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Source: *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (Feb., 1994), pp. 59-73

Published by: [Sage Publications, Ltd.](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/425583>

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Israel and Future Borders: Assessment of a Dynamic Process*

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This article deals with the question of determining a future Israeli–Palestinian border within the context of an originally developed analytical framework. Following the presentation of a previous model (Tägil et al., 1977, 1984), the authors offer a greatly modified and more detailed framework for the analysis of border determination. The modified framework emphasizes factors such as national ethos and two alternative national ‘imperatives’ (territorial and ethnic) as important determinants of borders. The article then applies the model to the Israeli case, offering detailed historical and statistical data related to the determination of a future Israeli–Palestinian border. The article demonstrates the dramatic transformation (among Israel’s elites and public alike) from a territorial to ethnic imperative and from integration (annexation of the West Bank and Gaza) to separation (Israeli withdrawal from the territories). In offering a general model for studying interstate and intercommunal conflict, and in demonstrating its applicability to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, this article is of immediate relevance to numerous other ethnic disputes around the world. The article, originally submitted three months *prior* to the Israeli–Palestinian mutual recognition of September 1993, has assumed particular importance by identifying the parameters that may determine the future borders in the Middle East.

All boundaries are artificial:
some are less artificial than others.

An American geographer

There are no problems of boundaries, only of
nations.

A French geographer

1. Analytical Framework

Borders are central for the relationships between sovereign states and between societies: (a) physically, they form tangible barriers between separate units; (b) politically, they define the limits of authority in a recognized territory; (c) socially, they demark the perimeter of a distinct society, a line beyond which a society begins; (d) attitudinally, they are often lines beyond which the ‘other’, the enemy, or even the barbarian reside.

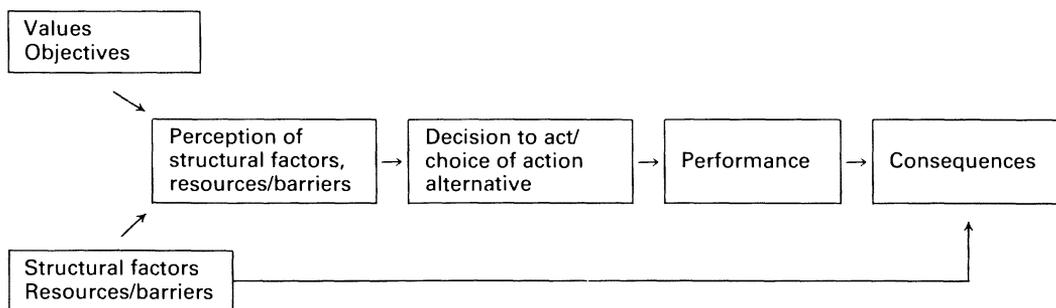
Unfortunately, most studies of borders, including those dealing with the Middle

East, have focused almost exclusively on the first dimension by adopting military, strategic and geopolitical perspectives (Cohen, 1986; Rosen, 1977). Large segments of the literature have dealt with the effects of borders on the eruption and the termination of international conflicts (Blake & Schofield, 1987; Diehl & Goertz, 1988). The underlying assumption has traditionally been that disputes over territories and physical borders are the fundamental causes of international wars or violent communal encounters.

In our opinion, it is beneficial to shift the emphasis from the first dimension of borders, the physical, to the other three dimensions, the political, the social and the psycho-attitudinal determinants. Borders are not merely physical locations. They are, to a large extent, reflections and symbols of national identities, elites, ethoses and collective methys. Just as nations are ‘imagined’ (Anderson, 1991), borders are imagined; ‘[a]ll boundaries are human creations, and although many boundary lines follow landmarks or physical features, none

* The authors thank three anonymous readers and Professor Lawrence J. Taylor of Lafayette College for their useful comments. The opening quotes are taken from Grundy-Warr & Schofield (1990, p. 10).

Figure 1. Tägil Model



Source: Tägil (1977, p. 132). Reprinted by permission.

could be described as “natural” (Grundy-Warr & Schofield, 1990, p. 13).

Borders are crucial to the establishment and the consolidation of group identity. The definition of a nation, like that of a person, seems to require two crucial aspects: a center and an edge, or border (Lawrence J. Taylor, personal communication). ‘The proximity or distance, the uniqueness or the plurality which characterize the relations of social groups to their territory are . . . often the root and symbol of their structure’ (Spykman, 1925 in Kriesberg et al., 1989, p. 46). Borders are so central for the collective identity that issues relating to borders have often been manipulated by political elites to establish control and to generate legitimacy. Social and political changes are often reflected in perceptions of and attitudes toward borders (Anderson, 1991; Grundy-Warr & Schofield, 1990; LeVine & Campbell, 1972).

It is important to realize that the relationships between communities and boundaries are multi-faceted and circular. While nations may determine the character of their borders, borders could and usually do determine the character of nations. Political generations in various social contexts may have different notions of what a particular border ought to mean and what, in fact, it does mean for the community. The link between the public discourse and the definition of international and intercommunal lines goes beyond the mere physical ‘reality’ of the

borders and it is highly dynamic. Historical examples abound: the notion of ‘frontier’ in US history (especially in the 19th century) and the changing French attitude toward Algeria in the early 1960s are only two such examples for the fluctuating notion of border in many societies. In the second case, the French, the political definition of the national border was strongly linked to the national ethos, until it was dramatically revised by the political elite.

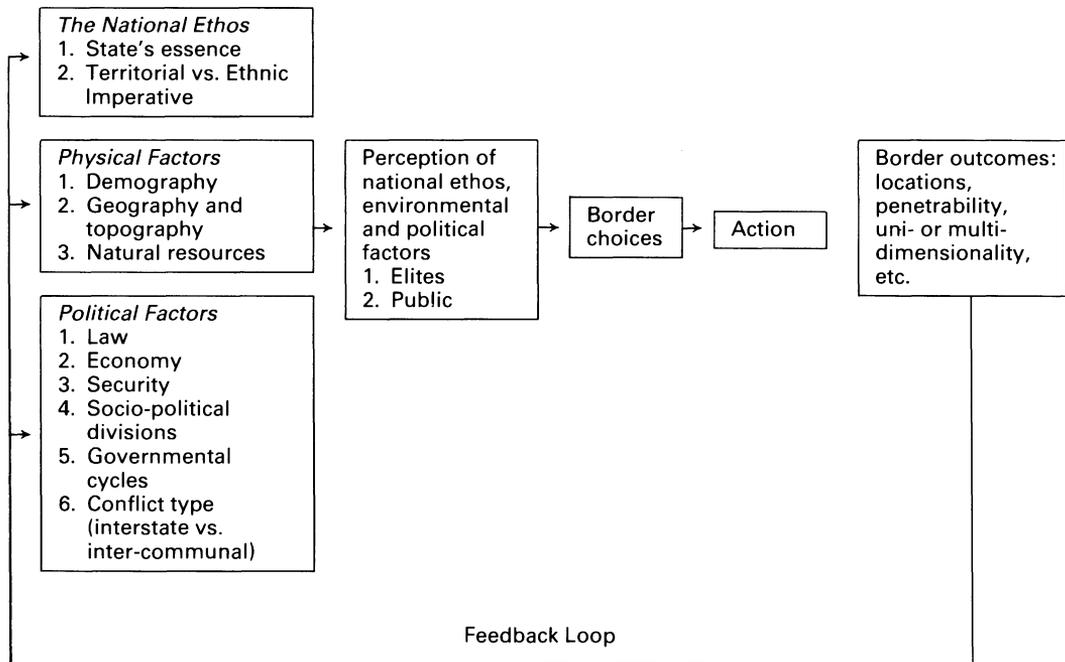
As this preliminary discussion indicates, an analysis of borders in a political context ought to be multidimensional and multidisciplinary. Borders are at one and the same time tangible and intangible entities, intimately connected to the very essence of the communities they define. In explaining the way borders are determined, we must consider both the values held by social actors and the environment within which these actors operate (Tägil et al., 1977, pp. 121–148). Above all, it must be noted that values, as determinants of borders, are at least as important as physical conditions, and ought to be incorporated into any model explaining the political construction of borders.

A preliminary multivariate model (Figure 1), developed to explain boundary conflicts, was introduced by Tägil et al. (1977, p. 132):

Tägil’s model constitutes a useful analytical framework for dealing not only with border conflicts but also with the determination of borders in general and the estab-

Figure 2. Barzilai–Peleg Model¹

Border Determinants



¹ The numbers do not reflect an order of priority among the items included in the model.

lishment of a future Israeli–Palestinian border in particular. Nevertheless, it requires important elaboration: (1) a more detailed list of border determinants is needed; (2) recognition of the distinction between elites and the general public ought to be included; (3) the feedback relationships between the ‘consequences’ of border determination and the border determinants must be added, thus transforming the analytical scheme into a dynamic model. Following these requirements, we present here (Figure 2) a revised and improved model for dealing with border determination.

Our model requires some explanation prior to the application of some of its components to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. We will proceed by briefly defining the model's components and follow this exercise by the development of two hypotheses applied to the Middle Eastern context.

The model includes a set of border deter-

minants, divided into three major categories: (1) national ethos, (2) physical factors, and (3) political factors. The *National Ethos* is a set of dominant values to which the society, nation and state subscribe. We propose to distinguish here between values related to the State's essence – how does it view its mission and its fundamental identity? – and values related more specifically to the nation's Territorial vs. Ethnic Imperative (that is, its relations to other states, to territorial possession, and to its own ethnicity).

The *Territorial Imperative* is a societal and often ideological drive for maximal geographical expansion of the State. The *Ethnic Imperative* is a drive for maximal ethnic separation from other ethnic or national groups, or for the purification of the nation from those elements considered ethnically foreign to it. While we recognize that within the national ethos those two forces may

exist side-by-side in one and the same time, and that political elites may pursue the Territorial and Ethnic Imperatives simultaneously, it is often the case (as it is, we would argue, in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict) that *one imperative is more dominant than the other*. Furthermore, and most importantly from the perspective of this article, each of these imperatives – in a world of finite resources – may dictate to the nation a different set of concrete border choices.

In an important passage on what he calls ‘state-ideas’, Cohen (1986, p. 98) writes about their dynamic nature and relevance for Israel in the present time. The paragraph demonstrates well our own notion of National Ethos and the different imperatives associated with it:

In the life of a nation, its state-ideas change in response to domestic, socio-cultural, economic, religious and political development, as well as the shifting international environment. The modern Jewish state is now at a crossroads with respect to the directions of its state-idea. Israel can choose the goal of coexistence with the Palestinian Arabs and the Jordanians through territorial compromise and mutual national recognition. Or on the other hand, it can pursue the ideal of Eretz Yisrael HaShlema through creeping or outright territorial annexation. . . . The choice will emerge from the struggle between the two major competing Zionist state-ideas, each with long traditions and deep roots.

The factors relevant for border determination – the human and physical milieu within which the national ethos is pursued – are quite diversified. Since not all of them are equally relevant to our analysis of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, we will define them quite briefly. In our analytical framework we recognize, first, three physical factors likely to play a significant role in border determination: (1) *demography* or the distribution of people of various types (ethnicity, religion, etc.) over defined territory; (2) *geography* or the characteristics (e.g. size, elevation, passability) of the relevant area for border determination and its relations to other, especially adjacent, areas; (3) *natural resources* in the territory in question and especially such crucial resources as oil and water.

The relevant political factors are more di-

versified than the physical ones: (1) *law* or the existing domestic and international norms for border determination, including the legal possibilities open for forced solutions or negotiated ones and legal constructs of particular relevance for determining collective identities; (2) *economics* or material conditions that might affect the border determination, including such factors as forces and conditions pushing in the direction of territorial annexation vs. those pushing in the direction of ethnic separation, the relative size of neighboring economies and the character of the labor market; (3) *security* or considerations relevant for the physical safety (or psychological perceptions of physical safety), including the proximity of the civilian population to potential future borders, their vulnerability to certain attacks and strategic and tactical scenarios of various military conflicts; (4) important *socio-political cleavages* within a polity engaged in a border conflict, including ethnic, religious, linguistic, social, economic and racial disputes. Also, relevant in this context is the nature of these societal cleavages (uni- vs. multidimensional, compounded or not), and their depth (Horowitz, 1985); (5) *governmental fluctuations*, especially when they are associated with changes in the national ethos and with integrative and separatist attitudinal prisms; (6) the *type of conflict* in which the society is involved, and particularly if it is interstate, characterized by relatively clear-cut border demarcation, or intercommunal, characterized by more blurred borders (Barzilai, 1992; Peleg & Seliktar, 1989; Russett, 1993).

The analysis offered in this article focuses on the National Ethos and some of the political factors included in our model. At the same time, we recognize that a truly comprehensive analysis of border issues in the Middle East requires more attention to additional variables included in our framework.

The *perception of determinants* is crucial in translating these determinants to border choices and, eventually, action related to border setting (Holsti, 1962). It is important, however, to distinguish here between

elites and the public at large, as indeed we do in applying the model to the Israeli–Palestinian case. In general, political elites tend to be more ideological than the general public (McClosky, 1964; Sullivan et al., 1993).

Border choices relate to the specific territorial options as they may be defined by policy-makers or the public at large. *Border outcome* – the actual border marked as the result of the process hereby described – effects in its turn the national ethos, the environmental factors and the political context in a later stage.

This article focuses on the relationships between some of the border determinants – especially the national ethos – and border choices in the Israeli–Palestinian context. This analysis of border choices improves the ability to predict border outcomes, although such prediction is outside the purview of this article.

2. Integration and Separation

The Israeli–Palestinian conflict is an important case for the application of our theoretical framework. It demonstrates clearly the connectedness of border-setting and national identity in a world dominated by ethnic loyalties. The usefulness of our theoretical notions could be measured by their effectiveness in explaining historical and contemporary processes in the region.

Questions related to the demarcation of the borders of the land known as Palestine or Eretz Israel have been on the agenda, in one form or another, throughout most of this century. The British struggled with this question throughout the tempestuous Mandatory era (e.g. the 1922 White Paper and the 1937 Peel Report). The United Nations has tried its hand in border setting (1947 Partition Resolution). Following many of the bloody flare-ups in the region, states, organizations and individuals proposed one set of borders or another. Thus, the Arab governments and Israel agreed on armistice lines in 1949, Yigal Allon (a prominent leader of Israel's Labor Party) offered his famous plan following the 1967 war, and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)

accepted formally a two-state solution (thereby accepting, in effect, the 1949 Green Line) in 1988.

The 1967 War, resulting in direct Israeli rule over a large number of Palestinians, made the issue of an Arab–Israeli border more important than ever before (Kimmerling, 1989; Sandler, 1988). The daily contact between Israelis and about two million Palestinians turned the issue of a future Israeli–Palestinian border into a central component not only in determining the future relations between these two antagonistic communities but also in determining the very character of their own identities. It is with this *dual function* of the border – a divider between national communities and an element in determining their internal nature and possibly even their very essence – that this essay is concerned.

In dealing with the border issue, it is important to note that the conflict between Palestinian Arabs and Israeli Jews has changed dramatically through the years. The initial Arab–Jewish strife was communal in character. The UN Partition Resolution and the 1948 war transformed the communal strife into an interstate conflict, but a series of developments following the 1967 war retransformed the conflict into its original, communal origins: the ascendance of the PLO, the eruption of the Lebanese Civil War and the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, the disengagement from the conflict of the largest Arab state (Egypt, 1979), and finally and most importantly the outbreak of a full-blown popular Palestinian uprising in the territories, are but some of the events explaining this important transformation.

The Palestinization (or, better yet, the re-Palestinization) of the Middle East conflict has turned the border issue into an all-important focal point for the Israeli polity. With the occupation of the territories, the existing border between Israel and its international environment, the 1949 armistice line, became hopelessly blurred. While in the period 1949–67 one could have accurately described the Arab–Israeli confrontation as an international conflict, *externalizing* the ethnic hostility, the period

following 1967 has increasingly *internalized* the conflict, especially in view of increasingly bolder Israeli claims on territories heavily inhabited by Arabs.

The policy of a long line of successive Labor and Likud governments has been to maintain the differentiation between Israeli settlers and Arab inhabitants in the territories, without pursuing aggressive moves either to withdraw from the territories or annex them immediately. The Likud governments, ruling Israel for most of the period 1977–92, promoted, in addition, a comprehensive settlement policy designed to lead to the eventual annexation of the territories.

Interestingly enough, the Israeli policies, in their totality, resulted not only in increasing Palestinian determination to gain independence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip but also in the growing ‘Palestinization’ of Israeli Arabs, thus making the issue of the border of Israel’s polity even more complex. As for the occupied territories, the ability of the Israeli authorities to quell the continuing violence clearly declined in the late 1980s and the capacity of maintaining the semblance of public order and tranquility was never recovered.

The decline of Israel’s governmental effectiveness in the territories should not be measured in pure military notions. It has to be viewed from a broader perspective of conflict-management capabilities (Ross, 1993). Thus, since the early 1990s, the Israeli military and security authorities found it increasingly difficult to guarantee the safety of Israelis not only in the territories but even within Israel proper. The daily violence of the West Bank and Gaza Strip was ‘transferred’ into Israel, a spillover of the communal conflict from the heartland of the Palestinian territory into the heartland of the Israeli territory. Thus, a solution for the long-term, seemingly intractable conflict became more urgent than ever before.

In discussing the Israeli–Palestinian struggle, it is important to note that not only has it become, objectively, a complicated puzzle with no clear-cut, easy solution, but that a large number of participants in the

conflict have come to perceive it as intractable. The comparative and theoretical literature in a few fields of contemporary social sciences has identified the conditions leading to and the consequences of such conflict (Campbell, 1965; Kriesberg, 1989; Kriesberg et al., 1989; Russett, 1993).

In the context of such intractable conflicts, borders could be used as a means for an ethnic separation and communal purification (LeVine & Campbell, 1972, pp. 81–114). According to this political interpretation of borders, communities tend to utilize geographical borders as clear social boundaries that are aimed at fostering separation between two or more rival communities. That has been done by emphasizing not the geographic discrepancies or differences between territories under contention, but by claiming the impossibility of reaching meaningful political reconciliation in view of contradictory ethnic affiliations, national aspirations and religious identification. Thus, separation might be utilized as a means to increase internal cohesion and conflict management.

According to this perspective on borders, communities will tend to agree, before or after violent hostilities, on the separation of contentious territories not because of their belief in coexistence but as a means of consolidating their own national identities. Conflicts such as the Indo-Pakistani one or the one in Cyprus have demonstrated the power of territorial separation as a means of conflict resolution. Such separation de-emphasizes and de-mystifies the geographic meaning of borders. The idea of separation is tied to the notion that every community attempts to improve its ability to manage its conflicts. If it is convinced that its efficiency in conflict management and changes of self-preservation increase as a result of separation, it will seriously consider this option (LeVine & Campbell, 1972).

In the Israeli–Palestinian context, there has been an increasing tendency in Israel to recognize what is perceived as the danger of Palestinization and the equivalent loss of the Jewish character of the state (Migdal & Kimmerling, 1993; Rekhess, 1989; Sandler & Frisch, 1984). Israelis have become con-

cerned with the decline in Israel's ability effectively to manage the conflict. The growing fragmentation and polarization of Israel's body politic (Kimmerling, 1989; Lustick, 1989, 1993a) have generated increasing support for changing the territorial status quo as means of maintaining the country's democratic order and the cohesiveness of Israel's Jewish public (Shamir & Shamir, 1993).

On the basis of some of the concepts discussed before, the historical review of the evolving Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and our own model of border determination, we now offer specifically the following hypotheses regarding the dynamics of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: (1) both elites and the general public in Israel tend gradually to prefer the Ethnic Imperative, maintaining Israel as Jewish as possible, on the Territorial Imperative, the incorporation of large areas with significant Arab populations into Israel; (2) both elites and the public tend gradually to prefer solutions based on the principle of separation between Israelis and Palestinians, although within the separation context there is a significant diversity of preferred choices.

The main purpose of the following section is to present specific data in support of hypotheses 1 and 2.

3. Data and Analysis: Border Choices

Opinions regarding border choices in Israel, on both the elite and the public level, have been characterized by diversity and fluctuations. The objective of the following analysis is to examine the relationships between the Territorial and the Ethnic Imperatives, on the one hand, and border choices, on the other.

3.1 The General Public

A series of public opinion polls identified important changes in Israel since the end of the 1980s. Most importantly, the Israeli-Jewish public has shown over the last few years increasing inclination to reject the territorial status quo resulting from the war of 1967 (Arian et al., 1988; Arian & Ventura, 1989; Arian et al., 1992; Goldberg et al., 1991;

Inbar & Yuchtman-Yaar, 1989; Shamir & Arian, 1990; Shamir & Shamir, 1993; Yuchtman-Yaar, 1993; Yuchtman-Yaar & Peres, 1993). More than ever before the public has expressed its advocacy of interim or permanent solutions to the protracted violent encounter. While during the 1970s around 70% of the Jewish-Israeli public supported the territorial situation of Israel in its post-1967 borders, in the 1990s only 2 to 5% of the public supported the status quo, either as an interim or a permanent solution.

In 1990, 30.9% of the public supported federal *interim solutions*, 24.6% favored interim dovish solutions, while only 10.9% advocated hawkish options as the best interim solutions (see Table I). A similar propensity prevailed in 1990 regarding options for *permanent solutions*. Federal options were considered by 31.1% of the public as appropriate permanent solutions, 37.6% favored dovish solutions, while only 15.4% perceived hawkish solutions to be the best options for a permanent resolution. Special attention should be given to the public support of political conceptions presented by such leftish Zionist parties as Mapam, Ratz and Shinui. In 1990, 12% of the public supported the options of a Palestinian state or a Palestinian state in the Gaza Strip only as the best interim solutions, while 18% advocated those options as the best possible permanent solutions to the conflict. A similar tendency was detected in 1991. About 15.7% advocated interim dovish options, while 17.3% supported dovish options as permanent solutions. The increasing recognition of political self-determination for the Palestinians on the part of the Israeli-Jewish public was detected, for the first time, two years prior to the elections in 1992 (Goldberg et al., 1991).

The Gulf War in 1991 was the only major event that could have significantly changed those public inclinations. Israel was attacked by about 40 Scud missiles, without even being directly involved in this conflict. While fatalities were minimal, the psychological burden on the Israeli public was meaningful. Nevertheless, the war did not alter the general public tendency to favor

Table I. Attitudes of the Israeli–Jewish Public Toward Solutions to the Arab–Palestinian–Israeli Conflict (Percent)¹

Solutions	Interim solutions		Permanent solutions	
	May 1990	June 1991	May 1990	June 1991
Dovish (total) ²	12.0	15.7	18.0	17.3
Palestinian State	5.2	6.5	9.1	9.8
Palestinian State in Gaza Strip Only	6.8	9.2	8.9	7.5
Federal (total) ³	30.9	37.8	31.1	42.0
Autonomy	23.2	23.1	18.5	21.9
Confederation	–	5.2	–	6.0
Jordanian–Palestinian State	7.7	9.5	12.6	14.1
Territorial Compromise with Jordan ⁴	12.6	11.6	19.6	11.2
Status quo	5.0	4.7	2.4	2.1
Hawkish solutions (total)	10.9	10.5	15.4	15.6
Annexation	3.6	3.7	5.1	4.4
Annexation and Transfer of the Palestinians	7.3	6.8	10.3	11.2
Don't know/other	28.6	20.3	14.1	11.8
Total	100	100.6	100.6	100

¹ Sample sizes $n = 1126$; representative samples of Israeli Jews above the age of 18; do not include permanent inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The polls were financially supported by the following private academic institutions: The Center for International Communication and Policy, Bar-Ilan University, the Bar-Ilan University Center for Strategic Studies, the Leonard Davis Institute for International Relations (Hebrew University), and the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs. The authors acknowledge the participation of Professors E. Inbar and G. Goldberg, both of the Department of Political Studies at Bar-Ilan University, in conducting the polls. However, the responsibility for the construction and presentation of this table is the authors' alone.

² Dovish solutions are based on Israeli recognition of an entirely independent Palestinian entity, in the West Bank and Gaza Strip or in the Gaza Strip only.

³ Federal solutions are those based on division of functions between two or more political entities. Autonomy is a solution in which the Palestinian inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza Strip will live under Israeli sovereignty but with some independent governmental functions.

⁴ An Israeli return of the West Bank and Gaza Strip to Jordan sovereignty with no recognition of Palestinian independence.

some changes in the territorial status quo in order to facilitate a political solution. Growing support for solutions traditionally advocated by the Zionist left has been detected: 15.7% favored the establishment of a Palestinian state in all the territories or in the Gaza Strip as an interim solution, while 17.3% advocated such options as the best possible permanent solutions.

It is important to note that this phenomenon is not based on idealistic notions of reconciliation between Israeli Jews and the Palestinian Arabs. Rather, the trend is a reflection of a public tendency *pragmatically to acknowledge the necessity of separation between the parties to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict*. Both the Zionist left and the Zionist right in Israel continue to oppose binationalism as a framework for a possible

conflict resolution. Yet, in both 1990 and 1991 the most favorable solutions among the public were those based on the principle of separation: in 1990, 32.3% of the public supported options for interim solutions based on the principle of separation between Israelis and Palestinians; in 1991, 42% supported such options for separative solutions (Table II). In terms of interim solutions, the Israeli public has shown reluctance in supporting any radical changes in the territorial status quo, probably due to deep-seated fears of possible military attacks on Israel. When long-range, permanent solutions have been at stake, however, the public has felt more confident and, thus, has tended toward greater support of such separative solutions. In 1990, 50.2% of the public advocated solutions based on separ-

Table II. Territorial Separation vs. Territorial Integration, Attitudes of the Israeli-Jewish Public (Percent)¹

Solutions	Interim solutions		Permanent solutions	
	May 1990	June 1991	May 1990	June 1991
Separation ²	32.3	42.0	50.2	48.6
Autonomy ³	23.2	23.1	18.5	21.9
Integration ⁴	15.9	15.2	17.8	17.7
No solution	23.0	16.0	7.0	5.5
Don't know/other	5.6	4.3	7.1	6.3
Total	100	100.6	100.6	100

¹ See note 1 to Table I.

² Palestinian state in all the territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip; Palestinian state in Gaza Strip only; Israeli-Palestinian-Jordanian confederation; territorial compromise and forming a Palestinian-Jordanian state; territorial compromise with Jordan.

³ Autonomy under Israeli rule or autonomy under Israeli-Jordanian rule.

⁴ Annexation with granting citizen rights; annexation without granting citizen rights; annexation of the territories and transfer of the Palestinian population (by force or by agreement).

ation, while, in 1991, 48.6% among the public considered solutions of separation to be the best for resolving the conflict.

Moreover, about one-third of those who supported separation (either as interim or as permanent solutions) advocated the establishment of some form of an independent Palestinian state (a Palestinian state in all the territories; a Palestinian state in Gaza Strip only; Israeli-Palestinian-Jordanian Confederation). These options were supported as interim solutions by 12% in 1990 and by 20.9% in 1991; as permanent solutions they were endorsed by 18% in 1990 and by 23.3% in 1991.

Thus, since the end of the 1980s the Israeli public has begun to move in the direction of more moderate solutions. This trend did not reflect increasing liberal attitudes toward the Palestinians, but greater tendency to prefer separation on any solution resulting in binationalist coexistence. A similar inclination to prefer separation has been detected among the Israeli political elites.

3.2 Political Elites

An exploration of attitudes among the Israeli political elites (i.e. members of Israeli political parties and of the Israeli parliament, the Knesset, and of Israeli governments) reveals interesting aspects of their attitude to border issues and the possible resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The findings presented here are based primarily on personal interviews with Members of the Knesset (MKs) and secondary sources (such as written press and books about the conflict).

Changes in the elites' attitudes toward the conflict are not as prominent as changes among the general public. In 1977 the Likud erased from its platform its ideological commitment for the annexation of the West Bank (Inbar & Goldberg, 1990). Nevertheless, the governments of Begin and Shamir were persistent in claiming that Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (especially the former) was non-negotiable; they publicly promised to their followers that Israel's control in those territories was eternal. The Likud was a major political force in settling the territories, providing the settlers with considerable economic benefits (Peleg, 1987, ch. 4). Only Labor's electoral victory in 1992 halted the intensive settlement drive.

Changes in Labor's approach to future borders and the resolution of the conflict are not very clear either. It is surprising that since 1967 Labor has not offered publicly a detailed peace plan which defined permanent borders beyond citing the formula of 'Territorial Compromise'. Moreover, despite the growing willingness to negotiate with PLO members, Labor's political leadership tended, until late August 1993, to delegitimize the organization. Officially, at least, Labor continues to oppose the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, especially in the West Bank.

Nevertheless, important attitudinal tendencies of the elites regarding the issue of future borders between Palestinians and Israelis should be noted. The Israeli political elites have tended, since the 1989 Baker Plan (and, some would say, since the 1978 Camp David accord), to recognize the need

Table III. Attitudes of the Public (P) and MKs (M) by Party Affiliation, 1990 (Percent)¹

	Interim solutions					
	Likud		Labor		Religious	
	P	M	P	M	P	M
Autonomy	23.1	85.0	23.5	53.0	23.3	92.0
Palestinian–Jordanian state	3.7	0.0	8.3	0.0	1.7	0.0
Status quo	7.5	15.0	2.8	0.0	11.7	0.0
Dovish solutions	22.0	0.0	35.0	41.0	11.7	0.0
Hawkish solutions	18.7	0.0	2.75	0.0	11.7	0.0
Don't know/other	25.0	0.0	27.65	6.0	39.9	8.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

	Permanent solutions					
	Likud		Labor		Religious	
	P	M	P	M	P	M
Autonomy	22.2	46.0	21.9	0.0	20.7	33.0
Palestinian–Jordanian state	7.3	0.0	18.6	44.0	1.7	8.0
Status quo	3.1	0.0	2.3	0.0	5.2	0.0
Dovish solutions	33.4	8.0	46.9	56.0	22.4	17.0
Hawkish solutions	25.2	31.0	5.6	0.0	20.7	17.0
Don't know/other	8.8	15.0	4.7	0.02	9.3	25.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

¹ The findings for the MKs (M) are based on 62 personal interviews conducted by Barzilai, Goldberg & Inbar (1991), a representative sample of the Jewish MKs in the 12th Knesset. The samples for the public (P) are identical to those presented in Tables I and II. The polls were financially supported by the following private academic institutions: The Center for International Communication and Policy, Bar-Ilan University, the Bar-Ilan University Center for Strategic Studies, the Leonard Davis Institute for International Relations (Hebrew University) and the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs. The authors acknowledge the participation of Professors E. Inbar and G. Goldberg, both of the Department of Political Studies at Bar-Ilan University, in conducting the polls. However, the responsibility for the construction and presentation of this table is the authors' alone.

for future Palestinian elections in the territories. The elites have also acknowledged the need for a Palestinian home-rule as a step toward the resolution of the conflict. Bilateral negotiations with Palestinian representatives in the territories have also been recognized as a necessary step toward the termination of the conflict. These new attitudes have reflected increasing awareness of the centrality of the communal component in the overall structure of the conflict, and a tendency to support a separation between Palestinians and Israelis. The political–social meaning of separation, however, has been conceived differently by Labor and Likud, as shown in data collected by Barzilai, Goldberg & Inbar in 1991.

Analysis of the data in Table III reveals that generally the members of Israel's two

major parties, Likud and Labor, have tended to reject the territorial status quo and to choose other alternatives. None of the Labor MKs has supported the option of status quo as an interim solution, and only 15% among the Likud members have advocated such a political alternative. When status quo was considered as a possible permanent solution, the results were even more striking: none of the Likud or the Labor MKs supported status quo as a possible option for a conflict resolution.

The marginal support for borders which reflect territorial integration is another interesting fact emerging from Table III. Among Labor MKs, none has supported an option of annexation either as an interim or as a permanent solution. Furthermore, and even more striking, none of the Likud

members has chosen territorial integration (based on annexation) as an interim solution. Only 31% among the Likud MKs have supported annexation as the best permanent options (annexation with granting civil rights, annexation without civil rights, or annexation and transfer by force of the Palestinian inhabitants).

Indeed, the two political elites have tended to differ regarding the nature of the permanent solutions. Labor members have shown an inclination (56%) to choose dovish solutions based on meaningful territorial compromises. Such compromises necessarily amount to clear-cut territorial and ethnic separation between Israelis and Palestinians. Likud members, on the other hand, have leaned toward functional autonomy as a long-term solution (46%). The concept of functional autonomy has two, seemingly contradictory aspects – integrative and separatist. On the one hand, the integrative component of autonomy calls upon Israel to retain its authority for all matters of national security and foreign policy. The separatist component of autonomy, on the other hand, calls upon Israel to grant the local Palestinian inhabitants full powers in running their own domestic, communal affairs. Thus, autonomy is a mixed solution, a hybrid between separation and integration.

An analysis of attitudes among the religious parties reveals similar inclinations of support for border choices. None of the religious MKs (including the members of the Haredi parties) has supported a territorial status quo as a plausible option, either as a permanent or as an interim solution, none has advocated territorial integration as an interim solution, and only 17% have chosen annexation as a permanent solution. The preferable solution has been (in some similarity to the preferred choice among the Likud MKs) autonomy (33%), namely: a partial separation between Palestinians and Israelis. An additional 17% among the religious MKs have supported dovish solutions which also contain the principle of separation.

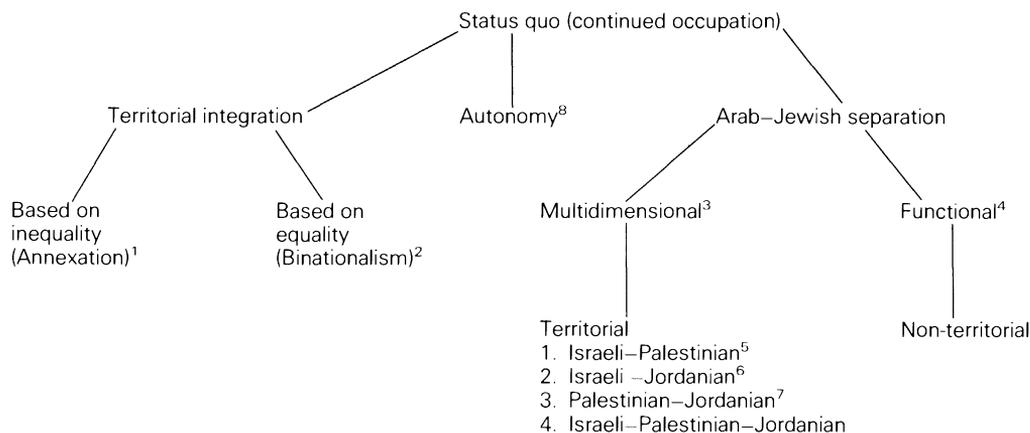
The general findings are, thus, clear: with

the exception of the radical right in Israel (which still advocates the integration of the territories to Israel) *the overall tendency among the Israeli political elites is to support greater separation between Israelis and Palestinians*. Although the two main political elites in Israel, Likud and Labor (and the religious parties as well), differ on the issue of a full or partial territorial separation, the overall trend in both camps is toward greater separation. There is an agreement that *the ethnic-communal dimension is the most crucial element in fostering resolution of the conflict*.

The contemporary Israeli political elites are much more conscious of the Palestinization of the Israeli body politic than previous elites. Consequently, they are also much more aware of the increasing tension between the Territorial Imperative (annexation *de facto* or *de jure*) and the Ethnic Imperative (the preservation of the State's Jewishness). Some of the Israeli elites are also sensitive to the need of preserving Israel's democratic traditions and are aware of the basic contradiction between the Palestinization of Israel and its ability to be loyal, in the future, to democratic principles.

Owing to the growing tension between the Ethnic Imperative and the Territorial Imperative, the time factor has become crucial for the formation of border choices. As for the short run, Labor and Likud have tended to agree that autonomy is the best solution because it will enable a degree of ethnic separation without taking many military or political risks. Autonomy is a convenient interim solution which makes separation possible, but also facilitates the gradual development of mutual confidence between the two rival communities. Our findings demonstrate that the September 1993 Israeli-PLO agreement has been a natural development. When permanent solutions are concerned, the differences of opinion between and among the elites are greater and are closely associated with the ideological rifts between Israel's political parties.

Figure 3. Border Outcomes – Permanent Solutions



¹ Supported especially by Israel's Radical Right (e.g. Kach, Tehiya, Moledet).

² No significant Israeli group supports this option now.

³ 'Classical', sovereignty-based two-state solution.

⁴ Functional division of power, associated with the name of M. Dayan.

⁵ Parties left-of-Labor (Meretz) and some Labor leaders.

⁶ Allon Plan.

⁷ Hussein Plan.

⁸ An intermediate solution between integration and separation (see text).

4. Border Outcomes: The Policy Dimension

Following the analysis of border choices among both the Israeli public and the political elites, we now explore some of the immediate ramifications of those attitudinal trends. Some of the most significant outcomes for a long-term border determination are presented in Figure 3.

To investigate a series of possible border outcomes, we have to return to our previous distinction between interim solutions and permanent solutions, on the one hand, and between the general public and political elites, on the other. Our data indicate that despite a variety of border choices, the Israeli public can be democratically mobilized to support territorial and ethnic separation between Israelis and Palestinians. This fact is crucial regarding interim and permanent solutions alike. While the public is more suspicious regarding interim solutions its tendency to support separation as a permanent solution is much more decisive.

The most acceptable solutions for the general public are those based on a compro-

mise with the Palestinians. In contrast to the past, the public tends to support *intercommunal compromises between Israelis and Palestinians, more than interstate compromises between Jordan and Israel*, and more than autonomy. Thus, in 1991, 30.4% of the public supported separation between the communities as interim solutions, based on a functional approach (confederation; Jordanian-Palestinian state) or on a multidimensional approach (Palestinian state; Palestinian state in the Gaza Strip only). Only 23.1% supported autonomy and 11.6% supported territorial compromise with Jordan as an interim solution.

This trend is even clearer regarding permanent solutions. While only 21.9% supported autonomy and 11.2% advocated territorial compromise with Jordan as permanent solutions, 37.4% supported separation based on intercommunal compromises between Palestinians and Israelis. Referring back to Figure 3, the possible border outcomes from this point of view are clearly toward functional and multidimensional territorial solutions based on separation.

Israel's political elites are more ideological and tend to be more committed to past political options than the general public. As far as interim solutions are concerned, the elites' inclination in 1990 was toward autonomy. Although our data were accumulated in 1990, both Labor and Likud still tend to support autonomy as the best interim solution, perceiving it as a good means for consolidating national consensus and for building mutual confidence between Israelis and Palestinians.

When long-term solutions are considered, the political elites in both parties tend to be more decisive and ideologically committed to their respective philosophies. Thus, while none of the Likud MKs supported hawkish solutions in the short run, in considering the long run 31% supported such solutions. Similarly, Labor MKs tended to prefer autonomy in the short run, but dovish solutions in the long run.

5. Conclusions

This article introduced the reader to a preliminary analytical framework, the Tägil Model, dealing with border conflicts. Secondly, the article offered a modified model which emphasizes the National Ethos – and particularly the State's Essence and two alternative 'imperatives' (territorial and ethnic) – as important determinants of borders. The article then applied the modified model to the Israeli case, dwelling on the determination of a future Israeli–Palestinian border. It demonstrated through historical and statistical data the transformation among Israel's elites and public from what we call the Territorial to the Ethnic Imperative, and from integrative to separative solutions.

In the course of the Intifadah, more Israelis have begun to perceive an increasing threat of Palestinization of the Israeli body politic and the contradiction between the Israeli control in the occupied territories, on the one hand, and maintaining the essence of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state, on the other. The Intifadah, as an intercommunal conflict, has significantly increased the Israeli public's awareness of the violent

relationship with the Palestinians and the salience of the Palestinian factor in the overall context of the Arab–Israeli conflict. Ethnic and territorial separation between Israelis and Palestinians has emerged, increasingly, as a more plausible method for improving Israel's conflict management capacity.

We believe that it would be beneficial to view the Israeli–Palestinian case study in a broader, historical and comparative context. In an effort to better understand the Middle East conflict and its possible outcomes, we identify (Figure 3) a series of theoretically possible solutions to that conflict. The border dilemmas confronted by Israelis and Palestinians are faced by numerous other national groups all over the world. The choices open to these groups (e.g. Territorial vs. Ethnic Imperatives) are pertinent to the Middle East, as well as to other regions of the world.

Although no one can predict with confidence future political developments, particularly in a volatile area such as the Middle East, we believe that there is a *strong trend toward separation between Israelis and Palestinians today*. It is yet unclear whether this separation will be functional or multi-dimensional (or some combination of the two) and what specific territorial formula the separatist trends will lead to (e.g. a Jordanian–Palestinian–Israeli confederation, a Jordanian–Palestinian state, etc.). Equally unclear is whether, once separated into sovereign or semi-sovereign units, Israelis and Palestinians would begin moving toward some kind of integration. Our analytical framework, however, facilitates a systematic inquiry of these possible outcomes. The beginning of an Israeli–Palestinian reconciliation in September 1993 strengthens our conviction that a departure from the status quo and the emergence of a new Middle Eastern regional order are imminent.

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