently had to consider. The more limited television and radio access in the past has given way to unrestricted growth of social media and internet access as the means of information transfer. With near zero barriers to entry, non-state actors and even sympathetic individuals can fully exploit the power of social media, and this has presented a new threat for Israel to consider when it conducts military operations. The globalization discourse and its associated rise of social media have diluted Israel's control of public opinion both in Palestine and abroad. Between Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and other social media venues, Palestinians and their supporters have been able to further their message to the world in real time. For example, in 2010 the Israeli government was caught off guard by a humanitarian force trying to get supplies into Gaza. As they were getting boarded by the IDF, they were tweeting and webcasting for the world to see.[11] In any military conflict, when new fronts open, the potential for exploitation is high and Israel has recognized this vulnerability. Case in point is how the IDF has managed to "weaponize" social media during the recent Gaza campaign in 2012 by attempting to influence and control world opinion well before Hamas was able to gain sympathy.[12] However, since the web is based on open access and availability, the threat exists for Israel to get outbid in the tweeting, webcasting, and posting arenas.

Question of System following the Arab Spring

The Arab Spring could introduce a threat to Israel by way of a consolidated pan-Arab protest. Israel's inclination of late to pursue an isolated path focused on minimizing conflict with Arab neighbors while avoiding a comprehensive Palestinian solution may be short lived. In a more democratic system in the Middle East that is better connected with social media, responsiveness to helping Palestinian plight could increase. The democratic-leaning, activist focused youth in Arab states that have seen their protests result in change, could become emboldened and focus their attention on helping Palestinians rally for statehood and equality. The fall of Hosni Mubarak and other Arab leaders who did not push for a Palestinian solution, or worse were seen as Israeli "collaborationists," could signal an increased likelihood for a grass-roots, youth movement against Israel on the part of its Arab neighbors.[13]

Another threat narrative within the vein of the changing international system is the notion of Arab solidarity with Palestinians in their struggle with Israel. As with many issues in the conflict, Arab solidarity with the PA seems to ebb and flow with the current solidarity at a high point today buoyed by Hamas' recent attacks from Gaza.[14] Certainly, in 1991 when the PA supported Saddam Hussein in his invasion of Kuwait, Arab support for the PA was at its nadir; however, it has steadily increased since then with the Hamas attacks against Israel in 2008 and 2012. Whereas in the past when Egypt and Jordan signed peace deals with Israel in 1978 and 1994, respectively, and recognized Israel's right to exist, the Palestinian question was sidelined. Today, it appears that Arab states are less inclined to embark upon bilateral negotiations with Israel as opposed to multilateral agreements that would include the PA and the UN precisely because of Israel's continued expansion in the West Bank. Israel's inward looking position on foreign policy security matters and intransigence over the past four years regarding settlements is both a cause for this stalemate and a symptom of a parliamentary governing system that provides smaller conservative groups an inordinate amount of power to dissolve government and influence the Prime Minister.[15]

Question of Influence and Decline: Unilateral versus Multilateral Considerations

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Olmert began to foresee a possibly untenable position, or perhaps even decline, for Israel following the second intifada. He witnessed the precarious position that his country was moving towards with its continued settlement expansion and ignoring of the Palestinians and the international community. He stated that, "when you fight for the impossible, sometimes you lose everything."[16] This quote highlights the point that Israel had doubled down on the growth of settlements and unilateralism at the cost of losing a possible solution with Palestinians and sacrificing goodwill in the international community. Moreover, the occupied lands introduced the position of territory as a burden. The burden lay in the occupied area not only as a drain on administration costs, but also as source of physical conflict derived from Israelis and Palestinians living in close proximity. Beginning after the first intifada, this position of burden took hold more firmly after 2001 with the second intifada with a new discourse of demographic security.[17]

Israel's September 2007 bombing of the Syrian nuclear facility offers another example of its lack of desire to achieve multilateral action against external actors. When Syria was progressing in its nuclear capabilities and the United States would not act or publicly condone attack, Israel decided to bomb the facility in order to negate the threat.[18] This act, while perhaps diminishing the immediate threat to Israel, furthered the idea that Israel's decision-making process is wholly unilateral. The timing of the attack was not lost on the PA, its allies, and the United States as they met two month later at the Annapolis Conference.

A year later, Olmert embarked on a goodwill meeting with Turkish Prime Minister Recep Erdogan in efforts to work through Palestinian solutions. However, soon after the meeting, Olmert launched strikes on Gaza. While some could construe this event as Israel's planning of an attack while pursuing peace negotiations, in reality, Israel's would most likely ask the rhetorical question of "what does one have to do with the other?"[19] This divide between the compartmentalized pursuit of unilateral action on one side and the search for compromise and peace on the other directly reflects a bifurcated policy by Israel to wish for peace with limited steps in that direction but ultimately ignore how their military actions are perceived by Arab neighbors and the international community. For example, Israel's much-delayed apology to Turkey for its killing of nine Turks on a pro-Palestinian flotilla in 2010 had soured relations with the most Westernized Islamic country. For these reasons, Israel continues to further isolate itself in the region.[20]

The November 29, 2012 UN vote on the observer status of the Palestinians was a culmination of unilateral policy choices for Israel and indicates a loss of its influence in the world. Whereas in the past, many European allies had supported the prevention of such a vote on Palestinian recognition, the recent vote represented a reversal by some to either vote in favor of the PA or abstain.[21] It also highlights a vote that in the past the US would have used more clout to block. Israel's less than stellar relationship with the US recently shows how this lack of influence is jeopardizing its safety in the region. Furthermore, in a sign that world opinion may not rank high on Israel's list of priorities, it announced shortly after the UN vote its planned construction of a new settlement on the eastern outskirts of Jerusalem. This event demonstrates not only the current triumph of unilateralism over multilateralism in Israeli thinking, but also the movement away from a desire for future compromise.

Even when the United States as its staunchest supporter asked Israel to stop building settlements four years ago, Israel continued construction and has now emplaced an infrastructure that all but prohibits withdrawal. While this disregard appears intentional, an Israeli official once noted that the Israeli government cannot control the growth of settlements in the occupied territories.[22] The Knesset make-up of many small parties introduces the reality that a move towards compromise or peace could be met with dissolution of the government. This in itself demonstrates a lack of control that the Israeli government has on its territorial expansion in the West Bank and the prospects for compromise.

Israel's unilateral actions could be construed as an increasing disregard of the rest of the world to solve the Palestinian issue. By default, Israel looks inward when considering foreign policy decisions especially in relation to security. When faced with national security decisions, factors 1-9 usually appear to involve choosing a solution that best protects the population or preserves deterrence. The 10th factor could be multilateral considerations, but they normally do not figure prominently into the calculus.[23] This decreasing concern for world opinion could be characterized as a movement towards diminished international power and influence. It would appear that there is also a tipping point for how much bad press Israel can receive before it impacts its ability to defend itself, call upon its

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allies for aid and weapons, and defeat a vote in the UN. Disparaging remarks about Israel's excessive use of force is beginning to reverberate in the international arena.[24] This intransigence, coupled with regional unrest in the possibility of the Syrian civil war spilling over into Israel and protests gripping Egypt and Jordan, have not only decreased Israel's influence in the world, but also isolated it from its allies.

Conclusion

Israel's perception of threat has changed over the past 65 years based on the evolving security narratives of the time. At the high level, these security narratives have been bounded by three periods of thought on Israeli security. The first period (1948-early 1990s) focused on overwhelming deterrence power to achieve Israel's security primarily against Arab states. The second period (early 1990s-2000) viewed Israel's future security in terms of compromise and peace with Palestinians. Finally, the third period began with the second intifada in the early 2000s and marked the return to the notion of security through power and unilateral action with respect to the Palestinians. While these periods had blips of the alternate security mindsets, namely the 1978 Camp David Accords and the 2008 Annapolis Conference, these periods of thought have consistently reflected the threats of their times.

This paper has walked through the threat narratives in the latter two periods of thought in an attempt to highlight Israel's changing threat perception along popular security discourses. While the security discourse of invasion monopolized Israel's early existence, the security discourses of a changing international system, globalization, clashing values, and relative decline have characterized the primary threat landscape in the past two decades.

The transition from security equating to deterrence to security through peace in the early 1990s was spurred by a confluence of factors to include: rising challenges in the "democratic" administration of occupied lands and increasing settlements, the Palestinian population as a threat, growth of powerful non state actors (PLO, Hezbollah, Hamas) in addition to menacing state actors such as Iraq and Iran, increasing reach of long range missiles, and a changing international system with alliance repercussions. Rabin understood that even an overwhelming deterrence force designed to deal with foreign state invasion was not the answer to threats that were cropping up within Israel's borders such as non-state actors. He also understood that an apartheid system in Israeli controlled land was both antithetical to Western concepts of democracy and unsustainable in the court of world opinion. Furthermore, unilateral actions against the Palestinians and bilateral actions with individual Arab neighbors would not make Israel safer in the new environment. As such, direct negotiations and compromise with the Palestinians at Oslo in 1993 and Camp David in 2000 represented this push to a negotiated settlement that would provide Arab recognition of Israel, by both state and non-state actors, and acceptance of its borders. This was Israel's compromise approach to prevent another intifada, avoid future Israeli deaths, and achieve security.

Israeli pursuit of this dialogue and *compromise-will-bring-security* strategy failed with the second intifada and resulted in a retrenchment into a power, separation, unilateralism, and inward focused foreign policy for the past decade. Even with the withdrawal of Gaza and parts of the West Bank in 2005, a unilateral execution of the process could be tied to this frustration with compromise. Though unsuccessful in its ultimate execution, the Annapolis Conference in 2008 was Israel's last attempt at compromise. This blip in the employment of political over military solutions to achieve security with Palestinians quickly ended with the 2009 operation against Hamas. Since then, the episodic provocation, escalation, and ceasefire cycle has repeated itself multiple times and mirrored the 2006 Israel-Lebanon war with Hezbollah.

Today, Israel appears content to continue with its "power equates to security" mindset and this third period of thought shows few public signs of transition back to the framework of compromise. Israel's continued settlement growth, Hamas' recent gains through military force instead of political means, and a general lack of political will by the international community to pull the two sides together points to a future of Israeli perceptions of security through power and unilateralism. These threat narratives, along with rapidly spreading technology, the Arab Spring, and waning international support, nest in the security discourses of globalization, system change, and declining influence.

These threat narratives and location in the discourses of insecurity in the last decade could, however, encourage a rethinking by Israel of its current power-equals-security mindset and inspire compromise. Just as the early 1990s

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was a period of intense change and rising threats, the last year has shown similar changes in the security discourses of a changing international system, rapidly changing technology, and decreasing national influence. With the Arab Spring, Arab youth have shown alacrity to right the injustices in their countries and have achieved significant successes. If these desires were devoted to the Palestinian cause, Israel would have to take pause. Second, just in the last year, globalization has demonstrated the ease in the transfer of technology. Hezbollah now has operational drones capable of flying well into Israel, Hamas has long range missiles capable of hitting Tel Aviv, and Palestinian supporters are using social media to engage Israel in the court of public opinion. Finally, the UN vote to grant the PA observer status shows not only a lack of support by friendly European countries but also a lack of political will by the US to block such a vote. By all accounts, these are major changes in Israeli threat narratives in these three discourses in insecurity.

After four years of ignoring President Obama's request to stop settlement growth, Israel is at a crossroads where it is seeing its position in the world decline. Today, like in the early 1990s, could be the right time for a re-evaluation of how best to achieve its security through the mindset of compromise, multilateralism, and political solutions. A continuation of the status quo and containment with a focus on domestic issues will only lead to more of the same. As respected Israeli author A. B. Yehoshua stated, if Israel does not alter its security mindset, it risks this "continuous slide towards a bi-national state" that nobody wants but that we could all be forced to live with.[25] If that does transpire, the security implications for Israel would be dire, and the residual Jabotinsky and residual Rabin security mindsets would be a reality forever locked in opposition.

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