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Miami, Florida

HISTORY, IDENTITY POLITICS AND SECURITIZATION: RELIGION'S ROLE IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF INDIAN-ISRAELI DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS FOR COOPERATION

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

HISTORY, IDENTITY POLITICS AND SECURITIZATION: RELIGION'S ROLE IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF INDIAN-ISRAELI DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS FOR COOPERATION

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This dissertation aims to provide an understanding of the historical and contemporary dynamics of India's foreign policy towards Israel within the context of religious identity from 1947 to 2015. A historical analysis of the relationship between India and Israel exhibits the ways that religious identity has served as a primary factor impeding as well as facilitating relations between the two nations.

The analysis was done within the context of the historical Hindu-Muslim relationship in India and how the legacy of this relationship, in India's effort to maintain positive relations with the Arab-Muslim world, worked to inhibit relations with Israel prior to normalization in 1992. However, the five years leading up to normalization, and thereafter, the dynamic is reversed with this legacy playing an increasingly progressive role in India-Israel relations via the social construction of shared meanings and identities between India's Hindu majority with Israel's Jewish majority. Social construction of shared meanings and identities are based, in part, within an historical/modern-day context of conflict with a minority, religious Other (Islam), and through bridges of connection

based in other historical, cultural, social, and religious areas. Formal interviews, archival primary-source analysis of government documents, and secondary-source review were methods employed in the evaluation of the role of religion in India's foreign policy towards Israel.

In conclusion, this dissertation demonstrates the normative and functional effects that religious identities have played, and continue to play, in determining India's foreign policy towards Israel given the fundamental role religious identity has historically played in the structuring of social perceptions, interactions and worldviews within Indian society up and through the present-day.

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INTRODUCTION

> "Relations between Israel and India tend to grow stronger when tensions between New Delhi and Islamabad rise, or when India experiences a rightward shift in anti-Muslim public opinion or in leadership" (Pfeffer, 2008).

The above quotation was taken from an article in an Israeli newspaper written in the days following the violent terror attacks in Mumbai in late November 2008. The attacks targeted several public buildings around the city, two of which were the Taj Mahal Palace & Tower hotel and the Nariman House Jewish community center in the city's downtown[1]. These deadly acts were carried out by a Pakistani-based, fundamentalist Islamic jihadi group known as Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT). LeT's targeting of a Jewish establishment as a part of a major terrorist attack within India worked to send a violent message to their dually perceived enemies of the Indian state and the Hindu world on one hand, and Israel and the Jewish community on the other.

The quotation further implies that this sort of violence, experienced by both societies with great frequency over the last few decades, highlights a more encompassing narrative and a deeper pattern of behavior. This is a narrative implicitly defined by identity and ultimately determined by threats to security. Indeed, Israel and India currently enjoy a very warm, albeit low-key, diplomatic relationship with one another, but to what extent, if at all, does the opening quotation be explain the primary motivating factor in the Indian-Israeli relationship since normalization? Has the history of conflict

[1] This series of attacks lasted 3+ days and killed 164 people across several areas of the city. Other targeted areas of this attack included the Cama and Albless hospital, the Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus railway station, the Metro Cinema, the Leopold Café, and the Oberoi-Trident Hotel. ("Mumbai terror attacks", 2015)

through the modern day with neighboring Islamic nations, which Israel and India have in common, been a foundation for growth of friendly ties? Can this foundation be seen to include deeper religion-based cultural ties and affinity? Will this historical commonality continue to provide a base of stability for a friendly and progressive relationship, characterized by a greater frequency of cooperative measures, between the two nations for the foreseeable future? Conversely, prior to normalization what role did religiously-based national or cultural identity play, directly or indirectly, in preventing normalization of relations between India and Israel from the time of Israeli independence? Do the over-arching, religiously-based national or cultural identities of the primary parties involved in these historical conflicts operate in a normative and/or functional capacity with regard to a presumed role in the historical Indian-Israeli relationship?

In this dissertation I aim to provide a greater understanding of the historical and contemporary dynamics of India's foreign policy towards Israel within the context of: 1) The role of identity regarding its religious majority of Hinduism and its largest religious minority of Islam; 2) the role of the religious identity in maintaining positive relations with the Arab-Muslim world and the resulting negative relations with Israel prior to normalization; and 3) the progressive role religious identity has played/can play via shared meanings and identities of Israeli Jews with India's Hindu majority post-normalization. Shared meanings and identities are based, in part, within a modern-day historical context of conflict with a minority, religious "Other" (i.e. the Indo-Pak conflict as 'Hinduism v. Islam' and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as 'Judaism v. Islam'), a dynamic that refers to both nations only since their near simultaneous independence in the late 1940s. I will examine the Indian-Israeli relationship with regard to similarities in

the development and history of each respective nation-state, each of which are highlighted by the shared experience of Partition movements that have come to be defined by the existence of a narrative of conflict with an Islamic "Other". This research seeks to address three main questions concerning the historical nature and potential future of the Indian-Israeli relationship that combine to form the thesis of this work. First, what has been the functional and/or normative role of religion-based national and cultural identity (Hindu, Jewish and Islamic) in the history and establishment of Indian-Israeli state-to-state relations? Second, since normalization, how crucial has identity been in reinforcing the burgeoning strategic/security relationship that exists today and also in reifying the importance of factors of religion-based cultural or national identity? This question is evaluated in the context of political and strategic developments, enveloped in a nature of religion-based nationalism, that have taken place in India and Israel over the last twenty years. It also considers the strong religious element present in both countries' contemporary concerns of cross-border terrorism by Islamic radicals originating in neighboring states. Finally, since normalization, to what extent are the religion-based national and cultural identities of (Hindu) India at the sub-state level (religious leaders, business elite, etc.) internalized and work to propagate the same dynamic that I argue exists to a relevant degree at the state level (e.g. 'Hindu' nation vs 'Islamic' nation), ultimately resulting in a reinforcement of this state-level dynamic?

Throughout my analysis of this topic, the use of several different, but interrelated, terms will be used in reference to the "identity" of both India and Israel. References, categorizations, and descriptions of identity in this case will include the frequent use of the terms "culture", "religion", "nationalism" and combinations of the three. The

interchangeable nature of the manner in which I use these terms throughout this writing comes with solid conviction and a legitimate explanation. An understanding of this explanation relates directly to recognizing Hinduism and Judaism as both traditionally being non-universal religions of "orthopraxy" or, put another way, "lived" religions. As "lived" religions, these traditions come to include several identifiable characteristics considered to be of a religious nature and action which would fall outside the standard Western understanding of what is and what is not a part of religion. This includes, but is not limited to, ideas of nationhood and ethnicity bound by a sacred language/land, strict dietary regulations, extensive systems of law and jurisprudence, and frameworks for social organization to name a few. A detailed explanation of orthopraxy as it relates to Hinduism and Judaism, and the significance this explanation has as a foundation in understanding of my overall argument, will be presented in chapter two. In short, if their classification as orthopraxic religious traditions is considered, Hinduism and Judaism cannot be compartmentalized as other institutionalized religions or religious practices would be according the standard Western understanding of what is and is not religious in nature.

It is also very important to make clear that the argument I will be making regarding the role of religious identity and the Islamic "Other" is particular to the Indian-Israeli case and their relationship with one another and not to either country's identity as a whole. While my argument may be applicable to India's and/or Israel's relations with other states, this is not the claim I will be making nor addressing. As Desch notes, "Cultural theories that may not be amenable to generalization across cases might still lead to generalization within cases across time. In other words, they may not offer general

theories of all states' behavior but may suggest theories of a particular state's foreign policy behavior over time" (1998, p. 155). Desch's point is directly applicable to this work and my argument presented here regarding India's foreign policy behavior towards Israel.

It is also significant to note that the Hindu nationalism I describe is a broadly construed, politicized version of what traditional Western scholarship identifies as the Hindu religion. Furthermore, its role in the Indian-Israeli relationship that I argue for is but one construction of the Hindu identity in India among many. As such, it is not a representative view of all 948+ million Hindus in India nor of India's approximately 260+ million non-Hindu citizens, a majority of whom (approximately 170+ million) are in fact Muslims. (Ghosh & Singh, 2015)[2]

The primary theme or assertion of my argument is that religious identity and concerns related to religious identity have historically had, and continue to have, legitimate effects on the status of the Indian-Israeli relationship. This argument, however, is not one of exclusive causality vis-à-vis the historical non-relations and eventual normalization between India and Israel. The non-relations and the process of normalization were ultimately the result of several important ideational, domestic, and systemic factors at play at various times throughout the historical period in question. In this respect, my goal is not to demonstrate the absolute role of religious identity as the sole causal mechanism responsible for the historical circumstance in question. Rather, the goal is to highlight religion-based national and cultural identity in the case of India and

[2] The cited article denotes numerical values, in part, through the use of the term 'crore'. Note that 1 crore is equal to a sum of 10,000,000 units.

Israel as one of the most critical factors responsible for determining the status of relations between these two countries and is an effort at demonstrating and encouraging critical thought on the impact of identity on state-to-state relations and foreign policy as a whole.

Finally, and perhaps most critically, I would like to point out my awareness of the other dynamics involved in the conversation assessing the Indian-Israeli relationship, specifically with regard to historical Hindu violence against those perceived to be non-Hindus. Anti-Muslim violence exemplified in the 1992 *Babri Masjid* incident and the 2002 Gujarat riots, as well as violence against Christians across India, and particularly in the state of Orissa since 1999, are but just a few of the unjustifiable acts of violence committed by Hindu factions in India against non-Hindus over the last few decades. Although some of these incidents will be mentioned at times throughout the course of my dissertation, they are not the focal point of this study. For the sake of this research, I am focusing on the Hindu-Jewish/Indian-Israeli dynamic as described previously. The arguments I make regarding this topic are not intended to ignore, down-play or otherwise justify other dynamics related to my argument, especially those dealing with violence committed in the name of Hindu identity or Hindu Nationalism against Muslims, Christians or others.

Chapter Outline

The chapters of my dissertation will be set up in the following manner with six chapters in total. *Chapter 1* contains an introduction to the topic being researched as well as my thesis statement and the aims of my research. Included here are an outline of all chapters that will follow as well as a description of what this research contributes to the

field and the scholarship on this subject. *Chapter 2* includes an explanation of key terms and concepts, the literature review and both my theoretical and analytical framework and method sections. The literature review will include the works most relevant to my study from the following fields and sub-fields: the history of Hindu-Jewish relations, identity in Indian-Israeli relations, and the politics of identity as analyzed in the field of International Relations. The theory and method sections of this chapter are key for understanding and framing the rest of the discussion and the arguments that I put forth regarding the role of identity in the historical Indian-Israeli relationship.

Chapter 3 details the historical beginnings and trajectory of three key nationalist movements based in religion up until the approximately the middle of the 20th century, including: 1) the development, evolution and role of Hindu Nationalist ideology, and what would eventually become the Hindu Right, in India's domestic political realm; 2) the onset of Muslim nationalism in India, the establishment of the All India Muslim League and the eventual creation of the world's first Muslim national state of Pakistan; and 3) the concurrent rise of Israel through the Jewish nationalist (i.e. Zionist) movement which began in the 19th century and culminating in the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948. The histories of these religiously-based political movements are chronicled in order to explain what I later argue to initially be a primary source of conflict between India-Israel and, later, a source of progression and normalization between the two countries through the recognition of one another's "shared" identity and historical experience.

Finally, religion's role in India's relations with Israel from pre-Partition to the eve of normalization (approximately 1980) will be analyzed as well. This analysis is done

within a framework that shows how religious identity negatively affected the normalization process, ultimately institutionalizing a view of Israel that would prevent the establishment of relations throughout the time frame under review.

Chapter 4 begins by looking at a brief comparative analysis of the histories of conflict with domestic and external Muslim factions or nations that both India and Israel have experienced. The respective histories of each nation as modern-states in this regard, will work to create a comparative historical and normative context within which my argument for the role of identity can be understood. This is followed by a thorough analysis of the decade immediately preceding the normalization of relations between India and Israel where the *Bharatiya Janata Party* (BJP) made their initial rise to relevancy in parliament. In contrast to the previous chapter, I argue here for factors of religion-based national and cultural identity being facilitators of India's relations with Israel, rather than an obstacle to them. It is the identity of the Hindu Right, combined with its unprecedented rise to political prominence during this decade, which I argue is absolutely critical to the "why" and the "when" of the establishment of relations. *Chapter 5* looks at relations since normalization took place in 1992. It highlights the evolution of Indo-Israeli security cooperation and its status as the linchpin of relations today, while also maintaining how this cooperation emanates from notions of religion-based identity. This chapter will also detail alternate bridges of the Indian-Israeli relationship including trade, tourism, technology exchange and agriculture and the role identity has in underpinning these relationships. *Chapter 6* will be the final chapter and will include conclusions found in my research, research challenges and competing explanations, as well as future prospects for Indian-Israeli relations.

Research Contribution

There is a clear lacuna in the literature concerning the role of identity in the Indian-Israeli relationship, concerning both state and non-state actors. Additionally, there also exists little focused scholarship on how religion-based national and cultural identity functions generally in each of these country's international state-to-state relations as well as how non-state actors from these countries interact with other actors at the international level. In this regard, this research is highly original and will be a novel contribution to the extensive field of identity politics, the sizable regional sub-fields of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, and the narrowly focused area of Indian-Israeli relations in particular.

My contribution will fill this deficit in the small but increasingly important literature on Indian-Israeli relations, specifically with regard to their official state-to-state interaction and how non-state factions affect the perception and role of each state's religion-based national and cultural identity in this interaction. The inclusion of, and focus on, the role of non-state actors in the Indian-Israeli also will contribute to the literature on the effect of bottom to top interaction and influence in state-society relations and what this means for state-to-state interaction. The context and aim of my research is not only highly original but becomes seemingly indispensable when considering current events and emerging patterns in the contemporary international system. My research is also relevant to the current debate and development taking place in the field of international relations when considering three global developments in particular: identity conflict, the rise of non-state actors as a threat to state security, and globalization.

The increase and frequency of identity-based or identity-involved conflict worldwide is difficult to argue against, especially in the third-world, developing countries and most recently, parts of Russia and the former Soviet Union. Identity here is a term inclusive of any category used by groups as a primary mechanism for differentiating themselves from the "Other" such as ethnicity, religion, nationality, etc. Furthermore, it is a feature which I believe requires sufficient attention to be given to it in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of today's international conflicts and relationships. In addition to the regions that include India and Israel, one can observe several examples of conflict which bring questions about identity to the forefront including ethnic wars throughout sub-Saharan Africa, sectarian violence between Sunni and Shia across the Islamic world, ethno-nationalist conflict in Eastern Europe and ethno-religious strife in the Caucasus to name just a few.

Religiously-motivated violence and conflict is an area of particular concern at the time of this writing, with several regions of the globe under varying degrees of threat from conflict of a religious nature or based in religious ideology. The imminence of such religiously associated conflict is reflected most notably in examples such as the fallout of the Arab Spring, highlighted by Syria's brutal civil war, and the subsequent rise of the radical Islamic "State", the 2014 election of Hindu nationalists as a majority in the state parliament, including the position of prime minister, in India the world's largest democracy, and Russia's resurgent support of the country's Christian Orthodoxy under the Putin regime as a means of reconstituting a nostalgic grand narrative of Russian dominance and empire.

The rise of the non-state actor as a serious or primary state security threat began to make headway in the early 1990's with the fall of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. The spike in ethnic-based conflict in Africa, the Balkans and parts of Asia during this time period, coupled with a steady increase in the occurrence of terrorism in various parts of the globe, gave reason for a potential shift in the focus of a state's security concerns to the realm of non-state actors. This potential shift was catapulted to the forefront of global security concerns almost overnight due to 9/11 and the USA's reconfiguration of the global security narrative defined by the new "global war on terror". Fifteen years and two major US-led wars in the Islamic-world and thousands of incidents of terror across the globe later, the concerns implied by this narrative still remain at the forefront of the perceived state security concerns of countries worldwide. In the absence of confirmatory statistics from a research group like SIPRI[3], few other countries in the world experience more cross-border terrorism than India and Israel. The state security concerns that they prioritize, I would argue, reflect not only a major linchpin in their cooperation with one another currently, but also the continued relevance and critical importance of the increasing role of the non-state actor as it relates to state security concerns.

Globalization has ostensibly contributed to the rise in the frequency of identity-based/identity-involved conflict. It is also a trend that is highlighted by characteristics highly visible in the Indian-Israeli relationship including technology development and exchange, increased economic cooperation and a thriving of the travel and tourism sector.

[3] Stockholm International Peace Research Institute

Globalization is undoubtedly, and faster than ever before, bringing into contact individuals and groups who historically have had little or no interaction with one another. As the world becomes a "smaller" place, one result has been for groups to reaffirm particular identities in the face of the encroaching "Other" which subsequently leads to conflict of varying degrees.

Conversely, globalization can also be a force for cooperation and constructive development. It is a process that has been greatly facilitated recently by the development of internet technology, the advent of widespread social-media, and the existence of rapid, global transit, all of which contribute to an environment of expanding communication and exchange of ideas. These developments as well as others have played a major role in the interaction between Indian and Israeli societies at every level, generating awareness of the "shared" identity factor, and positively contributing to the growth of the Indian-Israeli relationship as it stands today.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND EXPLANATION OF CONCEPTS, THEORY AND METHOD

My review of existing writings relevant to this research topic will be organized into three general bodies of literature. The first will survey the rich but relatively compact body of scholarship on Hindu-Jewish relations from ancient times to the modern-day. I focus here particularly on the historical Jewish experience in a predominately Hindu Indian society. A look at Hindu-Jewish relations significantly aids in creating a context for understanding the historical relationship between the indigenous and predominant cultures within both Indian and Israeli society and how they interact on the international stage. These are cultures that, I argue, underpin how these identities function in Indian-Israeli relations as well as underpinning the religious and nationalist identities at the center of my inquiries.

Next, I review the more established literature on identity politics. The notion of identity that I prioritize in this research is characterized by a cultural hybrid cultural and religious inclusive of conflated ideas of religion, ethnicity, and culture, the effects of which currently manifest themselves most notably through the Indian-Israeli security dynamic. Further, I will argue that this provides a base for engagement and a variety of interactions between Indian and Israeli societies, from the state or government level down to the individual as described in my theory section.

Lastly, I will review the minimal literature that exists on the role of identity in Indian-Israeli relations, primary of which are the works of P.R. Kumaraswamy and Nicolas Blarel. Several volumes and articles have been written on India and Israel, especially since normalization in 1992, but scholarship focusing on the causal or

normative effect regarding factors of religio-nationalist/cultural identity in the relationship is an area that is greatly lacking. Although several authors give varying degrees of attention to this subject matter in their writings on the Indian-Israeli relationship, an extensive inquiry into the topic is yet to be done.

Hindu-Jewish History

Hindu-Jewish relations have existed for centuries and the history of this relationship provides fitting examples of why the groups continue to have genuinely friendly relations. The Hindus and the Jews are not strangers to one another with contact between the two groups possibly reaching as far back as one thousand BCE as the Hebrew Bible indicates by its description of trade between Solomon's kingdom and India. (Katz, 1999, p. 13) Nathan Katz suggests the plausibility of India's earliest Jewish community in what is today's Cochin, Kerala dating back to the years shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem's Second Temple in 70CE. (2000, p. 30)

Looking at the medieval period, Malekandathil describes extensive trade and commerce network that the Jews of Kerala were involved in. He notes the importance of Jews as a mercantile group who successfully integrated themselves into Hindu society and bolstered their economic status through matrimonial arrangements and firm family ties. (2007, p. 7) Chakravarti echoes this assessment in his discussion of the evolution of Indo-Judaic contact and trade from the first to the twelfth centuries of the Common Era. (2007, p. 24-38)

A history of the Hindu-Jewish relationship in the modern period is chronicled by Katz who, in addition to describing the pre-modern origins of the Jewish settlement in

Kerala, describes the history and practice of the two other major Jewish communities in Indian history: the Bene Israel of Bombay and the Baghdadi Jews of Bombay and Calcutta. (2000) The earliest Western descriptions of the Bene Israel note how they became low-caste oil pressers, scattered along India's Konkan coast in the modern-day state of Maharastra, eventually reaching numbers of 50,000 at one point. Their origin in India is a topic of high debate, however. Despite claims of reference to the Bene Israel by Maimonides at the turn of the thirteenth century, and a pseudo-history that attaches the Bene Israel to the legend of the ten lost tribes of Israel, the time of their arrival in India has not been determined. (2000, p. 92-93)

The Jews of Arab and Persian descent, who would come to be identified as Baghdadis, established a community in Surat by the mid-eighteenth century. By means of commercial and entrepreneurial enterprise these Jews quickly spread to India's major port cities like Bombay and, by 1798, eventually established the first Baghdadi community in Calcutta. (Katz, 2000, 128-130) Joan Roland's extensive research on the Jews of India gives a narrative of all three of the previously mentioned Jewish communities in India, particularly the Baghdadis. Roland highlights the arrival of many Baghdadis to India due to increasing persecution in their countries of origin as well as the rise of the great Sassoon family whose success as merchants, beginning in 1833 and lasting until the early twentieth century, is one of the most well-known in modern India history. (1998, p. 15-19)

Since the establishment of Israel in 1948 and a consequent trend of immigration there, India's relatively small, thriving Jewish community has become a shell of its former self. Bombay still maintains the largest population of Jews in India, and is said to

have as many as five thousand. As for the rest of India, small numbers of Jews are scattered in places like Delhi and Calcutta, where a few dozen can be found, and in Cochin, where only a single-digit remnant of Jews remains in India's most ancient Jewish community.

The Jewish experience in India described by religious and societal freedom, and absence of persecution, has greatly informed the Hindu-Jewish encounter of the modern day by providing an inviting context within which a sound dialogue has been created. As Bender (2014) details, in 2007 and 2008 the world saw the first Hindu-Jewish Summits in Delhi and Jerusalem. This brought together leadership factions from each religion headed by the Chief Rabbinate of Israel representing the Jews, and the Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha representing the Hindus. Included among the major breakthroughs at these dialogue sessions were: 1) the Jewish acceptance of Hindu self-definition as monotheists; 2) the mutual recognition of both traditions as orthopraxic, non-proselytizing religions threatened by Islamic and Christian conversion efforts, secularism and the terrorism of religious extremism: and 3) the misrepresentation and distortion of sacred history and symbols, most notably the 'swastika'. (Bender, 2014) The dialogues are viewed as having been a highly successful enterprise for understanding and growth between the two religions and the societies which they inherently dominate and reflect. As Rabbi Abraham Benjamin, India's only current rabbi, stated at the first Summit in Delhi, "We [the Jews] were never in fear of observing any of our customs, or losing our traditional ways. We never faced persecution. This is what India has given to the Jewish community" (Benjamin, 2007).

Politics of Identity

Theoretically, the study of the politics of identity finds its place under the umbrella of Constructivism and proposes a way to understand religion, ethnicity, nationalism and other types of inter-subjective groupings. (Hopf, 1998) Wendt (1992) emphasizes how the identity and interests of states are socially constructed within and between each other. Hopf (1998, p. 193) also draws attention to the notion of differences of identity within states, pointing out that the state is not one, but various different actors as far as international relations and politics are concerned, with states behaving differently towards one another based on the identities of or within each. While I do not necessarily agree with Hopf's conclusion that we should "expect different patterns of behavior across groups of states with different identities and interests", this basic assertion regarding various actors operating within states holds great relevance to my theoretical discussion on the simultaneous nature of states as "both composite and unitary" (Mesbahi, 2011).

Weldes et. al. (1999, p. 13) reaffirm that actors act towards one another and objects based on the socially constructed meanings those opposing actors or objects have for them. Kratochwil (2008) highlights the notion that the things we perceive are a product of conceptualization which, in part, is a result of our social constructions. These ideas about perception play a key role then in defining our identity and the identities of those who are not us (i.e. the "Other"), the effect of which implies interests, preferences and consequent actions of states and non-state actors as well. (Hopf, 1998) Speaking about states, Hopf (1998) emphasizes the Constructivist assumption that identities are variable, formed by political, social, cultural and historical contexts. Considering this, the

establishment of relations between India and Israel could be viewed at a basic level as the result of similarities in the perception, and subsequent identification, of themselves and one another.

Keating (2008, p. 99-100) also discusses using culture, a broad ranging form of identity of which religion nationalism, ethnicity, etc. can be considered sub-categories, as a manner for understanding social and political behavior and institutions. Here elements of culture can provide a framework for interpreting and constructing visions of the world, producing histories and traditions which work to legitimize group definition, group values and dominant group interpretations. (Keating, 2008 p. 109-111) This process seems to be evident in the construction of India's identity as "Hindu" vis-à-vis a "threatening" Islamic "Other" by Hindu nationalists, particularly in the efforts of the Bharata Janata Party during its initial rise to political prominence in the 1980's.

Katzenstein (1996) looks to the cultural-institutional context of the political environment and the political construction of identity in his analysis of national security and its source(s). Jepperson et al (1996) are in agreement with this sentiment and endorse the notion that norms, identities and culture "matter" in that they take the primary role in causal arguments about national security policy, which is ultimately formulated due to the existence of a perceived threat. The framework that these authors (Jepperson et al., 1996) present provides the centerpiece of my theoretical assertion about the Indian-Israeli relationship and, as such, will be elaborated in the section entitled "Theories and Analytical Framework".

Kowert (1998) speaks about the link between national identity and national security with the latter depending on the former for its ability to, in part, allow states to

distinguish enemy from friend. In a similar tone, Barnett (1996) analyzes the potential advantage that identity offers over Realist explanations concerning the threat construction of states and the subsequent alliances or security cooperation they then choose to pursue. He highlights the central role of the emergence of a germane "Other", and points to examples of pan-Arabism's early years and the Gulf Cooperation Council's post-Gulf War security patterns. (Barnett, 1996) Rousseau (2006) concurs in his central conclusion that threat perception is a social construct, while going even further to suggest that Realist and Liberal predictions result from the line that actors draw between the 'Self' and the "Other". Again, the emergence of an "Other" is highlighted as playing a key role in threat perception and, subsequently, security cooperation. This is relevant when considering the mutual threat construction surrounding Muslim extremism that is shared by India and Israel. Lastly, Desch (1998) discusses the explanatory power of culture in cases in which structural environments are indeterminate (i.e. where both internal and external threats to the state exist or neither exist), a circumstance that arguably has applied to both India and Israel at different points in history as well as today.

This review provides a brief, yet well-rounded inclusion of some of the most important ideas emerging in the last two decades regarding the politics of identity and how they may be general applied to the case of India and Israel

Politics of Identity in the Indian-Israeli Relationship

The fairly minimal amount of scholarship on Indian-Israeli relations has yielded little that explicitly focuses on the role of identity in this relationship. A primarily descriptive argument denoting the combination of several variables as responsible for the

historical trajectory of India-Israel relations is found in several lengthier writings on the topic. (Rubinoff, 1995; Nair, 2004; Kumaraswamy, 2010; Blarel, 2014). Rubinoff (1995), Kumaraswamy (2010) and Blarel (2014) are keen to speak about the role of identity in India's policy towards Israel domestically, specifically with regard to the sentiments of India's substantial Muslim population, as well as internationally regarding their discussion of India's relationship with the Arab Muslim world. In particular, Kumaraswamy's lengthy conversation on the role of Islam in Indian politics highlights the notion of Israel being perceived, understood, and articulated through an "Islamic prism" throughout most of India's history, including those years leading up to Partition as most notably seen in Gandhi's use of Islamic motifs in his vocal support of the Palestinian cause. (2010, p. 68) Blarel (2014) contends that the notion of a monolithic, unchallenged Israel policy is false and looks to specify India's Israel policy over time, rather than just identifying multiple variables important in the history of this policy. While Blarel discusses religion, he does not, however, give it a centralized role in India's policy towards Israel.

Nair (2004) examines India's evolving perception of and stance towards Israel against the background of differing international political contexts, in particular those of West-Asia in the second half of the 20th century and the dramatically dissimilar post-Cold War world. As a part of this analysis, he includes a discussion that outlines India's historical West Asian policy, briefly touches on how Muslim identity affected India with regards to the "Pakistani factor", "the fear-psychosis of an Islamic bloc", and "the Kashmir issue" (Nair, 2004, p. 46-48) as well as the sentiment of India's large Muslim population towards West Asia (2004, p. 51, 63-66, 98) and the Indian National

Congress's (INC) historical support of the Khilafat movement in the years immediate prior to and after WWI. (p. 61-63; Blarel, 2014, p. 54-60).

A more promising outlook on the progression of Indian-Israeli relations can be seen in the instance of the future Indian diplomat K.M. Panikkar in 1947 who, while emphasizing the important role of Islam in Indian polity, envisioned a possible "Hindu Perception" towards Zionist aspirations for an Israeli state, particularly regarding Indian defense policy and a future Israeli state's ability to off-set alliances among Islamic countries. Furthermore, Panikkar explicitly highlighted that he saw a "great deal in common" between Hindus and Jews. (Kumaraswamy, 2010, p. 81-83; Kumaraswamy, 1995) Gordon (1975, p. 231-233) briefly touches on news articles that describe the connection between Jewish and Hindu nationalists, that imply Hindu-Jewish affinities and that talk about how these affinities play out for India and Israel in the conflicts that both were engaged in at the time.

Related to the effects of Panikkar's possible "Hindu Perception" of Indian defense policy, Singh (1999) discusses the potential influence and role of "Hindu" identity in India's strategic culture since Partition. This notion, which becomes quite relevant regarding the centrality of India and Israel's security relationship, is further analyzed by Rosen (1996) who expands the argument to include India's political culture and the profound impact that the Hindu caste system has on Indian politics. Until the rise of the Bharata Janata Party (BJP) in the years immediately preceding normalization, only a select few groups, such as the pro-Hindu Jan Sangh party and the Pro-Sikh Akali Dal party, would voice a perception underpinned by the anti-Muslim sentiments that would lead them to favor Israel. (Kumaraswamy, 2010, p. 158-159) Furthermore, some believe

that it was parties like these, particularly the BJP, whose stance on Israel had directly influenced and led to the establishment of relations with Israel in 1992. (Rubinoff, 1995, p. 504-505) There also existed a contingent of socialist parties in India which identified with and supported Israel on ideological grounds due to the prominence of labor movements in the country during the first few decades of its existence. (Kumaraswamy, 2010) Beyond the groups in previously described examples, however, a more progressive stance towards Israel never materialized, and India's policy towards Israel for the next 45 years following partition would remain much as it did prior to Partition.

Despite the discussion that exists in these works, both implicitly and explicitly, dealing with the role of identity throughout the history of the Indian-Israeli relationship, an in-depth examination of identity's role remains elusive in the literature, especially with regards to Hindu-Jewish factors of identity.

The Significance of "Religion": Hinduism in India and Judaism in Israel as Culture, Nation and Religious Practice

Culture, Nation and Religion

In order to build confidence in the theoretical underpinnings of my argument that will be discussed in the next section, it is necessary to discuss and define certain key terms and concepts. Comprehension of the role of religion-based nationalism in India's historical relations with Israel must commence with an understanding of what exactly is being referred to when discussing religion-based nationalism and other interrelated, yet specific, designations such as religion-based culture and religion-based politics.

However, I will first lay out working definitions of the terms culture, religion, and nation, which will then be followed by a brief explanation of combinations of these terms.

To begin, I would first like to look at what I argue to be the broadest and most inclusive term of this list: culture. One of the earliest attempts at defining and explaining what exactly is being referred to when using the term culture, E.B. Tylor, the founder of the sub-discipline of cultural anthropology, is quoted: "Culture or civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, an any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (1913, p.1; Scupin, 2008, p. 8). Inherent in this definition are characteristics commonly found within most explanations of religion, nation, and politics as well as the equation of culture with civilization. In this view then, the cultural enterprise comes to include nearly every aspect of human activity. As such, culture the becomes the broadest category used in the attempted exercise of conceptualization of an Indian-Israeli relationship whose history emanates, in part, from sources rooted in social constructions of identity.

A more focused, yet still fairly broad, definition of culture can be cited from modern anthropological conceptions which views culture as, "… a shared way of life that includes values, beliefs and norms transmitted within a particular society from generation to generation", with society referring to, "… the pattern of relationships among people within [or originating from] a specified territory" (Scupin, p. 8, 2008). Add to this understanding of culture, "… the historical accumulation of symbolic knowledge that is shared by a society and passed down through symbolic learning and language" (Scupin, p. 9, 2008), and this provides a basic understanding of what is being referred to in using

the term. Within this framework of understanding then, culture becomes a primary source of identity formation and recognition between "Self" and "Other". Also, note that it is important to keep in mind here some of the key words used to define culture including values, norms, and the significance of territory and symbolism. These are terms that are frequently recurrent throughout this writing, the understanding of which becomes paramount to my main thesis and my argument regarding the role of identity in the historical Indian-Israeli relationship.

However, while the highlighting of various combinations of these characteristics is used in most any attempt to separate one culture from another, there is no universal combination which is recognized as the primary method for determining separation. I would argue then that some combination of both the material (territory, structures, natural formations, etc.) and the non-material (beliefs, values, norms, etc.) become integral building blocks for creating a particular way of life that informs what Lawson (2006, p. 8) terms a "common spirit". For purposes of this study then, I define the term "culture" to mean:

> a particular way of living that is identifiable by a specified set of material and immaterial characteristics that have been adopted and given meaning by a group of individuals who are united by a mutual recognition of a "common spirit" among one another that is predicated on these shared characteristics, ultimately serving to orient these individuals vis-à-vis one another within the reality of a given society.

Keeping in mind this understanding of culture, I shift now to discussing the term religion. The essential question that dominates this discussion is whether religion is epiphenomenal (i.e. a by-product of) to culture or some other social, psychological, etc. force, or whether it is *sui generis* (i.e., "its own category'), and therefore not reducible to

anything else. Given this dichotomy, and much in the same as fashion as the term culture, historical attempts to define religion have been difficult, hotly debated and have generally resulted in broad, open-ended understandings of what exactly is being referred to when the word is being used. Efforts to defined this term have come within a variety of different disciplinary contexts, including philosophy, psychology, sociology, theology, and finally religious studies, etc. The result of these efforts has greatly contributed to the broad, open-ended nature of the term's understanding. Therefore, in order to utilize an understanding that best suits the constructivist theoretical underpinnings of this work, as well as the religious dichotomy of "orthodoxy" vs "orthopraxy" shared by Hinduism and Judaism that is to be explained in the next section, I will highlight several characteristics that have frequently been identified in many of notable attempts at explanation of this term throughout history, including those by Mircea Eliade, Clifford Geertz and Ninian Smart. This will be followed by briefly discussing a portion of Talal Asad's understanding of religion as a socially constructed category and as a term which ultimately cannot be decisively defined, but one that I argue should be analyzed within a category in and of itself.

While I would concede that a singular, concrete definition of religion is elusive, a working definition can be constructed for the purpose of this study. As a part of my explanation of what I am referring to in my use of the term religion, I first highlight several descriptive notions and characteristics inclusive in the term as presented by Eliade and Geertz. I would be in basic agreement with Geertz (Hecht & Biondo III, 2012, p. xi; Geertz, 1973, p. 87-125) and Ninian Smart (Hecht & Biondo III, 2012, p. xi; Smart, 1996) who both denote religion as a part of culture, a denotation that would apply within

the definition I gave as well as within much more general definitions like that of Tylor. To be considered a part of culture, however, does not mean that religion is synonymous with the term nor does it mean that it is not worthy of analysis in its own right. For example, "language" is a characteristic of culture but is also regarded as a phenomenon or subject that is analyzed on its own terms. In any case, while the terms religion and culture are interrelated and can be observed to impact one another with many contexts, this denotation is not without its complexities. This is why I ultimately argue for a separate discussion of the terms and for religion to be analyzed and understood in its own right.

There are three major attributes that I would argue are required in order to understand what religion is and how it functions in the context of this study: 1) the "Sacred" or "Holy"; 2) symbolism; and 3) its normative function in society that essentially can be described as a "blue-print" for life. The first attribute is discussed within the context of religion as a general phenomenon and is my primary argument for the categorization of religion apart from any other phenomenon or force. The latter two attributes, while not argued to be historically exclusive to Hinduism and Judaism, are present specifically with regard to each of these religious traditions and the way in which I argue they relate to on another throughout this study. Before continuing, it is worth noting here that the reason I work to formulate my own definition of the term instead of wholly using that of Eliade, Geertz, Asad or Smart, is that I take issue with some of the key modes of analysis and explanation found in their respective definitions.

The idea of the sacred, I argue, is significant to any understanding of religion, particularly if religion is to be understood in its own terms. Eliade cites the attribute of

the sacred as the most significant concept denoting the "autonomy" of religion as not being a by-product of any other sort of phenomenon such as psychology, economics, etc. (Pals, 2015, p. 230) Like Eliade, I would also argue that this notion ultimately provides the best single measure for determining the "religious" apart from the "non-religious" in nearly any context. According to Eliade, explanation of the "sacred" goes hand-in-hand with the opposing idea of the "profane", or ordinary, and can be summarized as follows:

> The profane is the realm of everyday business- of things ordinary, random, and largely unimportant. The sacred is just the opposite; it is the sphere of the supernatural, of things extraordinary, memorable, and momentous. While the profane is vanishing and fragile, full of shadows, the sacred is eternal, full of substance and reality. The profane is the arena of human affairs, which are changeable and often chaotic; the sacred is the sphere of order and perfection, the home of ancestors, heroes, and gods. (Eliade, 1959; Pals, 2015, p. 232)

His language here denotes the sacred to be a broad-based perception of something that is otherworldly and not of this reality, whether by virtue of G-d/gods, ancestors (i.e. the dead), mythic heroes of a mythic past, or some other parallel realm (for example *Nirvana)*, all of which by definition are generally not part of our mundane world. In this sense, notions of the sacred could include one or all of these attributes and are not confined to the inclusion of a narrow or single concept, such as that of monotheism for example. The enterprise of religion as a whole, works to promote contact or interaction with the sacred, a process that is even found in secular societies in unconscious ways through the use of nostalgia, existence of dreams and via various other forms of the imagination, according to Eliade. (Pals, 2015, p. 234)

In a fashion reflective of Eliade's understanding, Ninian Smart refers to the notion of the "transcendent" of the perceived world in any attempt at a unified definition of

religion. This notion of the transcendent includes ideas like that of G-d and Nirvana, both of which lie beyond this world, and both of which work to separate religion from comparable systems such as Humanism or Marxism. (Smart, 1979, p. 27) Smart combines this notion with a second which he terms the "mythic concept of the unseen":

> In myths and symbolic representations of divine and other forces in the world with which men conceive themselves to have relationships, it is notable that they stand for entities which are both manifest and hidden. A god can reveal himself to me (like Krishna in the theophany), but essentially he remains hidden. In performing a rite or a sacrament, we see outward actions and symbols, yet the true force of what is done is concealed, unseen, mysterious. Indra (the atmospheric, warrior of the *Rig Veda*), is not identified with the thunderbolts he unleashes or with the great storm-clouds piling whitely and darkly into the firmament above the great Panjab (*sic*) plain, but he manifests himself through these phenomena. Nearly everywhere in the mythic aspects of religion we see this tension between the seen and the unseen. (Smart, 1979, p. 31-32)

Together, Smart refers to these two aspects of religion as the "transcendently unseen" (Smart, 1979, p. 33) to create a concept that closely parallels Eliade's notion of the sacred. It is the transcendently unseen or the sacred that ultimately delineates that which can be considered to be religion. The sacred, therefore, becomes the single most important characteristic in broadly defining the concept of religion, and in making the argument for religion to be considered *sui generis*, as a phenomenon separate from culture or any other.

Now I turn to the second attribute, symbols or symbolism. Both Eliade and Geertz highlight the importance of symbols in their respective attempts at describing and defining religion. Geertz's definition of religion provides what basically amounts to a summation of the key attributes outlined above and how they fit together according to the narrative that will be constructed in subsequent chapters. My writing seeks to extract the

phrasing and some of the ideas behind Geertz's definition of religion which provides a useful starting point for my own analysis of the term as he states:

> (1) a system of symbols which acts to (2) establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in men by (3) formulating conceptions of general order of existence and (4) clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that (5) the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic" (Geertz, 1973, p. 90).

I highlight here Geertz's notion of symbols as representing an ordering force, or as a concept that directs one to the force of order, and which can be a powerful motivation or model for beliefs and actions of individuals or groups. Symbols provide a comprehensible or a tangible representation of a concept or circumstance which I would argue finds its source within the sacred.

For Eliade, symbols are an indirect form of expression where the language of the sacred is to be found. Symbols are rooted in analogy where certain things, actions, or circumstances resemble or suggest the sacred and they include myth in their narrative form. (Pals, 2015, p. 237) Symbols act as a sort of intermediary providing individuals with an avenue for conceiving of, and connecting to, the sacred from their position in the mundane world. Symbols, therefore, are critical for connecting what would otherwise be mundane action (implicit of beliefs) to the realm of the sacred. Symbols, therefore, become indispensable as an easily understandable and motivating source for beliefs or actions perceived to be deeply-rooted or emanate from the sacred. Without symbols, the sacred would theoretically be beyond the reach of the individual due to its very nature as being distant and otherworldly which would render the practice of, or participation in, religion an effective impossibility as it would merely be an abstraction in the mind of the individual. Further, symbols also play a critical role in the connection of one religion to

another through creation of "shared" symbolism which denotes a similarity in belief, action, experience or otherwise.

The final aspect of my explanation of the term religion looks at an important idea highlighted by Talal Asad. Asad's discussion challenges the idea of religion as a distinctly autonomous phenomenon and, while I believe religion to be autonomous insofar as it does not merely find its source in some other phenomena as Eliade believes, this does not mean that religion cannot be inclusive of politics, social organization, economics, etc. To clarify my position on the seeming discrepancy between Eliade and Asad, therefore, I do not believe religion to be of these phenomena, but I do believe that it can come to include these phenomena under its umbrella. Asad emphasizes the genesis of the term religion as an essential result of Western historical processes that have been inaccurately applied across the board in attempts to understand non-Western culture:

> The insistence that religion has an autonomous essence– not to be confused with the essence of science, or of politics, or of common sense – invites us to define religion (like any essence) as a trans-historical and transcultural phenomenon. It may be a happy accident that this effort of defining religion converges with the liberal demand in our time that it be kept quite separate from politics, law, and science– spaces in which varieties of power and reason articulate our distinctively modern life. Yet this separation of religion from power is a modern Western norm, the product of a unique post-Reformation history. (Asad, 1993, p. 28)

As a part of his discussion critiquing the fundamental influence Clifford Geertz has had in attempts to define religion, Asad notes the central role that belief eventually came to play post-Enlightenment conceptions of religion, a notion which Geertz emphasized "belief" as "…a state of mind rather than as constituting activity in the world" (1993, p. 47). The notion of making a division between what constitutes religion versus "non-religion" by essentially bestowing primacy of belief over practice (i.e., activity) will be

critical to my argument in the next section explaining what exactly could be identified under the umbrella of both Hinduism or Judaism as "lived" religions.

At its most fundamental level, patterns of defining religion in the Western world have come, first and foremost, with regard to belief in a supernatural and/or higher power. Those traditions that lack belief in, or which may not place primary emphasis on belief in, such a being(s) have tended to be more heavily scrutinized or, in some cases, dismissed outright as not constituting an identifiable religion. While I recognize the fact that belief in a higher power, deity(ies) or some sort of supernatural being is a primary characteristic used in many attempted explanations of religion, I also believe that this is only one of several characteristics that can be used in attempts to explain religion and I certainly would not agree that such a characteristic is absolutely essential for all understandings of religion. I believe this notion echoes Eliade's inclusive understanding of the "sacred" which does not narrow the idea of what is considered otherworldly or outside of our reality to an exclusively theistic understanding.

To summarize, a combination of what the previously reviewed theorists understood to constitute religion is used to designate a working definition for this writing:

> A system inclusive of beliefs and actions that have a foundation in or are undertaken in an effort to, connect to an agreed upon idea of the "sacred" which serves to instruct, through the primary median of symbols and symbolism, individuals and groups on how to behave in this world, resulting in the constitution of ritual, social organization, laws, politics (i.e. rule), and civil life, among other areas of human individual and social living.

To reiterate, this definition places religion under the umbrella of culture, denoting it as a subset that shares many overlapping characteristics with definitions of culture, but that

also possesses distinct functional features, primary of which is the idea of the sacred, that ultimately necessitates its own categorization that is *sui generis*.

The final singular term discussed here is "nationalism", and more specifically, its root word: nation. The ideology of nationalism essentially, "… involves demanding a political program, in some formal way, for that identity [i.e. nation]" (Lawson, 2006, p. 104). Attention, therefore, shifts to defining the term "nation". Like the previous two terms discussed, the term nation has also been, and remains, a topic of vigorous debate as to what it references and as to what the identification of a nation should be based on. Definitions of this term have come to include several characteristics found in the descriptions of the previous two terms as well. However, as with culture and religion, my aim here is not to debate the meaning of the term itself, but rather to establish a meaning or definition that is best suited for understanding the arguments for how the identity of nation is perceived and how it functions within the settings and contexts presented throughout this writing.

To succinctly summarize the debate on what exactly can be conceptualized as a nation, there are two main approaches explaining what constitutes a nation and how that constitution arises. These approaches have dominated the discussion in recent decades and are known as primordialism and modernism. According to Hearn, the two approaches can each be distinguished according to the several main themes or characteristics:

> Primordialism- Dominant themes of common descent, territorial belonging, and shared language in discourse; historical depth in the idea of the organic evolution of nations out of pre-existing substrate of ethnicity; underlying emotional bonds and feelings of attachment evoked through national language and symbols (2006, p. 20)

> Modernism- Generation of relatively unified national identity resulting from the demands of industrial and capitalist economies; the modern state as a bureaucratic and legal institution generating new conceptions and how this creates notions of 'civil society'; the spread of literacy, linguistic homogenization and standardized education as cornerstones of a mass culture and unified national identity. (2006, p. 67)

The processes of social construction of particular facets of identity are, as established in the introductory chapter, a key theme which the arguments of this study largely rest upon. However, the perception of what constitutes a nation, according to the various actors and agents references throughout this study of Indo-Israeli relationship, conforms most closely to the primordialist approach. This approach links conceptions of nationhood to a belief by its members of their connection to one another via ancestral bonds that, in the modern nation-state era, includes a, "… correspondence between cultural and administrative [i.e. political] boundaries" (Barreto, 2009, p. 59). And while the Muslim nationalism that drove, and eventually resulted in, the establishment of Pakistan is perhaps equally or better explained through the modernist approach, the observed social constructions of nationhood found in the Indian and Israeli examples are legitimized, in part, through a narrative laden with references to emotional bonds, a common language and decent from within an ancient territory, and shared historical experiences. The primeval quality ascribed to Jewish nationalism and Hindu nationalism as it is examined throughout this writing, will be demonstrated to be of particular significance in the exercise of legitimization of these ideas by their respective adherents. This is a major reason that primordialism is the preferred approach for analysis here for, as Barreto notes, "Ultimately,

nationalism rests its legitimacy on a pseudo *geritocracy*- the older a claim to primordial origin the greater the legitimacy of the nationalist claims" (2009, p. 17). The seeming immemorial nature of both Hindu and Jewish civilization will prove to be a key point in the attempted validation of claims and one that is used to link the two civilizations. As such, the definition of nation and its derivatives comes to refer to the views of the primordialist approach as defined here.

Revisiting both culture and religion, in addition to nationalism, references to religion-based culture and religion-based nationalism are frequently used throughout my writing and can now be explained. The reference to religion-based culture refers to any given culture, as defined earlier, whose particular way of living and "common spirit" have their foundations in religion which, most importantly, ultimately originates from within conceptions of the sacred. While many practices from cultures around the world may be based in custom, in practical rationale or perhaps even in reasons unknown, a religion-based cultural practice is one whose source is traced back, in history, through myth or otherwise, to sacred scripture, a sacred revelation, a sacred event or events, or sacred symbolism. In this sense, many day-to-day practices within India take place within a Hindu (i.e., religion-based) cultural context, even by individuals who may not be what some consider as practicing Hindus. These individuals could be Buddhist, Sikh, Muslim or even secular, but because Indian society's oldest and deepest foundations originate in "Hinduism" (as will be argued throughout this writing), those who may be viewed as non-Hindus may ultimately, and routinely, engage in Hindu (i.e., religion-based) cultural practices.

At a general level, religious-based nationalism, "… equates the religious community with the nation and builds on a previously constructed religious identity" (van der Veer, 1994, p. 80). Identity works to denote who the "Self" is, which leads, subsequently, to instruction on how the "Self" whether for individuals or groups, should act in their interaction with the "Other" (van der Veer, 1994, p. 80) and, in cases like this, an "Other" that is ostensibly religious. Notions of religion-based nationalism then assume the defining characteristics of the aforementioned primordialism with the understanding that, like religion-based culturalism, the basic elements from which a nation arises (i.e. history, territory, language, etc.) have their source in some sort of "sacred" origin. Nation as emanating or undifferentiated from a religious community is a dynamic that is recognized by large contingents of all three religious factions (Hindu, Muslim and Jew) within India and Israel, albeit to differing degrees.

It is worthwhile to note an additional caveat regarding my use of the term religion. I acknowledge the argument that some of the actors or groups discussed in this writing may in fact not ascribe to the term "religion" within the definitional framework previously given. However, while the essentially religious nature of such actions may be rejected or go unrecognized by the actor(s) being referenced in favor of purely political, social, cultural, etc. reasoning, it is worthy to note that many of the ideas behind these positions and actions ultimately have their foundations in ancient traditions of Hindu and Jewish "sacredness". This notion finds parallel, for example, with the Jewish atheist who keeps kosher. This type of individual may reject belief in G-d and sacred commandments, noting cultural or practical reasons for keeping kosher, but the fact remains that keeping kosher has its origins in divine command and the institution of

Halacha (i.e. the Jewish legal system) among the Jewish people over two and half millennia ago. This can also be seen with the non-practicing Hindu who insists on marrying within his or her caste despite not believing in the divine source of this idea's *Vedic*[4] origins. As a result, these terms inclusive of religion (i.e. religion-based nationalism and religion-based culturalism) can accurately be applied in the description and explanation of actions, scenarios, circumstances and arguments that follow.

Nevertheless, an understanding of religiously based culture and religiously based nationalism also requires further insight into the essential nature of the religious community(ies) under question, Hinduism and Judaism in this case, and how these religions are practiced and function in the respective societies and cultural context of nation-states in which they are the religious majority.

Function and Society: Hinduism in India; Judaism in Israel

I continue by analyzing the critical role that Hinduism (in India) and Judaism (in Israel) play in each respective society's conception(s) of national, religious, cultural and even political identity by each country's majority-religion populations. The demonstration of these roles will also work to highlight the religio-cultural similarities and potential bridges of cooperation held between the two societies that create what I term "civilizational resonance", a notion which implies a deep-rooted, ideational bond two ancient civilizations. It is this idea of "civilizational resonance" which will later be argued to be an existing state of affairs which could provide an extremely stable and

[4] *Vedic* is a term referring to the *Vedas*, a highly and widely revered set of Hindu holy texts dating back to the first or second millennium BCE.

secure foundation for interaction of these societies, and ultimately the countries they are a apart of, in the present and moving forward into the future. It is a foundation which I will argue had a role to play beginning with the normalization process and which has the potential to provide a deep-rooted base on which seemingly limitless cooperation continues to be built in areas of political relations, economics, and strategic military affairs, in addition to areas of cultural endeavors.

In the broadest sense, traditional conceptions of these religions posit them as "non-universal" traditions, a label buttressed by the understanding that Judaism and Hinduism are traditions that are deeply linked, historically and culturally, to a piece of geography, a nation of people and a sacred language. (Bender, 2011, p. 31) For the Jewish people this land is Israel and the language Hebrew, and for the Hindus it is India and Sanskrit. This goes in contrast to a "universal" tradition, such as Christianity for example, which has no deep rooted connection to a specific ethnic group, piece of land or sacred language in the way Jewish and Hindu traditions do. (Bender, 2011, p. 31)

One area that the non-universality of Hinduism and Judaism becomes identifiable is with the examination of the absence of an initiative to proselytize and processes of conversion. Not only is there a marked absence of conversion efforts in these religions, but proselytization has actually been seen as a threat to both civilizations throughout their respective histories. (Bender, 2011, p. 31-32) For those not born into any given religious movement, some type of conversion is typically the only way of gaining formal recognition by, or acceptance into, a religious community that one wishes to be a part of. Traditional Hindu or Jewish religion makes this process very difficult, if not impossible, due their very nature and the characteristics they possess as non-universal religions.

Regarding Hinduism, there is no standard conversion process for an individual who wants to convert or be a member of the religious community. An individual's recognition within a given community could vary, but in most Hindu circles they would not be recognized as a Hindu because of its strong tie to an ethnicity, culture, and history that is specific to location, time and a particular people or nation. (Bender, 2011, p. 32) As such, one essentially must be born into the Hindu community in order to be considered a legitimate part of it in most cases. However, the theology(ies), philosophy(ies) and sacred scripture(s) of Hinduism do address the issue of non-Hindus and the role they play within the Hindu worldview, integration into which, deals primarily with ideas of eventual reincarnation or rebirth as a Hindu into Hindu society.

Judaism, in contrast to Hinduism, does have a loosely standard process for conversion, although this process does vary from denomination to denomination. However, for an outsider who wants to become a member of the Jewish religious community, it is typically not an easy process. This especially holds true within Orthodox circles, the most traditional denomination of Judaism and the official denomination affiliated with the Israeli state regarding the civil matters of Jewish citizens. While ethnicity, a hotly debated notion within Jewish and academic circles alike, does not present as much of an issue in Judaism as it does in Hinduism, strong ties to culture, nation and history are an inseparable part of the tradition. It is, in part, for these reasons that it is not uncommon for a rabbi to deny an individual's conversion request several times before agreeing to convert an individual, regardless of denomination. In the same fashion as Hinduism, Judaic theology and philosophy also provides instruction on the

role of non-Jews in the Jewish worldview. The seven *Noachide* laws[5] are all that need be followed for a non-Jew to successfully integrate into the Jewish world, deeming conversion virtually unnecessary in addition to being quite difficult. In my interview with Rabbi David Rosen, the Director of the American Jewish Committee's Department for Interreligious Affairs and the special advisor to the Chief Rabbinate of Israel on inter-religious affairs, he both confirmed and summed up the Jewish position regarding this issue:

> For Jews, the absence of an imperative to convert comes out of reasons rooted deep in their history. This understanding of a non-conversion effort emerges out of a tradition which is culturally particular, historically specific, and based on particular experiences, therefore making it senseless to expect or require outsiders to covert to or follow it (Rosen, Personal Interview, 2010).

The same understanding would follow for the Hindu tradition as well which, as previously discussed, is also culturally particular, historically specific, and based on particular experiences. The result, therefore, is a degree of innate exclusiveness that is traditionally a part of each religion and is essentially maintained through constructed notions of nationality, peoplehood, a sacred land and language, and a particular history.

The key to comprehending the role and impact these religions have on their respective societies from top (the state government level) to bottom (the individual level) lies in the combination of their inherent non-universality with an understanding of

[5] In Jewish scripture the Seven Laws of Noah are basic, universal laws or moral prescriptions provided for mankind to live by, particularly non-Jews, (i.e., those who did not receive the laws of Moses and are not bound by *Halacha)*. The Laws of Noah include the following commandments: 1. Do not commit idolatry (i.e., deny the existence of the singularity of G-d); 2. Do not blaspheme G-d; 3. Do not practice sexual immorality; 4. Do not steal; 5. Do not tear a limb/eat from a living animal; 6. Avoid bloodshed; 7. Do establish courts of justice. (Katz, 1997, p.35) For further reading on this topic refer to "Jewish concepts: The…" (2008); “Jubilees, Book of” (2011).

Hinduism and Judaism as traditionally being religions of orthopraxis. Within the religious context, the dichotomy between orthodoxy and orthopraxy, or "right teaching vs. right practice" (Hopkins, 1971, p. 73; Bender, 2011, p. 32), provides a unique link and commonality among the majority religious populations of Indian and Israeli society. This commonality, when recognized by both parties involved, provides a deep, almost primordial-like connection between the two civilizations which would theoretically permeate state-society at every level. Ideas of "right belief" vs. "right practice", therefore, become relevant insofar as there is a "natural" alliance that is formed as a result of the orthopraxis found in the religions that traditionally underpin the organization and function of each society. (Bender, 2011, p. 33)

Before further explaining the particulars of orthopraxy, it is very important to note that neither Hinduism nor Judaism should be defined solely within the confines of orthopraxis. Each of these religious traditions, theologically and in practice, intrinsically possess characteristics of both orthodoxy and orthopraxy, with the latter ultimately the more prevalent of the two and hence their designation as such. For as Katz notes, "Most Hinduisms and most Judaisms, on the contrary [to Christianities], value practice over doctrine, and the primacy of orthopraxy over orthodoxy…" (1997, p. 33). By contrast, religions described as traditions of 'orthodoxy' will ultimately possess varying degrees of 'orthopraxis'.

In order to establish what will be a point of counter-comparison and understanding, I briefly look at a tradition which values orthodoxy over orthopraxy. All forms of Christianity hold central in their theology the crucial importance of belief in Christ as savior of mankind, a belief that ultimately becomes essential in the

determination an individual's salvation (Bender, 2011, p. 34). This is especially true for a multitude of Protestant denominations, the Southern Baptist Convention for example, whose membership is almost exclusively based on acceptance this belief. The centrality of this belief, a nearly universal aspect of Christianity worldwide, is the primary reason that Christianity is classified as a religion of orthodoxy as opposed to orthopraxy. Karl Barth, one of the most well-known theologians of Protestant Christianity of the twentieth-century theologian, highlights the idea that that individuals are saved "by faith alone" in Jesus Christ, as reveled through in Holy Scripture (Knitter, 2002, p. 24-25,). As a primary figure of the neo-orthodoxy movement within Protestant Christianity, Barth unequivocally reaffirms the critical importance of Christian belief in which Christ was as perhaps the only relevant element of theology found within this tradition (Galli, 2000).

This is not to say that all Christians take this approach, however. The dichotomy is explained in Peter Kreeft's book on Catholic catechism when he states, "The controversy that primarily provoked the Protestant Reformation was the controversy about faith and works. Luther taught that we are justified and forgiven by faith alone, while the church held that good works were also necessary for salvation" (Kreeft, 2001, p.126). In the contemporary day, "inclusivist"[6] traditions such as Roman Catholicism, by far the largest fraction of Christianity, hold the value of works, actions, and rituals of equal importance with belief in Christ. However, the fact of the centrality of the belief in Christ as universal savior in Christian religion remains. (Bender, 2011, p. 34)

[6] With regards to religion, an 'inclusivist' tradition refers to one that claims that , "One's own group possesses the [whole] truth; other religious groups, however, could contain parts of the truth" (Brill, 2010, p. 22). The theological category of 'inclusivism' used here is one of three in a typology first described by Alan Race (1983) which also included the categories of 'exclusivism' and 'pluralism' as well. Alan Brill (2010) adds to this typology a fourth category of 'universalism'.

Traditional practice of Hinduism and Judaism, as religions of orthopraxis, are commonly referred to as "lived" religions. Their shared notion as "lived" religions results from the traditional emphasis on particular ritual action as the central element of each religion, generally speaking. That being said, I believe it is important to describe where the pattern lies within each of these respective traditions as far as orthopraxy and orthodoxy are concerned, while noting specific reasons for labeling each tradition as orthopraxy-dominant.

The labeling of Judaism as a religion of orthopraxis relies heavily on the dominance of *Halacha* in Judaic religious life. There are 613 commandments derived from the Torah that bring a central focus on the way the individual lives his or her life with no reference to salvation. As Rabbi Alfred Cohen states, "For the 613 commandments in the Torah, there is no mention of any reward" (1984, p. 308), a statement which implies the importance of action alone. (Bender, 2011, p. 35) The focus on action is also highlighted by Rabbi-Professor Daniel Sperber, a Bar Ilan University professor who won the Israel Prize in Talmud, when he noted that, "We [Judaism] have very little in the area of dogma. There are two basic concepts: the concept of intention, thought intention and the concept of deed action. In Hebrew we say '*Kavana ne maase'*. In Judaism there is no doubt that action plays a greater role, more dominant role than that of intention" (2008, p. 40). Judaism's nature of orthopraxy is therefore demonstrated in its downplay of dogma in favor of a focus on action.

Orthopraxis in Hinduism is highlighted by the concept of *dharma* which is codified in the *Dharmaśāstra* texts. This *dharma* allows men to live in society and work

toward the distant, but desirable, goal of *mokśa*[7]. It dictates how humanity should act and it includes all actions by which men define and express their place in the cosmos (Hopkins, 1971, p.73). Referring to priestly social and ritual standards, Thomas Hopkins notes that:

> The details of these standards had been worked out from the time of the Brāmhanas onward, but in the period after 500 BCE there was a great increase in the number of texts dealing with duties of men in everyday life. The result was a large body of Brahmanical teachings on social as well as ritual responsibilities. These responsibilities were collectively called dharma, "that which is established", or in more specific terms, "what men ought to do. (1971, p. 73)

Swami Parmatmananda, secretary of the Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha (H.D.A.S.)[8], further explains *dharma* in a simple yet succinct manner in the statement that, "Though today it [*dharma*] has been limited to religion or a belief system, but primarily Dharma means a duty based life. Indian culture, Indian upbringing always emphasized on duties rather than the rights" (2008, p. 45).

Both *Halacha* and *dharma* provide a set of rules, laws and procedures for the individual within each respective tradition that essentially creates a blueprint for how to

[7] *Mokṣa* is a Sanskrit term which refers to the liberation or release from *samsara*, or the endless cycle of death and rebirth. The concept of *samsara* is one that is quite prevalent to many Indic-founded religion traditions including Buddhism and Jainism, in addition to Hinduism. For further information on this topic refer to Hopkins (1971)

[8] The Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha's is an umbrella Hindu leadership organization designed to be, "a unifying body that provides leadership, guidance and a collective voice for the Hindus" ('The Hindu dharma'). According to them, this organization provides a typically unorganized, divided religious community with the platform and the means to come together, to be acknowledged, and to be heard throughout the world. This apex Hindu body was formed by the late Swami Dayananda Saraswati, who passed away in 2015, and convened for their first ever conference in Chennai, Tamil Nadu from 11/29/2003-12/01/2003. Unfortunately the website for the H.D.A.S detailing their mission, events, membership, etc., no longer seems to be functioning. However, for further available reading on the H.D.A.S please refer to Bender (2011), 'Hindu Dharma' (2010), and Puri (2006).

behave within society and how to act in life. At their most basic level then, the emphasis of these two concepts lies primarily within individual action. As a consequence, action becomes the foundation of each religious tradition and ultimately the society in which the religion is predominant.

In addition to an extensive structure of criminal and civil laws, the existence of strict dietary laws is a marked and unique aspect that Hindu and Jewish practice also shares. The dietary laws that both traditions impose on their practitioners are a prime example of their nature as religions of orthopraxis. In the eyes of many outsiders, everyday diet expands well beyond the realm of what would commonly be considered a religious concept. (Bender, 2011, p. 36) The existence of dietary laws in both religions opens another lane by which each society is able to culturally connect with the other as Katz notes, "While Hindu and Jewish dietary codes do not coincide, they do overlap, and these are areas in which communication and cooperation can be developed" (1997, p. 38).

The concepts of *dharma* and *Halacha* and the existence of strict dietary laws all play into the notion of a "lived" religion which is commonly associated with religions of orthopraxy. As non-compartmentalized, non-universal traditions that are entire ways of life, everyday activities from eating to bathing to simply waking up in the morning all take place within what can be defined as a religious framework. For individuals of these traditions the boundary between religious and non-religious related activities is extremely blurred if not completely non-existent in many cases. Dr. L.M Singhvi, a constitutional expert and former member of the Indian parliament, stated that "Dharma is that which sustains and keeps us together. Like us Hindus, the Jews unite with us in their adherence to righteous living" (2007, p. 23). He depicts the vital importance of *dharma* to

Hinduism, and therefore subsequently a majority of Indian society, while also affirming how this concept ties Hindu practice with that of the Jews. (Bender, 2011, p. 37) During a meeting between Hindu and Jewish leaders in 2007, Rabbi David Rosen highlighted this one of a kind bond:

> There are many commandments, which tell us that to live a Jewish life is to be alive to the consciousness. It is a way in which the language, culture, and religion are intertwined. This is not found anywhere, except in Hindu culture, where the religious culture and society are similarly connected. (2007, p. 25)

Dr. Singhvi and Rabbi Rosen, one as a political leader and the other as a religious leader, are both keen to verify the all-encompassing role that their respective religions play in the society of each of their state's, in addition to emphasizing the unique bond that Hindu and Jewish societies share in this regard. As religions primarily of orthopraxis then, Hinduism and Judaism go well beyond compartmentalized notions of ritual practice by essentially providing a blue-print for the construction and function of nearly every aspect of their respective societies, which are inherently inclusive of ideas of nationhood, common culture, law political organization, etc. .

By taking into account the previous discussion on the role of Hindu and Jewish religion in their respective state societies, the explanation of the usage of the terms culture, nationalism, religion, and associate terms can now be better understood. These terms are used in conjunction with one another at different times throughout the writing since they are all distinct yet equally legitimate facets of each of these religions of orthopraxis. At the same time, however, the usage of one term rather than another becomes necessary to accentuate and discuss particular attributes of each religion as they pertain to the discussion at hand.

Theory and Analytical Framework

The preceding discussion provides an extensive definition for what is being referred to when the terms "Hindu religion", "Jewish religion" or any of their derivatives are used in this writing. Furthermore, this discussion works to highlight the significant role these religions play in each of their respective societies as all-encompassing, orthopraxic traditions. Using this understanding as a foundation for what follows, I now move to theoretically frame the extent of the functional or normative role identity plays in the Indian-Israeli relationship historically and in the contemporary day. With this in mind, I anchor my discussion in three distinct, yet complementary analytical approaches. In order to properly understand application of my theoretical framework, it is beneficial to bring the previously described religious and cultural explanations into a more concrete, politically-based realm as this is the single most significant arena for the official interaction of states in the current international system. A brief summary of what political culture is and how it functions in a given state, therefore, becomes useful. Political culture here would be the mechanism through which the identity(ies) of society become(s) manifest in a given state's domestic and/or foreign policy. Richard Wilson provides a working definition of 'political culture' in arguing that:

> In the most general sense political cultures are socially constructed normative systems that are the product of both social (for example, rules that coordinate role relationships within the organizations) and psychological (for example, the preferences of individuals) influences but are not reducible to either… (Wilson 2002, p. 264; Lantis, 2002, p. 106)

Additionally, Thomas Berger provides a more functional description of political culture where he contends that it is best understood as a combination of norms and political institutions that:

> …exist in an interdependent relationship each relying upon the other in an ongoing way. Formal institutions play a role in anchoring broader society beliefs and values and provide continuity and permanency to them. Culture forces, in turn, influence the shapes institutions take and provide them with legitimacy and meaning. The interaction between formal institutions and the beliefs and values prevalent in a given society becomes particularly relevant in periods where the political systems are undergoing change. (1998, p. 11-12; Lantis, 2002 p. 107)

The melding of the two descriptions of political culture given here, provide a definitional and functional base from which to begin theorizing about the role of such conceptions in the Indian-Israeli relationship.

The first, while not a "theory" itself, is highly useful as it looks at the process of mutual constitution between norms and identities, how this regulates the behavior of actors (i.e. states in this case), and the causal effect this has on national security policies (Katzenstein, 1996; Jepperson et al., 1996), an understanding I extend and apply more broadly to formation of state identity and the potential effect of this process on state-to-state relations. The second describes a tri-partite framework consisting of geo-political, geo-economic and geo-cultural structures that is both unitary and composite (Mesbahi, 2010; 2011), which works to explain the interaction of societies from top to bottom and the impact these interactions have on the nature/functionality of state-to-state relations. The third is supplementary, implemented specifically for its application to the India-Israeli security dynamic, and borrows from the sectoral approach to security taken by Buzan, Waever, and de Wilde. (Buzan et al, 1998) This will work to explain how referent objects other than states become securitized, who has the power to meaningfully do this securitizing and, subsequently, how this can affect state-to-state interaction.

Applicable to Indian-Israeli relations is Katzenstein's notion that, "… security interests are defined by actors who respond to cultural factors" (1996, p. 2). The

constructed identity of states, governments and political actors comes to play a central role in the creation of norms that constitute these identities and/or regulate the behavior of the actor(s) under examination (Katzenstein 1996, p. 4-5), a circumstance that can be found in the Indian-Israeli case. Thus, norms can be defined here as something that, "…describe collective expectations for the proper behavior of actors within a given identity" (Katzenstein, 1996, p. 5). In Hindu-majority India, norms operate to construct a shared identity with Israel that has its foundations in viewing Israeli culture, and Israel's majority/defining religion of Judaism, as also having historically shared the perception of a threat from the Muslim (and Christian) "Other". Furthermore, norms also work to "regulate" the behavior of a Hindu-majority India towards Israel and the Muslim and Christian "Other". By contrast, concerns over external perceptions of India's view and treatment of the Muslim "Other" held by historically dominating political factions of the national government became the primary conduit of the anti-Israel norm that existed for the first 40+ years of the country's existence.

In their discussion dealing with causal arguments about national security policy, Jepperson, Wendt, and Katzenstein use a simple schema (shown below) to summarize the variety of arguments found in their edited volume, thereby demonstrating how cultural and institutional elements of a state's environment affect identity, interests and policy, and how the affected identities/policies then work to reproduce and reconstruct the cultural/institutional structure of the environment. (1996, p. 52-53) The chart below is explained by the following, with the numbers in the five explanations corresponding to the numbers labeling the pathways of the figure:

1. Effects of norms (I). Cultural or institutional elements of states environments shape national security interests or (directly) the security policies of states.

2. Effects of norms (II). Cultural or institutional elements of states' global or domestic environments shape state identity.

3. Effects of identity (I). Variation in state identity, or changes in state identity, affect the national security interests or policies of states.

4. Effects of identity (II). Configurations of state identity affect interstate normative structures, such as regimes or security communities.

5. Recursivity. State policies both reproduce and reconstruct cultural and institutional structure. (Jepperson et al 1996, p. 52-53)

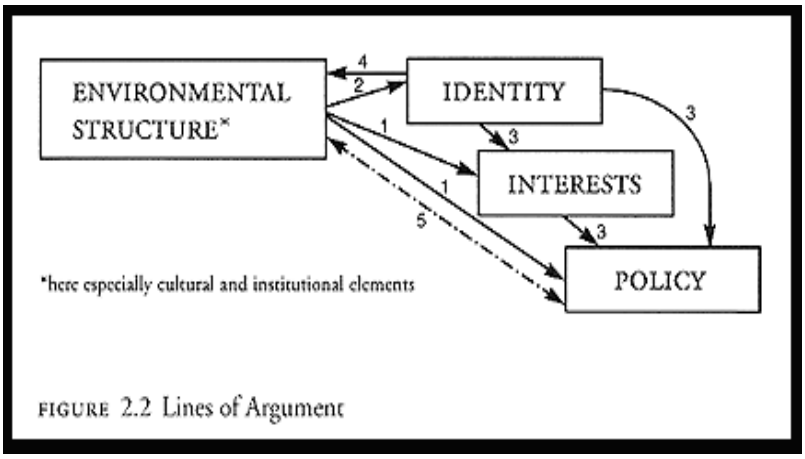


FIGURE 2.2 Lines of Argument

(Jepperson et al 1996, p. 53)

Cooperation between the two countries in the contemporary period is highlighted most notably by their shared security threat of cross-border terrorism and the main perpetrators of these terrorist acts, Muslim extremists. And while the Indian-Israeli relationship currently is developing most extensively within the realm of security cooperation, there are several other areas, particularly within the realms of culture and the economy, that are quickly gaining ground on the well-established security co-op and that have also been historically important as well.

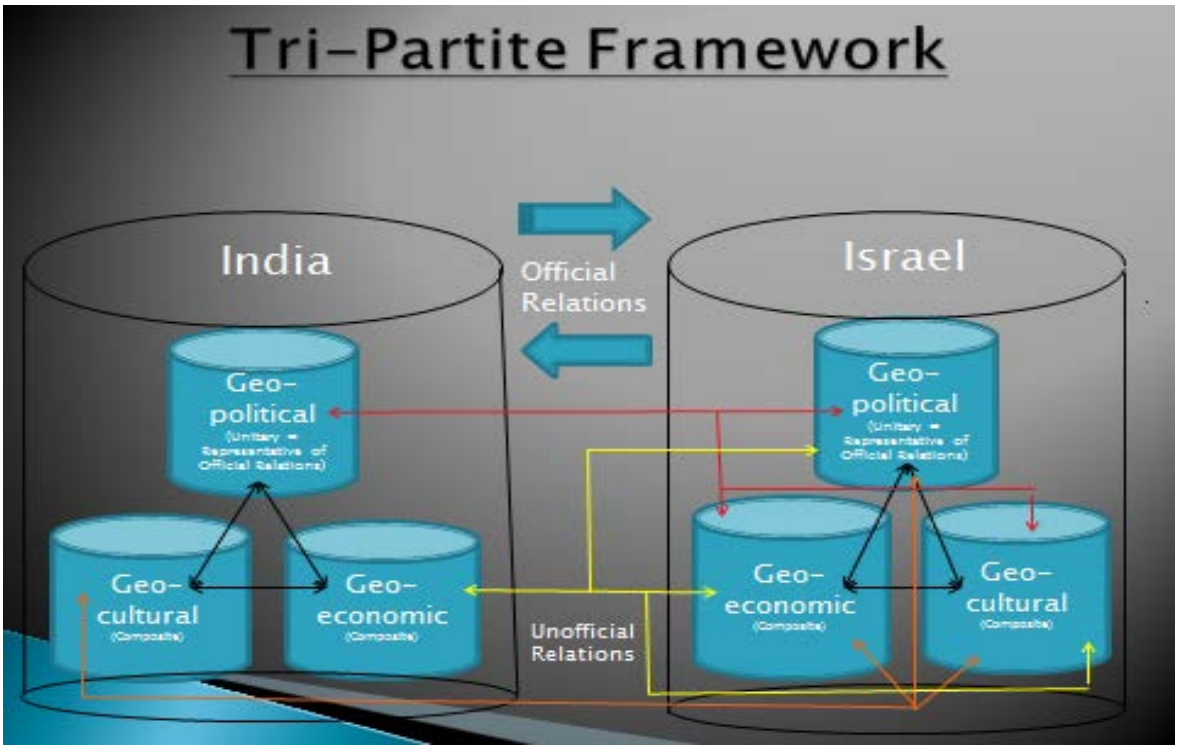
The schema above, therefore, becomes useful in framing the shifts in the identity, policy and environmental structure as they pertain to India and Israel both currently and historically. Furthermore, in addition to notions about security, this chart also can be used to provide a broader understanding of how societal elements of a state, such as identity and interests, directly impact and influence policy generally speaking, not just in the security realm. The result of this impact and influence is the creation of an environment conducive to the long-term perpetuation of such a policy towards another state.

Identity and interests embodied in a given society, however, neither act in a singular fashion nor do they act at a single level. Any given state-society is composed of innumerable layers which interact with one another and with other state-societies, from the individual at the bottom to the national government at the top. The interaction within and between actors, levels, and societies can result in what can be identified as a state-to-state relationship. In his article dealing with Iran's interaction with the international system, Mesbahi lays out a useful framework which aids in explaining this complex system of state-societal interaction which affirms three broad theoretical assertions:

> 1. The international system is a tripartite system with three interrelated yet distinct structures which includes the coercive-military (i.e., geo-political), the normative-social (i.e., geo-cultural), and the economic-developmental (i.e., geo-economical)[9]
>
> 2. The agent (the state) is simultaneously unitary and composite, interacting distinctly with the corresponding structural components of the international system
>
> 3. The net assessment of any state's position within the international system must take into consideration the symbiotic impact of the interaction with all three

[9] The three terms– geo-political, geo-cultural, and geo-economic –are used by Mesbahi in a different article as alternative terms to describe of this same analytical framework. (2010, p. 165-166)

structures, and the cross fertilization and cross compensatory dynamics between them (2011, p. 11)



Mesbahi's (2011) framework posits that the state is unitary with regard to the coercive-military structure, the state's "official" identity as represented through the national government, while being composite in both the normative-social and economic-developmental structures and, as Mesbahi notes, "Each structure deals with the state in a manner most conducive to its own elemental attributes, extracting and re-projecting a particular and prevailing "identity" (2011, p. 11).

At the highest level of the international system (i.e. the systemic structure that agents interact within) the sovereign state acts in a unitary fashion through the coercive-military (geo-political) structure, which other agents (i.e. states) recognize and engage with. With regard to the normative-social and economic-developmental structures,

however, the state will be dealt with and interact in its composite form made up of innumerable factions and groupings including, but certainly not limited to, institutions, interest groups, NGO's, political parties, businesses, etc. Some groupings are more official than others and it is these groups which tend to wield much more power and influence when it comes to the decision-making process at the highest levels of all three structures and how these structures function in any given state-to-state interaction.

Lastly, in order to provide a more in-depth look at what and how non-state actors securitize and how this can reflect state-level security policy, I refer to Buzan, Waever and de Wilde. (1998) The concept of 'securitization' used in my research refers to an extreme form of politicization where an issue is presented as an existential threat which justifies the use of emergency measures and/or actions that transgress the common boundaries of political procedure. (Buzan et. al., 1998, p. 23-24) In this manner, securitization becomes a self-referential process and requires only that a target audience accepts the presented issue as an existential threat in order for that issue to become securitized, regardless of whether a real existential threat exists or not. (Buzan et. al., 1998, p. 24-25)

Buzan and colleagues have devised a five-sector analysis which analytically allows for the differentiation of types of interaction (military, political, economic, societal and environmental) within and between states in the realm of security. (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 27) The adoption of this framework allows us to "widen" the securitization apparatus beyond the state and 'traditional' notions of security, which exclusively fell under the military (i.e. material) umbrella. My dissertation focuses particularly on the interaction among three of these sectors: military, political and societal. Analyzing

security issues in terms of these sectors will aid in linking identity to securitization and security concerns, while also demonstrating a security threat to sub-state actors can influence and become a part of state security narrative and policy. The resulting securitization measures, I argue, then work to reify the overall perception of a "shared" identity with the Israeli state and its majority-Jewish society.

Methods

My research reflects a combination of approaches and techniques. A comparative approach is utilized in combination with a method of historical institutionalism (Steinmo, 2008; Keating, 2008). With this combination, an analysis of the history that has existed between India and Israel from Israeli independence up through the present is undertaken in order to track the development of their relationship and analyze the discourses that existed between these nations during the time period under review. This works to provide an historical context that demonstrates why there were no formal Indian-Israeli relations before 1992 and why the choice was made to forge that at that time. These techniques/approaches will be implemented in an empirical analysis of first, second and third-hand literary sources and archives and further supplemented by interviewing individuals who are a part of groups whose identities and interests are normatively recognized as having a greater and more direct influence on state policy towards, and interaction with, other nation-states.

Keating's discussion on "culture and social science" posits that culture is, "… used to explain how people's preferences and motivations are formed in the first place" (2008, p. 116). His explanation of "new institutionalisms" (Keating, 2008, p. 104)

includes ideas that allow for the integration of culture into the argument presented throughout this writing, with particular reference to "historical institutionalism". According to Keating, historical institutionalism is complemented by the concept of tradition which also informs historical explanations by, "… showing how beliefs are transmitted, adapted and reinvented over time" (2008, p. 116). The utilization of this approach is done so under the assumption that history is not a chain of independent events (Steinmo, 2008, p. 128), and in which institutional change in the political realm is directly correlated to changes in ideas held by actors. (Steinmo, 2008, p. 130) It is the ideas of these actors who are ultimately responsible for setting, maintaining and changing ideas that are institutionalize in functional and normative ways. These actors make history "path dependent" in a sense that the longer and deeper these ideas are embedded (i.e., institutionalized) into the fabric of society, the more difficult it will become to alter this path and its expected outcomes as history progresses (Keating, 2008, p. 104). Therefore, a careful analysis of the historical record, and the processes that took shape during the years between Israeli independence and establishment of relations with India where issues of or relating to religious identity are demonstrated to have had a discernable impact, is undertaken to answer the questions found in the introductory chapter. The combination of these approaches allows for the consideration of the inherent complexities of historical events while also providing an excellent tool for explaining individual cases. (George & Bennett, 2005)

Archival research was completed at various sites including India, Israel, the United Kingdom and the United States. Archival research is a key method for providing primary sources that relate to the history of Indian-Israeli interaction. These include, but

are not limited to, official foreign policy reports, records of parliamentary sessions at which state-to-state relations were discussed, transcriptions/audio recordings of speeches, etc. To access them, I have visited several archives and libraries including: the British Library and the National Archives (UK); the National Archives, the State Archives and the Zionist Archives (Israel); the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, the National Archives (India); and the Library of Congress (Washington DC).

The last tool used in my research was interviewing. My initial approach to the interview process was Naturalist. I went into these interviews with some general question prompts while allowing the interviewee some flexibility in dictating the direction of the conversation. This allowed for a more natural flow of conversation, which is important when dealing with sensitive issues like religion and politics, especially in Indian society. As I completed more interviews, I ascertained a better idea of what sorts of topics I should include on a more standardized questionnaire as a part of all subsequent interviews that I did. The primary purpose of the interviews was to gain insight into how certain members of Indian and Israeli society view the identity (whether implicitly or explicitly) of themselves, one another and, for non-Muslim interviewees, the Muslim "Other". My goal was to discern a more thorough and current understanding of the role identity plays or does not play in relations between the societies and governments of India and Israel. My interview pool consists of the following: 1. top religious leaders from each state most familiar with Hindu-Jewish or Indian-Israeli relations (the Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha organization in India and the Chief Rabbinate in Israel); 2. politicians and individuals knowledgeable of the each respective country's defense

sector; 3. academics in India and Israel with expertise pertinent to my research area; and 4. activists involved in the countries domestic politics.

Despite the wealth and importance of information that can ultimately be gathered from interviews, I concede the supplementary nature of this technique due to the unpredictability of the interview process. Note that although I have had moderate success in my attempts to interview individuals from the four previously described groups, the sensitive nature of the research topic and current events taking place in each of the countries impeded access to some potential interviewees and ultimately impacted the quality of this venture as a whole.

FOUNDATIONS OF INDIAN-ISRAELI HISTORY: RELIGION-BASED NATIONALISM AND RELATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF IDENTITY FROM PRE-PARTITION TO 1980

Since the onset of their respective dates of independence in 1947 (India) and 1948 (Israel), the Indian-Israeli relationship is best defined by 'non-relations'. It would be nearly forty-five years from these movements before normalization took place. It was a period defined by a cold unwillingness on India's part to accept Israel's well-known and repeated desire to establish official relations. From its youngest days as a nation, Israeli was poised to establish official relations with the recently independent Indian sovereignty, but its success was minimal. According to Kumaraswamy:

> Since the founding of the Jewish state, India reacted and responded, often negatively, to various Israeli efforts toward recognition and normalization. India was active when violence erupted in the Middle East and did not accommodate Israel's concerns and fears. While Israel eagerly sought close ties, Nehru's India was reluctant and coy. For over four decades, it was India that decided, shaped, and controlled bilateral developments. (2010, p. 2)

The effects of the critical years have been at the forefront of international attention since the six plus decades that they commenced. Twenty-three years after the establishment of a sovereign Israeli nation, this undesirable dynamic continued to persist as Dr. Dov B. Schmorak, the director of foreign publicity of Israel during this time, still echoed, "We will be pleased if India also comes forward to establish diplomatic relations with Israel. From our side we are always prepared to accept it but unfortunately it is India that is always giving a negative response" ("Israel offers diplomatic," 1971). Unfortunately it would be over two more decades until Dr. Schmorak and the state of Israel's offer would be accepted by India.

It was in 1992 that India decided to accept the establishment of formal diplomatic relations with Israel. Despite the cold-natured, sometimes seemingly antagonistic demeanor of India towards the Israelis at times, there had been interaction between the two nations dating back 60 years. The warm nature of their relationship since normalization occurred in 1992 is, as previously described, quite a contrast to what their relationship was like for the 45 years preceding that date, despite India recognizing Israel as a "Jewish homeland" in the fall of 1950. As P.R. Kumaraswamy notes:

> The establishment of formal diplomatic relations between India and Israel on January 29, 1992, marked the successful completion of a political process that began in the early 1920s when Indian nationalist leaders were drawn into the Arab-Jewish conflict. Despite India's liberal, benevolent, and friendlier attitude toward Jews, Indian nationalists were unable to understand and unwilling to appreciate Jewish political aspirations in Mandate Palestine. (2007, p. 212)

Even more perplexing was the fact that India's antagonistic behavior toward Israel during the decades preceding normalization was largely devoid of any direct conflict or discord with one another. Beyond the existence of an Israeli immigration office since 1949 and the establishment of consular relations in 1953, India's policy towards Israel would remain the same until 1992. (Kumaraswamy, 2010, p. 126-127)

This chapter will also detail sources of India's policy of non-relations with the Israeli state which emanated from issues of, or related to, religious identity. While the chapter will be descriptive, it will not be a full "play-by-play" history of India's relationship with Israel during the timeframe under analysis, which runs from several years prior to Indian Partition until approximately the early 1980's. As such, it will instead be organized into four sections. The first section will detail the rise and trajectory

of religion-based nationalisms up until approximately 1947-48. The three sections following, organized chronologically, will detail several issues where religious identity played an observable role and which influenced India's foreign policy towards Israel during time the period under review. Note that most of the issues described in sections two through four of this chapter continued to influence India's policy towards Israel well beyond the timeframe in which they are described as entering the scene. The issues are organized and discussed based on the time when they became a relevant factor in India's active foreign policy towards Israel.

The first section will detail the history and formation of religion-based nationalisms in India and Israel up until approximately 1947-48. In order to accurately assess the influence and impact that Hindu nationalism had in the area of domestic politics during the time period immediately preceding normalization as will be discussed in the next chapter, it is first necessary to explain the ideological, social and historical foundations of the identity that pervades and informs Hindu nationalism from the genesis and development of the *Hindutva* movement beginning in the 19th century, the subsequent formation of the *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh* organization within India's political arena and the progressively gradual influence of the RSS in this arena from the 1920s to Partition. Included in this analysis of Hindu nationalism's rise will be the greatly significant and parallel development of the Muslim national movement, and the landmark creation of the All India Muslim League. Syed Ahmad Khan once stated as a part of a speech made at Meerut in March 1888 that, "Whatever will be our [Muslims'] fate, so too will be the fate of Hindus in this country" (Devji, 2013, p. 54). Sure to Khan's words, the mutual fears and concerns that Hindu and Muslim constituencies held towards one

another regarding the control of the Freedom Movement's political apparatus would have debilitating consequences for the future of an independent India. The result of such concerns would be the concurrent formation of both religious and non-religious nationalist movements and, ultimately, the partition of British India essentially based on the division of religious identities.

Additionally, a brief timeline of the parallel rise of the Jewish nationalist movement known as *Zionism* will be set out as well with the intention of drawing out ideological and historical similarities between *Zionism* and the Hindu nationalist movement in a comparative fashion which can then be categorized as links that aid in the establishment of a socially constructed civilizational resonance between the two ancient cultures in chapters 3 and 4.

The next section will detail India's political development as a whole vis-à-vis its relation to Israel from the time period prior to Partition until approximately 1956. It was in the decades preceding Indian-Pakistani Partition that the conversation on the Palestinian issue, and the formal stance on the possibility of a future Israeli state, began. This time period also saw various instances of direct and indirect communication between what would eventually become some of India's and Israel's first and most important leaders. The section extends analysis to approximately 1956 as this marks historical milestone in the first phase of India-Israel relations. It was by 1956 that nearly all discussion by Nehru and India's government regarding potential establishment of relations had subsided and that any potential modes of progress in the matter became closed, leading to a period of what can essentially be deemed 'non-activity' until over a decade later.

Section three of this chapter details the years from 1967 to approximately 1983. During this time period we see renewed activity on behalf of India's leaders and the development of the country's policy towards Israel. This renewal of activity, and the relevance of certain religiously-related issues vis-à-vis India's Israel policy, took place within the context of two major military engagements between Israel and the Arab world: the Six-Day War (1967) and the Yom Kippur War (1973). These critical eve ints the historical time-line of the Arab-Israeli conflict ultimately resulted in the Indian government's reconceptualization of certain attitudes towards Israel, while simultaneously working to reinforce other, previously established views held since the days of Partition.

This section also highlights developments that took place from the late 1970s until approximately the early 1980s, the final years preceding the rise of the Hindu nationalist BJP within Indian politics. When the first critical conciliatory event of the Arab-Israeli conflict took place in 1978 with the Egyptians under the leadership of Sadat agreeing to peace with Israel, India's policy towards the Israelis, by contrast, was arguably at its most hostile. Despite the partial degree of rapprochement between Israel and certain members of the Arab world, India's combative stance towards Israel reached new levels under the leadership of Indira Gandhi and her reinvigoration of India's seemingly absolute, pro-Palestinian stance from decades prior. This time period also becomes relevant as these are the years immediately preceding the onset of normalization and, as such, can provide key insights as to 'why' and the 'when' of the eventual shift in policy towards the Israeli state.

Identity Politics: Religion-Based Nationalism's Birth in Israeli and Indian History

Zionism: The Quest for a Jewish National Home

The state of Israel has a sovereign history nearly identical in length to India's that is also riddled with strife and conflict with a neighboring Muslim-majority nation. Unlike India, however, the genesis of Israel as sovereign, Jewish nation was inhibited by several circumstantial disadvantages for those leading the charge. These included Jewish minority status in the region and the lack of formally recognized political institutions within the territory, like the Indian National Congress in India, which created an organized political front that could be utilized against the British in the fight for self-determination. Furthermore, the beginnings of Jewish nationalism started not in the land that would become Israel, but a half-continent away in Central and Eastern Europe.

The beginnings of the conflict may be seen to coincide with the advent of Zionism. Moses Hess is credited with making the first clear reference to the desire for a Jewish homeland in his 1862 work, *Rome and Jerusalem: The Last National Question*, and was followed by other writers such as Leon Pinsker and Eliezer Ben-Yehuda up through the end of the 19th century. (Scheindlin, 1998, p. 219) It was the Hungarian-born Jew Theodore Herzl, however, who can be credited with turning this idea of Zionism into an international movement before his death in 1904 when he wrote *The Jewish State* in 1896 and organized the First Zionist Congress the following year. The First Zionist Congress, which included 204 delegates from the world over and took place in Basel, Switzerland, was a critical junction in the genesis of Zionism. (Bickerton & Klausner,

2002, p. 25) At this marquee gathering, Jewish leaders clearly defined Zionism's primary objective and came to a basic resolution stating, "Zionism aspires to the securing of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine, guaranteed by public law" (Gelvin, 2014, p. 77; Scheindlin, 1998, p. 220).

The political nature of this venture is clear and the appeal it would have to many traditionalist Jews of Eastern Europe as a trend that would, "…preserve Judaism and the Jewish tradition through the reestablishment of a religiously based Jewish culture located in the traditional Jewish homeland of *Eretz Israel*[10]", resulted in the creation of the political ideology of modern Zionism and the ideological base of what would become the world's only sovereign Jewish state in 1948. (Bickerton & Klausner, 2002, p.26) The statement regarding Zionism's primary objective, therefore, highlights two very important characteristics that relate to Israel's current and past conflicts with its neighbor. The first is the notion of a national home in *Eretz Israel* (what was then Palestine) for the Jewish people. This roots nationalistic desires in a foundation of Jewishness that embodies a people of a shared cultural, ethnic and religious identity. Secondly, this home was to be founded on land that had historically sacred ties to Judaism, but was at that time neither under the dominance nor the control of Jewish people. One of history's most famous modern Jewish philosophers, Martin Buber, was keen to cement the link between Zionism and of the "sacred" in a series of speeches given in Prague between 1909 and 1911. In his summary discussion of the ideas Buber expounded in these speeches, Baum notes:

[10] Hebrew for 'Land of Israel'.

> At the very outset of these speeches, Buber explains that the Jews are a nation and at the same time more than a nation, for they are defined by a unique relationship to the Eternal One. Yet it would be a mistake, he [Buber] continues, to dwell on the spiritual dimension without appropriate attention to concrete Jewish history, the succession of generations, and the great event that had shaped their common destiny. Jewish identity is defined by the spirit and the flesh.
>
> Since Jewish existence is both a spiritual and a bodily dimension, Jews cannot escape their dividedness while living in countries founded by other nations. Jews can experience their liberation only in Zion; only there will they be able to experience the unity between spiritual roots and societal institutions. (2001, p. 22)

Several of the characteristics of the 'primordialist' approach towards 'nationhood' are touched upon including territory, shared history, a common spirit embodied in destiny, and an inseparable bond to the "sacred", envisaged here as infinite and monolithic being. The utility of reference to religion-based nationalism is demonstrated in this description which works to create a conception where the social becomes inextricable from the divine.

During the time period entering into the 20th century, the land of Palestine was a sparsely populated area that was primarily inhabited by Muslims of Arab decent and under the control of the declining Ottoman Empire. While Zionist aspirations to establish a future Jewish State in the land of Israel frequently propagated a seemingly ideal vision of this answer to the Jewish problem in Europe, and even romanticized the notion to an extent, the reality for Jews in Ottoman Palestine early on in the 19th century was less than desirable. This was a society based on a principle of Muslim superiority which, in part, resulted in varying degrees of conflict between Jews and Muslim-Arabs, thereby creating a historical precedent prior to the Balfour Declaration for the modern-day conflict that currently exists:

> Jews were subject to a number of discriminatory regulations. For example, their testimony against Muslims in a court of law was not accepted; they were normally not eligible for appointment to the highest administrative offices; they were forbidden to carry arms or to serve in the army; and they were subjugated to oppression, extortion, or violence by both the local authorities and the Muslim population. (Bickerton & Klausner, 2002, p. 20)

While conditions for Jews there did improve in the second half of the 19th century, the collective memory of those events and conditions was not forgotten and the notion of a sovereign Jewish state in Palestine would be embraced by many. The subsequent increase in Jewish immigration to Palestine and the support that early Zionist ideas received did not go unnoticed by the local Muslim-Arab population. As early as 1891, Zionist Asher Ginsberg (aka Ahad Ha'am) noted that:

> The Arabs, and especially city dwellers, understand very well what we [the Jews] want and what we do in the country… when the day will come in which the life of our people in the Land of Israel will develop to such a degree that they will push aside the local population by little or by much, then it will not easily give up its place. (McDowall, 1989, p. 187)

With the growing propagation of the Zionist idea amongst the residents of Palestine during this time period, a divide began to set in between neighbors and friends. This divide came as the result of complex social constructions based initially on religious identities of being either Jewish or Muslim and eventually evolved into the basis of the ethnic identities of being Jewish or Arab. These people had always been Jewish, Muslim, and Arab, but the impending reality of Zionism now caused a shift in the social construction of these individuals and how they would now perceive their neighbors as either friend or foe.

The political development and history of the attempt to establish the sovereign nation of Israel from the early twentieth-century up until the commencement of WWII

can largely be explained within the context of the Sykes-Picot Agreement and three critical pieces of writing: 1.) the correspondence between King Hussein of Arabia and Sir Henry McMahon; 2.) the Balfour Declaration (the promises contained within these documents essentially formed the Mandate for Palestine); and 3.) the British 'White Papers'. Correspondence between King Hussein of Arabia and the High Commissioner in Egypt, Sir Henry McMahon, in 1915 and 1916 seemed to guarantee Arab independence in a post-WWI Middle East, which the Arabs believed would include the land of Palestine. (Ciment, 1997, p.29) While not a formal agreement for political autonomy, King Hussein used his forces to initiate the Arab Revolt of 1916 in support of British-Allied forces fighting the Ottomans in Arabia and other parts of the Ottoman Empire, including parts of modern-day Israel and the Palestinian territories. While these forces would play a relatively minor rule with regard to British military efforts in the region, the support given by Hussein's Arab nationalist forces to the British was to be in exchange for the right to establish an Arab "state or states" within the Arab territories of the Ottoman Empire. Despite the ambiguity of British promises, Hussein took this promise as being inclusive of the territory of Palestine. (Gelvin, 2014, p. 81)

October 1918 brought with it the end of Ottoman rule over the land of Palestine, but the plans for administration of former Ottoman territory were initiated two years earlier in 1916 with the Sykes-Picot Agreement. In a move seemingly opposite the "gentlemen's" agreement outlined in the Hussein-McMahon letters, the British and the French essentially took all the areas formally under Ottoman control and carved out areas of direct colonial influence and governance. During the same timeframe, however, the British would further complicate the issue raised around Arab self-determination and the

governance of Ottoman Palestine by holding discussions and making similar "promises" to those leaders at the forefront of the Zionist cause.

Since its beginning as an international movement two decades prior, the Zionist movement had gained considerable support among Jews and was becoming a clear threat in the eyes of the Arabs who inhabited the highly coveted land of Palestine. The support given to British forces by Zionist leaders as well as Hashemite Arabs in the fight against the Ottomans during WWI merited both the Zionist and Arab factions' simultaneous, yet conflictual, promises for an independent nation in what was then British controlled Palestine. These "promises" of independent nations to both Zionists and Arabs would only foster the rising development of a nationalist zeal. This zeal was rooted in both ethnic and religious contexts and would substantially increase regional conflict in the decades following.

In 1917, as promised to Zionist leaders, the British seemingly issued an official statement granting Jews a "homeland" in Palestine. The statement, known as the Balfour Declaration, was a part of what would become the British Mandate for Palestine in 1920 under the San Remo agreement. This mandate would be backed by the newly formed League of Nations and also included a provision for the establishment of a degree of Hashemite control over the Trans-Jordan under the leadership of King Hussein. (Blumberg, 1998, 40-43) Lord Balfour's declaration stated the following:

> His Majesty's Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of the existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country. (Ciment, 1997, p. 29; Gelvin, 2014, p. 81)

Again, the conflictual nature of British promises to the factions involved is reflected in both the ambiguity of this declaration and the course of action the British would pursue up until the establishment of the Israeli state. This is a declaration that leaves the entity in question to be a vague territory without definitive borders, while saying nothing about the economic, political or national rights of the non-Jews who were living in that territorial entity at that time. (Bickerton & Klausner, 2002, p. 41)

During the three decades between the Balfour Declaration and the Israeli independence in 1948, Zionists faced an increasingly up-hill battle against the British and their foreign policy while at the same time dealing with continually increasing conflict with a larger, but less internally well equipped, Arab rival. The Cairo Conference of 1921 would establish the son of Sharif Hussein, Abdullah Hussein, as the *emir* (i.e. prince) of the "Trans-Jordan", a detached territory east of the Jordan River taken from the Palestine mandate and an area where Jewish immigration was all but halted. (Gelvin, 2014, p. 88)

While Zionists faced an increasing multitude of difficulties throughout this timeframe, several important institutions arose to support and maintain the Zionist dream including the *Haganah,*[11] the *Histadrut,*[12] and the Palestine Foundation/Jewish National funds, both of which would finance the purchase of Arab land. (Ciment, 1997, p. 29-30) By contrast, there was relatively little internal institutional support from within the Palestinian Arab ranks. Much of the relative "success" the Arabs of Palestine had during the thirty years preceding the establishment of Israel was due to policies enacted, and

[11] A clandestine, civilian defense organization, the creation of which was instituted in 1921 as a resulted of repeated Arab attacks on Jewish settlements. (Bickerton & Klausner, 2002, p. 46)

[12] Israel's socialist labor union (Blumberg, 1998, p. 49) founded in 1920

actions taken, by the British government who sought to balance conflict between the two factions. In reality these policies and actions benefited the Palestinian cause and its leadership who at the time was commissioned to the Higher Arab Committee headed by Haj Amin al-Husseini, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem. (McDowall, 1989, p.189-90)

The British White Paper of 1922, also known as the "Churchill Memorandum", which limited Jewish migration by virtue that it, "… cannot be so great in volume as to exceed whatever may be the economic capacity of the country at the time to absorb new arrivals" (Cohn-Sherbok & el-Alami, 2003, p. 125), created yet another obstacle in the drive for a sovereign Jewish state in Palestine. By 1924, the British would renounce their commitment to the Balfour Declaration. Furthermore, the years 1921 and 1929 brought a series of Arab riots which resulted in the deaths of scores of Jews, while the great Arab revolt of the 1930's against Zionists as well as British forces would result in the deaths of many more Jews as well as over 5,000 Arabs. (Ciment, 1997, p. 31) In 1930 and again in 1939, the British government issued White Papers in a move that further limited Jewish immigration to the region, essentially appeasing Arab demands, while working to set back the efforts of the Zionist faction. As David McDowall notes:

> In 1939, the Higher Arab Committee made another disastrous error of judgment in rejecting the British White Paper. This promised most of what the Arabs wanted, restricting Jewish immigration to ensure the Arabs remained the majority and the promise of an eventual Palestinian government that would in due course acquire sovereignty. (1989, p. 190)

Predictably, Zionists outright rejected the recommendations put forth by the British White Paper and became intolerant of Britain's continuously disadvantageous treatment of them. This latest installment of the White Papers basically brought Zionist political ambitions for the establishment of a Jewish state to a near complete halt and seemed

make the promise of a future, independent Arab state in Palestine all but certain. As a result, the Zionist campaign for an independent Israeli state became increasingly more violent in the years leading up to 1948 as break away extremists like the *Irgun*[13] and the Fighters for the Freedom of Israel (also known as the Stern Gang) continued to violent attacks and bombings against both Arab and British targets. (Ciment, 1997, p. 32)

The sheer horror of the Holocaust, what it did to the European Jewish community, and the growing issue of Jewish displaced persons, all combined with the actions of zealous Jews in British Palestine to create a situation that required an immediate answer for the populations in question. Finally, in considering the previous turn of events leading up to the eve of Israeli independence, and its repeated failures to find a solution, the British government handed over responsibility for the problem in Palestine to the United Nations in May 1947. It was the UN's eventual partition plan that would become the central disagreement in the ongoing struggle for Palestine. (McDowall, 1989, p. 191) A UN special committee on Palestine, known as UNESCOP, was established in order to aid in dealing with the Palestinian issue. After considering the Zionist partition plan and the Arab plan for a unilateral state, two alternatives were offered by UNESCOP: (1) a partition onto two states with an international zone surrounding Jerusalem and (2) a proposal for a federal state, the first of which was supported by Zionists and neither of which was supported by the Arab faction. (Ciment, 1997, p. 33)

We see here initially an acceptance of a potential sovereign state of Palestine on the part of what was to become an independent Israel. The plan of partition, which the

[13] An underground paramilitary group, organized along military lines, whose function was to strengthen the armed capabilities of Palestine's Jewish population (i.e. the *Yishuv*) for what was believed to be an eventual conflict with the Arabs and/or the British. (Bickerton & Klausner, 2002, p. 73)

UN would eventually vote to implement, brought the issue of territorial allocation to the forefront of the conflict, where it remains even until the present day, by granting large sections of Arab-majority land to what would be the newly form Jewish controlled state of Israel. (Ciment, 1997, 33-34) On May 14th, 1948, the sovereign state of Israel was established in what became a unilateral declaration of independence due to the rejection of all plans by the Arab faction. The result would be an Israel that was no longer obligated to recognize an independent Palestinian state and an Arab faction that refused to recognize the sovereignty of the newly established state of Israel.

Although clashes had been taking place since early 1948, war would officially ensue immediately after the declaration of Israel's independence. Israel's War of Independence would be the first of several violent conflicts between themselves and their Arab-Muslim neighbors over the next several decades, conflicts that stemmed from a territorial dispute that was ultimately rooted in the concerns over the ethnic and religious identity of the groups in control of these lands.

Religious Identity and Indian Politics: The Rise of Religious Nationalisms

Nationalism on the part of both Hindus and Muslims took hold under the watchful eye of British colonialists. India has traditionally long been identified with a Hindu culture that, with the advent of the concept of *Hindutva* in the early 1920's, came to feature hostility to all but indigenous religious practices, including Hinduism, as its main unifying factor[14]. The implementation of this concept in Indian society marked Muslims

[14] Indigenous religious practices of India in the context of *Hindutva* refer to major world religions that have their origins on Indian soil including not just Hinduism, but Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism.

as “Other” and to be excluded since Islam is not a religion indigenous to the Indian sub-continent. This sentiment was the primary catalyst for partition and embodied a nationalistic ardor opposed to securing rights and privileges for British India’s largest religious minority population, the Muslims. As the 1920’s began to unfold, a series of competing nationalist discourses vying for Indian self-rule unfolded with it:

> The competing visions all tried to address the most pertinent question of the day, namely, the relation between cultural communities and the question of which community the Indian nation was going to belong to. (Hansen, 1999, p. 44-45)

From this context would develop concurrent yet divergent movements to separate British India’s population based along the lines of social, political and national differences, each of which was embodied in a religious identity ultimately believed to be in contrast to the other.

The development of religiously-based, nationalist movements of Hindus and Muslims in British India has resulted in political and communal violence between the groups that has been ongoing for more than a century now. The eventual partition of India and Pakistan worked to invigorate the clash of nationalist ideologies that has left an enduring hostility between Hindus and Muslims within, and between, the two sovereign states. Over the years, this hostility would become more and more evident in the rhetoric of both Hindu and Muslim nationalists. For India, the consequences of the formation of these identities would ultimately play out in the domestic political and social spheres, as the construction of Hindu identity would become synonymous, in part, with that which was opposed to the Islamic “Other”.

The Early Days of Hindu Nationalism

The roots of Hindu nationalism can be found in the religious Hindu reform movements of the early 19th century beginning with the Bengali reformer Raja Rah Mohan Roy. Roy, a Hindu who was greatly influenced by rationalist Western philosophies, founded in 1843 the *Brahmo Samaj*[15] which sought to do away with the social evils of Hinduism such as the caste system and the notion of the inferiority of women while encouraging cultural and intellectual activities. (Malik et al., 2009, p. 21) A little more than a quarter-century later, Gujarati Brahmin Swami Dayanand was another active voice in the reform movement of the time period, as is evidenced by his creation of the *Arya Samaj*[16] in 1875. Like the *Brahmo Samaj* the *Arya Samaj* similarly sought to do away with evil Hindu social practices in a manner that was somewhat 'revivalistic' as opposed to 'universalist', however. (Sharma, 2002, p. 21) As such, and in a fashion dissimilar to the *Brahmo Samaj*, Swami Dayanand took a largely rejectionist stance towards the West and its influence, vehemently opposing Islam and Christianity, while simultaneously glorifying the Hindu past. (Malik et al., 2009, p. 21-22) In comparative

[15] The *Brahmo Samaj* sought social and religious reform of Hinduism by introducing and institutionalizing what they believe to be modernizing, rational concepts. These included, but were not limited to, concepts of monotheism, rejection of idol worship, emancipation of women and the doing away with India's ancient caste system. For a thorough and more detailed discussion on the origins and history of the *Brahmo Samaj* refer to Kopf (1979).

[16] The *Arya Samaj* worked towards many of the same social goals as both their reformist predecessors and their British colonizers, but on the basis of Hinduism's own historical traditions and sacred scriptures, the Vedas, rather than on the basis of Western philosophical thought or ideas. The ideological rhetoric of the *Arya Samaj* categorically rejected British or Western influence in India's religious revival, while seeking to restore Hinduism to a perceived greatness of a past 'golden age'. In this way it became a more divisive element than any previous reform movement in its contribution to imminent processes of the formulation of the religious nationalisms. For further reading on the *Arya* Samaj, and how it affected the Hindu-Muslim divide taking place during this time period, refer to Fischer-Tiné (2000).

fashion, Swami Vivekananda preached of the greatness of the Hindu tradition while also highlighting its superiority over the Western culture characteristic of India's British overlords. (Malik et al., 2009, p. 22)

The significance of these reform movements, which have their base and inspiration in the Hindu religion, worked to create a cultural revival in India and encouraged a collective Hindu identity united under a single banner. The resulting aim of these efforts is summed up in the following:

> It was not surprising, therefore, that the glorification of Indian history became a staple of writings in various regional languages in India. In addition, literary elites and political leaders used Hindu religious symbols to arouse patriotism. They identified Indian nationalism with Hinduism and deified the motherland. Recollection of the glories of the past was essential to the creation of a sense of national respect and a new national identity. (Malik et al., 2009, p. 22)

Here one can gather the essential role that the reform movements had in the process of development of Indian nationalism. Despite the various movements towards a united Hindu identity taking place and the foundations of Hindu nationalist thought beginning to materialize during this time period, the situation on the ground in India was still quite fluid, and could even be described as conflated, prior to 1900. Indian society was generally quite accomodationist with regards to non-Hindu elements, especially Muslim ones, at both political and social levels. For example, this reality of Hindu indifference towards Islam was particularly evident when observing Hindu displays of reverence for certain Muslim shrines and saints. (Sharma, 2002, p. 11)

As British India forged ahead into the twentieth century, ideas of rigidity concerning religion coalesced, while nationalist concepts and movements within society took on a more organized and coherent front. The hallmark feature of plurality and the

accustoming nature traditionally found within Hindu and Muslim practice of India began to dissipate under the rapidly changing social and political conditions under way at this point in India's history. At this juncture, accommodation seemingly became less and less of a reality. Sharma summarizes the pernicious environment, stating:

> The first development [i.e. religion] meant that political differences based on religion could not be accommodated regionally. Given the emergent concept of a nation they had to be dealt with at the national level, in the singular. Moreover, the monolithisation (*sic)* of the Hindu and Islamic traditions closed off the fissures of adjustment between them socially and locally, and made them face, and then confront, each other as single consolidated entities. (2002, p. 12)

The progression of Hindu nationalism can be seen in its development through, and occupation of, institutions such as the Indian National Congress and the Indian Civil Service (ICS). With the establishment of the INC in 1885, the nationalists were provided with an avenue to more effectively deal with the British and issues related to self-determination. In 1915 Hindu nationalists converged under the banner of its first political party known as the Hindu *Mahasabha*. Evolving from the regional political group, the Punjab Hindu *Sabha* which was established in 1907 sought to band together a recognizably disunited and disorganized Hindu front that would represent "Hindu interests" on the national stage in the face of a recently organized effort by British India's Muslim community with the same goals. (Hansen, 199, p. 76-77) While the influence of this party was rather marginal both before and after the Partition movement, it never the less became significant as the the original political platform from which Hindu nationalists officially participated in India's domestic political process. Further, it also provided V.D Savarkar and his *Hindutva* ideological framework a political stage on which it could be developed and from which it could be propagated.

By 1915, with the arrival of Mohandas K. Gandhi onto the scene, the INC developed into a mass political movement and created a more unified Hindu nationalist fervor with which to combat British imperialism. (Corbridge and Harriss, 2007, p. 15-16) During this time Hindu nationalists were operating primarily through the political apparatus of the INC alongside the majority Gandhians, or "territorial nationalists", as well as the other minority Muslim nationalists of the All India Muslim League. (Sharma, 2002, p. 21) While a united effort existed beginning in 1919 under the guise of the *Khilafat* movement, the collapse of this movement saw the divergence of these nationalisms in what became the period shortly following the introduction of *Hindutva* into British India's independence narrative and just prior to the formation of the *Rashtriya Swamsevak Sangh* (RSS), perhaps the most prominent symbol of this breach. (Sharma, 2002, p. 21)

Hindutva

One of the first and most influential attempts at bringing social and political cohesion to the Hindu nationalist movement during this time period was Vinayak Damodar (V.D.) Savarkar. In 1923, Savarkar was the first to use the term *Hindutva* and would create the foundation for the ideology that the BJP would adopt as their creed over six decades later. Paralleling my earlier discourse describing the orthopraxic nature of Hinduism, Savarkar's discussion of *Hindutva* and Hinduism began by distinguishing between these two closely related, yet distinct terms, whereby *Hindutva* comes to encompass all that characterizes Hinduism and more. According to Savarkar, the essence of *Hindutva* could only be understood by first differentiating it from who or what could

fall under the label of "Hindu"[17]. For Savarkar, the term "Hindu" was primarily a reference to a people united by the love of and, identification with, a common motherland (*Rastra*) as well as by common blood or race (*Jati*). (1969, p.84) *Hindutva*, while inclusive of notions of common recognition of a sacred land and common blood, additionally reflects the recognition of a common civilization, or *Sanskriti* as Savarkar calls it. (1969, p. 92) Civilization, of course, is a loaded term in and of itself and includes several marked characteristics, many of which in this case were highlighted in the previous conversation on Hindu orthopraxis and which will be examined again in the next chapter as themes of the 2007-08 Hindu-Jewish dialogues. He first highlights the historical component found among those who describe themselves as part of a civilization. For those Hindus who fall under the banner of *Hindutva*, from "Ceylon to Kashmir", Savarkar notes that, "We [those from Ceylon to Kashmir] had kings in common. We had stability in common. We had triumphs in common and disasters in common" (1969, p. 94), all of which are documented in a common literature written in and connected by the common sacred tongue of *Sanskrit*. (1969, p. 95)

Further characterizing a united Hindu civilization are common architectural designs, laws, institutions, and the observation of "feasts and festivals" which Savarkar notes are celebrated by the people who have, "… deliberately refrained from referring to any religious beliefs that we as a race may hold in common" (1969, p. 99). In distancing

[17] Note that for Savarkar, to define who or what a Hindu is, was essentially an exercise of impossibility due to the all-encompassing nature of the term which he believed to be greatly limited by any existing definition/description. Furthermore, any attempt to do so would also be an inherent exercise in Orientalist thought, ignorant and grossly misleading. See Savarkar (1969) for further information regarding his views on defining the term Hindu. This term is traced historically from its semantic origins in the term 'Sindhu', which refers to the 'Indus' river and was purportedly first used by the Aryan race of the Vedas, according to Savarkar. Refer to Sharma (2002) for a detailed academic analysis describing and differentiating between the terms 'Hindu', 'Hindustan', 'Hinduism' and 'Hindutva'.

himself from any narrow religious definition(s) of Hinduism, Savarkar sought to avoid any potential political fall-out (Sharma, 2002, p. 22), or disintegration of his effort of a united front against what he perceived to be "non-Hindu" influences in the Indian freedom movement, that that may have resulted from such an exclusivist exercise. This sort of understanding defined members of Indic-derived religions, those deemed to have left Hindu "orthodoxy", as legitimate Indian nationals based on their recognition of India's intrinsic holiness and the existence of a majority of their major holy sites in the modern Indian state. (Abraham, 2014, p. 116-117)

Again, this line of thought is indicative of a Hinduism that is not simply a religious phenomenon, but an entire way of life embodied in a distinct and primordial civilization, thereby bringing other "religions" into the fold. He is keen to highlight his concerns about the exclusion of other indigenous religions of India in this regard and in a direct message of assurance to those he views as his indigenous "heterodox" Indian brethren, including Jains, Sikhs, Lingayats[18] and Buddhists, he declares:

> If you identify the religion of the Hindus with the religion of the majority only and call it orthodox Hinduism, then the different heterodox communities being Hindus themselves rightly resent this usurpation of Hindutva by the majority as well as their unjustifiable exclusion. The religion of minorities also requires a name. But if you call the so-called orthodox religion alone as Hinduism then naturally it follows that the religion of the so-called heterodox is not Hinduism. The next most fatal step being that, therefore, these sections are not Hindus at all!" (Savarkar, 1969, p.106)

[18] *Lingayats* are an Indian religious community with a monistic conception and who worships of the Hindu god Shiva as their sole deity while outright rejecting any authority of the *Vedas*. ("Lingayat", 2015) This contrasts to, and is distinct from, the Brahmanical-based practice of Hinduism of Savarkar and many Northern Indian communities.

Therefore, this works to distance such practices, typically viewed in the West as "religious" activities, away from compartmentalized definitions of religion and towards the more expansive and inclusive, orthopraxic Hindu worldview. Thus, this creates an identity that can be referenced in the context of an entire civilization.

To summarize then, Savarkar's *Hindutva* is comprised of three requisites: a common nation (*Rastra*), a common race (*Jati*) and a common civilization (*Sanskriti*). (Sharma, 2002, p.22; Savarkar, 1969, p. 116) Throughout his tenure in Indian politics, both prior to and after the Partition movement, Savarkar's rhetoric and his writings are thoroughly laden with language that, not only highlights these three requisites on a consistent basis, but that frequently does it in the context of an imminent threat from Islam and India's Muslim constituency. Within this context Savarkar heeded the call for a Hindu militarization movement aimed at ensuring a dominant position for Hindus in an independent India (1969, p.4-7), he vehemently advocated for the exclusive use of Devanagari script and Hindi, in combination with other indigenous Indian languages, across Hindustan with his 'anti-Urdu campaign (1969, p. 115-119, 170-173), and even discussed a perceived covert effort on behalf of Indian Muslims at rallying Chinese Muslims to their 'anti-Hindu' Pakistani cause prior to being partitioned. (1969, 48-51)

While some of Savarkar's concerns regarding the perceived threat of Islam to the social, cultural and political landscape of an independent India could, in hindsight, be legitimized to varying degrees, there is no arguing the extreme tone that characterizes many of his ideas and rhetoric. Nowhere are these ideas better documented than in his frequent criticism of a Gandhian-dominated ideology embraced by the INC:

> If the Moslems do not want to be friendly with the [Hindu] majority, trust it, and be loyal to the Indian State then they can never escape from the fear of Hindu domination which is bound to be the factor irremovable from Hindusthan (*sic*). Once you approach the Moslems avowedly "to please them" with unjust and anti-national concessions, they can never be pleased until they come to dominate Hindusthan. It is this mad hope of pleasing the Moslems and calling it ['territorial'] nationalism which has been at the root of rendering the so-called national movement more dangerous and fatal to the Indian Nation than the British occupation itself. (Savarkar, 1969, p. 161)

> If the Moslems have their own political ambitions, possible or impossible, then let them not forget that the Hindus have their own political aspirations. Their racial soul is still cherishing to realise (*sic*) the achievement of an absolute political independence of Hindusthan wherein no anti-Hindu would be able to raise his head to browbeat. Our Hindu history, at any rate, bears out the truth of this belief from Vedic days and has consequently enabled our race to survive and revive during the world struggles for existence down to this day. (Savarkar, 1969, p. 153)

It is therefore crucial to understand this fundamental point of how Savarkar's threat perception of Islam and the Islamic "Other" becomes a key factor in legitimizing his case for Hindu-nationalist supremacy in Indian politics, society and culture. It is the language, heavily present on the preceding quotes, which highlights Savarkar's narrative that became the dominant rallying call in the historical development of Hindu-nationalism, and which would thereafter be embodied within the concept of *Hindutva.*

The Rashtriya Swamsevak Sangh

In 1925 the *Rashtriya Swamsevak Sangh* (RSS), an offspring of the Hindu *Masabha*, was founded. With its creation came the establishment of an institution that provided an organized social core from which the Hindu nationalist movement could operate. The somewhat clandestine RSS sought to objectify Muslims as the "Other"

within what was perceived to be an unabashedly Hindu India, while also perpetuating Sarvakar's ideology of *Hindutva* that essentially declared those with ancestral roots in India, and who did not practice Islam or Christianity, to collectively constitute a Hindu nation. The resulting understanding essentially equated religion with nationalism in a manner that would gradually become politicized.

The founder of the RSS, K.B. Hedgewar, was of the Brahman caste and took his inspiration for the formation of this organization from stories of a Hindu king from the Indian state of Maharastra who became legendary for his resistance against the Mughals and the British alike, resulting in what would become the RSS's militant vision of the Hindu state. In line with the central role of the king in his inspiration in the founding of the RSS, it is no surprise that Hedgewar envisioned the RSS to be, "… the *kshatriyatized*[19] antithesis to Gandhi's nonviolent, 'effeminate' bhakti inspired Hindu" (Hansen, p. 93, 1999). Hedgewar's summation of the role of the Hindu in the developing Indian national movement at the time echoe's that of his contemporary V.D. Savarkar and the ideology of *Hindutva*:

> Hindu society living in this country since times immemorial is the national society here and the main responsibility of this country rests with this society. The same Hindu people have built the life-values, ideals and culture of this country and, therefore, their nationhood is self-evident. (Goyal, 200, P.47)

[19] *Kshatriya* are one of the four ancient *Varnas* (or classes) found within Vedic scriptures in which Indian social organization had been based for centuries until the establishment of the modern-nation beginning in 1947. The *Kshatriya* were the warrior/ruling class. They are second in the social hierarchy after *Brahmins* (the priestly class) and are followed by *Vaishyas* (merchant/artisan class) and *Shudras* (service/labor class). Although officially abolished after partition, remnants of this social system still function today to varying degrees, especially in rural areas of India.

Again, the notion of Hindu identity becomes inclusive of value, ideals, culture and ultimately nationhood. As one method of synthesizing these ideas, the organization placed particular emphasis on the relationship between physical prowess and spiritual practice while largely conceding the belief of the superiority of Indian spirituality. (Van Der Veer, 1994, p. 71) The militant tradition they sought to espouse would be reflected in the celebration of their main festival of *Dessehra* which is based on the victory of the Hindu god Rama over the demon-kin Ravana, one of the most important epics of Hindu lore. The physical and the spiritual are synthesized in different martial arts, wrestling and yogic events whose practice symbolized power, with its displays of physical strength, and spiritual purity, with its young members' adherence to celibacy, in a combination that would, "…relate these ideas to a more political vision of the social hygiene of the nation" (van Der Veer, 1994, p. 72).

Under the guise of the *Hindutva* worldview, the RSS notably developed concepts relating to the link between "Hindu" culture and territory as well. Their heavy insistence on the inseparable connection, both tangible and symbolic, between spirituality and conceptualizations of nation-state worked to contextualize the Hindu claim to *Bharat*[20], the Hindu nation, a claim that transgressed far beyond the state boundaries that would be established during Partition approximately two decades later. This conceptualization of the nation placed more importance on the spiritual principle as a measure of the boundaries of the nation, rather than political power over the state in its administrative form. (Jaffrelot, 2011, p. 31) The Hindu nation, *Bharat*, therefore, included any piece of

[20] *Bharata*, or India, is a name found in ancient Hindu cosmogony that is short for "the Land of the Sons of Bharata". It refers to the southern zone of the southern continent of *Jambudvīpa* that was separated from the rest of this continent by the Himālayas i.e. India. (Basham, 1967, p.490)

land that was considered “sacred”, a condition directly correlated with the existence of religio-historical ritual places or pilgrimage sites, and any land where Hindu culture was indigenous and currently widespread, in Nepal for instance. (Jaffrelot, 2011, p. 31)

By 1940 an individual by the name of M.S. Golwalkar (aka Shri Guruji) ascended to the top of RSS leadership with the death of Dr. Hedgewar. Golwalkar would go on to become the chief ideologue of the RSS, while leading the organization through the most controversial period of its entire history up until, and including, the modern-day. In his writings in the late 1930’s, Golwalkar sought to highlight the critical role of cultural unity as a prerequisite for the feasibility of the state. He attempted to demonstrate this notion by using a framework that identified five “unities” that defined statehood including racial, geographical, religious, cultural and linguistic. (Hansen, 1999, p. 80-81)

The overlap with Savarkar’s ideology is quite clear in the RSS’s propagation of a definition of Hindu that is wholly inclusive of concepts of religion, ethnicity, culture and nation, and the propagation of a sovereign India that is contingent on these conceptions. However, while operating within a broad narrative similar to Savarkar’s with several inter-related concepts being perpetuated, Golwalkar’s vision was primarily cultural as opposed to political. This was due to Golwalkar’s belief in the “impure nature of politics” and in, “… Hindu society as constituted by culture rather than any strong or viable state” (Hansen, 1999, p. 83). So while Savarkar tended towards instigation and mass mobilization within the political realm, Golwalkar was focused on cultural activism and the character of the movement.

In 1937 Savarkar was elected to the position of president of the Hindu *Mahasabha* and the division between it and Golwalkar’s RSS widened. Here, Savarkar

pushed on a campaign built around anti-Muslim rhetoric and full-fledged political activism, while Golwalkar maintained his cultural strategy aimed at a more gradual transformation of Indian society's habits, norms, and moral standing (Hansen, 1999, p. 92-94). This was not the only division plaguing Hindu nationalist efforts at the time, however, as the RSS itself became increasingly divided between those who accepted Golwalkar's strategic vision of the organization and those who sought to create an RSS that much more closely resembled the hardline, and at times radical, position put forward by Savarkar. As Andersen and Damle note:

> As the RSS took a "cultural" path and terminated many of the public, high-profile activities, considerable internal tension arose. Two camps evolved during the organization-as tendencies rather than factions-one consisting of "traditionalists", the generation, mainly Maharastrians , favoring character building; and "activists", the younger generation, mainly north Indians, favoring agitation and mass action. (1987, p. 108-109; Hansen, 199, p. 95)

This divide began to increase and manifest itself more violently in the years and months approaching the Partition. The "activists", in contrast to what Golwalkar and other leaders were urging, increased their engagement in communal violence and justified it through a narrative built around what was perceived as a clearly threatening Muslim enemy. The onus of responsibility for the eventual partition of *Bharat* as viewed by many of these "activists" was placed squarely on the political leaders of the INC, judged as corrupt and morally weak, and its influential supporters, including Gandhi. (Hansen, p. 95, 199)

The apex of this violent and extreme behavior materialized in January of 1948, just five and half months post-Partition. RSS member Naturam V. Godse, a Hindu radical and avid follower of Savarkar, would assassinate Gandhi and, in the process, strike a

severe blow to the aim and cause of the RSS. The murderous action created a shock effect among the populous that now saw a shift in support towards the Indian government's vision of secularism and Hindu-Muslim unity, while allowing the government to subdue Hindu communalism. This turn of events would result in the outlawing of the RSS for a few years while essentially extinguishing the "flame" of Hindu nationalist influence for decades thereafter. (Wolpert, 2009, p. 375)

Muslim Nationalism

In a similar fashion as their fellow Hindu compatriots in British India, ideas of Muslim nationalism found their roots in the Islamic religious reform of the century prior to the Partition movement. The evolution of this reform process demonstrated attempts at establishing in colonial India an *ummah*[21] of an orthodox nature, while also distancing the community's identity and ritual practice away from what were perceived heterodox forms of Islam, particularly as embodied in certain Sufi practices. (Van der Veer, 1994, 58-64) When religion is viewed in the context of a basis for national identity, the basic reason for such a move towards a more orthodox version of Islam becomes much clearer. This was essentially due to the syncretic nature of Sufi practice which could be observed to include or accept certain elements traditionally associated with Hinduism, and whose saints and shrines commonly drew the devotion of practicing Hindus. Thus during the 19th century, there was fear that the lines identifying who was a Hindu versus who was a Muslim could become substantially blurred, if not invisible, in such a reality. Much of the

[21] An Arabic word referring to an Islamic community

conversation and debate over religion during this time would, therefore, have inextricable relevance in the case for the Muslim nation-state in the years just prior to the onset of the Partition. As van der Veer notes:

> In historical writing on Indian Islam during the colonial period the reformist attempt to define Islam by condemning certain established Sufi practices is interpreted as being linked to the political assertion of boundaries between the Muslim community and the Hindu community. Emphasis on the social and cultural exclusiveness of the Muslim community was used in the political struggle for a separate Muslim state. (1994, P. 62)

The implication here is that religious identity and practice formed the foundation for the dichotomy between "Self" and "Other" during this time in colonial Indian society and, subsequently, two distinct nations based on this foundation. This put forth the beginnings of a narrative where such nations would be entitled to self-determination, and ultimately, their own sovereign state and right to self-governance.

Shortly after the INC came into existence in 1885, some of the first concerns voiced regarding the minority status of Muslims within this newly organized political apparatus, were iterated by Syed Ahmed Khan. India, as a country numerically dominated by Hindus, led Khan to naturally believe that they would dominate the politics and political agenda of any future nation as well. As Devji is keen to note:

> Even the limited forms of democracy envisaged by Congress, then, struck Syed Ahmed Khan as being potentially oppressive, as they might rely upon the weight of numbers rather than rather than negotiation and good will to ban such [Hindu forbidden] practices [like cow slaughter], to say nothing of other liberties claimed by minority groups. (2013, p. 53)

Although a staunch modernist himself, Khan's concerns about majoritarianism in the domestic politics of India, independent or otherwise, aided in opening the discussion on minority politics and religion in the country's political realm. Furthermore, Khan was

known to have made the assertion, albeit primarily within an academic setting, that two nations based upon religion existed in India and that it would be "inconceivable" to ever think that these nations could "remain in the same throne room in equal power". (Callard, 1957, p. 11) And so, with Khan's death in 1898, came a major shift in Muslim politics of India. This shift would move away from the focus on the elitist-led, Muslim regionalism envisioned by Khan, and towards a more pan-Islamic model which saw representation from Muslim communities across India and its class spectrum. (Devji, 2013, 52- 68)

The development of Muslim nationalism in the political realm officially came to fruition in the early 20th century as a response to the majority status of Hindu individuals involved in leading the independence movement and also due to the growth and ideational application of Hindu traditionalism within India's native political realm as well. The seeds of doubt and insecurity had been planted with the initial idea of the "two-nation" theory, as Khan alluded to, and the political developments underway involving the INC at this time. The majority perception by the Muslim constituency of the developing situation, according to Callard, was an unfavorable one to say the least:

> The Indian nationalist leaders, including some Muslims, might talk of secular equality, but the Muslim reply was that firstly they distrusted the reality of secularism among the majority of the Hindus, and secondly, that they themselves had no wish for a secular state. Islam was their way of life in public affairs as in private, and they were not prepared to renounce it merely because some Hindus professed a willingness to make some like sacrifice. (1957, p. 12)

This assertion, and understanding of the political developments it espouses, would provide the foundation for a rallying call to action among India's large Muslim minority. This call came in an effort to avoid what they feared and perceived as an India that would come to be dominated at every level by Hindu values, ideals, religion and culture.

In the autumn of 1906, on what would come to be recognized as the eve of the establishment of the Muslim League, India's Muslims took their first step in their effort to protect themselves against Hindu majoritarianism when they were granted a separate electorate in the domestic political arena under the terms of the Morley-Minto Reforms. The desire of Muslims for a separate electorate found its base in the concern over their disproportionate numbers vis-à-vis the Hindu constituency. In addition to separate electorates under this arrangement, councils and legislatures would be required to reserve a number of seats for (religious) minorities that was markedly greater than the representation that the minority population would otherwise warrant. In this regard, Minto argued for increased Muslim representation that, "should be commensurate not with merely their numerical strength but also with their political importance and the value of the contribution which they make to the defence (*sic*) of the Empire" (Wolpert, 2009, p. 288). This policy, known as "weightage", was premised on non-numerical arguments such as those that Minto endorsed and was implemented in an effort to provide minorities with what was perceived to be a more effective form of representation in governance. (Devji, 2013, p. 68) By 1909 Britain's government would bring these reforms to fruition, effectively empowering Muslim nationalists, while further incubating a scenario where by a separation of religiously-based nations would gradually be perceived as the only viable solution to the issue at hand.

As the early part of the century progressed, the INC took a central role in Indian politics and was coming to be dominated by Hindus. This parallel development to the Morley-Minto reform movement would further rally Muslims into political activity, thereby resulting in the creation of the All-India Muslim League in 1906. Led by

Muhammed Al Jinnah, this institution provided what would become a strong, stable body for India's Muslims. The Muslim League can be seen to have pursued a policy of relative cooperation with the INC for approximately the next three decades following the Muslim League's establishment. Up until this time, the vast majority of the Muslim constituency was not considering the end of British rule as a real possibility. This resulted primarily in efforts of defense against the perceived Hindu threat within the established political framework, rather than within a framework of a future, independent, Muslim-nationalist state. (Callard, 1957, p. 12)

It became apparent at this juncture, however, that a Hindu-dominated INC was pushing hard for a strong central government once independence was achieved, which would have disadvantaged the Muslim minority in the eyes of the Muslim League. In fact, at this time Ali Jinnah was putting forward an argument that was seemingly paradoxical to the one that had primarily defined the Muslim League's narrative based in the minority status of Muslims in British India. Relative to India's Hindu population, which stood at approximately 75%, the Muslim minority population which stood at slightly less than one quarter of the population (approx. 90 million[22]) is indeed a fairly substantial minority. However, in absolute terms, 90 million is a considerable number of individuals, and greater than the total population of the majority of the world's nation-states that existed during that time period. With this notion in mind, Jinnah highlighted the concentrated nature of Muslim populations in British India and, riding on constitutional legitimacy of the Muslim constituency established through the Morley-

[22] (Devji, 2013, p. 88)

Minto Reforms, made an argument that these factors combined to create a political entity too distinct to be regarded simply as a religious community. (Devji, 2013, p. 83) In support of such a notion, Jinnah stated in 1939 that:

> The Congress in insistence that they, and they alone, represent the people of India is not only without any foundation, but is highly detrimental to the progress and advancement of India. They know that they do not represent the whole of India- not even all the Hindus, and certainly not the Muslims, who are often wrongly described as a minority in the ordinary sense as understood in the west. They are in a majority in the north-west and in Bengal, all along the corridor stretching from Karachi to Calcutta. That part of the Indian continent alone has double the population of Great Britain and is more than ten times in area. (Devji, 2013, p. 83-84)

During roughly the same timeframe, in 1937, the Muslim League suffered a notable setback in the provincial elections that year by winning only about twenty percent of Muslim seats. This again resulted in the implementation of a defensive strategy that reified the notion of "Islam in Danger" at its core. (Malik et al., 2007, p. 150) In March of 1940, the Muslim League adopted what is known as the Lahore resolution as an official call for a separate Muslim state:

> Geographically contiguous unit of British India are to be demarcated into regions which should be constituted, with such territorial adjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which Muslims are numerically in a majority as in the North-Western and Eastern zones of India should be grouped to constitute *Independent States* in which the constituent unit shall be autonomous and sovereign. (Malik et al., 2007, p. 151)

In the days following the announcement by the Muslim League at Lahore, Jinnah affirmed the basic core issue of the Muslim League's concerns and their desire for an independent state:

> The Muslim minorities are wrongly made to believe that they would be worse off and be left in the lurch in any scheme of partition or division of India. I may explain that the Mussalmans (*sic*), wherever they are in a minority, cannot improve their position under a United India or under one

> Central Government. Whatever happens they would remain a minority. They can rightly demand all the safeguards that are known to any civilized (*sic*) government to the utmost extent. But by coming in the way of the division of India, they do not and cannot improve their own position. On the other hand, they can, by their attitude of obstruction, bring the Muslim homeland and six crores of the Mussalmans (*sic*) under one government, where they would remain no more than a minority in perpetuity. (Jinnah, 1976, p. 19-20)

By the time of the 1945-46 provincial elections, the Muslim League's efforts showed signs of great reinvigoration and came to be regarded as the INC's most formidable rival as well as the biggest obstacle impacting the vision of a unified, independent Indian nation that encompassed the entirety of the mighty sub-continent. They captured nearly ninety percent of the seats in Muslim-majority provinces, while keeping in mind that independence from Britain was imminent at this point and becoming more and more vehement in their demand for a separate sovereign state as outlined in the Lahore resolutions, the ultimate goal now being the creation of the world's first Muslim Nationalist state.

Partition: The Legacy of Religio-Nationalism

As a result, in part due to the critical years of division and conflict just prior to Indian independence, the INC sought to bring Hindu nationalist more into the fold. They sought to do this by rallying for their inclusion into the ICS and by successfully reworking the politics of civil disobedience and non-cooperation, which urged Indians to act as an independent nation. Policies such as these, organized and executed by the INC, eventually led to the introduction of the India Independence Bill to the British House of Commons in 1947. (Corbridge and Harriss, 2007, p. 16)

This historical timeline, which looks at the evolution of the religion-based nationalism from reform to institutionalization to sovereign government, brings us to the eve of an independent India. Wide spread dissention amongst India's Hindu and Muslim populations was the result of the outcry by the Muslim League, thereby making the potential for civil war a serious possibility once independence was achieved. In a move that went against their ideal vision of an independent India, the increase in violence and tension ultimately pushed the INC to an agreement on the partition of India on the basis of religion. (Malik et al., 2007, p. 29) The Mountbatten plan of partition, outlined and implemented by the British, is summed up nicely in the following assessment by Mcleod:

> Territories which had been governed directly under the British Raj between 1858 and 1947 would be divided on the basis of religious prominence. Areas where there was a Muslim majority would cede to one of the two wings of Pakistan and areas of Hindu majority would accede to India. The Princely states which had existed under British paramountcy during the Raj, would accede two sovereign states. (2008, p. 71)

On August 15th, 1947 independence from Britain and partition descended upon India all at once. The Indo-Pak conflict endures today because of four main areas of interrelated concern: the deep ideological divide between the two nations, a history of military and violent conflict, the Kashmir struggle, and cross-border terrorism. According to Sumit Ganguly, a professor of Political Science at the University of Indiana-Bloomington, the Indo-Pak rivalry should be one characterized by "unremitting hostility" of which the underlying element can be traced back to fundamentally divergent ideological elements of nationalist elites during the rise of the anti-colonial movement. (Misra, 2010, p.14) This can be captured to a degree in the explanation I gave dealing with the rise of Hindu

and Muslim nationalism and the tensions and rivalries that mounted between the INC and the Muslim League prior to partition.

The Critical Early Years: Pre-Partition India until 1956

A significant influence on India's choice to not establish relations with Israel can be found in the debilitating process of partition with Pakistan and the sovereign nation of India's very beginnings. Prior to 1947, the potential partition of what was then colonial India into two sovereign states based primarily along a religious divide, was an idea unequivocally rejected by Congress leaders from its very inception in 1940. This rejection was founded, first and foremost, on the staunch secular character brought to the Indian freedom struggle by its leadership and those that would become India's first elected officials as a sovereign country, with Mahatma Gandhi and its eventual first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru leading the charge. (Nair, 2004, p. 66-69) The influence of such individuals is widely recognized by many, including some of India's current and best-known political leaders. As Indian politician Dr. Shashi Tharoor, Indian National Congress party member and current *Lok Sabha*[23] elect from Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, notes:

> Nehru was an extremely pro-Jewish person, particularly seen in his stance and behavior towards Jews and their struggles within Hitler's Germany. He did not, however, have any sympathy towards the Zionist cause. Since Pakistan had just been created on the basis of religion, the notion that Israel was also being created along the same basis was an anathema to the Indians. We rejected the notion because our entire state rests on the principle of all of us having the same political allegiance to our country, regardless of our faith. (Tharoor, Personal Interview, 2014)

[23] India's Lower-House of parliament

Similarly Dr. Abishek Singhvi, Indian National Congress party member and current *Rajya Sabha*[24] elect representing the state of Rajasthan, confirmed the same in an interview:

> The historical evolution of India, especially during the contextual time of partition, and what we came through, meant that Nehru rightly always emphasized the secular, non-religious ethos of India and it was a very important contextual thing. Everybody fought everybody else in hindsight, but if you look at the context the upper most projected image was a secular country's image and you can link it with the non-aligned in the foreign policy field or an objective stance, etc., but these were all the same Nehruvian projections. (Singhvi, personal interview, 2014)

Because Gandhi was assassinated less than six months after the partition movement, the onus of guiding and leading a newly independent India fell heavily on the shoulders of Nehru and his supporters in the Indian National Congress. The impact and high degree of influence that Nehru's perception of the world and his ideas of governance had on India early on, therefore, cannot be overstated here. It was his vision and the aims of the Indian National Congress party which he led that would be primary in shaping India's direction as a nation, while also setting the tone for India's foreign policy for decades to come.

A predominant characteristic of a secular India envisioned by both Nehru and Gandhi was that of anti-racialism, a notion that played well into a grand narrative depicting India as an unabashedly secular country that strives for objectivity in the world. Both leaders of the Indian freedom movement professed a staunch commitment to anti-racialism proclaimed what became India's uncompromising stand on racial, ethnic and religious equality that in turn would come to define India as a free, democratic and secular nation. (Nair, 2003, p.35-36; Gandhi, 1947)

[24] India's Upper-House of parliament

Gandhi made his vision of a free and sovereign India clear in his well-known message of tolerance, justice and extreme non-violence or *ahimsa*. When it came to how he envisioned an independent India should function, he would consistently highlight the aforementioned ideals but would frequently discuss these notions within the context of India's great plurality of religious identities:

> Hindustan[25] belongs to all those who are born and bred here and who have no other country to look to. Therefore, it belongs to Parsis[26], Bene Israelis, to Indian Christians, Muslims and other non-Hindus as much as to Hindus. Free India will be no Hindu raj, it will be Indian raj based not on the majority of any religious sect or community, but on the representatives of the whole people without distinction of religion. I can conceive of a mixed majority putting the Hindus in a minority. They would be elected for their record of service and merits. Religion is a personal matter, which should have no place in politics. (Gandhi, 1947, p. 277-278; Joshi, 2007)

> I do not expect India of my dreams to develop one religion that is to be wholly Hindu or wholly Christian or wholly Mussalman (*sic*), but I want it to by wholly tolerant, with its religions working side by side with one another. (Gandhi, p. 257, 1947; Joshi, 2007)

Quotes like these illustrate that, although Gandhi envisaged a secular India in which no group enjoyed any sort of special treatment or privilege, he still viewed the political and social development of the nation primarily through a lens of inter-religious relations and society whose members would identify one another vis-á-vis religious affiliation above all else. In practice then, religion in India would become the 'de facto' means for social organization and division as the centuries-old caste system began to gradually wane, a process that is still very much underway today. Further, it seems as though Gandhi's

[25] Hindustan refers to a landmass comprised of modern-day India, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

[26] Note that this term refers to India's community of individuals who belong to the ancient religion of Zoroastrianism. The majority of India's Parsis live in the modern-day city of Mumbai.

notion of "religion having no place in politics" that he held with regard to India, did not extend to the Israel-Palestinian issue. In the context of his long-running support for the *Khilafat* movement, Gandhi made clear his unconditional refusal of any future non-Muslim governance in Jerusalem and Palestine noting that, "What non-Muslims could not do was to acquire sovereign jurisdiction over Palestine" (Blarel, 2014, p.45). Despite his clear call for the separation of religion from politics or governance, Gandhi is recorded to have displayed a blatant preference for the political administration of any future Palestinian state to exclusively be under the control of Muslims.

Nehru, in a similar fashion, also recognized the basic fabric of Indian social organization to fall within the framework of its religious plurality, at least in practice. His rhetoric acknowledged, although only implicitly at times, the role of religion as a key component of India's social organizing structure:

> In a country like India, which has many faiths and religions, no real nationalism can be built except on the basis of secularity. Any narrower approach must exclude a section of the population and then nationalism itself will have a restricted meaning than it should possess… Our constitution lays down that we are a secular state, but it must be admitted that this is not wholly reflected in our mass living and thinking… We have not only to live up to the ideals proclaimed in our Constitution, but make them a part of our thinking and living and thus build up a really integrated nation. That does not mean absence of religion, but putting religion on a different plane from that of normal political and social life. Any other approach in India would mean the breaking up of India. (Nehru, 1980, p. 330-331)

It was Nehru's perception then that religious identity, despite the great value he gave religion, presented a considerable challenge to his vision of a united India whose citizens would embrace a national, secular identity above all others.

Despite the staunch commitment of Nehru and Gandhi to a secular India devoid of religious favoritism, much of their rhetoric used during the Indian freedom struggle was inclusive of language that referred to and identified India's populous primarily in terms of their religious identity. The argument here is that in the hard-pressed effort and mission to ensure that the newly independent nation of India unquestionably remain a democratic and definitively secular country, in both domestic politics and in its foreign policy, it ended up doing just the opposite in some cases, specifically where their policy towards Israel was concerned. Since normalization occurred, a multitude of scholarly explanations have been put forward that attempt to explain the underlying reason(s) that drove India's policy towards Israel up until the time when relations were established. Several of these alternate explanations will be addressed in the concluding chapter of this work, but I continue here by putting forth an explanation where the politics of (religious) identity can be seen to actively shape and drive India's Israel policy.

In theory, India's solidarity with the Palestinian cause was designed to be a clear message to the Arab-Muslim world of their unwavering support for what they saw as an objective and universally accepted injustice to a nation suffering under the yoke of imperialism and brute force. As a leader of the developing world and as a secular, democratic nation seen to be built on ideals of justice, tolerance and equality, there would appear to be a natural expectation that India would support a disadvantaged people where such ideals and inherent human rights were purportedly being violated and disallowed.

However in practice, I argue, this became an exercise of seemingly unconscious (or unacknowledged) favoritism towards both domestic and foreign Muslim constituencies as far as India's stance towards Israel was concerned. The intense

preoccupation of the majority of India's leaders before, during and after independence with not being seen as showing favoritism to its Hindu majority and maintaining an undeniable secular character, actually led them towards a dynamic of favoritism vis-à-vis the nation's large Muslim majority in certain areas of domestic and foreign affairs. Hindu nationalist members of the INC were the first to perceive and resist the existence of such a dynamic, which of course was viewed by them as a policy of appeasement towards Muslims. (Sharma, 2002, p. 23-24)

Domestically, several examples can be highlighted that would underpin the perception or the actuality of Muslim appeasement. By the time of the creation of India's constitution, which was ratified in 1950, the debate over appeasement was already in full swing:

> … a number of [constitutional] framers, who were also ruling members of the Congress Party, introduced legislation that transformed Hindu personal law in the realms of marriage, divorce, and inheritance. Yet the same legislators made a conscious effort to avoid changing Muslim personal law, concluding that the still-fresh trauma of partition made it advisable to defer legal reform of the Muslim minority's religious practices to a later time. This decision to defer the reform of Muslim personal law would later play into the hands of Hindu zealots and political activists who could disingenuously argue that the official secular state was actually a scheme for pandering to minorities. (Ganguly, 2003B, p. 13-14)

Equality in civil law among Muslim and Non-Muslim Indians, and the country's secular credentials as a whole, were further put into question due to the disparity in legal treatment between these two groups created as a result The Hindu Marriage Act of 1955. This act formally legalized punishments, including imprisonment, for Hindus who attempted to be involved in polygamous marriage unions while, at the same time, Muslims were established to be free of such a restriction. (Jacobsohn, 2003, p. 112)

Nearly 30 years on from the creation of the constitution, India's *Shah Bano* case, which lasted from 1978 until its final ruling in 1985, famously reiterated the previously described controversy involving Muslim appeasement and particularly as it relates to civil laws. This was a situation where an Indian court, in contrast to Muslim personal law, ordered a Muslim man to pay alimony to his wife, a decision that was subsequently overturned by PM Rajiv Gandhi and a move that still placed the degree of India's secularity and its seeming appeasement to its Muslim populace squarely into question. (Ganguly & Mukherji, 2011, p. 154-155; Jacobsohn, 2003, p. 107-108)

A final example of India's appeasement of its Muslim population during its earliest years as a nation comes with regard to article 370 of the Indian constitution which, among other things, "… prohibits the sale of immovable property in the only Muslim-majority state in the Indian union, Jammu and Kashmir, to any non-Kashmiri " (Ganguly & Mukherji, 2011, p. 163). The fear here is that the overturning of this article would allow Hindus to overrun the Jammu-Kashmir area and effectively change demography in their favor. Therefore, it was with government policies such as these, that the charges of appeasing India's Muslim minority in the domestic sphere by the Nehru-led Congress party were most notably found.

Regarding its foreign policy, secular India aimed to be perceived as a country of objectivity, of cooperation, and of non-belligerence. India sought to promote an image of neutrality to the world whereby its direct role in most any other country's domestic affairs was extremely minimal, if not non-existent. Nowhere was the attempt to institutionalize this notion more apparent perhaps than in India's central role as an eventual leader of the Non-Aligned Movement established in 1961 in Belgrade. Prior to

the establishment of this movement, however, several notable instances/events took place that set the stage for India's involvement in such a campaign.

Anti-colonial and anti-imperial sentiment had been a center-piece of the writing and rhetoric surrounding India's independence movement beginning many years prior to its eventual attainment of self-rule in 1947. As McLane notes, "Colonialism's displacement of Indians from power induced anxiety and critical self-reflection, which grew more intense as independence approached" (2010, p. 195). Within this context, an interesting dynamic was formed through two notable characteristics of India's identity formulation and projection that become instrumental building blocks towards the recognition and institutionalization of their 'non-aligned' status and, in certain ways that will be explained later, to the eventual rise of Hindu nationalism in the 1980's: notions of historical victimization and notions of 'Great Power' status.

Identifying with victimization appears to have played a relevant role on both sides of the political spectrum (i.e., the Congress Party on the left and the BJP on the right) at certain time periods in recent Indian history. For the Congress party, this time period featured most prominently from pre-partition up and through the establishment of NAM, and for the political Right (i.e., the BJP), this narrative began in the mid-1980's and was still found to be present even at the turn of the millennium as will be demonstrated later. With reference to the time period under review in this section (up until 1956), this theme of victimhood was found to be present within the political narrative and functioned to strategically assist India in defining India's place in the international system and its relationship with certain countries/regions.

Identifying with the historical circumstance of imperialist victimhood was the primary feature of the narrative(s) that underpinned much of the third-world's engagement with (former) imperial powers, and this was certainly the case for those countries that would eventually join the Non-Aligned Movement. As Miller notes, "A large category of states–states that have experienced imperialism and colonialism–do not necessarily behave in the way that realists or liberals would necessarily predict because a common transformative historical event contributes to a powerful ideology of victimhood that dominates their decision calculus" (2013, p. 34). However, while notions of victimhood were explicitly featured as a highlight of India's policy towards the world as self-perceived leaders of the struggle against colonialism, the absence of a real threat to their sovereignty from any Great Power aided in the creation of a seemingly contrary dynamic whereby their historical victimhood and status as a third-world country did not inhibit them from practicing a fully independent policy as they viewed it.

India would maintain and play on its victimhood throughout this time-frame but, unlike most other members of the anti-colonial movement that would eventually become members of the NAM, India projected also itself as a special type of Great Power from as early as 1948. As Nehru keenly conveyed:

> I can understand some of the smaller countries of Europe or some of the smaller countries of Asia being forced by circumstances to bow down before some of the greater powers, because they cannot help it.

Nehru continued

> We [in India] are not citizens of a weak or mean country (*sic)* and I think it is foolish for us to get frightened, even from a military point of view, of the greatest powers today. (Poplai, 1959, p. 24; Willetts, p. 6, 1978)

> If we had been some odd little nation [*sic*] somewhere in Asia or Europe, it (our independent policy) would not have mattered much. But because we count.… Everything we do becomes a matter for comment…we are potentially a great nation and power. (Poplai, 1959, p. 29; Willetts, p. 6, 1978)

India's victimhood is implicit here as is an explicit degree of perceived equality with the more traditionally recognized world powers of the time. As Amit Acharya of American University, quoting Nehru, once stated, "Asian countries need to find a way of relating as equals to the richer powers of the Western world" (Miller, 2013, p. 31). The humiliation of colonialism created need to reacquire respect in international system and by affording themselves Great Power status, India saw a means of accomplishing this feat. It did this primarily by measure of "prestige".

India's sense of being a Great Power at this time came not from material wealth or military might, but rather from its potential to attain these things given its large size, amount of resources and massive population, and, more importantly, from the universal "prestige" it believed it garnered from the "moralistic" policies based in Gandhian tradition that it espoused. In this manner, "prestige" became a significant factor influencing a state's behavior through utilization by political groups as an end in and of itself. (Miller, 2013, p. 31) The Gandhian tradition that provided the foundations for this notion of "prestige" would therefore underscore the essence of India's non-aligned practice, as was succinctly summarized by Professor A. Appadorai, a former director of the Indian School of Indian Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University, who stated its aim:

> To keep the peace, try peaceful means–negotiation, inquiry, conciliation, and arbitration; listen to the viewpoints of both parties to a dispute expressed by their duly constituted representatives; hesitate to condemn either party as an aggressor until facts proved by international inquiry indisputably testify to aggression; believe the bona fides of both until

> [there is] proof to the contrary; explore fully the possibilities of negotiation and at least localize war–this is India's view. (Damodaran, 1982, p. 205)

India's self-regarded "prestige", combined with its potential for attaining more traditionally recognized forms of international strength to create a novel image of a Great Power that would be created markedly dissimilar to any other sort that existed at, or prior to, that time period. The vision of how such a special type of power would independently function in the international system and the role it would take on was clearly stated by Nehru in 1948:

> … we have to plough a lonely furrow in the United Nations… Nonetheless… I am quite sure that by adopting that position, we shall ultimately gain in national and international prestige… fairly soon… a large number of the small nations… will probably look to India more than to other countries for the lead. (Poplai, 1959, p. 17-18; Willetts, 1978, p.6)

Over the next several years, India would proceed to attempt reinforcement of such a view through a combination of bi-lateral and multi-lateral agreements, as well as through means of international institutionalization.

This "moralistic", non-partisan approach to the foreign policy of India was rather vaguely codified in their 1954 trade and communications agreement over Tibet with China in what is known as the *Panchsheel*[27] agreement. (Willetts, 1978, p. 7) The principles of *Panchsheel* were then, in part, included in those found in the agreements of the Nehru-organized Bandung Conference in 1955. India's perceived position as a unique Great Power that stood as the vanguard of the world's former colonial entities that had

[27] This agreement included five general principles: 1.) mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty ; 2.) mutual non-aggression; 3.) mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs; 4.) equality and mutual benefit; and 5.) peaceful co-existence. (Willetts, 1978, p. 7)

historically been victimized by imperial powers[28] and were members of the third-world, made it a "natural" fit for playing such a leading role in Bandung's organization and the political trajectory of these former colonial entities that would follow. Bandung, an event which would precede the founding of the NAM by six years and prove highly influential to it, included the participation of 29 sovereign states whose essential theme was "condemnation of colonialism in all its manifestations" and the initial adoption of ten principles[29] which "promoted world peace and cooperation". (Potter & Mukhatzhanova, 2012, p.18)

From the very beginning of their sovereign nationhood, then, India's philosophy on foreign affairs was meant to highlight and project a sort of 'open-door' policy, a great willingness towards consideration of relations with any nation. Nehru details this philosophy during a speech to the Constituent Assembly in March of 1949, over a year and a half after Indian independence:

> And foreign relations, though they involve trade, business, etc., are not like opening a branch of business firm as sometimes some of our business magnates seem to imagine. It is very intricate and very difficult business dealing with the psychology of human being, the psychology of nations, involving considerations of their background and culture, language and so on.

[28] Including, but not limited to, the British, French, Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese, Belgians, Germans, Italians, Russians, Japanese and Americas.

[29] These principles included the following: 1.) respect for fundamental human right and objectives of the charter of the United Nations; 2.) respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations; 3.) recognition of equality among all races and the equality among all nations, large and small; 4.) non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of another country; 5.) respect for the right of every nation to defend itself, either individually or collectively; 6.) (a) non-use of collective defence pacts to benefit the specific interests of any of the great powers; (b) non-use of pressure by any country against other countries; 7.) refraining from acts or threats of aggression, or the use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any country; 8.) peaceful resolution of all international conflicts in conformity with the charter of the United Nations; 9.) promotion of mutual interests and cooperation; and 10.) respect for justice and international obligations. (Potter & Mukhatzhanova, 2012, p.18-19)

> … So our policy will continue to be not only to keep aloof from power alignments, but to try and make friendly cooperation possible. Fortunately we enter upon our independence as a country with no hostile background in regard to any country. We are friendly to all countries. Our hostility during the last 200 years was mainly directed towards the dominating power here and because of India's independence that hostility has largely vanished, though it may survive in some people's minds. So we approach the whole world on a friendly basis and there is no reason why we should put ourselves at a disadvantage, if I may say so, by becoming unfriendly to any group. I think that India has a vital role to play in world affairs. (Gopal, 1980, p. 367)

Nehru's speech here implied that the very nature of India's foreign relations would not be limited by a state's domestic identity or structure, and it explicitly stated that there should be no reason why India could not have relations with any nation, a notion that by all accounts should include Israel. This nature, purportedly anchored in Gandhian philosophy, would be further underpinned and institutionalized as a founding party to the Non-Aligned Movement, its precepts and all precedent agreements leading up to this founding (i.e. Panchsheel, Bandung, etc.).

When it came to relations with the Jewish state, however, "background and culture" ultimately did matter. Identity became a factor here despite Nehru's words and the very image that India claimed to project. It was not Israel's background, culture or identity that came into play, but rather the identity of those engaged in, or who perceived themselves to be engaged in, direct or indirect conflict with the Jewish state – the Arab-Muslim world and parts of the non-Arab Muslim world, including Pakistan – and India's desire to maintain the best relations possible with many of these entities. India sought the friendship and support of the Arab-Muslim world for a variety of reasons relating to the

size of their domestic Muslim population and, in particular, because of their on-going dispute over Kashmir with Pakistan.

Nehru, however, seemed to be very well aware of the possibility that for some states, identity, culture, background, language, etc., did in fact play a critical role in their foreign policy, or at the very least that there were those who believed and propagated such a notion. The Arab-Muslim world was one such example where this notion had been raised as part of the international narrative on state-to-state relations. Twenty-odd years prior to Indian independence Nehru, in writing about the foreign policy of a future independent India, addressed such a notion:

> Some people, living in a world of their own creation, imagine that there is a pan-Islamic block which may threaten India. This is pure fancy. Every one of the Islamic countries is developing on intensely rational lines and there is absolutely no room in them for an external policy based on religion. Indeed, even their domestic policy has little to do with religious dogmas. The interests of these countries are and will continue to be our interests. (Gopal, 1980, p. 338)

It can be presumed that when India did gain its independence, and Nehru took his seat as the country's first prime minister, his views on the matter remained steadfast since neither his rhetoric nor his actions ever seemed to deviate from such a perception. And while he may have been correct in that such a bloc did not and would not threaten India, it is an historical fact that such a bloc did arise in the years following WWII, even if they did not threaten India, and would last for several decades thereafter as a united front on a select few issues with Israel being at the top of this agenda.

The point here is that not every nation-state endorsed such a seemingly "fair" and "objective" take on foreign affairs as did Nehru and, by extension, India. In fact as early as 1950, around the time India would recognize Israel as a state entity, the country's

Ministry of External Affairs was debating the nature of India's future relationship with Israel in terms of a Muslim nation's concern over religiously related issues and the possibility of a negative response from a particular state in the Arab-Muslim world as Kumaraswamy has documented: "The displeasure of Saudi Arabia may also have serious repercussions on Hajj pilgrimage by Indian Muslims and thus give rise to domestic difficulties" (Kumaraswamy, 2010, p. 153). Whether or not the Saudis would in fact have restricted the participation of Indian Muslims in *Hajj* at this time due to Indian normalization with Israel can only be speculated on at this point in history. However, given India's sheer number of Muslims and the violence that took place between Hindus and Muslims as a result of the recent partition process, the fear of domestic conflict erupting or a significant deterioration in relations with Saudi Arabia haunted India's government.

Nehru appointed several Muslims, including Maulana Azad, to key posts responsible for India's Middle East policy in a move that was, in part, an exercise in assuaging doubts of India's secular character. (Kumaraswamy, p. 146, 2010) This was a move that inherently put the potential for normalization with Israel at a great disadvantage and essentially resulted in the exclusion of any pro-Israel consideration in many regional policy matters.

Therefore, in dealing with types of states like Saudi Arabia, India and its first prime minister would be required to take into account this radically different take on foreign affairs. In the case of Israel, a widely perceived enemy of the Arab-Muslim world and, by association, the Muslim world in general, India was required to disregard portions of its own self-declared philosophy towards international affairs. While consideration of

its religious identity may not have been much of a factor or any factor at all, in the majority of the Muslim world's state-to-state relations, Israel was an exception and an exception that subsequently would be embraced by India due to historical, geographical and demographic considerations.

The resulting support, or the "favoritism", that Nehru and India's first leaders had shown towards Muslim factions domestically and internationally, was an outcome of the recognition of previously described factors relating to religious identity between Arab Muslims and their South Asian religious brethren, a circumstance which was beyond India's control. As such, despite India's domestic and international stance against the engagement of politics based on such factors like identity, India's leaders were left with few other options, all of which would ultimately risk the well-being of the Indian state in their minds. Their overcompensation for what India's leaders feared would be viewed as anti-Islamic behavior, both domestically and in the Arab-Muslim world, resulted in the preferential treatment that they sought diligently to unequivocally exclude from their policy in their establishment of an independent, secular India. In focusing so intently on being secular, it seems India's leadership post-partition inadvertently did show favoritism towards the cause and concerns of the Muslim constituency by pandering them through what they believed to be fair treatment of India's largest religious minority.

In their attempted effort to demonstrate equality and fairness towards all Indians in their treatment of Muslims, Nehru and Congress actually ended up treating them in a way that resulted in benefits reflective of almost a favoritism of sorts. This was done solely in an effort to demonstrate the free and fair secular nature of the state and the secular aims of Congress, but in fact it had a negative or disadvantageous effect on Israel

due to the status of relations between the Jewish state and the rest of the Arab-Muslim world. The "fair" and "equal" treatment Nehru's India sought to afford to its Muslim constituency equated, in part, to India's staunch anti-Israel position.

Regarding his application of neutrality in international politics, the partiality with which Nehru's India treated Israel's Arab-Muslim neighbors compared to the treatment Israel received of course did not go unnoticed by Israel's leadership at the time. Even Ben-Gurion was noted to have remarked:

> Nehru claims allegiance to neutrality… He is not even neutral in regard to Israel and the Arabs, for he has close ties and normal relations with Arab countries- but he has stubbornly refused diplomatic relations with Israel, and in his frequent visits to the Middle East he has on every occasion-and not by accident-over looked Israel. (Kumaraswamy, 2010, p. 126)

One of the more notable instances this played out was in July of 1960 when a formal invitation was sent to Nehru to visit Israel. Shortly thereafter, Nehru replied that such a visit would not be conducive to the improvement of international relations and noting the difficulty with which it was for him to travel abroad, despite having visited Gaza just two months prior. (Kumaraswamy, 2010, 126)

The religious demographics of India, with Muslims making up a substantial minority, created a condition domestically that had a significant impact on Nehru and the INC's initial stance towards Israel that began prior to partition, as historical and anecdotal evidence demonstrates. This balance of the religious make-up in India was embedded in the legacy of a partition based primarily in the separation of religions, a circumstance that ultimately worked to revive a foundation for the narrative of "Hindu v. Muslim". In addition to producing a popular narrative based in the separation of Hindus from Muslims and generating a fragile demographic situation in India, the legacy of partition would also

brought with it the creation of a Muslim-majority Pakistan and the complex situation of territory allocation and border creation between the two newly created countries. The conflict that ensued would be another factor that would bring religious considerations into India's foreign policy decisions in two ways: 1.) war with Pakistan, a Muslim national state with a Muslim majority; 2.) subsequent control of a Muslim-majority state of Kashmir.

Two months after partition, war began with Pakistan that would last well through Israel's establishment in 1948 and into January of 1949. While this conflict was presumably not viewed as anything other than an inter-state war by many of India's leaders, this is not how the dynamic was perpetuated by some of Pakistan's leaders. Further, Nehru and the INC feared the manner in which this conflict would be perceived by nations of the Arab-Muslim world given the nature of partition and the narrative that was beginning to take shape. Unfortunately for India, Pakistan, as a self-declared Muslim nationalist state, naturally always had an advantage in courting the political and diplomatic support of an overwhelmingly Muslim Middle East. (Nair, 2004, p. 46-47) The All-India Muslim League, the political party which sat at the vanguard of the Pakistani nationalist movement, who eventually vied for partition and who would produce Pakistan's earliest leadership in the years following its split from India (Rao, 1972, p. 13), was feared by the INC because of the potential influence it was perceived to have over Muslims in the entire sub-continent. Even after partition, the Muslim League would continue to lay its claim as the representative of not only Pakistan's Muslims, but of India's as well. From the time of the early 1920's the Muslim League consistently framed its "agitation", both domestically and externally, in the context of the existing

threat to Islam. (Rao, 1972, p. 16) This, combined with its hardline stance against Israel and Jewish nationalism, created a situation that, "… naturally influenced and compelled the Congress Party to accommodate the Muslim sentiments [in India] on Palestine" (Kumaraswamy, 2010, p. 78).

A major driving force in India's conflict with Pakistan is the Kashmir issue. The conflict over Kashmir goes back to the princely-state's desire to remain an independent entity, free from Indian and Pakistani control, after the conclusion of partition. Shortly following this conclusion, however, there were fears by Kashmir's leader, Maharaja Hari Singh, of an imminent takeover by Pakistani forces or militants driven by the belief in Indian plans for annexation of the region. Singh appealed to India for military assistance and, in what is viewed as a moment of desperation, agreed to relinquish Kashmir's independence in exchange for this assistance. The result was a divided Kashmir region with India controlling approximately 65% of the territory and Pakistan controlling the remaining. ("A brief history", 2001)

While the details of this turn of events are hotly debated on both sides, the relevance here is India's conflictual engagement with a Muslim entity (i.e. Pakistan) over what is perceived as an inherently Muslim territory. Within a political and normative context, India's annexation of Jammu & Kashmir was and still is perceived by Pakistan, much of the Muslim world, and even many Muslim residents within the territory as illegal and oppressive. The portion of Kashmir that would come under control of India is Muslim-majority at approximately 70% of the population, a prevailing condition that fit nicely into the Muslim League's "threat to Islam" discourse. Pakistan used this simple fact of demography as justification for its desired possession of the whole of Kashmir, a

notion that Nehru was well aware of speaking nearly a decade after the conflict there began. (Gopal, 1980, p. 223-224) Furthermore, placed within a more fundamentalist religious discourse, India's annexation plays into the "Hindu v. Muslim" narrative through an understanding of Kashmir as a Muslim land under forcible control of a *kafir*[30] ruler by virtue of the notion that Hinduism is a non-Abrahamic, polytheistic religion.

The notion of Kashmiri Muslims under "threat" from India that formed a part of the Pakistani discourse being preached to other Muslim nations created a foreign policy challenge for India. Since the Pakistani Muslims would never back down as far as Kashmir itself was concerned, this discourse was one that would have to be countered by India through other avenues that demonstrated to the rest of the Islamic world India's free and fair treatment of Muslims. These circumstances combined to create a highly sensitive state of affairs vis-à-vis its relations with the Arab-Muslim world for India, a circumstance which India's leaders sought to ameliorate, in part, through their Israel policy.

With the previously detailed series of circumstances ultimately founded on the legacy of partition, and the division of the two countries along what were primarily religious lines, India and its leaders were, to a degree, compelled to conduct policy based in part on (religious) identity at particular times. During this period of time and within this prevailing context, India's government would have been obliged to take such action towards Israel in order to offset any misperceptions the Arab-Muslim world might hold towards India regarding both its increasingly conflictual and violent relationship with its

[30] An Arabic term referring to those deemed to be 'unbelievers' in a monotheistic conception of G-d and/or Islam's religious message as revealed by the prophet Mohammed.

Muslim neighbor Pakistan, and the controversial status of its rule over Muslim-majority Kashmir. With the formation of the INC's policy towards Israel being a product of both historical circumstance and Nehru's perceptions and leadership, India was placed on an ideological path that would become more and more difficult to leave as time passed. The passage of time, combined with the eventual onset of certain historical events and subsequent reification of Israel as an enemy of the Islam across the Muslim world, meant a shift in India's official position on the Jewish state would require fundamental shift in majority political ideology and leadership of India. For Israel this desired shift would unfortunately not come for over three decades. While the potential for normalization did exist for some years after India's recognition of Israel in 1950, all successive attempts by the Israeli government to expedite the process of normalization were ultimately rebuffed by New Delhi, and the Suez Crisis in 1956 would effectively close the books on any new developments between the two nations for over a decade. From this point on, relations between the two fledgling nations would get progressively worse before they got better.

1956 to 1967: India and the Israeli Interwar Period

The international reaction to the 1956 Suez Crisis aided the Indian government in "substantiating" its position towards Israel. It would now be the British playing the frequent role of the go-between as far as India's relations with Israel were concerned. The official stance of India throughout this time period would remain supportive of the Palestinian cause, accomodationist to the sentiments of the Arab-Muslim world and, additionally, loyal to the policy directives of the newly created, Nona-Aligned Movement (NAM) established in 1961. As mentioned, the formation of this movement owes a great

debt to the cooperative efforts between Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser and Nehru himself, while providing this established partnership with another official platform for their shared views on Israel. Even with Nehru's passing in 1964 while still in office, his impact and influence in shaping India's official foreign policy towards Israel would remain cemented, in-tact and inflexible for the next 27 years.

Despite this grim circumstance, however, a clandestine security relationship began to develop during this time in what would later be revealed as the only tangible development in the relationship for over a period in excess of ten years. In its infancy Israel supplied India with ammunition and small arms during wars fought against China and Pakistan in the 1960s. Israel was one of the only countries to provide this sort of support to India at the time. From the 1960s onward, there exist several documented reports of intelligence and training cooperation between the two nations which included documented interaction between Israeli security specialists. (Kumaraswamy, 2010, p. 241)

This sort of behavior towards Israel, both the outwardly hostile and inwardly supportive, would characterize and provide the narrative for India's policy towards Israel for the next three-plus decades. It was not until this time that a domestic challenge to the INC's political monopoly would arise with a narrative that, among other things, was warmly conducive towards relations with a Jewish Israeli state vs those of Palestine and the Arab-Muslim world.

1967 to the Early 1980's: War in the Middle East and a Missed Opportunity for Change

In 1966 Nehru's only child, Indira Gandhi, was elected Prime Minister of India and with her would eventually come a seemingly renewed zeal aimed at courting the affections of the Arab-Muslim world, which ultimately would drive India's official policy towards Israel to a new low. The Indian government's Israel policy was carefully shaped by Nehru's legacy and his drive to maintain a secular character for India as it progressed into modernity, but the government would continue to be unable to stand by its conviction in this regard. Israel's conflict with the Muslim world (as many Muslim-majority states framed it) continued to worsen, as did India's situation over Kashmir and with Pakistan. Religious identity would be an incessant factor in politicized developments, both internal and external, that India's leaders were obliged to take into account when formulating policy despite their insistence that that was not the case.

Several incidents that took place during this time period reflected how considerations of religious identity directly or indirectly impacted India's foreign policy towards Israel. Regionally, India re-engaged in all-out conflict with its Muslim neighbor Pakistan. Just a year prior to Indira Gandhi's election as Prime Minister, India became embroiled in one of its last two major wars with Pakistan; the second took place during the fifth year of her governance. The wars of 1965 and 1971 again brought attention to the ongoing dispute that had plagued the relationship of these two countries since the Partition, the type of attention India did not seek to solicit from the Muslim world.

During the border conflict of 1965, Pakistan receive an immense amount of support from across the Muslim Middle East in the form of arms, money, equipment, fuel, strategic assistance and even moral backing. This wealth of material and moral

backing was given by all major players in the Muslim world (including Jordan, Turkey, Iran and Saudi Arabia) with the exception of Egypt which not only remained neutral, but who also worked to moderate the pro-Pakistani tone among its Arab-Muslim compatriots. (Blarel, 2014, p. 157-158) Again in similar fashion to 1962, Israel provided arms to India, but to no avail. At the end of the day India's leaders continued their historical pattern of disregarding the inordinate backing Pakistan continued to receive from the Muslim world and the lack of any symbolic and/or tangible reciprocal support from the these states, while publically and privately rejecting the notion any sort of Israeli assistance during the conflict.

In June 1967 the world was again up in arms over a war that had erupted between Israel and her Arab-Muslim neighbors. The clash of the Israeli military with Palestine's Arab-Muslim supporters, Egypt, Jordan and Syria, in the Six-Day War would leave an indelible mark on the way the situation was perceived by the outside world, especially India. This war, and some events that followed, provided India with an opportunity to reassert its solidarity with the Palestinian cause. However, there was also the implicit hope for some sort of positive reaction from the Muslim-world regarding India's conflict with Pakistan and the struggle over Kashmir. At times, the means by which India went about demonstrating this solidarity was not so much reflective of support for the Palestinian or Arab cause, but rather was indicative of its backing for what was perceived as, and frequently verbalized to be, a pan-Islamic issue by the world's Muslim-majority states. The war heightened India's historically persistent and well-documented fear of deterioration of its relations with the Arab (i.e. Muslim) world. Indian leaders felt they needed to demonstrate India's unity with that world but couldn't agree on how to do so.

In the initial aftermath of the Six-Day War there existed quite a bit of disagreement over India's official stance on the conflict. Disagreements existed in and among the public, the parliament and even the ruling Congress Party. However, this by no means equated to support for Israel in the matter but rather a call for a more balanced official view of the situation. (Kumaraswamy, 2010, p. 206-207) In any case, and in keeping with past patterns of behavior, India continued to pursue methods of courting Arab and Muslim approval.

A notable demonstration of the impact of religiously-related concerns with reference India's policy towards Israel can be viewed in two events that took place in 1969. In August of that year, a fire ripped through Islam's third holiest site, the al-Aqsa Mosque which is situated on the Temple Mount site of Jerusalem's Old City. This random act of property damage and defamation was perpetuated by a mentally unstable, Christian tourist from Australia. Despite these facts, however, the issue was vocalized and perpetuated as another instance of Israel's conflict with the Arab-Muslim world and as a direct transgression against Islam by the state of Israel itself. An opportunity was created here again for India to offset its conflict with Pakistan over Kashmir through a demonstration of solidarity with the Islamic world on the issue and so the Indian government joined the voices of Muslims everywhere in condemning the act within this religiously enveloped narrative.

Shortly after the incident, the Indian Foreign Ministry office in Delhi D.S. Kamtekar sent out notifications to the heads of various Indian missions around the world stating the following:

> We have received reports of Arab and other Muslim governments having initiated moves for Joint Action to persuade various Governments to lend active support for implementation of U.N. resolutions on Jerusalem with particular reference to protection for holy places of Islam in view of damage to AL AQSA MOSQUE (*sic)* by fire on August 21. You should associate yourself with any such approach to Government of your accreditation expressing our shock at outrage and emphasizing necessity to implement Security Council resolution on Jerusalem without delay. Statements by Indian political and religious leaders and newspaper comments being morse-cast. (Archives-NAI, Kamtekar, 1969)

The implication communicated here is that India's view and reaction to the al-Aqsa incident should be mutually consistent with the views which "Arab and Muslim governments" held, views which are undoubtedly religious in nature. Maharaj Krishna Rasgotra, a diplomat in residence at India's US embassy in Washington at the time, responded to Kamtekar affirming approval of the idea of affiliation with the previously described movement and noting his recent conveyance of such sentiments to the ambassadors of Kuwait, Malaysia and Morocco in the US. (Archives-NAI, Rasgotra, 1969a) India's cohesion with this religiously-grounded movement was further confirmed in Rasgotra's message to Tunisia's Ambassador to the US at the time, Rachid Driss:

> We understand that Governments of Muslim countries have initiated or intend to initiate moves for joint action to persuade various governments to lend their active support for implementation of the U.N. resolutions on Jerusalem with particular reference to protection pf the holy places of Islam in view of damage to the sacred Al Aqsa Mosque by fire on August 21. The government of India wish to be associated with such moves, and we shall appreciate if any approach that may be made by the concern Missions here to the Government of the United States of America in this connection to shock and concern of the Government and people of India may kindly be expressed at the outrage on the famous Al Aqsa Mosque. We should also like to join the concerned Missions in emphasizing the necessity to implement the Security Council resolutions on Jerusalem without delay with particular reference to the protection of the holy places of Islam. (Archives-NAI, Rasgotra, 1969)

According to Indian leadership, their view was adopted within the context of, "…the rights of Palestinians [not Muslims] and the preservation of holy and sacred places [generally speaking]" under Israeli control (Kumaraswamy, 2010, p. 210), there by publically refusing to admit the religious nature that the issue was overwhelmingly being presented as by the majority of both Arab and non-Arab Muslim states and populations. Even Indira Gandhi vehemently denied India's viewing the incident as an Islamic issue. However, although publically India attempted to frame this as a Palestinian issue, its private correspondence from to the Tunisian government and various Indian missions located in Arab lands, demonstrates otherwise. Further, the domestic response to the incident in India by large swaths of its Muslim population indicated that this incident was indeed being viewed through a Islamic lens, with rallies all over the country and a protest in Calcutta that saw an estimated ten million Muslims refrain from going to work for a day. (Kumaraswamy, 2010, p. 210) The rhetoric at many of these rallies was clear and newspapers heralded the Muslim masses as conveying the message that, "[Muslims] all over the world will shed the last drop of their blood to restore the sanctity to their holy places" (Kumaraswamy, 2010, P. 210).

The Indian government was aware of the strong reaction to the incident and, despite its efforts to frame the issue with a non-religious context, knew that action had to be taken on its part due primarily to its fears over Muslim concerns and outcries. Indian leaders demonstrated their agreement with the rhetoric of Muslims and Muslim state leaders who clearly identified this as an Israeli-Muslim issue and not an Israeli-Palestinian/Arab issue. This occurred despite India's definitive claim that religious matters played no role in its foreign policy and that this was an incident that was neither

perpetrated nor supported by the Israeli state or an Israeli citizen, let alone by Israel as an act of deliberate violence or desecration against the Islamic world and its sacred sites. This series of events then demonstrates that some of India's policy decisions were based on, or at least seriously informed by, concerns related to religious identity.

The al-Aqsa incident was the primary catalyst for a gathering of Muslim countries and entities in Rabat, Morocco, less than a month later. The Rabat Conference as it came to be known was significant, in part, for its creation of the pan-Islamic organization known as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). In the broadest sense of the word, the OIC exists as, "… the collective voice of the Muslim world and ensuring to safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony among various people of the world" (About OIC, 2005). From its very beginning, the OIC has given vociferous attention to the issue of Jerusalem as Israel's declared capital; what they collectively term *Al-Quds Al-Sharif* [31].

While India continued to press the notion that its position on the al-Aqsa incident was grounded in non-religious reasoning, their insistence on being a part of a conference, the very nature of which was best described as, "… an Islamic gathering in name, content, composition, and future course of action" (Kumaraswamy, 2010, p. 213), demonstrated otherwise. India would again be involved in policy stances and official positions directed at Israel due to its large domestic Muslim population and due to its conflict with Pakistan. These circumstances required India to attempt inclusion in this conference since it, "… could not leave an open space for Pakistan to gain the sympathy

[31] Arabic word that can be translated as 'Holy Jerusalem'

of Muslim states in West Asia" (Blarel, 2014, 179-180). India attempted to justify its secular credentials in the face of the matter by highlighting that it sent a non-state delegation comprised of Indian Muslims, thereby trying to pretend that attendance was not being official state business. In any case, the insistence on inclusion by the Indian government resulted in nothing less than what can be termed a "diplomatic fiasco" due to calls by several members, led by Pakistan, for non-inclusion on the Indian delegation in the conference. Moreover, India's "secular" West Asian policy come under heavy scrutiny. (Blarel, 2014, p. 181-182) The Rabat incident provides yet another clear example of how concerns over matters of religion were integrated in India's foreign policy towards Israel.

In 1971, India engaged in its most large-scale war with Pakistan, a conflict that would be significant mainly due to India's sound defeat of Pakistan and the subsequent independence of the new state of Bangladesh. When the war began at the end of March, India pledged its support for the independence movement in what was then East Pakistan. By the end of the year, India was supporting the Bangladeshi military on the ground and was engaged in open conflict with (West) Pakistan, a series of events that would ultimately lead to the swift defeat of (West) Pakistan and ensure the independence of newly named Bangladesh. Again, as in both of India's previous major conflicts in the 1960's, Israel provided invaluable support in terms of arms (Datta, 2013) and humanitarian support (Kumaraswamy, 2010, p. 215). Also again, just as was the case in their previous wars with Pakistan, much of the Arab-Muslim world remained steadfast in their support of Pakistan and in their criticism of India for meddling in what was viewed as a domestic Muslim issue within the country. While questions were raised regarding

India's political stance toward the Arab world, India's Congress-led government ultimately continued to court the approval of the Muslim world through its Middle East policy and to the further detriment of its relations with Israel.

What eventually came to be seen by India as a "re-agitation" of the Islamic world in its defeat of Pakistan was coupled with the fact that, on March 1, less than a month prior to the beginning of hostilities between East and West Pakistan, Indira Gandhi and India's Congress party completed one of their finest showings in the national elections to date. Their clear majority in the *Lok Sabha* equated to 350 out of 515 total seats, reducing opposition to a paltry sixteen members, and solidifying their power for the foreseeable future. (Wolpert, 2009, p. 407) The Congress Party's electoral sweep resulted in Indira Gandhi's power consolidation and, subsequently, a thorough re-institutionalization of Nehru's Israel policy. This combined with India's perceptive need for reinforcement of its Middle East policy that would conclusively, albeit in an implicit manner, demonstrate a pro-Muslim stance, both domestically and internationally.

A matter less related to conflict, but just as significant in India's calculations towards both Israel and the Arab-Muslim world, related to certain facets of India's economy. Beginning in the 1950's, immigrant labor began flowing into what was mainly the (Persian) Gulf region of the Middle East or, in other words, the Arab-Muslim countries of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. By 1973, the worldwide oil embargo pushed prices for oil way up and, subsequently, also the need for foreign workers due to the lack of indigenous workers present in these Gulf countries. (Naufal & Genc, 2012, p. 33) This was the beginning of the eventual mass migration of both skilled and unskilled labor from several Asian countries, especially India, into the

region in order to fill the need that now existed. Not only were critical labor opportunities being provided to India's burgeoning population, keeping larger and larger numbers of its citizens employed, but much of the money earned was, and continues to be, sent back to India in the form of remittances. The number of Indian workers in the Gulf began to gradually increase from this time onward; one estimate puts the number of Indian workers there at 260,000 by 1975. (Naufal & Genc, 2012, p. 45)

This circumstance of migratory labor added another layer to India's Israel policy and India fear of an unfavorable reaction from the Muslim-majority Gulf countries, in addition to the already existing concerns over trade opportunities and India's increasing need for energy. (Kumaraswamy, p. 173, 2010) India feared the possibility of falling out of favor with these Muslim Gulf nations should they perceive India's foreign policy as anti-Islamic, whether referring to India's relations with Pakistan or Israel. As India perceived it, falling out of favor with the Gulf States could mean country-wide energy shortages, the downsizing of trade with an important region and a devastating reduction of labor for hundreds of thousands of Indians and counting. In addition to factors already explained, India's heavy reliance on Muslim nations in these three sectors would add great impetus to the necessity of demonstrating a pro-Muslim, and therefore anti-Israel, foreign policy.

In October 1973, Israel and the Arab-Muslim world engaged in its most recent major war; it was known as the Yom Kippur War named after the Jewish holiday on which the conflict began. The Congress-laden government that dominated India at the time was all too eager to side with the attacking Arab forces citing the Indian government's historical solidarity with the "Arab" cause and blaming Israel for its refusal

to evacuate territories conquered from the Arabs during the war in 1967. (Kumaraswamy, 2010, p. 188) The Gandhi-led Congress government predictably used Israel's perilous circumstance in an effort to build on what it perceived as India's fading rapport with the Arab Muslim world.

As a result, the mid- to late-1970's brought a sharp decline in Indo-Israeli affairs. In 1975, India became the first non-Arab state to give recognition the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). The Indian government allowed the PLO to open an office in the national capital, New Delhi, and also in 1975 went on to lead the "Zionism equals racism" vote at the United Nations. In early autumn 1978, the signing of the Camp David Accords took place, establishing a formal peace between Israel and Egypt. In 1977, while Indo-Israeli relations were arguably at their worst, Gandhi was ousted from her leadership position for a period of three years, with the *Janata Party* coalition coming to power and some of the Indian government's views on Israel were briefly relaxed a bit. (Kumaraswamy, 2010, p. 217)

This relaxed political circumstance did not last long, despite India's brief respite from the rule of Indira Gandhi and despite Israel's normalization of relations with India's historically close ally Egypt, an Arab-Muslim nation and founding member of the Non-aligned Movement. The Indian policy towards Israel remained staunch and cold for several years and Indo-Israeli relations approached what would eventually come to be recognized as a new historical low. It would be then that the rise of a political force that would challenge Gandhi and the Congress party's essential monopoly on India's government dating all the way back to Partition would begin to emerge and,

subsequently, considerations of religious identity, for better or for worse, would bring progression in the Indian-Israeli relationship.

The Analytical Framing of Relations until the 1980's: The Inhibitive Nature of Religion

The historical processes of India outlined from pre-partition up until the early 1980's were underpinned by a constantly imminent concern with being perceived as anti-Muslim by India's large, domestic Muslim minority and the Islamic world at large, particularly the Muslim nations of the Middle East. The fear of the consequences of such a perception, from the political to the social and even the economic, ultimately equated, in part, to an anti-Israel foreign policy stance. As a result, when these historical processes are placed within the proper conceptual foundation, factors of religious identity be seen to have played an instrumental role as a force inhibiting India's potential for establishing diplomatic relations with Israel.

Revisiting the basic analytical framework of Katzenstein, Jepperson and Wendt (1996) to explain national security policy, we apply it here in a broader fashion to foreign policy as a whole (a notion inclusive of national security concerns) and are able to understand exactly how religious identity came to influence and become gradually integrated as a driving force in India's policy of non-relations with Israel. Ultimately, an analysis on India's foreign policy towards Israel over the designated timespan could accurately be described as coming full-circle as an exercise that sought to ensure the social, economic, military and political security of the nation-state.

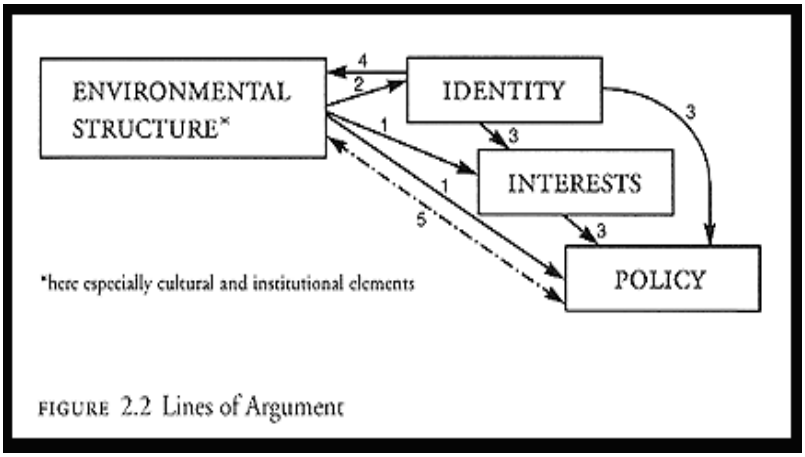


FIGURE 2.2 Lines of Argument

(Jepperson et al, 1996, p. 53)

Within the confines of this research, the schema above provides a visual representation of the mutually constituting and cyclical nature of the process involved in the formulation of India's foreign policy towards Israel. The sectors labeled "Environmental Structure" (i.e. normative structure), comprised mainly of cultural and institutional elements, and "Identity" both emerge gradually through a complex interaction of historical processes. They work to continually constitute one another in a simultaneous fashion, creating state "Interests", and ultimately effecting "Policy". "Policy" then, through its recursive nature, works to continually reproduce or reconstruct the "Environmental Structure" that underpins the narrative responsible for India's anti-Israel stance.

Operationalization here can become problematic in that there generally exists no temporal and/or tangible measuring point for the formulation of such processes, especially where identity and norms are concerned. However, in light of the fact that India's foreign policy towards Israel is the process under review, the analytical starting point commences with the date of independence of Israel, the second of the two nations

to become independent. The normative structure and identity present in India at the time of its independence were the results of the convergence of several key historical developments that played out in the decades prior to independence. These included the rise of religious nationalisms, the political cohesion and subsequent division that played out, the violent legacy of a Partition movement framed within a context of "Hindu vs. Muslim", and India's substantial remaining Muslim minority. Taking Israel's historical trajectory with Arab-Muslim nations (and by extension the Islamic world) over the same time period into consideration, and India's perceived need to maintain exceptionally positive relations with such nations, the resulting developments combined to institutionally solidify the normative anti-Israel stance of India's most important political leaders, while ensuring the role of religious identity in the process through India's efforts to display a pro-Muslim stance.

Through this method of understanding, India's "Interests" are seen to mirror the interests of the Arab-Muslim world which demonstrated a pro-Muslim stance that was absolute in nature with reference to concerns over a Jewish-majority state. This circumstance was, in the end, reflected in India's official "policy" towards Israel. Once established, the recursive nature of this policy continually worked to reproduce the original cultural and institutional structure that had such a significant effect on the state's normative stance regarding Israel. The various international and domestic developments described to have taken place throughout this time period provided opportunities which the Indian state capitalized on to reproduce this structure, continually shaping state identity, determining interests and, ultimately again, formulating policy.

Nehru's political legacy, carried on through his influence and by his family members, as well as the Congress Party's essential domination of India's political scene up until the 1980's, worked to ensure the necessary coherence and continuity in the process that determined India's Israel policy. While there did exist small pro-Israel contingents within India's political, social, and academic apparatus throughout this time period, their power and influence over the country's Israel policy relative to that of Congress Party, Nehru, and his legacy, had a negligible impact. As leaders of India's independent vision, Nehru, Gandhi and the INC came to be favored by and represent a large majority of India's populous. This allowed them to dominate key leadership positions across India's political realm heading into independence and thereafter. With these key leadership positions came the ability to shape the nation's identity and aided in ensuring certain normative cultural and institutional elements.

The accomplishments of the Congress Party and its leaders in achieving what was perceived to be a free, independent, and secular India, garnered the admiration and support of a majority of non-Muslim Indians, while their accomodationist stance towards its massive Muslim minority worked to secure nearly the entire base of the Muslim constituency at this time. Any sort of potential influence that India's pro-Israel contingent (i.e., mainly the Hindu Right) might have possessed heading into independence was shattered with Gandhi's assassination by a Hindu National extremist, further solidifying the fate of India's Israel policy. Furthermore, with the exception of information provided to Indian's Muslims by the rest of the Islamic world, most non-Muslim Indians presumably would have very little about the Jewish people and this small, newly created state of Israel. As such, a vast proportion of Indian societal actors at the sub-state level

would have been unknowing, uninterested or, at best, apathetic towards Israel. The only individuals influential in the discussion about Israel were those who vehemently opposed its actions or existence.

With a few exceptions then, the indifference or hostility toward Israel characteristic of much of Indian society up until this time was reflected not only in the lack of state-to-state level political engagement but also in the lack of cultural exchange and in the essentially non-existent economic relationship. India's government dominated the narrative on Israel within Indian society and, combined with a strong voice of support from India's Muslim minority and the essential non-existence of knowledge or even interest in the Israel issue on the part of the vast majority of India's non-Muslims in the Israel issue, meant that neither a state nor a sub-state influence was present that would be able to pressure India's Israel policy into a shift. The historical events and circumstances necessary to effectively alter the identity or normative structure of India in Israel's favor did not begin to exist, I argue, until approximately the early 1980's. At that time, a state-level shift occurred within India's domestic political demographic that was brought on by certain internal and external events. This shift would lay the foundations for a degree or reconstruction in India's "identity" and "environmental structure" thereby creating a path for normalization of relations with Israel at the state-level as well as creating an outlet for relations to develop between innumerable levels at the sub-state level.

THE RISE OF THE BJP AND THE CASE FOR RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL

This chapter aims at highlighting the dynamic of India's foreign policy towards Israel from the 1980s to 1992 in light of a perceived political and societal threats posed by India's large, minority Muslim population. It was during the 1980s that India's build up towards normalization with Israel began. The discussion here focuses on several factors involving Islam, religion-based national politics, and security that influenced this build-up that would eventually culminate in full diplomatic relations with Israel.

From the time of the partition movement in 1947, as I have argued above, it was the Muslim "factor" that was the main catalyst for India's lack of normalized relations with Israel. India's parliamentary parties needed to appeal to a domestic Muslim constituency. In addition, India used its support for the Palestinian struggle as a principal means to establish its pro-Arab credentials and reinforce its desire for a progressive Middle East policy. (Kumaraswamy, 2010, p. 14)

By the late 1970s the seeds for a shift in India's foreign policy towards Israel had arguably been planted. Internal and external developments taking place in the Islamic world played a very important part in this shift, but it is the role of Hindu identity, specifically in the realms of domestic politics and society, that played an instrumental role in bringing this shift to fruition. Islam's perceived role as a threat to India's domestic and regional sphere was internalized by Hindu nationalist groups during this roughly decade-long prelude to India's normalization of relations with Israel. The rise and influence of the "neo"-*Hindutva* (the people of the Hindu land) movement, initialized

first in 1951 by the *Bharatiya Jana Sangh* party and eventually lead by the *Bharatiya Janata Party* (BJP) by 1980, coincide with the process of normalized relations with Israel and played a critical role in the facilitation of eventual normalization. This is the point at which the BJP's socially constructed threat that Islam poses towards a Hindu Indian society becomes key. This is a threat construction brought about by historical factors relating to: 1.) the formation of nationalist identities that resulted from the historical legacy of the partition movement; 2.) the rise of a counter Muslim nationalist movement that would ultimately result in the establishment of the sovereign of Pakistan; 3.) the on-going Indo-Pak conflict, highlighted by the Kashmir issue; 4.) the concern over domestic Islamist movements in Indian politics and society, and since the late 1990s and early 2000s; and 5.) the threat from cross-border terror perpetrated primarily by radical, Muslim fundamentalists backed by the government of Pakistan in many cases. The BJP of today endorses similar, albeit a noticeably toned down, rhetoric highlighting the Islamic threat as it did over two decades ago during its rise to prominence in India. The official website of the BJP states:

> We must realize that we have a problem on hand in India, the problem of a stagnant and conservative Islamic society. The secular leaders and parties tell us that the problem on our hands is not Islamic fundamentalism, but the Hindutva ideology. This view is good only for gathering votes. The fact is that we have a fundamentalist Muslim problem, and our problem cannot be divorced from the international Islamic politics and the world's reaction to it. (Gurumurthy, 2009)

It is within this context, then, that this chapter works to assess the degree to which the rise of the *Hindutva* movement from the 1980's onward, embodied politically in the BJP and rhetorically in its narrative based on the Islamic threat, can be correlated with the normalization of relations with Israel.

A detailed discussion on the rise of the BJP starting in the 1980's up until normalization, and its role in the normalization, will be the central focus of this chapter. The argument for this role is built on the explanation given earlier for the foundations of Hindu nationalism and the genesis of the *Hindutva* movement and demonstrated through the integration of my previously described theoretical framework emphasizing the impact of identity formation and identity perception within this process. Special attention will first be given to Savarkar's writings regarding Jews and Israel, and the chronicled rise of the BJP will then segue into an initial discussion about the influence of the RSS and development of the *Vishwa Hindu Parishad* (VHP), which was established in the mid-1960's.

Prior to the analysis outlining the BJP's development and evolution, however, a comparative historical timeline of India's and Israel's military conflicts with factions of the Islamic world since their respective independence movements will be necessary. This colloquy is included in an effort to exhibit a bridge of connection via a "shared" history that can be socially constructed between the civilizational states of a Hindu India and Jewish Israel. This "shared" history of conflict with a perceived common enemy legitimates the security cooperation of these two ancient civilizations, a Hindu India and a Jewish Israel. The result was the creation of a circumstance of identity construction through analogies of conflict. The manner that these histories have been perceived and depicted, then, will later be demonstrated to have great significance for the construction of the base narrative initially used in linking the two nations and maintaining this link in the years that would follow.

The tumultuous history portrayed between Hindus and Muslims prior to and after the partition movement would provide Hindu nationalist groups with the identity that drives their agenda. The BJP has continued to perpetuate the fallout of this history while constructing an identity defined until recent years by anti-Islamic sentiment and mobilization. The BJP's rise to power in India's political system closely parallels the normalization process with Israel and it this rise to power which I argue is a primary factor, not only in the normalization which officially took place in 1992, but also the connection and cooperation between India and Israel today.

With this combined analysis, I set the context for the rise of Hindu nationalism that began in the 1980's highlighted by the formation of the BJP, and the subsequent effects of this rise on India's relations with Israel. It is here we see the formation of a particular Hindu identity that is largely defined in contrast to an Islamic identity and society which is believed to pose an inherent and fundamental threat to India's indigenous Hindu culture and civilization. It is an identity that, I argue, provides the primary impetus from which the normalization process began.

The Histories of Conflict

India and Pakistan: Nations Divided

The late 1940s brought the beginnings of monumental change in both India and what would become Israel, the effects of which we see playing out even in the present day. During this time period India became independent from British rule immediately after the partition of Pakistan from the land that would be India (1947), the Israeli State

became independent, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict started (1948). Common characteristics of both independence movements included disputes over territorial claims, and the clash of identities and ideals over some combination of contrasting religious, ethnic, and nationalistic fervor.

Creation of the new sovereignties of India and Israel brought to a head serious issues with serious implications. In India, the partition of Pakistan that preceded Indian independence by only minutes required both the Indian government as well as its people to immediately recognize the sovereignty of this newly created state carved from what was traditionally part of the ancient Hindu land of *Bharat*. Israel's sovereignty began from a different starting point in that it was created from the former territory of Palestine with no enforced obligation placed upon it to recognize the sovereignty of this former territory's people once independence was achieved. Despite the opposing starting points of each country in their respective struggles, I believe that India and Israel have demonstrated similarities in the processes and developments that have shaped their own conflictual relationships with neighbors. Patterns of war, violence, struggle and even reconciliation at times, have characterized the on-going conflicts in which Israel and India are currently involved. Of the seemingly innumerable minor and major conflicts and resolutions have taken place during this sixty tear timeframe, I have highlighted a select few that have had the greatest impact on the relationship Israel and India have had with their neighbors up until the present-day.

The Indo-Pak conflict endures today because of four main areas of concern, many of which overlap. These include a deep ideological divide between the two nations, a history of military and violent conflict, the Kashmir struggle, and cross-border terrorism.

The most recognizable catalyst for the continuing conflict between India and Pakistan is their history of military engagement and violence towards one another. The best way to categorize this catalyst is as a "spatial rivalry" in which, according to Misra, the states engage in conflict over territory. (2010, p.13) Nowhere has this spatial rivalry been more apparent than in the northwest Indian frontier state of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K).

The first confrontation over this piece of land occurred within months of the date of partition and is known as the Indo-Pakistani War of 1947 or the First Kashmiri War. J&K was a princely state at the time of partition and was ruled by Maharaja Hari Singh who initially avoided accession to either India or Pakistan as was required according to terms of partition. However, Pakistan's alleged involvement in the Poonch Revolt prompted Singh to appeal to Delhi for military assistance in order to combat the Pakistani-backed insurgents attempting to overthrow his rule. (McLeod, 2008, 74-75) This appeal ultimately resulted in the accession of J&K, where over two-thirds of the people are Muslim, to India. Pakistan refused to recognize the accession of J&K because its rulers believed Singh no longer possessed power to make such a decision since the revolt had overthrown his government. At this point in time Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru airlifted India troops into Kashmir, beginning a war which would last until 1948 at which point a political decision was made to cease fire via the UN. (McLeod, 2008, p. 75-76)

The mid-1960s brought a focus to the Kutch-Sind border issue, and with it, India and Pakistan's second major military confrontation, the Indo-Pakistani War of 1965. The roots of this conflict had their origin about a decade earlier, as Ashutush Misra explains:

> The dispute emerged in April 1956; when Pakistan put forth its claim to 3,500 square miles above the Twenty-forth Parallel, a claim that led to the initial exchange of arguments and counter arguments between India and Pakistan with regard to the location of the boundary in that sector. (2010, p. 95)

The issue of the India's Western border with Pakistan involved five identifiable territorial disputes in the years preceding the war in 1965. Surprisingly, four of these disputes, Chak Ladheke, Theh Sarja Marja, Husainiwala, and Suleimanki headworks, were all resolved on the negotiating table prior to the war. (Misra, 2010, p.96) This demonstrated the existent ability, and even the future possibility, of the two respective factions involved in the Indian-Pakistani conflict to work with one another to a degree and concede to mutually agreed upon reconciliatory measures, absent the use of force or military measure. The fifth dispute, that over the Kutch-Sind territory, however, was not readily resolved.

A series of claims in 1965 about the movement of military personnel in the Rann of Kutch region of what is now Pakistan's Sindh province, ignited a series of violent clashes between Indian and Pakistani forces. (McLeod, 2008, p. 80-81) On June 30th of the same year the Kutch agreement was signed and then approved by India's Congress Parliamentary Party (the majority party in Parliament) three days later putting an end to this dispute and demonstrating once again the ability of both sides to negotiate successfully. (Misra, 2010, p. 97) The words of Pakistan's Foreign Minister at the time of this signing were widely quoted, "Rann of Kutch was not a dispute per se. It forms a part of a much bigger issue. The heart of the Indo-Pakistani dispute lies in the Srinagar

Valley"[32] (Misra, 2010, p. 81). Sure enough, only a month and half later, Pakistani forces implemented a covert attack on Indian forces in J&K known as Operation Gibraltar that led to violent clashes over the next month which were eventually halted, ending in another stalemate by a UN brokered cease-fire. (McLeod, 2008, p. 85-87)

The war in East Pakistan[33] of 1971 was characterized by notable violence and blood-shed despite only lasting thirteen days. Initially a Pakistani civil war, India was drawn into the war for two reasons:

> The flight of an estimated 9.2 million refugees from East Pakistan into Indian Bengal and Assam posed a serious threat to political stability in India. The refugee crisis also presented India with an opportunity to act against East Pakistan and undermine the philosophical justification for Pakistan by demonstrating that the bond of Islam was not sufficient justification for the existence of Pakistan. Such an undermining of two-nation theory in the East would also damage Pakistani claims to Kashmir because the Pakistani claim to Kashmir is also based on this ideology. (McLeod, 2008, p. 108)

West Pakistan ultimately lost this war and East Pakistan seceded and became the sovereign nation of Bangladesh. Again, this example highlights the notion of territory being at the center of the Indian-Pakistani conflict while reminding us of the religious element of the conflict and redirecting the focus to the on-going dispute over Kashmir.

The last two decades of the conflict in Kashmir can be characterized by the Kargil Operation (War) of 1999 and since that year, the threat of renewed military confrontation initiated by cross-border terrorism. The Kargil War is the last overt military confrontation

[32] Srinagar is the summer capital and largest city by area and population in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The Valley that takes its name has been at the center of much of the fighting this conflict has seen historically.

[33] Modern-day Bangladesh

between the two powers and is significant due to the fact that both nations had attained nuclear capabilities by the time this dispute commenced, raising the stakes of arm conflict considerably and causing Indian-Pakistani relations to regress to a new low. (Misra, 2010, p.37)

In December 2001, a terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament by Pakistani militants led to complete cutting of diplomatic, economic, political and commercial ties with Pakistan by India's government. The ties were not restored until 2003, after several peace initiatives on India's part that were in turn reciprocated by Pakistan. (Misra, 2010, p. 37-38) In the years following, Pakistani-based extremists have been responsible for repeated terror attacks throughout India, including in downtown Mumbai where two of the more infamous attacks took place in 2006 when bomb blasts went off on a train and, as mentioned in the introductory chapter, in 2008 with the attacks on the Hotel Taj Mahal Palace and the Nariman House.

These are just a few of the more notable instances of non-state inflicted conflict that have taken place since India's last war with its historical neighboring enemy. Although Indian-Pakistani relations seem to be on the upswing, their border still remains one of the most dangerous in the world and its progress of relations between them is continually being held back because of terrorist undertakings such those described above as well as the continued destabilization of the domestic security situation in Pakistan.

The Israeli-Palestinian Dilemma

From the moment the state of Israel was established on May 14 1948, a violent and bloody conflict with its Palestinian neighbors has permeated its borders and its

people. Motivated by the partition plan implemented by the UN which gave Israel its independence and recognized its sovereignty, Arab forces wasted no time in striking their now sworn enemy. Their dissatisfaction with the partition comes primarily with regard to territory allocation and the demographics of that territory which awarded a smaller population of Jews a greater percentage of the land compared to their Arab rivals. On May 15, 1948, five of Israel's Arab neighbors sent military forces into the newly born independent state resulting in a thirteen month war that ended in Arab defeat and the proposed Arab state of Palestine losing a considerable amount of land. This dispute ended with an armistice and Israel controlling nearly three quarters of Palestine, but both sides refused to sign a peace treaty or responsibly deal with more than 300,000 refugees who were displaced because of the war. (McDowall, 1989, p. 28)

The loss of territory as well as the absence of formal peace treaties have become aspects all too characteristic in the on-going struggle between these two factions. After Israel's War of Independence of 1948-49, the Rhodes Armistice was put into place to give some measure of assurance of the cessation of hostilities; however, tensions between Israel and the Arab world only proceeded to swell, and conditions in the region continued to deteriorate. In the years leading up to the Suez Crisis of 1956 the situation between the two sides would be absent of any major military engagements, but the struggle persisted in other forms. Conflict during this time period was characterized by the onset of cross-border raiding by various individuals and groups of Palestinian refugees from Jordan and the resulting retaliatory responses from the Israeli military. There were also several recorded instances of military-to-military engagements on the Syrian border and incidents

by Egyptian "infiltrators" on Israel's border with Gaza and the Sinai. (Bickerton & Klausner, 2002, p. 117-120)

The belligerent cross-border activity and the steady onslaught of raiding that had been occurring since the end of Israel's first war were still ongoing come the eve of the 1956 Suez Crisis (aka the Sinai War). In July of 1956, Egypt's recently established president, Gamal Nasser, announced the nationalization of the previously foreign-controlled Suez Canal. With this move Egypt further inhibited Israel's already limited access to key maritime trading routes within the Gulf of Aqaba down through Straits of Tiran. Aggravation over the loss, combined with a keen desire to deal with the several years of cross-border raiding and violence on their Egyptian border, provided the Israelis with a pretext for a preemptive strike. (Bickerton & Klausner, 2002, p. 127-129; Bregman, 2000, p. 37)

By late autumn, and in collaboration with French and British forces, the Israelis attacked Egyptian forces in the Sinai Peninsula. In little more than three months, Israel had achieved outright victory and occupation in the Sinai at a cost of 172 killed and 700 wounded to Egypt's thousands killed, with many more wounded and over 5,500 POW's taken. (Bregman, 2000, p. 39) As a result, and in part due to a newly established UN force in the Sinai and Gaza strip, Israel's previously described maritime issues were resolved and the cross-border raiding by Egyptian and Palestinian factions along their southwest borders ceased. (Bickerton & Klausner, 2002, p. 131-132)

During the slightly more than a decade that separated the war in the Sinai from Israel's next major confrontation with the Arab world, the region was relatively free from physical conflict until approximately the mid-1960's when two key developments got

underway that would have implications for the next major war. The first was the institution of Ba'ath military rule in Syria beginning in 1963. The Ba'athist leaders brought with them a highly radical, anti-Israeli vision to Syria which criticized the rest of the Arab world for being too passive towards Israel and issued an open call for Palestinian groups to engage in guerilla war against the Jewish state. (Bickerton & Klausner, 2002, p. 140) The second development was the establishment in 1964 of the Palestine Liberation Organization, which led to formation of the Palestinian Liberation Army (PLA) for the purpose of "…liberating Palestine from its colonialist oppressors, the Zionists…", with "armed struggle" being the primary method for achieving this aim. (Bickerton & Klausner, 2002, p. 145) This organization was formed under the auspice of Yasser Arafat and the Fatah political party, and for decades thereafter would spearhead the nationalist driven effort to destroy the Zionist entity while seeking to create a Palestinian state. Subsequently, raids and guerilla strikes were incurred on Israeli territory leading up to the beginning of the Six Day war of 1967. (Ciment, 1997, p. 40-41)

This war was a major strategic turning point in the nature of the military conflict between Israel and its Arab neighbors, who again attacked and were ultimately defeated by Israel in a swift and dominant fashion. As a result of Israel's decisive military victory, territory again exchanged hands with Israel taking control of large swaths including the Sinai Peninsula (Egypt), the West Bank (Jordan), East Jerusalem (Jordan), and Golan Heights (Syria). (McDowall, 1989, 29-30)

The Six-Day War increased tensions between Israeli and the Arab powers, inducing an ever hardening attitude toward one another that would ultimately only continue to progress. Shortly after the culmination of the Six Day conflict, several Arab

states involved in it adopted what was known as the Khartoum Resolution which was based on four guiding principles: no peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel, no negotiations with Israel, and action to safeguard the Palestinian people's right to their homeland. (McDowall, 1989, p. 30) The situation was again exacerbated in October 1973 when Syria and Egypt launched a surprise attack on the Jewish homeland during the holiest day of the Jewish year in what would come to be known as the Yom Kippur War. This attack put Israel under a serious threat which only came under control with assistance from the United States. (McDowall, 1989, 30-31) Israel would soon end this military onslaught, dealing another serious blow to the confidence of its Arab neighbors. Because this war took place on Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish calendar, the attack sent a symbolic message to Israel and was a response by Arab forces that was in large part due to Israel's territorial gains from the war in 1967. The end of the Yom Kippur War brought a familiar scenario with a cease-fire being brokered and implemented largely due to the efforts of the United States and the UN Security Council and with Israel increasing its hold on a Golan Heights territory that was once a part of Syria. (McDowall, 1989, p. 31) Four years after the culmination of the Yom Kippur War, there was a turn of the tides in the Arab world with regard to the attitude towards Israel.

In 1977, Egypt's president Anwar El Sadat signed the Camp David accords in an official peace treaty that was mediated by American officials and which gave all Egyptian territory occupied by Israel back to Egypt, normalizing relations between the two in the process. (McDowall, 1989, p. 34) This was the first of Israel's Palestine supporting neighbors to create and agree upon normalization of relations with the Jewish

state and added to the already increasing trend of the PLO and the Palestinians of taking control of their fight against Israel.

By 1987 other issues, particularly the Iran-Iraq War, seemed to be garnering as much attention from the Arab League as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The people of occupied Palestine, feeling very frustrated and vulnerable at this point, decided to take matters into their own hands and began what is termed the First Intifada. This Intifada would last for nearly five years and was characterized by continual riots, mass demonstrations, and the throwing of stones and Molotov cocktails by the Palestinians. (Ciment, 1997, p. 53-55) The Oslo Accords, signed in the summer of 1993, was a step in the right direction between Israel and Palestine, but once again left the parties in an ambiguous dilemma as Ciment notes when he writes:

> By late summer of 1993, those negotiations [between Yitzhak Rabin and the PLO in Oslo] led to Israel's recognition of the PLO, as well as the Declaration of Principles (DOP), also known as the Oslo Accords. Ratified with a historic handshake between Rabin and Arafat on the White House lawn on September 13, the DOP was neither a detailed plan for Israeli withdrawal from Occupied Territories nor a declaration of Palestinian independence. Instead, it was merely a blueprint for further negotiations that would settle the status of the Palestinians and Palestine. (1997, p. 59)

The inability of the two factions to come to terms on the issue of Palestine in the years following the Oslo Accords led to the eruption of a violent Second Intifada which began in 2000 and lasted over 5 years going into 2006.

Cross-border terrorism in Israel, a common occurrence during the Second Intifada, has come to define the most serious threat facing the Israeli population over the last two decades with dozens and dozens of notable incidents. These include the terror bombings that took place during February 1996 in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem killing 58

individuals and in March of 2002 when a total 127 Israelis lost their lives due to Palestinian terror attacks. (Wasserstein, 2003, p. 189-90) Complicating the issue further is the fact that two separate governments now control the divided Palestinian territories with the moderate Fatah in the West Bank and Hamas, which observes the guidelines of the 1967 Khartoum Resolutions[34] and which the US and the EU have declared a terrorist group, governing the Gaza strip. The political division of the Palestinian authority and the hardline, terroristic approach that Hamas continues to implement towards Israel have added another obstacle to the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and further strains hope for a sustainable peace-agreement in the near future.

Histories of Conflict as Bridges of Connection

This brief, yet thorough summary of the major conflicts experienced by India and Israel since their near respective dates of independence provides a historical foundation on which the two countries have found common ground. There are a few key areas that can be highlighted within these histories of conflict that provide points of connection in the attempt to identify India and Israel with one another in such a manner. To borrow terminology coined in Samuel Huntington's highly scrutinized *Clash of Civilizations* theory (1996), India and

[34] As it relates the discussion on Israel and Hamas, the most critical clause found within the Khartoum Resolution stipulates the following on line 3: "The Arab Heads of State have agreed to unite their political efforts at the international and diplomatic level to eliminate the effects of the aggression and to ensure the withdrawal of the aggressive Israeli forces from the Arab lands which have been occupied since the aggression of June 5. This will be done within the framework of the main principles by which the Arab States abide, namely, no peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel, no negotiations with it, and insistence on the rights of the Palestinian people in their own country" ("Khartoum resolution", 1967). For a brief commentary on the historical context of the particular timeframe when the Khartoum Resolution took place, see Ahmar (2001, p. 144-145)

Israel both engaged in their conflicts across three "fault-lines" of contact: territory, national identity and religion.

Territorial dispute has been a consistent feature of the continuing conflict each country is involved in with neighbors. Kashmir was demonstrated to be the key conflictual issue between India and Pakistan and remains as such even until the present-day. Additionally, other territorial issues between the two nations, such as the Rann of Kutch dispute, have also historically been used as a legitimizing pretext for perpetuating conflict on both sides. In Israel exchange and control of territory have also been central themes in the history of its conflict with Palestine. Hamas refuses to recognize Israel's right to exist, therefore denying Israel's claim to any territory at all in the region. Fatah, as well as several other Arab factions, have demonstrated their desire for Palestine to be granted a state based on the pre-1967 borders, a notion that would require Israel to give up territory in Golan Heights and East Jerusalem. Territory is a serious point of contention in both conflicts due to issues involving security of borders, the ability to adequately defend the state in the event of a military attack, and because of the limited, but shared, water resources that these contended lands possess.

The next two "fault-lines", national identity and religion, are argued throughout this writing to converge in the cases of India and Israel, thereby creating the unique existence of religion-based nationalist identities in each case. For purposes of this section, however, I will briefly attempt to deal with them in separate fashion.

The Indo-Pak conflict, as well as Israel's conflict with its Arab neighbors, have always been inclusive of elements of national identity. The conflicts in each case have been fought between clearly defined nations (although not necessarily nation-states), over

what are perceived to be the borderlines separating these nations and the populations that identify with and are a part of each. Despite the role I argue that religion has played in underpinning the national identities of the state factions involved in these conflicts, classical elements of nationhood have always been very much a part of these conflict narratives. These include disputes over territory, issues of sovereignty, and notions of common history, language and culture, all of which have been used as mechanisms of separation.

Religion, to one degree or another, has been a visible point of contention throughout the history of conflict for both countries. In the case of India and Pakistan, conflict generated over religiously-related issues was present from the moment of partition and even prior. Here, religion was used as the primary method for dividing an independent Pakistan from an independent India, separating Muslim-majority populations from the Hindu-majority areas in both the far east and far west of the mighty sub-continent. In Israel's case, religious divide also played a key role in the initial partition plan with Palestine in 1948. This is a narrative of conflict that has historically been viewed along Israeli-Arab national lines, however, the development of Islamist groups like Hamas and Hezbollah regionally, and the global rise of religiously-inspired terrorism to the forefront of international security concerns over the last twenty-odd years, has reframed this narrative along Jewish-Muslim lines.

It is therefore from connections such as these that a political and social narrative of "shared" history can and has been built on, particularly by the BJP and other Hindu nationalist groups in India.

The Formation of the BJP and Normalization of Indo-Israeli Relations

This section works to demonstrate how the growing influence of the BJP's agenda on the domestic political sphere correlates with the shift in India's Israel policy and how it parallels the process of gradual normalization with Israel. While there always had been a small contingent of Israel supporters within India's political arena for the more than three and a half decades prior to the BJP's establishment, the INC's dominance of this arena left little chance for any deviation from their policy path. In referring to India's political climate of the mid-1960's, Blarel notes:

> The Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS), the Swatantra Party, and the Praja Socialist Party (PSP) were traditional supporters of the establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel, but these parties lacked the political access and leverage to press the INC-dominated government to implement change. (2014, p. 159)

Given the absence of domestic power and influence on the part of pro-Israeli advocates, the sentiment of such parties and politicians on the Israeli issue could easily be pushed aside or even outright disregarded. For there to be any change in India's Israel policy there would have to be a notable shift in the demographic of India's political establishment whereby more traditionally Israel-friendly parties and politicians would gain power.

This prevailing circumstance throughout India's political history, therefore, makes the timing and impact of Hindu Nationalism's (i.e. the BJP's) arrival on the scene seemingly significant with regard to India's relations with Israel. The genesis of Hindu Nationalism, and the eventuality of its official role in the political arena, was documented

in the preceding evolution from Savarkar's conceptualization of *Hindutva*, to the formation of non-governmental organizations like the RSS and the VHP, and finally to the eve of its establishment as a meaningfully functional political party within India's parliamentary system beginning approximately with the onset of the 1980s. The foundation of the BJP's ideology, the platform of their political movement, and their take on Israel, ultimately requires attention to be redirected back to Savarkar's *Hindutva* concept and his accompanying writings. As shown above, Savarkar's *Hindutva* writings are the ideological centerpiece of Hindu Nationalism and, more specifically, of the BJP. One of the most notable components of Savarkar's *Hindutva* writings observed in BJP rhetoric and its constituent's actions in their rise during this time period, is the development of a threat perception of the Islamic "Other". This stands out as a key idea that drove the acceptance and support of BJP political campaigns beginning in the mid-1980s. Further, Savarkar's arguments work to implicitly connect Hindus, politicized Hinduism, and ultimately India's indigenous Hindu civilization, to Israel and its indigenous Judaic civilization via the social construction of a narrative depicting the two as having "shared" histories as modern nation-states uniquely based in two general premises: 1.) they are victims threatened by the same enemy; and 2.) they are ancient, religion-based civilizations.

The RSS: From Vishwa Hindu Parishad to Bharatiya Janata Party

The relationship of the RSS and the VHP with the BJP has been a controversial one since the late 1970's when the BJP's immediate predecessor, the *Jan* Sangh, was

initially founded. The nature of this relationship is given a succinct description by Van Der Veer who notes:

> The political success of the BJP depends squarely on its alliance with two Hindu nationalist movements the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), an organization of religious leaders, and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a militant youth organization. This alliance allows it to use religious discourse and mass-scale ritual action in the political arena. (1994, p. 1)

It is important to keep in mind that the early- to mid-1990's in India was a tumultuous time for politics within the country and the potential for communal violence between Hindu and Muslim factions had been exacerbated by the 1992 destruction of the Babri Masjid incident (detailed in the next section). Nevertheless, while the nature of this relationship and the domestic political atmosphere in India have undoubtedly transformed since then, the beginnings of this relationship remain the same and the influence still markedly apparent in the modern day.

The VHP was established in 1964 on the birthday of the Hindu god Lord Krishna and attended by over one hundred and fifty religious leaders, and a man named Shivram Shankar Apte, an RSS worker, was appointed the first general secretary of the organization. The basic mission of the institution set out goals similar to many of its predecessor Hindu nationalist organizations, including the strengthening and consolidation of Hindu society, the fostering and dissemination of Hindu life values, and establishment of schools, hospitals, etc. to serve "downtrodden [Hindu] brethren" of the world.[35] (Van der Veer, 1994, p. 130) As an institution designed, in part, to link the RSS with Hinduism's religious establishment, the religious leaders that much of VHP's

[35] For a complete list of the VHP's founding objectives refer to van der Veer (1994, p. 130)

membership was composed of could frequently be seen taking on positions as "spiritual advisors" to high-ranking politicians in a process that aimed to create a "nationalized" form of modern Hinduism through populist discourse and high-profile appearances. (Hansen, 1999, p. 102)

The extent of the VHP's strategic relationship with the RSS would become much more noticeable given the RSS's role in the VHP's staging of political rituals beginning in the 1980's, with some even arguing that the initiative to found the organization was put forth by Golwalkar himself as a means to essentially involve Hindu religious leaders in the mission of the RSS. (Van der Veer, 1994, p. 131) The history, genesis, and mission of the RSS since its inception, one of the best ways to summarize its relationship with the politicized Hindu nationalism that arose by the 1980s, specifically the BJP, would be with the Sanskrit term *rajguru*[36]. The term, which roughly translates as the "spiritual teacher of a ruler", denotes the RSS (the *rajguru*) as a sort of divinely-imbued mentor or advisor for the BJP (the ruler or ruling party) whose subsequent governance and policies could then be viewed as emanating from this divinely-inspired influence. In 1979, just a few years prior to the BJP's initial ascent to the primary stage of Indian politics, then BJP member of the *Rajya Sabha* explained this notion:

> Fact is that RSS is not political. It is, if I may coin a word, meta-political. It is not interested in power as such but it is very much interested in the factors and forces that go into the making of a country's politics. It is interested in the people and their character, in our culture and its integrity, in the country and its unity and strength, but stands above and beyond politics, like some sort of institutional *Rajguru*. (Goyal, 2000, p. 2)[37]

[36] The *rajguru* is a Hindu mythological concept whose nearest modern, functional equivalent could be a "think-tank" with divine backing. The *rajguru* worked to advise rulers on all matters of governance, but who was beyond reproach due to their divinely-sanctioned status as, "A force standing between earth and heaven, negotiating with heavenly beings the fate of denizens of a particular territory" (Goyal, 2000, p. 1)

While not a political party or an official political party itself, the role of the RSS and its associate organizations within the BJP and India politics generally speaking, can more clearly be defined in light of the seemingly ambiguous nature they have emitted for much of the time they have existed.

It is from these beginnings, ideologically rooted in Savarkar's idea of *Hindutva* and grown through organizations such as the RSS and the VHP, that the identity wielded by Hindu nationalist groups would have its foundations. Cultivated by the events prior to and following partition, these foundations would create an environment that would eventually lead to the blossoming of the BJP in the mid-1980s.

The BJP and its Establishment

In the aftermath of the 1980 national elections in India, the BJP was formed from the *Jan Sangh* contingent which left the coalition *Janata* party and adopted a moderate political stance based on Gandhian socialism for the first six years of its existence. (Sahu, 2002, p. 254-255) Founded in large part through the efforts of Hindu Mahasabha president Shyama Prasad Mookerjee in 1951 as a means for the RSS to formally enter politics, the *Bharatiya Jana Sangh* was the forerunner of the BJP. In 1977, in an effort to ally with other parties and defeat the INC, the *Jana Sangh* took to adopting a more moderate line, but remained closely associated with the more militant-minded RSS. While this coalition did manage push Indira Gandhi and the INC out political leadership in India's lower-parliament for a time, the alliance lasted for little more than three years

[37] Note that this quote originally comes from an April 8, 1979 issue of the *Organizer*, a weekly magazine published by the RSS.

and the *Jana Sangh's* close association with the RSS proved detrimental to its membership in the *Janata* party. (Jaffrelot, 2011, p. 47-48)

The subsequent break led to the *Jana Sangh's* formation of a new party. From its founding in April of 1980 until approximately 1984, the BJP was prone to highlighting its secular credentials in an effort to demonstrate itself as an alternative to the Congress party and its leader Indira Gandhi, while simultaneously using this as a strategy for initially distancing itself from the RSS given the history of controversy that surrounded this organization. (Andersen and Damle, 1987, p. 143) It is no surprise then that the BJP's overall impact and influence on Indian policy, including that towards Israel, remained marginal at this time.

The dismal results of the 1984 election for the BJP, however, prompted a shift in the BJP strategy. In 1986, the highly motivational and, eventually controversial, Lal Krishna (L.K.) Advani was elected as BJP president. His advocacy for close BJP-RSS relations was well regarded and in one of his first marquee presidential speeches he called for political action to abolish Kashmir's special status, while denouncing existing legislation put in place by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's Congress party that called for application of traditional Islamic law in certain civil cases within India's Muslim community (Andersen and Damle, 1987, p. 236). A multitude of domestic political and social issues taking place in India beginning in the late 1970's, and continuing up and through the early 1990's, would be further cited as justification for the shift in BJP's agenda during these years. For example, the conversion of over one thousand Scheduled caste Hindus to Islam in the Tamil Nadu village of Meenakshipuram in 1981 (Koithara, 1999, p.16) was looked back upon and highlighted as a blatantly hostile attack aimed at

India's indigenous Hindu civilization, an event that saw a vigorous reaction and counter-effort put forth by the VHP at the time this event took place. (Andersen and Damle, 1987, p. 134-135) And while the threat to the ritual or "religious" aspect of Hinduism was a concern, the threat to Hindu belief or ritual practice was not the central focus. As Sahu notes, "The Hindu nationalist organizations succeeded in uniting the Hindus not so much through common religious belief, but more through shared hostility toward Muslims" (2002, p. 257). As nationalist groups like the BJP saw it, with conversion to a non-native religion comes a loss of values, ideals, practice of rituals, and ultimately one's Hindu identity.

The agenda of the BJP was further bolstered throughout this time period by the existence and mission of political factions such as the *Jama'at-i-Islami* of India and Islamist groups like the Students' Islamic Movement of India (SIMI). The *Jama'at-i-Islami* is a missionary movement within India functioning through a wide range of institutional developments across India including study circles (240+), schools of all levels (600+), and a weekly presence as speakers at over 700 mosques country-wide. (Agwani, 1994, p. 267) By 1981 they had published and distributed over 650 books in Urdu (491), Hindi (77), and English (78) while adopting a program aimed at 'non-Muslim brethren' which stated that 'Islam offers the best remedies for the intellectual, moral, social, economic, and political crisis afflicting the people of India'. (Agwani, 1994, p. 267) Established in 1977, SIMI derives its ideals from the founder of the *Jama'at-i-Islami* Sayyed Abul 'Ala Maududi and strives for the goal of Islamic polity in India in the establishment of one true monotheism, making political power extremely central to the Islamic mission. (Sikand, 2004, p. 181) Until its banishment in 2004,

SIMI's presence could be felt in Indian society in the following ways: 1.) through the propagation of its message in mass contact programs, lectures, literature, rallies, and seminars; 2.) it's gradual radicalization beginning in the 1980s and evolving through the 1990s; and 3.) its call to wage Islamic jihad against the Indian state and Hindus after the *Ram Janmabhoomi* incident. (Sikand, 2004, p. 187-188) In the minds of many Indians, past incidents, SIMI's reputed connection to *Lashkar-e-Taiba*, and its call to wage Islamic jihad against the Indian state justified blaming SIMI for an August 2003 car-bombing incident in the heart of Mumbai which killed 50 people and wounded hundreds more. (Brasted, 2005, p. 106)

By 1989 the BJP began to shed its moderate exterior in favor of a more militant and hardline policy. In 1990 there was a demand by the BJP to hand over the *Ram Janmabhoomi*[38] temple of Ayodhya, where a 16th century Babri mosque was standing at the time, to "the Hindus" and disassemble the mosque as this site was believed to be the sacred holy birth place of the Hindu god Rama. (Sahu, 2002, p. 256) With the support of the BJP, the liberation movement for *Ram Janmabhoomi* gained more legitimacy, and thereby highlighted the success of its greatly expanding base of support which spread across the middle class in small towns all over India. (Sahu, 2002, p. 257) As Brasted notes, "Likewise in India, the BJP's championing of Hindustan and its tracing of Hindu political practice to values and beliefs rooted in the past has appealed to large numbers of Indians" (2005, p. 121). In December of 1992 the *Ram Janmabhoomi* liberation movement culminated in violent Hindu-Muslim clashes resulting in the destruction of the

[38] This location is widely regarded by Hindus to be the birthplace of the Hindu god Rama.

Babri mosque of Ayodhya and death of thousands of people across India, many of which were Muslims.

The growing power and support base of the BJP was not solely a product of domestic developments, however. Various international developments taking place during the 1980's such as Zia al-Haq's Islamization in Pakistan, the impact of the Iranian Revolution and the rise of Islamic fundamentalism throughout the Muslim world working to increase support for the BJP. (Sahu, 2002, p. 257) Regionally, development in the rivalry between Hindu and Islamic nationalists has manifested itself most notably perhaps through the history of military engagement and violence between India and Pakistan which was described in a previous section. This history of conflict with a Muslim faction (nation) outside the domestic sphere has greatly influenced the construction of the BJP identity and agenda that developed after its founding in 1980 and the malevolent view they ultimately perpetuated towards various aspects of Islamic civilization.

This conflict, although multi-faceted over the years, is defined by the primacy of the dispute taking place up until the present-day in the northwest Indian frontier state of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). The highlighting of the enduring conflict over Kashmir, a conflict which is as old as the partition movement itself, has continued to be used in Hindu nationalist rhetoric to explicitly demonstrate that Pakistan is still a major "external threat" (Brasted, 2005, p. 121), while implicitly working to demonstrate the threat of political Islam and Islamic civilization to India's indigenous Hindu civilization. The militant Islamic front which has opened up in Kashmir, and Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence which operates there and is responsible for over 30,000 deaths since 1989, have given the BJP a large amount of tangible substance and talking points to further

underscore and justify this threat. (Brasted, 2005, p. 121) In this fashion Kashmir became a rallying point, a sort of 'poster child' used by the BJP to demonstrate the reality of the perceived threat of Islamic civilization and influence within India to the Hindu masses.

In addition to providing the potential for the narrative of a "shared" history with Israel, the aforementioned regional disputes between India and Pakistan that have taken place from partition up until the contemporary day, added fuel to the fire of Hindu nationalism both before and after the founding of the BJP. To reiterate, these included the Kutch-Sind border issue in the mid-1960's which resulted in Indo-Pakistani War of 1965, the war in East Pakistan (present-day Bangladesh) of 1971, the Kargil Operation (War) of 1999 where nuclear war seemed to be an inevitability and the multitude of terror attacks in India over the last 15+ years, highlighted by attacks in Delhi in 2001 and in Mumbai in 2006 and 2008.

The general consensus was that historically right-wing parties, especially those like the BJP, were pro-Israeli mainly because they are anti-Muslim:

> Their [Hindus and Sikhs] immediate grievance against Muslims, whom they held responsible for partition, was transformed into fondness for "enemies" of Muslims. Their unfriendliness and suspicions toward the Muslim population within India was externalized. They viewed Israel primarily as a state opposed to Islam and Muslims, and were thus favorably disposed toward it. (Kumaraswamy, 2010, p. 158-159)

The 1991 campaign platform of the BJP featured Hindu nationalism and identity at its center while effectively exploiting anti-Muslim hostilities and the Ayodhya issue. This led to the capturing of 119 seats in parliament and power in four Indian states. (Sahu, 2002, p. 257) If we look back at the elections of 1984, a time when PM Rajiv Gandhi was taking only small, unsuccessful steps towards a renewed Israel policy, we see the BJP in

a substantially different position in India's government than they would be seven years later, just prior to establishment of full diplomatic ties with Israel. As Kumaraswamy notes:

> In the 1984 Lok Sabha elections, the pro-Israeli Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) won just two seats in the 542-member parliament. The dogmatic communists, who had won more seats, were never strong allies of Israel. The third emerging force, namely the Janata Dal under V.P. Singh (who subsequently became prime minister in 1989), was too eager to cultivate Muslim groups to adopt an overly Israeli stand. (2010, p. 234)

The narrative of the BJP depicting of Muslims and Islamic culture as a threat is clearly the result of the aforementioned domestic and international events as well as the BJP's adherence to Savarkar's tenets of *Hindutva*, particularly the ideas he propagated regarding concerns over Muslims, written several decades prior. The idea that Israel, and by extension the Jewish people, are "natural" allies in combating the perceived threat posed by Muslims is one that Savarkar addressed directly in his writing on Hinduism and *Hindutva*, and on more than one occasion. And it was an idea at time plainly vocalized by the BJP during this time period.

In chronicling its own history and referencing the 1991 elections specifically, the BJP's website states that:

> When, in 1991, the Congress formed the Government on its own, even though it did not have a majority of its own, the BJP acted very responsibly and helped it have a speaker of its choice, content with deputy speakership of the Lok Sabha. Having been all along opposed to a license-permit-quota Raj it welcomed the policy of liberalization in principle. At long last New Delhi recognised Israel and South Africa, something the BJP had urged for long. (Jayate, 2011)

This again attests to the BJP's desire then, and their continued support now, for established diplomatic relations with the Israeli state.

The 1991 BJP rise to prominence in the *Lok Sabha* came less than 1 year prior to normalization of relations with the Israeli state. The BJP's supportive stance on Israel during this time is clear and this support would play a significant role in India's foreign policy towards Israel given the number of seats the BJP had recently gained in *Lok Sabha*. A second important influence on India's choice to alter its foreign policy towards Israel came from a shift by a significant faction of India's Hindu population in the normative stance regarding Islam in Indian society which would ultimately bode well for the BJP's campaign platform at the time. The shift to viewing Islam's role in Indian society and politics as a threat is seemingly evidenced by several factors. The first, the BJP's rise to power and their great success in the elections of '91, is indicative of the popular support of Indian voters who would have presumably been on board with their campaign platform that election season.

Secondly, the level of the anti-Islamic sentiment in society, and the fear of Islam as a threat, was undoubtedly manifest in the violent communal events that took place beginning the mid-1980's up and through the early 1990's, hitting an apex with Ayodhya incident in late 1992. This event, perhaps more than any other during the timeframe under analysis, epitomizes both the BJP's agenda towards Islam and adoption of this agenda as normative by a certain segment of India's Hindu populace. There is also evidence of recognition of this normative shift by Islamic parties within India. This can be seen in 1993, shortly after the Babri mosque incident, in the formation of a Muslim-*dalit* (lower castes) coalition in order to defeat the BJP during that year's elections in an attempt to limit the BJP's influence and power in the *Lok Sabha*. (Brasted, 2005, p. 122) It can therefore be seen how the strong *Hindutva* based platform and rhetoric of the BJP would

have affected India's foreign policy in two ways: 1. directly, by means of the influence and power that comes with the sheer number seats they held in the *Lok Sabha* on the eve of normalization of relations with Israel; and 2. indirectly, as the primary cause of a shift in the normative response to a perceived threat of Islam to Indian society and the subsequent influence this would have had on India's foreign policy towards Israel.

Normalization and the Significance of the Islamic "Threat" Perception

The normative stance towards the Islamic threat from within Hindu society could continue be seen throughout the 1990s and into the 21st century, a stance whose acceptance would be key in viewing relations with Israel positively. Popular support for the BJP would flourish from 1998-2004, and subsequently so did Indian-Israeli relations (Kumaraswamy, 2010, p. 160). The 1998 national elections provided a sobering reflection of how large numbers of Indian constituents identified with the BJP's message as the *Financial Times* media outlet noted, "The BJP's 1998 electoral performance, its all-time best, was a telling testimony to the assertion of its ideological identity"[39] (Miller, 2013, p. 99). While the government collapsed shortly thereafter, new general elections were held the following year in 1999. By the end of this voting period, the BJP had collected 183 seats ('General 13th Lok') on their way to winning national elections yet again, in addition to forming a second coalition government and having Atal Bihari Vajpayee take the position of Prime Minister.

[39] Geeta P. (1999, June 3). Between identity and power. *Financial Express*.

The successful 2002 “anti-Muslim” campaign run in Gujarat by then BJP hardline chief provincial minister Narendra Modi (Brasted, 2005, p. 119), and the riots against the Islamic populace that followed, attested to the continued perception of an Islamic threat by India’s Hindu populace nearly two decades after this narrative was revived. The riots, which claimed more than 790 Muslim lives, were said to be retribution for the Sabarmati Express train fire where 59 Hindu pilgrims died and which a group of Muslims was blamed for.

While high-profile incidents of anti-Muslim violence committed by Hindus have been largely absent since that in Gujarat in 2002, numerous incidents of communal violence between the two religious groups have taken place in India from that time up until the present. This provides further evidence that, although the BJP’s rhetoric concerning Muslims has taken a noticeable regression as of 2015, the continuation of the normative stance of Islam as a threat to Hindu society has been, and continues to be, strongly present within segments Indian society up until the contemporary-day.

The narrative combining the story of Hindu civilizational supremacy, with the idea of an Islamic “threat”, was central to the BJP’s campaign strategy from the mid-1980s to the early 1990’s. Further, it was the BJP’s perception of Israeli identity as a modern-state under civilizational threat from a common foe that would be an absolutely necessary condition for the BJP’s support of normalization. The Israel issue was by no means a primary campaign initiative during this time and was couched in with the much larger, louder narrative of Hindu supremacy and Hinduism under threat. However, the reasons that ultimately achieved political success for the BJP in the 1991 are the same reasons Israel would have been looked at favorably by the BJP and its voting

constituency, thereby creating a positive environment for normalization. The prevalence of an identity forged in anti-Islamic sentiment could therefore be seen to extend beyond the realm of politics into the general populace through the BJP's public support base and voter constituency. This notion was also voiced with great disapproval by the General Secretary of the Communist Party of India-Marxist Prakash Karat when he stated:

> The chauvinist positions and military attacks by Sharon and his rightwing government find positive response amongst the BJP and its RSS mentors in India. The war against the Palestinians is seen through the prism of the *Hindutva* war against Muslim minorities in India. Some of the barbarism which is taking place in Gujarat finds a parallel in the Israeli atrocities in the West Bank. That is why the Vajpayee government has remained silent throughout except for a muted expression of concern for Yasser Arafat during the siege. There is no indignation or revulsion as the savagery of the Israeli onslaught. The nexus with the Israeli regime established by the BJP rulers need to be exposed and thwarted. (Kumaraswamy, 2010, p. 160)

While less popularized and disseminated, there also existed within Hindu nationalist circles an understanding of another avenue of connection believed to create a "natural" bond between India and Israel. The link made to Israel by the BJP via the Islamic "threat" narrative perpetuated during the Party's rise to political power is the primary of two conceptions by which this relationship could be framed. The second understanding of Hindu India's link to Israel was framed in terms of the related, yet distinct notion of "civilizational resonance". Awareness of what could be a foundational, deep-rooted civilizational bond had been vocalized and written about even prior to partition. It is an awareness presented as a kind of implicit understanding of a "natural" comradery between the two civilizations, the basic framework for which is described as

being based on many of the premises found in the discussion on Hinduism and Judaism as religions of orthopraxy.

Non-violent Connections: BJP Understandings of "Civilizational Resonance"

The influence of V.D. Savarkar's writings and his *Hindutva* ideology on the Hindu nationalist movement, and specifically the BJP, has been explained above. The anti-Muslim sentiment explicit in his rhetoric and the primacy and high-status he affords to Hindu civilization are highlighting themes found within his strain of thought. However, apart from a connection based on being the "victims of Islam", some of Savarkar's less controversial writings on *Hindutva's* relationship to Judaism and the Jews also provided the BJP and Hindu nationalism as a whole with significant points for understanding Israel

Savarkar, Israel and the Jews

In addition to using comparative and relational arguments as a means to justify support of Israel from the standpoint of *Hindutva*, Hindu Nationalists can also draw on Savarkar's writings that explicitly dealt with Jews and his take on a potential, future Jewish state in the biblical *Eretz* Israel. The phrase "National home of the Jewish people" was commonly used is Savarkar's reference to a future Israeli state. He is documented to have directly compared and applied the situation of Hindus regarding their holy-land of India to that of the Jews and *Eretz* Israel:

> Look at the Jews; neither centuries of prosperity nor sense of gratitude for the shelter they found, can make them more attached or even equally attached to the several countries they inhabit. Their love is, and must necessarily be divided between the land of their birth and the land of their

> Prophets. If the Zionists' dreams are ever realized– if Palestine becomes a Jewish State and it will gladden us almost as much as our Jewish friends – they, like the Mohammedans would naturally set the interests of their Holyland (*sic*) above those of their Motherland in America and Europe and in case of war between their adopted country and the Jewish state, would naturally sympathise (*sic*) with the latter, if indeed they do not bodily go over to it. (1969, p. 135-136)

Savarkar's argument here regarding Jews and Israel, in near identical fashion to his argument for Hindus vis-à-vis India, directly links religion with sacred land in an understanding that ultimately politicizes religion and imbues a national identity on a group essentially understood by opponents to be based in compartmentalized notions of religion as discussed earlier. When the Jewish people finally did succeed, and an agreement was reached by the UN that was in favor of the establishment of an independent Israeli nation-state, Savarkar was keen to again address the Jews and the would-be Israeli citizens directly. He expressed his pleasure with the fact that such a large majority of the world's nations voted in the manner they did while also noting that these nation's should have provided "armed assistance" to the Jews in order to expedite and ensure this process:

> After centuries of sufferings, sacrifices and struggle the Jews will soon recover their National home in Palestine which has undoubtedly been their Fatherland and Holyland (*sic*). Well may they compare this event to that glorious day in their history when Moses led them out of the Egyptian bondage and wilderness and promised the land flowing with milk and honey came well within sight. (1967, p. 219)

He continues, writing in the context of an Indian public he perceived as being misinformed by sinister pro-Moslem propaganda regarding the issue:

> It must be emphasized therefore that speaking historically, the whole of Palestine has been, from at least two-thousand years before the birth of the Moslem Prophet the National Home of the Jewish People. A long line of their great prophets and kings, Abraham and Moses, David and Solomon

> (*sic*), has endeared that country to them as their Fatherland and Holyland (*sic*). The Arabian Moslems invaded Palestine only a few decades before they invaded our Sindh, and as their fanatical fury exterminated the ancient Egyptians or Persians, they attempted to wipe out with fire and sword the Jewish people too. (1967, p. 219)

Once the establishment of Israel became a reality, Savarkar's rhetoric towards the Jewish state maintained its 'religio-nationalist' imagery and character, while continuing to parallel it with the situation of Hindus in India. His words here work to cement the legitimacy of the Jewish claim to Israel by highlighting the deeds of key, albeit unverified, figures from Judaism's religious history, by condemning Islam's initial conquest of the sacred lands of the Jews and Hindus, and by again denoting the status of the Jewish people as a nation, not simply a religious group.

To further cement his ideas on Jews and Israel, and by extension his own Hindu nation, Savarkar notes that, "And speaking relatively [with reference to the existence of race] alone, no people in the world can more justly claim to get recognized as a racial unit than the Hindus and Perhaps the Jews" (1969, p. 90). In this manner, Savarkar creates an image of the Jewish people that is practically indistinguishable from the orthopraxic understanding of his own people: in primordial fashion as a religion, as a nation and as an ethnic or racial group, permanently bound to an ancestral and sacred homeland. This understanding of Jews and a future Israeli state demonstrates a 'bridge of connection' between the two civilizations as acknowledged by *Hindutva's* founder and most influential thinker. This civilizational resonance is further solidified and intensified when reflecting on the tumultuous past that each nation shares in its relationship with neighboring Muslim states or factions. It is an understanding that followers of Hindutva,

including the BJP, can agree to and act on vis-à-vis their feelings and policy towards the Jews and, ultimately, Israel.

The Value of "civilizational resonance"

Savarkar's comparisons of Hindu and Jewish civilization, and the implication of an inherent cultural resonance, were recognized and voiced by other Hindu nationalist politicians and members in the years that followed. Professor M.L. Sondhi, a former MP of the Jana Sangh and then the BJP, was an avid Israel supporter throughout his tenure as an academic, politician and public figure in India from the start of his professional career in the 1950s until his passing in 2003. Sondhi was well-known, within Israel and India, for his efforts in establishing formal relations between the two countries. His efforts were frequently manifest through his voice at parliamentary meetings, in his many visits to Israel, through his writing and through his establishment of the Hebrew-Sanskrit society in the 1960s. (Sehgal, 1993) Sondhi, a highly influential, outspoken and well-regarded leader of the Hindu right, was very well aware of the cultural sentiment that the two ancient civilizations shared. He made this notion an active part of his strategy and drive to have India normalize relations with Israel throughout his life, recognizing the important role that shared cultural sentiment, and the inseparable spiritual dimension that is an inherent part of these cultures, could and would play in a diplomatic relationship between the two nations.

His establishment of the Hebrew-Sanskrit society was reflective of early efforts at creating an understanding of cultural resonance, something which he insisted had been

present throughout the comparative histories of both nations and in the legacies of certain historical figures:

> Gurion's intense interest in India and Buddhism, the views of A.D. Gordon (Israel's answer to Karl Marx) on labour (*sic)*, the comparison between Indian thinkers and Martin Buber (the great Israeli philosopher), the philosophies of Herzl (the founder of the modern Zionist movement) and Ahad Haam (Israel's Mahatma Gandhi), the essential historic consciousness- these are the areas that India needs to explore if it wants to have an enduring relationship with Israel. (Sehgal, 1993)

Sondhi's words, efforts and actions demonstrate an active understanding of what was perceived to be a unique, civilizational bond that India and Israel purportedly share with the implication pointing to the an understanding of its existence since the earliest years of the two nation's modern existence.

An understanding of a "civilizational resonance" is very much present within BJP circles today according to some individual party leaders, activists and members. Dr. Anirban Ganguly, director of the BJP-affiliated Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee Research Foundation, has acknowledged this understanding as a significant component underpinning the India-Israel relationship at its roots that creates a unique and naturally favorable condition for development:

> Ever since the first Jews came to India in order to seek asylum, amongst the vast majority of the people of India, especially Hindus, there is a spontaneous affinity towards the Jewish traditions. An affinity towards the Jewish civilization, the people, and, in modern times, towards Israel. This is regardless of any political framework, involvement, or considerations. It is civilizationally spontaneous. We were taught and we were told about Jews growing up and as children and I think that this still acts in our minds. Israel, the Jews and their holy land, is for the Indian Hindu is something very civilizationally attractive. There is a sense of kinship that has developed since the beginning. This has helped sustain a momentum in favor of the Jewish demands when they have taken place. A large number of spiritual leaders, opinion makers and our ideational leaders

> were fascinated by the Jewish civilization, tradition and life. They basically saw us and them as tied in civilizational kinship.
>
> It is not only the politicians in the early 90s that decided to open relations with Israel. I believe there was this entire ground swell of opinion and feeling towards Israelis and the Jews, especially among non-Left, non-Communist Hindus. The civilizational link has remained through the centuries because the Jews came millennia ago and stayed, lived and comfortably thrived. It has always been a positive and progressive link. (Ganguly, Personal Interview, 2014)

Dr. Ganguly highlights some of themes earlier discussed regarding orthopraxis in Hinduism and Judaism. Further comments and understanding of Dr. Ganguly on the subject closely parallel those Savarkar wrote about with reference to Jews and Israel:

> If I speak of the Hindu civilization, there has been in the past suffering from displacement often in our history. There has also been de-culturization, we have suffered all these. So automatically one does not have to make an effort if one has a sense of that Hindu identity. Those who are practicing Hindus and have a sense of this civilizational identity will tell you about this displacement which was due to external invaders and external rule for a thousand years. When the Hindu looks at the Jew, it is the same similar feeling of displacement that comes. They see that the Jewish nation was displaced and faced dislocation from its civilizational roots. When the entire movement for a Jewish homeland arose, the Hindu could empathize because despite this group having no land for centuries, they still never lost their sense of nationhood and civilization. (Ganguly, Personal Interview, 2014)

Dr. Ganguly's responses to my questions about Indian-Israeli cultural connections lend credence to the idea of the presence of Savarkar's two-pronged understanding of Jewish civilization being found within the BJP's narrative. This same general sentiment regarding India's connection to Israel was in informal conversations I had with other BJP affiliates, including an active politician.

The understanding of a Hindu-Jewish, or Indian-Israeli, connection is not limited to the BJP elite (i.e., ideologues, politicians, associate academics, etc.), but can also be

found at the sub-leadership levels as well. One area where I found awareness of this understanding was in the realm of social activism and organization. Amitabh Tripathi, author and journalist on Indo-Israeli relations and Middle East affairs and founding member of the Hindu Struggle Committee, also expressed a deep awareness of several connecting features of Hindu-Indian and Jewish-Israeli civilization according his summary understanding of Indo-Israeli relations:

> There are several reasons why people in India are so fascinated with Israel. The common threats India and Israel have, it binds it together and because of that Indians feel so excited about having good relations with Israel. Second, in the sub-conscious mind of the Indian people there is a civilizational resonance between the two nations with binds us together. Jews are not alien to India and when they were being persecuted around the world, they came to India and have become a welcome part of our history. These relations are not a modern phenomenon. The modern nation which they have founded is based on their ancient traditions. There is a blend of ancient tradition and modernity which we see in the Jewish nation. The nation of India is the first whose people I have seen in the whole world that have given their consent to the people of Israel as a Jewish nation. India, as a people, have accepted Israel as a nation of Jews. Religion, I think, is always playing a big role in Indo-Israel relations.
>
> When Hindus talk about their civilization and who can be their friends based on civilizational matters, I think for a long time Indians as a whole, and Hindus in particular, have seen Israel as a natural ally in every sense. When you talk about civilizational identity, when you talk about threats, and when you talk about development and modernity. Since the economic developments of the 1990's, people of the Indian middle class have started to realize that if we want to be more modern and technologically advanced that we need to learn much from Israel. This is the newest dimension of Indo-Israeli relations. (Tripathi, Personal interview, 2014)

While the extent of this understanding throughout Indian society as presented by Mr. Tripathi is open to debate, what can be discerned is that an awareness or recognition of strongly perceived civilizational link between the entities also exist to a degree at the sub-state level. While an extensive survey of

Hindu Indians regarding their awareness of such an understanding is currently beyond the scope of this study, the responses of Dr. Ganguly and Mr. Tripathi, in conjunction with the writings of Prof. Sondhi and V.D. Savarkar, are significant for the insight they provide regarding historical and contemporary strands of thought of the Hindu Right regarding the Jewish identity and Israel. They provide some empirical grounding for the existence of this civilizational narrative within Indian society for the last several decades, in particular at the state level of society, where its primary significance will later be demonstrated as far as India's Israel policy is concerned.

Building on Savarkar's original thoughts and understanding of Jewish civilization, the previous discussion demonstrates the awareness that BJP leaders would have been cognizant of this Hindu-Jewish civilizational connection, thereby creating a circumstance which could then have formed a significant impetus for the establishment of relations with Israel when combined with the perceived connections via the Islamic "threat" that have been well established.

Awareness of the Islamic "threat" link, rather than the "civilizational resonance" link, was much more dominant in BJP circles in the years leading up to normalization with Israel and was arguably the most vocalized tenet of their ideology as a whole at this time, Israel aside. However, individuals like Savarkar and Sondhi demonstrate that this understanding of a civilizational link was present to varying degrees among Hindu nationalist leaders and ideologues years prior to the formation of the BJP and, subsequently, India's normalization with Israel. Further, as I argue in the following chapter, the significance of perceived civilizational connections is demonstrated to be

more apparent as a condition that creates an "environment for cooperation" across societal sectors, including the "geo-political", the "geo-economic" and the "geo-cultural", in the decades following normalization. In any case, if such two-pronged understanding about an Indian-Israel relationship did exist within the BJP during the time period under review, placing the BJP's ascendency in India's domestic political arena into a theoretical framework will explain how this development would have been key in the 'how' and 'when' of India's normalizing of ties with Israel.

Framing the BJP's Rise and India's Establishment of Relations with Israel

If looked at through general constructivist lens, India's establishment of relations with Israeli must be viewed as the product of the socially constructed conceptualizations (Kratochwil, 2008, p. 81) of the BJP-led Indian government's threat perception of Islamic society and Muslims themselves. At its core this perceived threat is not based on material (i.e., economic or military) or structural factors, but rather is based on ideational factors that has their roots in India's Hindu nationalist movement that dates all the way back to the late 19th century. Also, at a secondary level not so widely recognized or propagated at the time, a socially constructed idea of "civilizational resonance" was in circulation as well, albeit only within small political and academic circles of the Hindu Right.

The Hindu nationalist narrative constructed over a period of several decades worked to establish a threat perception of Islam on the part of the BJP that ultimately translated into securitization efforts on the part of the Indian government during the time period under examination and the years that have followed. This securitization narrative was the most recognizable manifestation of the Hindu nationalist political narrative as a

whole and would be the center-piece of the BJP platform for years to follow. This security agenda framed India's security issues as ones of a Hindu state and cultural society, thereby giving credence to Katzenstein's notion of cultural factors and responses to them as defining security interests for some groups. (1996, p. 2)

Katzenstein (1996, p. 4-5) reinforces the idea that the constructed identity of states, governments and political actors comes to play a central role in the creation of norms that constitute the identities and/or regulate the behavior of the actor(s) under examination. Here, that political actor is the BJP and its Hindu nationalist support-base. The BJP's identity was constructed on a foundation of Hindu exceptionalism through its adoption of the *Hindutva* ideology. Fundamental to *Hindutva* was the understanding of the orthopraxic nature of Hinduism, a nature that necessarily transgresses the Western or secular understanding of the role of religion in a state society to include sectors of politics, law, social organization, etc. The BJP's argument for Hindu exceptionalism in India was legitimized by pointing to Hinduism's indigenous and demographic credentials.

The social (re)construction of the Hindu identity was not completed within a vacuum of unitary religious configuration. Threat perception also proved to be a critical (or perhaps the critical) element in the politicized reconstruction of the Hindu identity for the BJP during their rise and its initial stance on normalization with Israel. The perceived threat of the Islamic "Other" is a theme demonstrated to have been consistently present throughout some of *Hindutva's* most influential writings up through this time period. The described trajectory of historical events, both within and outside of India, combined with the political environment fostered by the Congress-led government for so many years to

legitimize the threat perception of the Hindu Nationalist camp. Furthermore, for the state, notions of threat and threat perception tend to be inextricably linked to many foreign policy decisions and/ stances. In the case of India then, this line of reasoning is demonstrated to form a major component of its Israel policy. For a BJP-led India, the construction of a shared identity with Israel, and eventually the establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel, has its foundations in viewing Israeli culture and its majority religion and defining identity (i.e. Judaism) as also having historically shared the same threat from Islam.

Such a notion of threat conception, where by the referent object of securitization is a large-scale collective identity, is described by Buzan as a 'societal sector' threat. (et.al., 1998, p 22-23) Conceptualizing Islam and the Muslim "Other" as a threat to what is regarded here as an inherently Hindu Indian society creates a foundation which supports perceptions of specific kinds of threat, including political and military, based on the increasingly visible role they come to play as the narrative develops. This is where the discussion and understanding of Hinduism as an orthopraxic religious tradition becomes so significant. The perceived threat to Hindu society equates to a threat which encompasses not only "religion" but social organization, politics, the state, etc. The Hindu identity cannot be separated from these other sectors or facets of life in India. Perception of threat to a society and state based in an indigenous, orthopraxic religious tradition also becomes key in creating a foundation for Hindu India's link to Israel as well. Securitization of the "Other" takes place within a narrative, first and foremost, of threat to identity and the society representative of this identity, without which, the argued basis for agency would be severely compromised. With this understanding, the shared

notion of a societal threat becomes both the ideational linchpin for Indian-Israeli relations and the foundation on which the other sectoral "building blocks" of the relationship find a base and more tangible threats, such as terrorism, build a narrative.

Further analytical framing of the BJP's genesis during this time period demonstrates a process that functionally mirrors the understanding postulated for India's non-relations with Israel from Partition until normalization, which took place under the guise of the Congress Party's domination of the domestic political apparatus. This framework stipulates the significance of change in the 'Environmental (normative) Structure' and "identity" of the state in order to modify a given "policy".

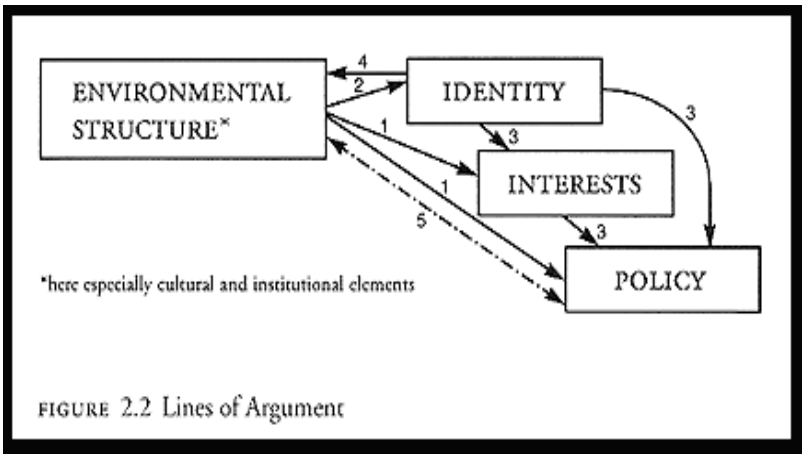


FIGURE 2.2 Lines of Argument

(Jepperson et al, 1996, p. 53)

Again, the conceptual framework above is demonstrative of the process which created the conditions necessary within the India political and social context for a marked shift in policy towards Israel. The rise of the BJP to political relevance during this time period brought with it the presence of the aforementioned "identity" and the cultural and institutional elements of an "Environmental (normative) Structure" to the system. This

identity and normative stance perpetuated “interests” that allowed for the creation of a “policy” conducive to a normalized view towards Israel.

While the BJP did not come to dominate the political arena at this time in the way that Congress traditionally had, its views and positions as a one-fifth minority (120+ seats) by1991 could no longer be disregarded. It was the first time that it had garnered more than a few seats, and its momentum of social and political influence had been building since the mid-1980s. The element of the BJP’s identity that was most recognized, publicized and widely disseminated, was that of a civilizational entity under threat from another outside and aggressive civilizational force who wished to dominate society. This would have made the perception of a shared threat from Islam key for Hindu Indian support for Israel given recent events that had taken place in India, the rapid rise in communal tensions and violence there, and, by then, the inability of the ruling Congress Party to justify the seemingly absolute nature of their support for the Arab-Muslim world in the political realm which had always gone unreciprocated. These factors came together as a formidable force for a change in India’s Israel policy, I argue, ultimately due to the degree of political pressure at the top on the Congress-led parliament from the opposition that had never existed before. The BJP’s constant presence as a sizable opposition within India’s lower parliament from normalization until the present-day, combined with the political, logistical and even practical issues that would accompany breaking off diplomatic relations (if there ever had been a desire to do so), have worked to ensure the recursive nature of India’s Israel policy as it has been gradually and progressively reconstructed at the normative level.

While Mesbahi's (2011) framework is most useful in understanding India's state identity vis-à-vis Israel several years after normalization, the BJP's rise and establishment as a politically relevant entity within the parliamentary arena was a critical development that allowed for the possibly of a "composite" state identity transformation and, to a arguable degree, of a transformation in India's prevailing "unitary" identity as well. This was a transitional time period whereby the Nehruvian identity that dominated India's policy towards Israel since its inception, was challenged by the events and developments taking place within India's domestic political realm. From this transition there would arise the ideational foundation on which the social construction of a Hindu-Jewish link and a new normative understanding towards Israel could gradually be built. It would be nearly a decade after normalization between India and Israel, and with the growing support of Hindu nationalists in politics and society, that the relationship could be observed to have blossomed across several sectors and strata of Indian society, thereby demonstrating a shift in India's "composite" identity as far as it interaction with Israel is concerned.

Placed within this combined analytical framework, the BJP's ascent in the realm of domestic politics can be conceived of as a highly significant factor in the normalization process with Israel. The narrative, I argue, that provided a base for establishment of relations with Israel continued to be present in the rhetoric of the BJP after normalization and certain social, political and military developments involving India thereafter, would continue to be used to legitimize the narrative. When considering both the rhetoric of Hindu exceptionalism and the perceived social and political threats posed by Islam and Muslim factions that defined their political philosophy during this time, the

BJP's rise should therefore be considered as one of the primary catalysts that led to India's establishment relations with Israel. The creation and subsequent perpetuation of a normative stance towards Israel that becomes present and publicized within India beginning during the BJP's rise lays an infrastructure from which relationships across structures and within and between multiple "composite" strata of society have developed. This normative stance, and its prevailing historical narrative, can therefore be seen to have created a deep-rooted avenue for cooperation that is maintained and reified through the very relationships and cooperative developments that it gave rise to in the first place.

BEYOND NORMALIZATION: INDIA AND ISRAEL SINCE 1992

With the previous chapter making the case for the correlation between the BJP's climb to domestic political-party relevance and India's normalization process with Israel, chapter five works to demonstrate the link between the BJP's influence in India's domestic political sphere and the progression of Indian-Israeli relations since normalization took place in 1992. Certain key events or milestones are observed to have taken place during time periods of BJP-led parliament control, time periods when the prime minister hailed from the BJP, or as a direct result of BJP-related initiatives and/or circumstances.

In August of 2015, C. Raja Mohan, head of strategic studies at the Observer Research Foundation in New Delhi, spoke candidly about the changing and seemingly "intimate" nature that Indian-Israeli relations were experiencing under the 2014-elected BJP government. Mohan was keen to note that the previous Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, and most prior to him since normalization, kept India's relationship with Israel at low profile while current PM Modi has not, "Cynics in Israel would point out that Delhi was treating Tel Aviv like a mistress - engage in private but refuse to be seen with in public. The Modi government is having none of that" (Bagla, 2015). While the rhetoric between India's leader and the Israeli government has never been so transparent, and the overt cooperation seemingly never more apparent, there does exist a degree of precedent for the shift in the manner in which this relationship is presented to the Indian public.

If we look at the BJP's popular growth as a political party and its performance in general elections since its inception in the early 1980s, three major milestones of success can reasonably be highlighted and two analyzed in relation to the Indian-Israeli relationship. The first milestone came in the 1991 when the BJP first cemented its presence as a significant minority party in India's *Lok Sabha*. As noted earlier, the 119 seats it managed to capture in the *Lok Sabha* was just over twenty percent of the total in parliament. It was by far the most seats the BJP held in the Lok Sabha up until that point in time in its history. Paralleling the BJP's rise and first major success in general elections in 1991 was India's process of normalization with Israel and ultimately the establishment of diplomatic relations shortly after in the months that followed the elections.

The second milestone came in 1999 when the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) coalition, led by the BJP's 183 seats, took power in the Lok Sabha with a total of 298 representatives. ('General 13th Lok') Subsequently, the BJP's success in this election was followed by a flourishing of Indian-Israeli relations, the most notable feature of which was general beginning of the burgeoning security co-op and arms trade that exists between the two countries today. Furthermore, India also saw its singular visit from an Israeli Prime Minster, Ariel Sharon, towards the end of this term of BJP power in 2003.

The BJP's third milestone took place in the 2014 elections where it claimed an astonishing 284 seats in the *Lok Sabha*, their most successful showing in elections to date, and an overall capture of 336 seats by the NDA coalition they form the vanguard of. ('General 16th Lok') Based on the general historical pattern that can be observed regarding the nature of the Indian-Israeli relationship following previous BJP election

milestones, what could this indicate for the depth and development of Indian-Israeli relations as they continue to progress forward?

The relationship between India and Israel at the state-to-state level, as well as with or between actors at the sub-state level, has seen a gradual progression across several different areas and sectors. Based on the previous discussion, it could be gathered that the existence of spikes in this line of progression or cooperation tended to have come when the BJP or a BJP-led coalition comes to power in India's government, with continued positive development even after it left power.

The first section details a summary of Indian and Israeli relations in the areas of security cooperation, technology sharing and arms dealing, in what I collectively refer to as their overall security relationship. The narrative that fortifies this security relationship highlights the mutual threat of cross-border terrorism perpetrated by Islamic radicals that each state has faced at times over the last few decades. I argue that the normative nature of this narrative in Indian society and politics is a corollary of the decline in threat from several states which historically sat at the top of the list of India's security concerns, combined with the increased volume of radical terror incidents perpetuated over the previously mentioned timeframe. The security relationship, subsequently, reifies the narrative, resulting in a circumstance of co-constitution between idea or perception and practice. Currently, as the most manifest feature of the Indian-Israeli relationship, the security relationship holds great significance for several reasons. The genesis of this security relationship, inclusive of the briefly described narrative and resulting actions, provides a clear demonstration my theoretical framework in action, while also sustaining a broad, historical narrative rooted in religious and cultural ideas that creates a foundation

from which relationships between India and Israel within the geo-economic, geo-cultural, and geo-political structures of my analytical framework can flourish. Simply put, the narrative supporting the relationship changed as the nature of the threats to the two countries changed.

The next chapter lays out a comparative timeline of BJP political milestones (i.e., when they ascended either to parliamentary majority or executive control in India) and the subsequent significant developments that came to pass in India's relationship with Israel during those same periods. Included here is a detailed explanation of the progress in relations between the two nations since normalization in the political, economic, and cultural sectors, and the role religion-based national and cultural identity could play in the foundation or facilitation of such progress.

A following sub-section describes an event that highlights an official religion and cultural interaction between the two states that also has theoretically significant implications across sectors and structures. It documents the track-II diplomatic efforts of Hindu and Jewish leadership at the 2007 and 2008 Hindu-Jewish dialogue sessions, and the impact this could have on Indian-Israel state ties and the relationship as a whole. The significance of this track-II diplomatic effort is underpinned by the argument I make throughout this writing regarding the role of religion in Indian and Israeli society and politics, particularly as religions of orthopraxis.

The final section places the post-normalization developments within the aforementioned theoretical construct. Mesbahi's (2011) tripartite framework for state identity conceptualization provides an analytical tool that allows for an understanding of how the identity-based notion of a Hindu India-Jewish Israel connection can and does

play a constructive role in the progressive development of relations between the two countries across the structures and strata that makes up each state's "unitary" and "composite" identities.

Indian-Israeli Security Cooperation: Were Identities in Shared Threat Manifest?

Cooperation between India and Israel within the security and defense sector is undoubtedly the most recognizable and scrutinized aspect of their relationship. The precedent for cooperation in this sector dates back to as far as 1962 when India was surreptitiously receiving arms from the Israeli government in India's short, but bloody border-conflict with China. As was detailed earlier, this cooperation could be observed on several occasions in the years that followed and so the predominant nature of the security cooperation comes as less of a surprise. Despite this, however, it would not be until several years after normalization that developments falling within the security realm would merit a significant increase and begin making headlines as the primary attribute of the relationship. The onset of the short but high-stakes Kargil Operation in October 1999 would mark a new milestone for India in security cooperation between the two nations. During that war Israel provided technological and arms support to India in a very short timeframe in a move that became critical to India's success in the conflict. The BJP had previously come to power with a parliamentary high of 182 seats during the 1998 elections, in addition to being a part of the National Democratic Alliance *NDA) that formed the governing coalition of the *Lok Sabha* at the time. (Kumar, 2014) When new elections were held a few months after the Kargil War began the BJP retained its seats,

and the NDA its leading position, in an electoral outcome that would keep them in power until 2004. (Blarel, 2014, p. 292)[40]

It can be observed that the arms trade and security cooperation have steadily increased every year since the BJP's second stint in power; there is little reason to believe this trend will be reversed any time soon, especially now that the BJP is back in power. From the onset of normalization until the BJP's first majority leadership position in parliament in 1998, India had only completed four defense deals with Israel. From 1998 until 2004, they completed fourteen major deals. (Blarel, 2014, p. 324) This sector of the security cooperation was institutionalized under BJP leadership, a circumstance that was given a major boost by the events that took place during the Kargil War. In 2006 Israel's defense companies had recorded the value of India's purchases to be at approximately $1.5 billion, with the average spending per annum between 2002 and 2006 reaching the $1 billion threshold. This is tantamount to nearly a quarter of India's annual arms expenditures estimated to be around $4 billion at the time. According to these figures, therefore, India is Israel's leading market for defense export. (Inbar, 2009, p. 240) Subsequently, this makes Israel the second largest arms dealer to India, sitting behind only Russia. Furthermore, from the Kargil conflict between India and Pakistan in 1999 until 2009, Israel racked up military business with India that was in excess of $9 billion dollars. ("India, Israel decide", 2009) Recently, the existence of extensive intelligence cooperation over the last fifty years has been revealed, spanning even the "unfriendly" years of Indira Gandhi's leadership during the 1960s and 1980s. Reports even went as far

[40] See Blarel's footnote (#47) on this page for brief, but detailed explanation of the situation involved in the October 1999 parliamentary elections held in India.

as to confirm a "secret liaison relationship with Mossad" approved by Gandhi in 1968. (Kumaraswamy, 2010, p. 241) There many accounts that attest to this now widely believed fact, including one mentioning the Research and Analysis Wing[41] (RAW) which:

> … has always had links with the Israeli's and the US. In the late 1970's, it engineered the visit of Moshe Dayan to India; it also played an important role in trying to get the Israeli defense industry a foothold in India. RAW sent its personnel to Israel for specialized training and in late 1984, in the wake of Indira Gandhi's assassination, it also [sought the advice of] … a senior Israeli security specialist on the Prime Minister's security systems. (Kumaraswamy, 2010, p. 241)

The specialized training received by India's RAW from Israeli forces demonstrates an important facet of Indian-Israeli military strategic cooperation that continues to the present-day.

In 2002, the two countries formed the Joint Working Group of Counter Terrorism aimed at bi-lateral collaboration dealing with the issue of terrorism in all its forms. In a meeting in Jerusalem in 2002, the two countries outlined the following goals for collaboration:

> India and Israel Sunday [6 January] held the first meeting of Indo-Israeli Joint Working Group on anti-terrorism and discussed ways to boost cooperation to fight the menace plaguing both the countries.
>
> The discussions were held in a spirit of friendship and covered a number of issues including the threat of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations as well as the sources of terrorism, the legal dimensions of global fight against terrorism and other matters, a joint communiqué (*sic*) issued at the end of the meet said. ("India and Israel discuss", 2002)

[41] The external intelligence arm of India's intelligence services.

Some of the most important security cooperation interaction of Indian and Israeli officials in this regard have come in the last several years, including a 2008 visit by Major- General Avi Mizrachi to obtain a close view of India's Kashmir situation, advise Indian military leaders, and organize a tactical training co-op between Israeli commandos and Indian counter-terror units on combatting guerilla warfare in an urban setting. The primary purpose of Major-General Avi Mizrahi's visit was to lecture senior Indian officers about counter-terror operations:

> OC Ground Forces Command Maj.-Gen. Avi Mizrahi paid an unscheduled visit to the disputed state of Kashmir last week to get an up-close look at the challenges the Indian military faces in its fight against Islamic insurgents. Mizrahi was in India for three days of meetings with the country's military brass and to discuss a plan the IDF is drafting for Israeli commandos to train Indian counterterror (*sic*) forces. Under the proposed agreement, the IDF would send highly-trained commandos to train Indian soldiers in counterterror (*sic*) tactics, urban warfare and fighting in guerrilla settings. (Katz, 2008)

The varying degrees of security cooperation discussed here are indicative of how the security collective between the two countries has evolved, to a much grander scale, since the normalization of relations in 1992.

This well established pattern of arms exchange between the two nations is recently highlighted by the planned cooperation to build an integrated anti-missile system for the primary purpose of defending against potential future attacks by China. (Raghuvanshi, 2014)

A multitude of weapons and technology has been bought, sold and exchanged between India and Israel over the last 15 years. Perhaps the largest of deals, approved by the United States in 2003, was for India's purchase of two Green Pine Radar systems and

three Phalcon airborne warning and control systems which amounted to a staggering $1 billion. (Inbar, 2009, p. 241) Other deals include the purchase of the LR-SAM and MR-SAM for the Indian Air Force ("India, Israel decide", 2009), upgrades of India's Russian-made MIG-21, thermal imagers for the Indian army's Russian-made T-72 tank fleet, and ship-based surface-to-air Barak systems for the Indian Navy. India has also implemented Israeli counter-terror techniques and equipment which includes radar, fences, and arms. (Inbar, 2009, p. 241-244)

In October 2014 India made an agreement with Rafael Advanced Defense Systems, an Israeli defense company, to purchase anti-tank missiles worth more than half-a-billion USD. ("Israel defence chief", 2014) Perhaps the most intriguing undertaking between these nations in the realm of weaponry and defense has come with regard to their previously mentioned joint-development of the Barak 8 missile system. This is a long-range, surface-to-air missile system designed to intercept incoming anti-ship missiles. A corollary to this joint development has been the meeting of several high-ranking military officials on both sides, including an august 2015 visit of Israeli Navy chief vice admiral Ram Rutberg during one of the trial launching sessions of the Barak 8 by the Indian navy. ("Israeli navy chief", 2015)

Although the previous list is not an exhaustive one, there is little doubt about the extent of Indian and Israeli security cooperation. As P.R. Kumaraswamy notes, "Because of increasing acts of terrorism and cross-border infiltration, Israeli expertise in intelligence gathering, innovative and proactive counterterrorism policies, and electronic surveillance along international borders have become key areas of cooperation" (2010, p. 257). India and Israel continue to exchange information and intelligence in several anti-

terror areas including terrorist recruitment patterns, operations, training and financing. Numbers in sale of arms from Israel to India continue progressively higher each year, while joint-R&D efforts between the two countries in weaponry and technology have become gradually more common.

India's Historical Security Concerns: The Threat from State Actors

In making the case for the primacy of the shared threat of religiously-inspired terrorism in the Indian-Israeli security dynamic, and the parallel narrative that accompanies it, it is necessary to succinctly explain the role of other threats to India's national security and why primacy is given to issues of terrorism in India as opposed to other threats that concurrently exist to the state. Historically, the most significant threats to India's security apparatus have traditionally come from state actors. Given this notion, I briefly highlight state-security concerns posed by three of India's neighbors: Bangladesh, China and Pakistan. The primacy I afford to the threat of terrorism in the India national security agenda comes in response to the shift in the South Asian security climate over approximately the last ten to fifteen years. As such, it is important to note that this section's focus is on the current security environment of the outlined state threats, not what the security situation has been like historically, in years past with these neighboring nations.

Bangladesh

India's neighbor to its northeast, Bangladesh, has never posed a threat since the war and its subsequent independence from Pakistan in 1971. On the security front today,

tensions have arisen between the two based on India's claim that safe havens for Indian secessionist groups are provided within Bangladesh on its northeastern border. (Lewis, 2012) Although there have been ups and downs in the relationship, the two countries have seen a great increase in cooperation since the 2008 general elections when the Awami League came to majority power in Bangladesh. ("Embraceable you: Growing", 2012) The rapidly improving relations have been highlighted by the visitations of top Indian leaders to Bangladesh in recent years, including a visit by then Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in September of 2011.

The two countries have agreed to several areas of cooperation including the development of transit routes from Bangladesh to India's remote northeast at the cost of over $10 billion as well as other infrastructure projects. ("Embraceable you: Growing", 2012) The forecast for India's ties with Bangladesh appears to be quite optimistic. In referring to a friendly June 2011 meeting between Sonia Gandhi of India and Sheik Hasina of Bangladesh (among other notable figures), the following was described:

> As a result, officials this week chirped that relations are now "very excellent". They should get better yet. India's prime minister, Manmohan Singh, will visit early in September to sign deals on sensitive matters like sharing rivers, sending electricity over the border, settling disputed patches of territory on the 4,095km (2,500-mile) frontier and stopping India's trigger-happy border guards from murdering migrants and cow-smugglers. Mr. Singh may also deal with the topic of trade which, smuggling aside, heavily favours (*sic*) India, to Bangladeshi ire. ("Embraceable you: Growing", 2012)

Most importantly to India's national security vis-à-vis Bangladesh, I would argue, is that it too has implemented serious efforts in dealing with extremists who pose a threat to India. These include individuals and groups with ties to Pakistan, Indian Mujahideen, and anti-Indian and Islamist politicians within Bangladesh. ("Embraceable you:

Growing", 2012) Further, India's National Security Advisor Ajit Doval has noted the "extremely helpful and friendly" nature of the support the regime in Bangladesh has provided in cooperative efforts with India to control insurgency problems in India's northeast. ("India's relations with", 2015)

As with any diplomatic relationship there is always a possibility of relations taking an unexpected turn, which could become possible in the event of a new ruling party coming to power in Bangladesh. There has also been some discussion over India's intentions in building the transit system and how these intentions could affect Bangladeshi relations with China and the unruly neighboring population in India's northeast provinces. ("Embraceable you: Growing", 2012) Never the less, the future is anybody's guess. There is no threat to Indian national security from Bangladesh and current relations are on the upswing. The threats to Indian security that do come from within Bangladesh are posed, in large part, by radical Islamist and Maoist terrorist organizations and are being dealt with by the Bangladeshi state. (Lewis, 2012) Keeping this in mind, the majority of threats to Indian national security from Bangladesh are connected to terrorist groups, the fear of cross-border terrorism and insurgency issues, not the state of Bangladesh itself which is a willing and active partner with India in the efforts to minimalize these types of threats.

China

China has been seen as a national security threat to India since Indian independence in 1947. The conflict between two rising Asian superpowers could be observed as far back as 1962 during the short, but violent, Sino-Indian War and other on-

going territorial and border disputes. Since the turn of the millennium, however, there has been a trend towards rapprochement and a stabilization of ties between India and China. The contemporary security environment, therefore, can most accurately be described as "Lockean" where rivalry replaces enmity because, "…unlike enemies, rivals expect each other to act as if they recognize their sovereignty, their 'life and liberty' as a right, and therefore not to try and conquer or dominate them" (Wendt, 1999, 279).

Although rivalry and competition exist between the two, common domestic challenges, including high poverty rates, developing economies and huge, rapidly increasing populations, have led to increased cooperation between India and China in recent years. (Lal, 2006, p. 131) Since the end of the Sino-Indian War in 1962, the remaining conflict between India and China has been manifest most notably in several territorial disputes that dot the immense 3,488km border between the two Asian giants including those in Kashmir region and paralleling the Tibetan corridor, particularly along India's northeastern border with China. Ajit Doval has deemed settlement of this conflict in that stretch the most critical, "All advancement made in the 'relationship' with China gets centred (*sic*) around and becomes important on settlement of the [Arunachal Pradesh] border" ("India's relations with", 2015). The contention over the territory of Arunachal Pradesh continues today but a cooperative dispute resolution is currently being employed gradually and as Colonel R. Hariharan notes that, while progress has been minimal on the issue, "…modalities to avoid accidental intrusions and conflict have been worked out between the two countries" (2015). In 2003, in a gesture that worked to reduce ill-will in the territorial dispute process, India moved towards recognition of Tibet

as a part of China. The Chinese officially recognized Sikkim as Indian sovereign territory just two years later. (Lal, 2006, p. 136)

A major reason for the improvement of the security situation between the two nations is due to trade. China is India's largest trading partner with an all-time high of $73.9 billion in total bilateral trade completed between the two countries in 2011. ("India expects stability", 2012) Within the economic and commercial realm Modi's India has also voiced persistent calls inviting the Chinese, given their vast foreign currency reserves, to invest in infrastructure and the manufacturing sector in what is termed as the "Make in India" program, the ultimate aim of which is to transform India into a global manufacturing hub. (Karl, 2015) India recognizes the potential benefit in minimizing dependence on Western financial institutions such the IMF and the World Bank, in favor of China which has largely avoided any sort of reliance on Western financial institutions during its meteoric economic rise, while also seeing itself become a new source of economic and financial assistance to several developing countries around the globe. This is a strategy that would give India the dual benefit of further improvement of relations with its neighbor while side-stepping reliance on institutions like the IMF/World Bank and the destructive results of their loan conditionalities. Moves aiming to build commercial and economic ties have been further supplemented on India's part by joining the BCIM[42] corridor project, which seeks to create a common transit line between these countries (Hariharan, 2015), and two alternative institutions to the IMF and World Bank:

[42] Acronym standing for Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar.

the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, a Chinese initiative, and the New Bank, an initiative of the BRICS[43] countries. (Hariharan, 2015; Karl, 2015)

In addition to territorial disputes, other areas of contention currently do still exist between the Asian giants including Indian concerns due to the massive trade imbalance that exists between the two nations, and those relating to the military assistance China provides to Pakistan and the $46 billion infrastructure aid package China offered to Pakistan in 2015. Limits to this relationship and a certain degree of distrust are sure to be present for years to come and progress will be very gradual. However, while a European-style "security community" realistically remains only a pipe dream currently, the costs of conflict between one another appear to substantially outweigh the benefits for both India and China, a fact that both nations recognize. Impending domestic issues, more pressing territorial disputes with other neighbors, as well as continuing occurrences of ethnic and religious conflict within their own borders, have made India and China realize the advantages of improving relations. India and China are greatly beneficial to one another as far as bilateral trade goes, despite the imbalance, military relations have even reached a level of cooperation inclusive of joint military drills in the last several years (Lal, 2006, p. 142) and India has joined the Chinese-created Shanghai Cooperation Organization. (Hariharan, 2015) As Lal notes, "When asked, many leading officials and scholars in both countries say that remaining disputes on borders and Tibet are not worth war" (2006, p. 131). With these facts considered, China ultimately cannot be considered India's primary security concern as of 2015.

[43] BRICS is an acronym referring to the nations of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, and the expected development of their economies on a global scale.

Pakistan

The final threat analyzed, Pakistan, has traditionally been India's most pressing security concern since partition and subsequent independence in 1947. The history of violent conflict between these two nations is highlighted by four wars and several other armed conflicts rooted in nuclear proliferation, border contentions and territorial disputes, and, most notably, the persisting fight over the Kashmir region. Despite the history and ongoing issues between the two countries, there has been a slight improvement in relations over the last few years. Prior to the 2008 Mumbai attacks, India and Pakistan were in the process of implementing confidence-building measures and restarting the talks to resolve the Kashmir issue. (Qazi, 2012) Although this attack suspended progress for over three years, a push towards normalization between the traditionally bitter rivals began in 2011. Pakistan's current leaders have voiced their aims to stabilize relations in the immediate region while attempting to champion a liberal foreign policy over the last few years. With regards to steps towards normalization between India and Pakistan, Qazi notes:

> For example, 15 years after India first granted it most-favored nation status, Pakistan finally reciprocated. Furthermore, in September [2012], the two countries also signed a new visa agreement easing restrictions on travel. Together, the moves are expected to boost cross-border trade and increase cultural contacts between Indians and Pakistanis. (2012)

Perhaps the most significant development recently in India's relationship with Pakistan comes in the shift by Islamabad in delinking the Kashmir issue from other points of contention it has with India. Pakistan has even agreed to allow India a limited role in

Afghanistan whereby India may pursue interests of development and trade. These are developments never before seen in the history of the Indo-Pak saga. (Qazi, 2012)

In light of the more recent political developments between the two nations, Pakistan's apparent push towards normalization, and the absence of any meaningful military engagements in over a decade, the threat of the state of Pakistan as India's primary national security concern becomes diminished, although still relevant. In contrast to some of the more encouraging developments in recent year, there are still several areas of concern that continue to strain the Indian-Pakistani relationship. One of India's main concerns with Pakistan comes with regard to its status as a nuclear-armed power. Pakistan gained status as a nuclear power in 1998 and the following year the Kargil War with India took place, putting the world's major powers and everyone in the region on high-alert over fears of a potential nuclear war between the two sides. While nuclear war never materialized between India and Pakistan during this time, and there have been no official armed conflicts between the nations since then the theoretical possibility of nuclear war always exists between the two rivals.

The potential inability of the Pakistani government to control its domestic terror issue, and thereby maintain stability within and on its own borders, inevitably has a detrimental effect on neighboring India's security and the historically strained relationship that plagues the two countries. Several major terror outfits have originated and operate within or from Pakistan. A plethora of notable large-scale, deadly terror attacks have taken place in Pakistan since the turn of the millennium. Sectarian violence plagues the western state of Balochistan, major urban areas such as Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar and Islamabad have been the target of dozens of high-casualty incidents (some

involving the hundreds of casualties), and the porous northwest border with Afghanistan has allowed for a free-flow of illegal weapons, munitions and militants into the country.

It has been estimated that Pakistan has lost as much as $110 billion (Vasudevan, 2015) in recent years in its struggle with terrorism on its own soil. Thousands of individuals fall victim to terror attacks in Pakistan each year The Pakistani government's fight against domestic terror has, since summer of 2014, been highlighted by 'Operation Zarb-e-Azb' in North Waziristan. The primary objective of this military offensive has been to push-back and ultimately eliminate the operating capacity of Terik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and several of its allies from Pakistani territory. According to government figures, nearly 3,000 militants have been killed as of August 2015 and ninety percent of militant strongholds have been cleared. (Kaplan, 2015) While Pakistan's imminent domestic instability can work to destabilize India's own security at home, particularly in Indo-Pak border regions, this instability also creates a situation that requires the Pakistani government and military to prioritize problems within its own borders, thereby directing time, money and other resources into addressing such problems that may have historically been otherwise used in their historical conflict with India.

Pakistan is still considered by many to be India's number one threat to national security, however, due to the fact that a number of the most notable organizations that have perpetuated terrorist activity inside the Indian state originate within Pakistani borders, and due to the relationship that Pakistan's government has or had with some of these organizations. Despite the presumed link between the two, however, the state of Pakistan should not be confused with what officially are labeled as independent, non-state actors (i.e., extremist Muslim terror organizations) operating from within Pakistan's

borders who employ the terror tactics that result in India's most pressing national security concern. India possesses a great concern with the potential Pakistani connection to terror groups, most notably Lashkar-e-Taiba which is responsible for several high-level attacks in India since the turn of the millennium. Furthermore, even though India seeks an end to its tensions with Pakistan, Kronstadt notes:

> New Delhi acknowledges that a stable Pakistan is in India's interests. At the same time, however, Indian leaders are convinced that Pakistan has long been and remains the main source [of] India's significant domestic terrorism problems. They continue to blame Islamabad for maintaining an "infrastructure of terror" that launches attacks inside India. (2010, p. 3)

The Pakistani government categorically does not accept responsibility for such acts, however. Islamabad officially condemns many of these acts when they take place and has cooperated fully in select investigations by New Delhi into some of the incidents, but constant acrimony impedes this process and the peace process as a whole. (Kronstadt, 2010, p. 2) Pakistan's PM, Nawaz Shariff, has also implicitly accused its neighbor and historical enemy of supporting the same type of destabilizing ventures as India accuses Pakistan of supporting. During a speech at an all-party meeting, Sharif highlighted what was perceived to be India's attempt to divide Pakistan and incite communal tension throughout the country saying, "The enemy is using different tactics to divide the nation on sectarian and ethnic grounds but we will thwart their designs with unity", and noting that, "There are some who wish to make us fight amongst ourselves" (Vasudevan, S., 2015). This rhetoric, of course, is nothing new for Pakistan or India when speaking about one another's impact on its own, domestic security situation.

Regardless of the potential link between the state of Pakistan and terrorism, it is very important to reiterate the distinction between the Pakistani state and the terrorist

factions that operate independently within and from Pakistan. This is necessary here in order to establish (cross-border) terrorism directly as the primary threat to India's national security as opposed to the state of Pakistan itself. As such, extremist terror factions originating or operating from within the Pakistani state should be analyzed in their own right and as a security threat independent from other issues threatening India's national security.

The important distinction between threats from the Pakistani state itself (i.e., its military) and threats emanating from within the Pakistani state (i.e., terrorist organizations based from with the state), combined with the imminent reality of Pakistan's mounting domestic issues currently highlighted by military operations on their northwest frontier that they must address, create a situation where the Pakistani state should not be considered the primary threat to India's national security.

Modern-Day Histories of Terror

"India shares with Israel a common perception of terrorism as a menace, even more so when coupled with religious fundamentalism. Our mutual determination to combat terrorism is the basis for discussions with Israel, whose reputation in dealing with such problems is quite successful." - BJP leader L.K. Advani in 2000
(Kumaraswamy, 2010, p. 252-53)

In revisiting some of my earlier statements, we are presented with the overlapping identity of India and Israel based, in part, on a dreadful history of terrorism each has experienced. These countries have been victims of cross-border terrorism, an experience that more than any other has worked to create a shared identity-base which is recognized

by many Indians as well as Israelis. It is just one characteristic of identity that citizens of these two nations share and one that proves to be crucial to the collective security dynamic that exists between India and Israel today.

The following discussion in this section briefly details the history of terrorism in both India and Israel by illustrating various examples occurring over the last twenty years. These examples work to provide a point of comparison between the two countries and highlight there ongoing struggle with the threat of terrorism.

India

It is a painful, but ironic, fate that India would become one of the world's foremost victims of terrorism. It was the India-linked, Hindu extremist group known as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (i.e., the Tamil Tigers) that, beginning in the 1980's, popularized the despicable tactic of the suicide bombing during its separatist war in the country of Sri Lanka. (Pikert, 2009) For over thirty years, the headlines of Indian news reports have featured dozens and dozens of examples of terrorist activity by several different religious or ideologically-based groups. These groups include Hindu radical groups, Sikh extremists, and Leftist movements, such as the Maoist Naxalites, in addition to Islamic extremist organizations. Highlighted here are instances of Islamic radical terror that have occurred over the last two decades or so.

The December 2001 terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament by Pakistani militants resulted in the deaths of nine individuals. The government placed blame on the groups Jaish-e-Mohammed and Lashkar-e-Tayyiba. (Robertson, 2007, p. 368) This was significant for the choice of target as a direct attack on the highest, representative body of

the Indian state. The infamous November 2008 attacks on the Hotel Taj Mahal Palace and the Nariman House, the single most significant event epitomizing the Hindu-Jewish narrative due to the symbolic nature these targets project, resulted in 164 fatalities and the wounding of at least 308 (Bora, 2015). All in all, between 1994 and May of 2010, terror attacks in India resulted in 58,204 fatalities. (Misra, 2010, p. 39) Another notable attack took place in July of 2011 when again the Pakistani-based militant group Lashkar-e-Tayyiba attacked the city of Mumbai, setting off two near simultaneous blasts in the city center which killed at least 21 and injured over 140 more. ("Near simultaneous blasts", 2011)

Other notable terrorist activities, several of which were perpetuated by Lashkar-e-Taiba and Indian Mujahideen, that have taken place in India over the last twenty years includes, but are not limited to, the following:

- March 12, 1993: More than 300 people die in 13 separate but almost simultaneous truck bombings at financial sites in Bombay, India.
- February 14, 1998: A series of 12 bomb attacks [perpetrated by Al Ummah] at 11 locations in the city of Coimbatore in the state of Tamil Nadu killed 58 people and injured more than 200.
- October 1, 2001: Suicide attack on legislatures in Kashmir and Jammu leaves 38 people dead. Jaish-e-Mohammed initially claims responsibility, but later recants.
- August 25, 2003: Lashkar-e-Taiba sets off two car-bombs in Mumbai killing 54 and injuring 244.
- October 29, 2005: Three explosions in New Delhi kill 62 and injure more than 210. Lashkar-e-Taiba was responsible for the attacks.
- July 11, 2006: Commuter trains in Mumbai, India, bombed, killing 209 and injuring more than 700 with Lashkar-e-Kahar claiming responsibility

- May 13, 2008: Blasts in Jaipur kill 63 and wound 216. Indian Mujahideen (*sic*) claims responsibility
- July 26, 2008: A series of 21 attacks in Ahmedabad carried out by Indian Mujahideen kill 56 and injure over 200
- February 13, 2010: A German bakery in Pune is bombed with 17 fatalities and Indian Mujahideen claiming responsibility

(Bora, 2015)

In addition to some of these larger incidents, there have been dozens of smaller terror incidents throughout India perpetrated by Islamic extremist groups, as well as non-Islamic groups, since Mumbai in 2011 and through 2015, including one in 2013 in Bihar that killed six and targeted eventual Indian PM Narendra Modi. Since 2010, according to New Delhi's Institute for Conflict Management, that number of fatalities has further increased to approximately 65,000, albeit not all the result of Islamic extremism. ("Indian fatalities 1994", 2015). While annual fatality numbers due to terrorism have dropped in recent years, several contemporary developments have relegated cross-border/domestic as India's primary security concern as of 2015. These include the previously argued demise of state actors that have been historical threats to India's security, the increasingly unstable political and security situations in neighboring Pakistan where many terrorist threats to India originate, and the rise of terror groups, recruits, and incidents worldwide headlined by the rise of Islamic "state" in Iraq and Syria.

Israel

Cross-border terrorism in Israel, an especially common occurrence during the second intifada that lasted from 2000-2005, has come to define the most serious

immediate threat facing the population over the last two decades with dozens and dozens of incidents to take note of. Israel faces cross-border terror threats from the groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad on their southwestern border with Gaza and from Hezbollah militants on their northern border with Lebanon. All three of these groups and others, such as the former Palestinian Liberation Organization, have carried out terrorist bombings and attacks with relentless frequency since the 1980's. These include the terror bombings that took place during February of 1996 in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem killing 58 individuals and in March of 2002 when a total 127 Israelis lost their lives due to Palestinian terror attacks. (Wasserstein, 2003, p. 189-90) It is documented that from 2000-2004 there were 157 suicide attacks in Israel perpetrated by individuals from various Islamic radical groups in which a total of 507 Israelis were murdered.

The examples of terrorism and suicide bombing activity that took place within Israel's borders over the last two decades are seemingly innumerable. The following list provides several more examples (out of literally hundreds) briefly demonstrating the nature of frequency of this violent phenomenon the plagues the day-to-day existence of Israeli society:

- January 22, 1995: Bomb at Israeli military facility kills 19; Islamic Jihad claims responsibility
- February 26, 1996: Hamas suicide bomber blows up bus in Jerusalem, killing 26
- March 4, 1996: Tel Aviv shopping center bombed; 20 deaths reported. Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad claim credit
- June 1, 2001: Hamas suicide bomber hits "Dolphinarium" dance club in Tel Aviv, killing 21 people and wounding 140

- March 27, 2002: Hamas suicide bomber attacks Passover worshipers at Park Hotel in Netanya, Israel, killing 22 people
- October 4, 2003: Hezbollah suicide bomber attacks Haifa restaurant, leaving 19 dead

(Robertson, 2007, p. 362-371)

- July 12, 2005: 5 dead, 90 injured as result of suicide-bombing in Netanya mall
- April 17, 2006: 11 dead and 61 injured in a Tel Aviv suicide bombing at a fast-food restaurant
- March 6, 2008: 8 killed, 11 injured when an Islamic extremist entered Mercaz Harav Yeshiva in Jerusalem and opened fire
- August 8, 2011: 8 dead, 31 injured in Eilat as result of an attack on a bus, a roadside bomb and mortar fire on civilian vehicles
- November 18, 2014: Two Muslim extremists enter a Jerusalem synagogue killing 7 worshippers and injuring 11

(Johnston, 2014)

While the highest spikes in the frequency of terror attacks and the number of fatalities since the late 1980's have taken place during the first and second Intifadas, forms of terrorism remain a serious threat daily for Israeli citizens in certain parts of the country. This holds particularly true for those living on the border areas with Lebanon and especially Gaza, where indiscriminate rocket fire from various jihadi groups has become a regular occurrence taking place, on average, several times a year.

Israel's capability to defend its citizens against such attacks during both war and peacetime, has improved markedly since the lessons learned after the Second Intifada. These include the tightening of border security through the erection of walls and fences, increased numbers of check-points at border crossings, the strict control of all naval and

air-space in and out of Gaza, and the creation of the 'Iron Dome' system, just to name a few of the measures taken. Despite the continual advance in Israeli technology, weaponry and strategy, however, cross-border terrorism still remains a regular and constantly evolving threat for Israeli society. This is due to the ongoing existence of extremist factions such as Hamas, Hezbollah and Islamic Jihad in the territory surrounding Israel, and the continued state-sponsored support of these groups by Iran and/or many of Israel's historical Arab enemies.

Political Developments and Exchanges

It is no secret that the BJP has traditionally had a favorable view of Israel throughout its 30-plus years of existence which has been characteristic not only of privileging Israel on several occasions, but also of criticizing the Congress Party and its partners for their failure to support or properly engage the Israelis throughout most of their history as India's primary ruling political party. (Mohan, 2014)

With the BJP's ascent to domestic political relevancy just prior to normalization provided the Israel relationship with a much-needed support base within the lower-parliament who policy stance could no longer be disregarded, tangible signs of a significant rapprochement were very gradual and the institutionalization of this normative stance would take several years. During the years that made up the BJP's first majority governance term following the events of the Kargil War, the bilateral relationship would progress with the occurrence of four key political visitations. These included visits to Israel by India's first senior cabinet member, Home Minister L.K. Advani, and India's Minister of External Affairs, Jaswant Singh, in June of 2000, a meeting in the USA by

India's National Security Advisor Brajesh Mishra with the American Jewish Committee in May 2003, and, most significantly, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's visit to India in September of that same year. (Blarel, 2014, p. 300-303)

Sharon's visit was a major political milestone in the relationship between the two countries that has yet to be reciprocated. No Indian Prime Minister has ever visited Israel while in power, however, this is scheduled to change under the BJP-led government that undertook its role in 2014. The newly elected Prime Minister of India, Nerendra Modi, visited Israel in 2006 while he was chief minister of the state of Gujarat which is known for its cooperation with Israel in several areas including water management, sustainable agricultural practice and joint research ventures to name a few. (Katz, 2014) If we consider this past occurrence with the BJP's well-documented support of Israel, the change seemingly appears imminent with Modi at the helm as India's PM.

While the BJP's current support of Israel is apparently strong as ever, their historically anti-Muslim rhetoric also seems to have been reduced by a measurable degree over the last several years as well and has left the door open for the narrative focus to shift to the less militant, more positive connections the two nations share regarding "civilizational resonance". The BJP campaign platform for the 2014 elections placed its focus on economic growth, highlighting Modi's success in Gujarat, and on the promise of equal treatment of all Indian citizens, among other things. The initial reaction by India's Muslim populace to these promises and to the implicit self-image change of the BJP has, generally speaking, been one of belief and the approval as 2014 election results from several of India's Muslim-dense states seem to indicate. (Chalmers & Kalra, 2014) The invitation Modi extended to Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to visit India

immediately following his party's victory at the polls is perhaps further evidence of a perceived BJP image change vis-à-vis India's domestic Muslim constituency and its Muslim neighbor Pakistan.

Although the BJP's third term in power is now only in the second year of a six year term, history would suggest that India's relationship with Israel, politically, socially and militarily, will only continue to expand under BJP leadership, potentially in a more broad-based and rapid fashion. In what could traditionally viewed as a practice contradictory to developing ties with Israel, the BJP has also set out to change its own historical self-image regarding Islam and a sizeable portion of India's 175 million strong Muslim minority appears to have given their initial vote of confidence in this image change. Only time will tell if Modi and the BJP can successfully maintain this balancing act between the way it is perceived by India's Muslim citizenry and unwavering support of Israel. Only later will we be able to judge the success or failure of the BJP's third milestone and the legacy of the 2014 Indian general elections.

The normative stance taken by the BJP towards Israel throughout most of its existence may also be becoming reflected in India's institutional behavior, in addition to the improvement of direct, state-to-state cooperation that has be observed since the party's electoral success in May of 2014. In December of the same year, India's long-time policy of abstention in the UN voting was purportedly under review as a part of the Indian government's evaluation of its foreign policy strategy as a whole. India's voting record in the UN, which has a historically well-known track-record of Palestinian support, is under consideration for revision with only an "administrative nod" needed to make this revision move forward. (Berman, 2014) Conversely, India's Foreign Minister

Shrimati Sushma Swaraj, who is slated to visit Israel in October 2015, has stated publically that, “To say that we are tilted towards Israel or we are making any changes in our policy is wrong” (Ahren, 2015), insisting India’s foreign policy remains unchanged.

Despite the recent oratory from Swaraj reinforcing India’s longstanding position and UN voting patterns regarding the Israel-Palestinian issue, developments on the ground seem to suggest otherwise. The beginnings of this potential policy shift were hinted at nearly a year earlier, in July of 2014 when India’s BJP-led lower-parliament rejected a primarily Center and Left-supported resolution to condemn Israel over the conflict that was, at the time, taking place between Israeli forces and Hamas in the Gaza strip. (Gupta, 2014) Similarly in early July 2015, just before Swaraj was quoted reassuring India’s support for Palestine, India had abstained in a vote on a UN Human Rights Council resolution that backed a report critical of Israel’s behavior during the conflict with Hamas in Gaza last summer. (Ahren, 2015) Furthermore, two months prior to this it was confirmed that Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi would be the first Indian head-of-state to visit Israel. (Keinon, 2015) This visit will be an event with symbolic implications as great if not greater than the practical ones, and it will work to further support the onset of “civilizational resonance” I argue is now being fostered within the narrative on Indian-Israeli relations.

The takeaway is that, while these developments are significant in terms of the tangible or practical benefit they could bestow upon Israel (or India for that matter) in the short- or long-term, what is most remarkable here is the seeming reversal of India’s long-term normative stance towards Israel that had been solidified under Nehru’s leadership over six and half decades ago. India’s stance on Israel, as explained in chapter three, was

always publically assessed and promulgated vis-à-vis the Palestinian issue and the status of this conflict at any given time. The staunchly pro-Palestinian sympathies espoused in India's official position on all Israeli-related issues remained strong even after normalization of relations between the two countries in 1992. While there has been a gradual improvement of relations every year since normalization, on the international stage throughout this time period India had always remained critical of Israel and the way Israel has handled its issues with Palestine.

Economic Relations and R&D

From a stance of a relationship embedded in the notion of a "shared" identity, an environment results that is conducive to fostering of ties across sectors. If Modi's track-record during his time in Gujarat is any indication of what we can expect during his tenure as India's prime minister, then close attention should be paid to the progression of India's economy, and economic relationship and bi-lateral trade relations with Israel. Since the establishment of relations between India and Israel in 1992, there have been several other areas in which cooperation has been initiated and has continued to flourish in addition to the security realm. Economically speaking, bilateral trade has increased from just $200 million annually at the establishment of official relations, to $4+ billion per annum currently. Of this amount, anywhere from 50-70% is said to be a result of the diamond trade and trade of other precious stones. (Kumaraswamy, 2010, p.254-255)

Two areas that are especially burgeoning are those of science and technology ("India and Israel", 2010) which comes as no surprise if one considers the unprecedented rise of the I.T. sector in Israel's 'Silicon Wadi' and the south Indian city of Bangalore

over the last several years. The status of both these countries as global tech centers has created a multitude of opportunities for research and development cooperation and collaboration. Fields of cooperation here include telecommunications, nano- and biotechnology, and space technology to name a few, as evidenced by the visit of India's Minister of Science and Technology Kapil Sibal in May of 2005 and the subsequent understanding on the creation of joint research and development fund (Blarel, 2014, p. 334-335) The vast-growing nature of the technology relationship has even led Israel to open up a consulate in India's tech-city Bangalore in 2012 (Blarel, 2014, p. 334) in order to aid in facilitating the high-volume of day-to-day interaction between individuals and companies of the two nations' technology sectors. In 2014 the two governments were in ongoing talks about the establishment of an R&D fund of a reported $40+ million dollars that would be aimed at bringing together Indian and Israeli companies and scientists for collaborative technological efforts. (Cohen, 2015)

The seemingly limitless capacity for current and future R&D co-op, and its mutually beneficial relationship for the two countries' economic ties, was voiced by the official spokesmen of the Israeli embassy in Delhi, Ohad Horsandi, in an interview I conducted with him:

> Market-wise it is huge for Israel, 5.5 billion dollars in 2012. We are working on signing an FTA with India which is a huge game changer. It will allow Israeli companies to sell more equipment and commodities here, much more than it has been now, and experts say that trade can triple within 3-4 years. This also has an effect on areas of R&D and movement of people. Israel is a small country and we need markets because it is an export economy. Also, India is very good with R&D and can be a very good partner for this whether it is private to private, government to government, or academic to academic.

> You can only get so far by doing all R&D in-house. In a few years this will be a pillar of the relationship along with defense, agriculture, and trade. Israelis are good with innovation and creating ideas and developing them to a certain point and that is it. Indian companies are good at taking a good idea and sustaining it and making it grow. They can take that idea, adapt it, lower its cost and then mass market it. (Horsandi, Personal Interview, 2014)

The two countries appear to be "natural" partners in this regard with the very nature of the market, and the rapid increase in reliance on technology, creating a situation for seemingly unlimited growth between the nations. Israel is well-known for product innovation and design, while India adapts that product and then markets it. Each country provides the other with something the other vitally needs to ensure a healthy economy and, in large part, some the other lacks. The Free-Trade Agreement (FTA) that currently being negotiated is a restart initiative of Modi's BJP-led government and, once the details are agreed upon, is predicted to at least double the already booming economic partnership and open up more avenues for trade beyond the dominant arms and diamond sectors. (Parashar, 2015)

As Mr. Horsandi was keen to mention, there have also been major technology and learning exchange programs centered on water and agriculture. (Beck, 2013; Kamin, 2013; Udasin, 2013) Similar to the Israel development-Indian marketing dynamic, Israel has agricultural technology, but little land, while India has an immense amount of land, but lacks the technology to maximize cultivation of this land. A multitude of factors including inefficient agricultural practices, natural disasters, insufficient water supply and a rapidly increasing population, all negatively impact the amount, distribution and quality of India's water supply and India's ability to effectively grow and manage crops in many areas. Technology developed in Israel over the last several years and its experience in

managing water issues at home have made this an area ripe for cooperative measures and problem solving.

A multitude of bi-lateral agreements between states within India and Israel have been put in place over the last several years with the aim of vastly improving agricultural techniques, making water and irrigation practices more efficient and generating greater crop yields. For example, an agricultural collaboration initiative known as the Action Plan was initiated by the Israeli government in 2008 which continues in 2015, has created many centers where the collaboration is based on and includes seven different Indian states[44]. (Blarel, 2014, p. 334) The continued developments in technology, agriculture, research collaboration, trade and others, function to integrate deeply the two societies in a fashion that is poised to result in their ascent to a level of significance alongside the defense and security relationship.

Cultural Developments

A rapidly developing area of Indian-Israeli relations that demonstrates relevance for my argument is the booming tourism industry. India is currently a top tourist destination for Israeli travelers, a growing trend with more than 40,000 visiting annually. It has become an especially popular destination for young Israeli soldiers after finishing their required military service, and Israeli tourist volume is so high in some places, such as parts of Kashmir, that it has become the norm to see signs and labels written in Hebrew.

[44] Includes the states of Harayana, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, and Karnataka. (Blarel, 2014, p. 334)

A major impetus for such a trend lies within the civilizational affinities that Jewish Israelis have for the widespread 'culture of spirituality' that day-to-day life in India is perceived to be embedded in. This is a spirituality that ultimately finds its base or beginnings in what can only be described as "Hindu" sources of culture and being. Hindu culture, which historically has been a religious tradition famed for its tolerance and integration of minority religions into the fold of Indian society, for nearly two millennia has welcomed and respected Jews who have lived within the territorial confines of their ancient civilization. This highly redeeming quality of the Hindu society, many centuries in the making, has created a deep rapport with the Jewish community. Israeli Jews are especially cognizant of this rapport which is reflected in the spiritual and cultural attraction they have for India and the civilizational base on which this society is built.

The spiritual and cultural ties embedded in the tourism sector are manifest most notably perhaps in the joint-collaborative effort between Indian and Israeli governments that aims to bring Jews Indian-origin to India for heritage tours. This program is set to be in place by early 2016 and will allow the estimated 85,000 Indian-Jews from Israel to tour and experience various Jewish heritage sites throughout India in an effort to educate and connect them with their Indian origins:

> With India renovating Jewish heritage sites in the country, India's envoy to Israel has appealed to young Jews of Indian origin to utilize the ease of travelling to the land of their forefathers and to contribute in strengthening bilateral ties by connecting to their roots. ("India to start", 2015)

The notion that this program will "contribute to strengthening bilateral ties" demonstrates an implicit recognition by both governments of the deep 'religio-cultural' connections and affinities that these countries share as well as the utility that that cultural cooperative

efforts can have for the solidifying of ties at the state-to-state level. This 'religio-cultural' cooperative endeavor also finds significance in the fact that, as far as Israeli Jews of Asian origin are concerned, it is a unique opportunity that practically only India can offer (save for China[45]) due in large part to the travel bans and serious safety concerns that would be faced by these Jews in any attempt to visit their country of origin across the Asian continent. Unlike many other locations in Asia where historically significant populations of Jews once lived, but Israelis cannot travel (i.e. Iran, Uzbekistan, throughout the Arab world, etc.), India is very welcoming and relatively safe for Israelis to visit. This again plays into the entirety of the history of Jews in India and the theme of "civilizational resonance" discussed throughout this writing.

The historical circumstance(s) on which this rapport is built on is quite unique for Israeli-Jews and one that, I argue, may not be found with any other nation or society in the world. From this circumstance, a platform for cooperation and resonance forms within the normative-social sector of Mesbahi's framework that reinforces and aids in facilitating new avenues of engagement between the nations within/between other sectors and composite levels. Given the primordial and often deep-rooted nature of the cultural enterprise, connections or cooperation made at this level could be argued to create bonds that are stronger and longer-lasting than any sort of relations emanating from purely pragmatic circumstances or tangible reasons.

[45] China is an Asian country where it is currently permissible for Israelis to travel. While native Jewish communities are known to date back several centuries, the numbers were relatively marginal. Common estimates have these numbers potentially reaching a thousand at one time, with a few sources claiming up to 10,000, although this figure is not widely accepted. See Pollak (1980) for details on Jews of China. Despite the fact that Israeli Jews can safely travel to China, the relationship between China, Judaism and Israel is much less significant within the context of the discussion for several reasons including that the native community in China is all but non-existent and the Chinese-Israeli relationship is primarily economic, currently lacking any real connective substance in the geo-cultural or geo-military sectors.

Recognition of Civilizational Resonance: Building a Case for a Cultural Foundation of State-to-State Interaction

The topics that informed the comparative explanation of the orthopraxic nature of Hinduism and Judaism found in chapter two, in addition to others, were major themes of discussion when top religious leaders from India's and Israel's majority religion began an official inter-faith dialogue starting in 2007 in New Delhi[46] with the Chief Rabbinate of Israel representing the Jewish delegation and the H.D.A.S representing the Hindus. These two religious envoys were brought together, in part, through the effort of a third-party NGO[47] called the World Council of Religious Leaders[48] and its Secretary General Mr. Bawa Jain. Subsequent meetings took place in the following years, including the second installment of the original New Delhi meeting which took place in 2008 in Jerusalem[49] and less publicized 2009 meetings[50] in New York and Washington which were conducted between secondary associate groups of the main Hindu and Jewish contingencies, in addition to the H.D.A.S. These groups included the Hindu American Foundation, the American Jewish Committee, religious leaders and several academics and experts in fields of religion, political science, and other disciplines.

The importance of this dialogue and these meetings with regards to Indian-Israeli relations derives from the holistic role of Hinduism and Judaism in their respective

[46] For further reading on this meeting refer to Bender (2011; 2014); "1st Hindu-Jewish" (2007)

[47] Non-Governmental Organization

[48] For further information on this organization prefer to "The world council" (2002)

[49] For further information on this meeting refer to Bender (2011; 2014) and "2nd Hindu-Jewish" (2008)

[50] For further details on this meeting please refer to Brill (2009) and "Hindu, Jewish religious" (2009)

societies as described in previous sections. These high-level meetings between the leaders of the two most important communities within each respective religious tradition provide a palpable example of the mutual recognition of commonalities in the character, history, and development of each nation not only within a contemporary context, but at a deeper, primordial level as well.

The effects that such an understanding and partnership could have on India-Israel relations can be measured within the framework of track-II diplomacy[51]. Track-II diplomacy is one angle from which religion can be approached within the IR discipline. Track-II talks (diplomacy) can be defined as:

> Discussions held by non-officials of conflicting parties in an attempt to clarify outstanding disputes and to explore options resolving them in settings or circumstances that are less sensitive than those associated with official negotiations. They are neither academic conferences nor secret diplomacy conducted by government representatives. (Agha, Feldman, Khalidi & Schiff, 2003; p. 1-2)

As the definition indicates, this alternative form of diplomacy has the potential of being both very useful as well as effective in addressing and dealing with pressing issues of nation-states. Further, some of the most recognizable forms of track-II diplomacy occur between religious groups and can be seen in formal meetings between religious leaders in the form of inter-faith or inter-religious dialogue. Inter-religious meetings and dialogue is are methods of integrating the “religious” with the “political” within or between states in

[51] For a more in-depth discussion regarding track-II diplomacy and notable historical examples refer to Agha & et. al. (2003), which details the role of track-II talks throughout the history of much of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Leguey-Feilleux (2009), whose chapter on 'track-II diplomacy’ typologizes the enterprise while providing notable historical examples for each, and Johnston & Cox (2003), whose discussion highlights track-II diplomatic efforts in the context of role and potential of religiously-affiliated individuals and/or groups.

a way that is sensitive to public opinion and knowledge and the overall process of conflict management. Joseph Montville, the individual who first coined the term track-II diplomacy in his 1981 article "Foreign Policy to Freud", details this integration into the political sphere by noting that:

> Track two diplomacy is a process designed to assist official leaders…by exploring possible solutions out of the public view and without the requirements of formal negotiation or bargaining for advantage. Track two diplomacy seeks political formulas or scenarios that might satisfy the basic security and esteem needs of the parties to a particular dispute. On its more general level, it seeks to promote an environment in a political community, through the education of public opinion that would make it safer for political leaders to take risks for peace. (2006, p. 16)

Track-II diplomatic efforts, therefore, can create a potentially viable bridge between the Indian and Israeli states which makes each cognizant of the antecedent notion of "civilizational resonance" that I argue exists between the two states at multiple societal levels.

In addition to conflict resolution, however, I would expand the usefulness of track-II diplomacy to include those efforts by non-official representatives in seeking to improve existing stable relations or relations that have encountered a lull acknowledged to fall short of the traditional label of 'conflict' which implies the presence of some degree of force and/or violent measures. Putting aside for the moment any relation or effect the Hindu-Jewish dialogue can or does have on India-Israel relations, there was definitively a conflict present in terms of a perceived serious theological and dogmatic divide between the two religions. This was a primary reason for organizing the dialogue in the first place, an attempt to shed light on and come to an understanding over these concerns. In this manner, this example of track-II diplomacy conforms to most definitions

of the term that are ‘conflict oriented’. This religion-based enterprise of civilizational bridge-building could also work to subdue the remaining conflict-creating misgivings stemming from the Israeli-Palestinian issue that prevented India from establishing relations with Israel prior to normalization, and that have made them so cautious in their dealings with the Jewish state ever since. In this sense, even after normalization, India has continued to have a sensitive conflict of interest to a certain degree in its relationship with Israel. Furthermore, it is when the dialogue is placed in the context of its potential effect on the India-Israel relations that it then becomes a means to build on an already existing and stable relationship, as my extended definition posits, in addition to aiding to overcome historical reservations that India has had against Israel relating to Palestine and Israel’s creation as a religiously-based state.

The potential significance of the Hindu-Jewish Summits for the Indian-Israeli relationship, and the value of ‘religio-cultural’ interaction for this venture more broadly speaking, was implicitly demonstrated by Israeli state through the recognition of importance that it gave to the dialogue at the time. This recognition went as far as hosting and receiving the Hindu delegation at several events. The delegation was hosted as honored guests at official dinners, on tours to certain parts of the country and a special welcome greeting by the Israeli Parliament in session. Among those who met with the Hindu delegation were local governmental officials, members of the Foreign Ministry, President Shimon Peres and even then Prime Minister Ehud Olmert. ("Delegation of senior," 2008; "Hindu leaders meet," 2008) The potential significance of the Hindu-Jewish dialogue for Indian-Israeli relations, as can be implied from the actions of endorsement by the Israeli government, was previously and dually acknowledged by the

delegates at the Delhi summit of 2007 in the official report of this meeting which states that this initiative, "… is becoming increasingly important as India and Israel continue to take steps to strengthen their relationship, a relationship that has the potential to affect global politics by altering the balance of power in Asia" ("*1st Hindu-Jewish*", p. 3, 2007).

Track-II diplomacy, broadly speaking, cannot and will not supplant 'formal' diplomacy (track-I), nor is it typically sufficient as a stand-alone measure in conflict resolution or bringing about a major progressive shift in an existing stable relationship between states. However keeping in mind the potential value of track-II diplomacy, combined with the complexity of religious integration that pervades both Indian and Israeli society as a whole, the existence of such a dialogue potentially takes on much more significance. This significance emanates from the notion that this is a relationship between state societies where religious leaders would theoretically hold a greater measure of influence among the large contingent of citizens who defined themselves as a member of one of these two majority religious communities. This includes those citizens who hold official political office or power, particularly those whose party ideology finds its base in religion or religious identity. This type of dialogue works in reinforcing the commonalities of the shared history between these countries and provides a significant point of connection between the religion-based cultures that underpin each state's society and, theoretically, the formal relationship between these states. When situated within the theoretical framework set out in the next section this religio-cultural base, when combined with other currently thriving sectors such as cooperative economic development, would provide "incentives, institutional support, and continuity to the political and psychological processes" (Montville, 2006, p. 16).

By placing this Hindu-Jewish dialogue within a context which highlights the significant effects that track-II diplomacy can have on state-to-state relations, and parlaying this idea with the erstwhile explanation of religion's unique position and influence in the societies of India and Israel that was offered earlier, further conviction can be demonstrated for the overarching argument of this dissertation regarding the normative and functional effects that religious identity has, or can have, on the Indian-Israeli relationship.

The Analytical Framework of Security, Politics, the Economy and Culture post-1992

Chapter four argued for the initial impact of the BJP's influence on the "environmental structure" and "identity" (Jepperson et. al., 1996) of India leading up to and including the time of normalization. With the cultural and institutional elements needed to challenge India's state identity and implement a shift in their policy towards Israel, an opening was then created for various sectors and support mechanisms to be established in the years that followed. These would work to support, uphold, and progress this policy and the identity that was argued to underpin it.

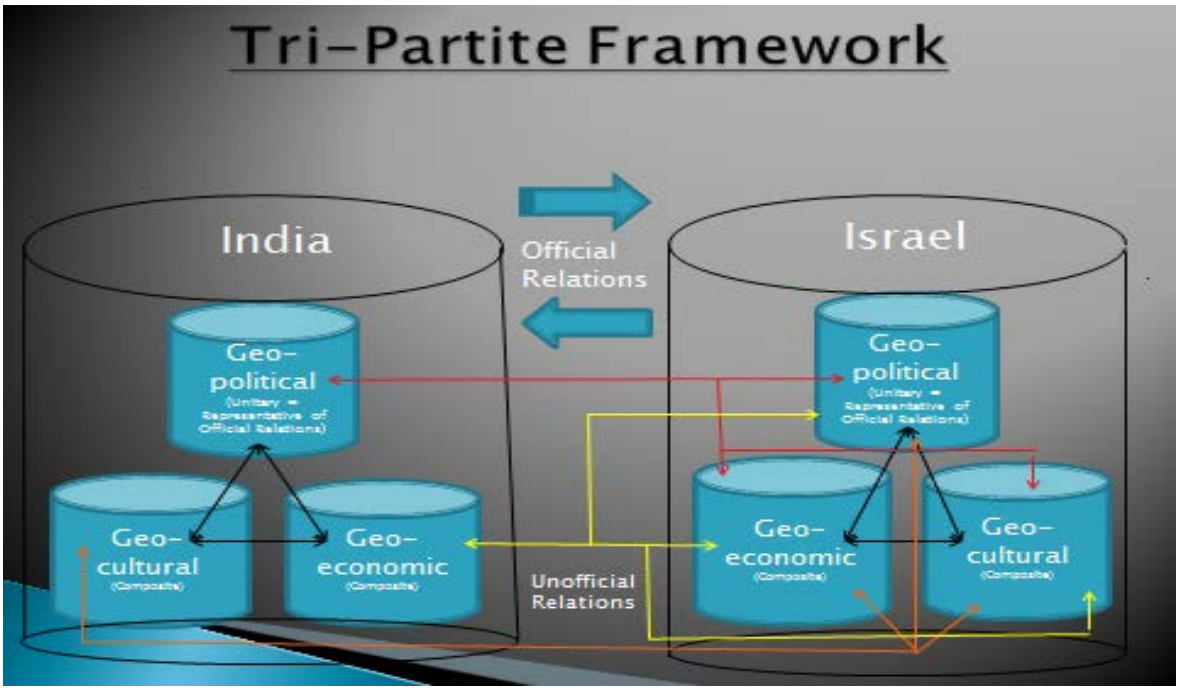
The security co-op was highlighted first as it is currently the most recognizable and deeply embedded sector of the Indian-Israeli relationship and because notions of shared threat (the primary component of securitization) were the initial link for establishment of relations during the BJP's rise. A short, comparative history of terrorism over the last few decades in each country was discussed in order to highlight the real-world examples used in the legitimization of a primary theme of the narrative that underpins the Indian-Israeli bond. Propagation of such a comparison provides impetus to

take action, such as security cooperation and the buying of arms. In short, the narrative urges the taking of action and then resulting action works to support and reify the narrative.

The BJP's perception of threat shared with Israel was set within a context of one religiously-based society relating to another, that is a Hindu India threatened by an "outside" Islamic identity comparable to a Jewish Israel threatened by an "outside" Islamic invader. As a threat to identity at its most basic core, a link is established within Buzan's (et. al, 1998) "societal" sector of securitization. As the narrative was taken up by the BJP, an established party within India's state, regional and local political arena, the threat was brought into Buzan's (et. al, 1998) "political" sector. Here the Islamic identity was securitized with reference to the growing influence of Islamist parties in India and the perceived preferential treatment Muslims have historically received from Congress-led governments over the years. Once the BJP became a relevant opposition and, at times, the governing party in India, its influence was strong enough to bring this narrative and threat perception into Buzan's "military" sector of securitization. This sector of course is where the biggest flurry of activity has taken place between the two nations in recent decades. Its foundations, however, are still ultimately rooted in notions of shared societal threat perceptions and, without the BJP's gradually progressive influence at the highest levels of government since the late 1980's, the narrative encompassing these threat perceptions might not have sufficiently politicized to create the security partnership we see today.

The three security sectors of Buzan (et al.) outlined above, the "societal", the "political" and the "military", seem to be significant factors that fit within two of the

three structures of Mesbahi's state-identity framework, with notions of "societal" security falling into geo-cultural (normative-social) structure and the "political" and "military" sectors falling under the geo-political (military-coercive) structure.



In referring back to the tri-partite framework posited by Mesbahi (2011), developments rooted in the geo-cultural structure advanced and, through its inherent interaction with the geo-political, essentially fostered the normalization by the central government which opened up and allowed for further engagement between India and Israel in and between structures, at the "unitary" level and across "composite" strata. These developments refer to the social construction of the BJP's identity and how this identity was and is used to create a connection with the Israeli state and its majority Jewish society. While the initial social construction of a connection between the societies and states fell mainly within the realm of the perceived threat from Islam, the "civilizational resonance" construct was

also present at the time, albeit to a rather minimal degree. As a social construct and a narrative built around a threat to a society based in the Hindu religion and culture, this series of events can then be viewed as emanating from the geo-cultural structure.

The gradual and progressive development of the BJP's position in parliament from its electoral victory in 1991 to the present, has allowed it to gain power and influence as both a minority and majority party in the state government over this span of time. As an accompanying attribute of its progressively increasing and influencing presence in government, the narrative it constructed could then be inserted within the geo-political structure to challenge India's longtime "environmental (normative) structure" and "identity" that this stratum dictates regarding Israel, thereby creating a gradual shift in "interests" and ultimately effecting "policy" towards Israel. The narrative of course is not static as has been demonstrated by increased awareness of connections with Israel via "civilizational resonance" and with the BJP's greatly toned down rhetoric regarding Islam as a threat generally speaking, instead opting for a more refined focus on the threat of Islamic extremism. In any case, being that the geo-political structure puts forth the "official" identity of the state and has the most direct influence on a state's interaction/relationship with the system and other states, shifts or changes within the geo-political structure generally have a great impact on policy.

The presence of such a narrative at the "unitary" (i.e., state government level) that sits at the top of the "composite" Indian societal strata, puts it in a position to create a trickle-down effect on these sub-state levels within the other structures, both the geo-cultural and the geo-economic. Several years after normalization, relations began to flourish across multiple strata within the geo-economic structure and relations within the

geo-cultural have taken on a much more tangible character, developments that have paralleled the progression within the geo-political structure. What is critical to highlight here is the role and evolution of the bonding narrative of threat and "civilizational resonance" within structures and across various strata. As some of the examples demonstrate, the dual-layered narrative works in manners both indirect and direct. For example, indirect, within the geo-economic structure through notions of "shared" identity which foster a comfortable environment in which to do business or create partnerships, and direct, as can be observed in the geo-cultural structure through high-level, government-involved interfaith initiatives or in the religious or spiritual tourism highly popular with Israeli tourists in India.

While determining the exact tangible impact of such developments across stratum is a long-term research task that is beyond the scope of this writing, the significance of the development of these types of relationships over the last several years can be conceptualized through the tri-partite framework. The "trickle-down" effect that growing BJP influence theoretically had in influencing the "environmental structure" and "identity" of India allowed "composite" stratum to subsequently begin forging new relations with the Israel state within all three structures and across similar strata. The progressive nature of these relationships, in turn, began to gradually reflect in the "identity" of the Indian state, thereby essentially reifying the BJP's narrative on Israel at the "unitary" level through a kind of "trickle-up" effect and continually strengthening the relationship between the countries as a whole.

This model then conceptualizes the interdependent and cyclical nature of how this narrative functions within Indian society, from the state-level down to the individual, and

what this means for India's relationship with Israel. Instances of increased BJP leadership in Parliament were and are important to the relationship which has affected and continues to affect across the structures and strata of society as a whole. This also works to demonstrate the intersubjective nature of reification of the identity narrative from "unitary" down to "composite" levels and back up again. While the initial shift in India's "identity" and 'environmental (normative) structure' necessitated the existence of an influential actor (i.e., the BJP) at the highest state-level stratum (i.e., the "unitary" level), critical support and strengthening for the foundations of the narrative underpinning this structure and identity were and are increasingly found at the various "composite" strata. The more these relationships exist and develop, the easier it becomes for pro-Israel actors within the geo-political structure at the state-governmental level to advance official relations with Israel and continue to perpetuate the identity-based narrative heralded to give the two nations such a unique bond.

CONCLUSIONS

The final chapter of this work aims to reiterate my initial argument on religion's role in Indian-Israeli relations, summarize the findings regarding my thesis and briefly discuss future avenues to continue this study. First, however, I would like to analyze some of the challenges that arose in the conduct of this research. I also will review some of the other competing explanations for the nature and normalization of Indian-Israeli relations and how these alternative factors fit, or could fit, within my analytical framework and future research avenues. This will be followed by discussion of future research possibilities and, lastly, a summation of my argument and research findings.

Research Challenges and Other Factors in Normalization

This work on the role of religious identity in the Indian-Israeli relationship, of course, did not come without some challenges. These challenges can be categorized in two primary ways: challenges to my research design and challenges from competing arguments regarding reasons for Indian-Israeli non-relations and subsequent normalization. Both categories will briefly be reviewed below, followed by a section highlighting potential avenues for future research inclusive of strategies for obtaining a more complete understanding of my topic and a plan for successfully building on my research findings.

Challenges to Research Method and Analysis

While in the field, as well as during the writing process, some challenges arose with regards to the general nature of my chosen theory and methods used for gathering information and evidence. There exists an inherent difficulty in demonstrating empirical evidence for the effects of ideas, a criticism that social constructivist theory has had to deal with since its inception.

While an extensive review of the arguments surrounding this debate is far beyond the scope of this writing, I felt it important to acknowledge the limits of taking such a theoretical approach and how these limits could be present in my case. Determining the functional, normative or causal effect(s) of an identity can be difficult given that identities are based in acceptance of ideas, and ideas ultimately are private information. While the sharing of knowledge regarding the true motivation for the endorsement of certain policies or the taking of any sort of action on an issue is ultimately at the discretion of the individual or individuals under analysis, several research methods can be utilized in an effort to close this discretionary gap, but these too have their short-comings.

Archives

In an effort to accurately access this private information, as was detailed in my earlier methods section, I engaged in primary-source archival research and personal interviews as supplementary measures to the empirical analysis of secondary literary sources, such as books, academic journals and newspaper articles. For all of these different types of source material I would pay particular attention to the rhetoric used by key individuals under review, being written about or being interviewed in an attempt to

find terms or concepts with religious meaning, value, or relation. For the archives, the major challenges came with regard to the availability of material and the general discretion that government officials tend to use in managing access to these documents. Gaining entrance and access to material available in India and Israel was of little issue, however, since what material was available was rather meager in some cases.

In India, the major challenge came with reference to the archival material released to the public to date. India, unlike nearly every other free and democratic nation, has no policy requiring the release of classified documents after a certain period of time. As such, documents on its official dealings with Israel are only available up through approximately the mid-1970s. Even these are relatively few in number and many, although officially listed as having been released, still remain in "transit" from India's Foreign Ministry office and are not physically present in any accessible archive.

In Israel, while the availability and release of documents are much more transparent and organized, a minor obstacle was presented by the language barrier. This issue was not present in India, since India uses English as a primary mode of government communication. Also, Israel's archives lacked the third-party communication that Indian archives had regarding relations between the two countries. India's third-party discussions with other countries were important due to the fact that they provided an indirect line of communication with Israel and because these discussions were almost exclusively done through the medium of the English language.

For both nation-states, officially democratic and secular countries, any seemingly "religious" language would typically be avoided and any incidents or issues of a religious aspect would have been very carefully articulated so as to maintain a decidedly political

tone. Given the highly sensitive nature of religion and politics in both countries, and the tumultuous and tactful environment that surrounded India's relationship with Israel, further impetus has been created for maintaining a subtle and less transparent protocol regarding archives on India's official dealings with the Israeli state.

Interviews

Much in the same fashion as official government archives and communications, attempting to get politically or religiously involved individuals to speak openly about religion in the Indian-Israeli relationship proved to be quite challenging. Government officials tend not to depart much from the official party position on the matter and they, along with religious leaders and academics alike, are very careful in how they iterate their views on religion and Israel, again because of the highly sensitive nature of both topics throughout the nation's history. Related to this issue was the fact that many interviewee's were wary about speaking on the record at all, a concern that resulted in my inability to record conversations, their unwillingness to sign the necessary forms and even meet with me at all in some cases. While such obstacles were fairly predictable, the relatively limited timeframe I had in contacting interviewees, establishing rapport, and organizing interviews, all placed a limit on the amount of valuable information I was able to obtain using the interview method.

Considering the Role of Other Factors

There are, of course, several other occurrences and circumstances that have been, and continue to be, argued as contributing factors to both normalization and non-

normalization. While the analysis in this writing had the primary aim of highlight the significance of religion and religious identity in the historical Indian-Israeli relationship, it was by no means an argument for a mono-causal trajectory of this history. The influences on, and causes of, such historical developments are ultimately the result of the interaction of a multitude of complex processes over a long period of time. Though the aim of my analysis was not to investigate and establish the role of these other processes, I would acknowledge a fair amount of the scholarly arguments concerning the significance of these factors. As such, I will briefly address some of the other factors that have been considered and discussed as causal factors for (non) normalization in the historical Indian-Israeli relationship as a whole. The goal here is not to disprove the significance or effects of these alternative factors, but rather to direct attention to some of the shortcomings or lack of explanatory power they may possess regarding the (non) normalization discussion which, in turn, could be supplemented or improved by taking my argument for religious identity into consideration.

End of the Cold War: Economic Liberalization and the End of a Bi-Polar World

The end of the Cold War was a meta-event that had significant repercussions worldwide, the effects of which we arguably can still see being played-out in the modern day. The consequences of this historical occurrence for India itself were particularly significant given its ideological commonalities, its reliance on the arms trade and, despite its leadership role in the Non-aligned movement, its close relations with the former Soviet Union. The resulting shift in global hegemony that accompanied the fall of the Soviet Union, in part, caused India to reevaluate its socio-economic strategy and its

position within this new state of global political affairs that saw the United States solely positioned at the top. In addition to economic liberalization and its opening to the free-market, this was a reevaluation for India that has been argued to include its relationship with Israel given the timing of normalization and two newly existing conditions that were present given the collapse of the USSR: 1.) India was, to an extent, bound to the East-West political division of the Middle East that eventually saw Israel as a staunch US ally, but this was no longer the case with a now defunct Soviet Union and bi-polar world; and 2.) Normalization with Israel was a strategy for building closer ties with Washington given the break-up of the Soviet alliance system and subsequent US hegemony.

The Soviet Union did have a particularly tumultuous relationship with Israel after the 1956 Suez crisis, an occurrence that would give way to decades of Soviet support for the Arabs, and hit an apex after the 6 Day War when the Soviets cut off diplomatic relations with Israel, a situation that would not be remedied until the Soviet Union fell in 1991. Despite this historical trajectory, the Soviet Union had been one of the first countries to recognize Israel's sovereignty and the Jewish state's historical connection to socialism provided a potential bridge of connection between the two countries for the first few years of Israel's existence. However, India's pro-Soviet bias was gradual (Kumaraswamy, 2010, p. 20), taking place over several years. In any case, India's policy towards Israel was previously argued to have become institutionalized under Nehru's leadership and cemented in the occurrence of the Suez Crisis, a series of events that took place prior to the staunch anti-Israel stance that the Soviets would eventually take. India's position on Israel, then, seems to have been well-established prior to Soviet influence on the matter which instead served to support existing views against relations. By the time of

the Soviet Union's breakup, an event that very few saw coming, the normalization process, had seemingly been underway for a few years, a condition that implicitly reduced any influence that the fall of the USSR might have had on this process.

India's relationship with the US has certainly improved since 1991, the end of the Cold War, and 1992, the year of its normalization with Israel. However, while normalization with Israel was certainly not an impediment to US-India relations and, understandably, could have only served to improve this relationship, I believe this notion to be of marginal importance in India's normalization process with Israel. It is true that India's relations with the US are currently quite stable and have gradually improved since the early 1990s and I agree with Kumaraswamy (2010, p. 258-260) who outlined the main sources of India-US rapprochement which he rooted primarily in India's economic liberalization, its economic growth and the elimination of its anti-American ideology and mindset. Furthermore, despite the growing and relatively healthy relationship between the two, several noticeable conditions remain that India would presumably seek to reevaluate or downplay if indeed US relations constituted a primary concern rather than simply one of many important foreign policy initiatives. These include India's continued warm relations with Russia, the nature of its relationship with Israel which seems to be increasingly conducted independent of US concerns, and its innate uneasiness with the continuing American partnership with Pakistan.

Non-Religious Identity

Two other notable and, to a degree, interconnected identities are observed to play role in India's overall political development prior to the end of the Cold War: Socialist

and anti-imperialist (i.e., their NAM identity). There had been contacts and friendly ties (generally speaking) between Indian socialist party members and Israel as a whole given the connection its founding and earliest leaders had to socialism. J.P. Narayan, former Indian PM and one of India's most prominent socialist party leaders, recognized the connection between the two nations via the socialist avenue in the early days of each state. He was one of the few prominent Indian leaders to visit Israel in the first decade of the Israeli state's existence noting that, "I can promise you that Israel has many friends among wide circles of Indian people, in the Socialist movement" (Archives-NAI, "Military, naval and air attaché", 1958)[52]. Despite India's socialist credentials, its long history of association with socialist states, and the strong presence of a variety of socialist leanings among many of its leaders, better relations between India and Israel on this ideological front never really had a significant impact on the relationship as a whole. Many of the socialist nations India was associated were unabashedly anti-Israeli and, furthermore, many of India's socialist-minded leaders were members of the dominant, more Centrist Congress Party or were significantly greater to the Left as active members of one of India's communist parties. In any case, whether more towards the Centre or more towards the Left, neither was in favor of relations with Israel.

The Non-aligned Movement demonstrates another avenue for the analysis of India's non-relations with Israel within the context of the role of India's identity with anti-imperialism. However, several different factors seem to detract from any primary causal power that may be given to India's adoption of such an identity. The first is that,

[52] This archival note was a photocopy of a newspaper article with the following bibliographical information: 'Narayan foresees closer ties between India and Israel'. (1958, September, 21) *The Jerusalem Post.*

despite the critical role of anti-imperialist ideas in India's founding and the fact that many of its earliest leaders held such ideas close to their heart, India's Israel policy was well established by the time the NAM came into official existence. Also, Israel's close affiliation and cooperation with Western imperial powers did not really materialize until the years following the Suze Crisis and could not by itself have been considered an imperial or colonial power in any traditional sense of the word, but rather only an "associate" of such imperial states. Second, was the close relationship India historically had with one of the two major "aligned" powers, the USSR. Its close relationship with the Soviets would seem to imply that being a major imperial power, or being closely associated with a (major) imperial power, did not seem to be a deal-breaker when it came to relations with India. Israel did not have a very close association with any imperial power until after 1956 and the Suez crisis. Further, Israel was arguably only a regional power at best during the first couple of decades of their existence, a notion does not comfortably fit the criteria for the type of "imperialist" India sought to denounce or to avoid alliance with. Furthermore, in a historical circumstance markedly contrast to one another, Egypt, one of NAM's founders and close ally of India, was able to normalize relations with Israel in 1978 while India's own relations with Israel would reach a historical low during that same exact time period.

In either case, whether looking at identity based in socialism or as part of NAM, both provide potential arguments linking concerns or issues of identity with India's history of (non-) normalization with Israel. While any role in the normalization process given to socialist identity would reasonably be considered negligible, identification with anti-imperialism and NAM could be viewed as providing another useful leg of support in

the legitimization of India's Israel policy. As such, they both provide further impetus for studying the normative and functional role of identity, broadly speaking, in the historical Indian-Israeli relationship in addition to that of arguments constructed around the role of religiously-related identity.

Israel's Status in the 1990's: The Madrid Peace Conference and New Diplomatic Partners

With the Soviet Union's sharp decline and the Cold War imminently coming to an end, several events with international significance took place or began during the early 1990s that would impact Israel's international standing and, ultimately, India's view of them. The Madrid Peace conference, which took place in late 1991 and sought to launch the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, was significant for its symbolic value and the subsequent advancement Israel made in improving their relations with several nations thereafter. This conference demonstrated the willingness of some of the most important Israeli and Palestinian leaders involved in the peace process to engage one another on the grand stage and it had the moral support of many countries throughout the Arab-Islamic world, including Saudi Arabia. Israel saw ties improve with Arab countries like Oman, Qatar and Jordan, and saw (re-) normalization with major powers such as Russia and China, with India following suit shortly after. (Blarel, 2014, p. 238-239)

Despite these notable events, the successes of Madrid were offset by a few circumstances that I argue would overshadow any tangible or symbolic importance the conference might have had in India's view. Ties improved with many of the aforementioned Arab-Muslim nations, but only to a marginal degree in most cases. All

but one of these countries still does not have diplomatic ties with Israel up until the contemporary day and the one that does, Jordan, did not do so until 1993 when the Oslo Accords were signed. Moreover that the First Intifada was ongoing during this time period and would essentially remain active up until around the time the Oslo Accords took place. This means that while Israel made symbolic and even some tangible in-roads with several countries, both Muslim and non-Muslim, the two main parties involved in the fighting by this time, Israel and Palestine, were still very much engaged in conflict.

The Madrid Conference and its fallout undoubtedly worked to further ease the normalization process with Israel for India, but much of the groundwork for normalization was demonstrated to have been laid in the 1980s up and through the months prior to the conference to the conference. Prime Minister Rao had, unsuccessfully, tried to push towards normalization beginning half a decade before Madrid and, once the domestic atmosphere was made ripe for this normalization with the BJP's substantially increased influence, this process was able to take place.

Future Research

Given the previously explained challenges in measuring the normative and causative effects of identity in state-to-state relations, as well as the malleability and in-flux nature that identity inherently possesses, future directions of research would seek to engage such challenges. This would be done in an attempt to generate evidence for a more empirically grounded take on religion-based identity as it pertains to Indian views on Israel. An expansion of the interview process of those individuals whose opinions or views are judged to most likely to impact foreign policy decisions in India (i.e.,

parliamentary members, religiously-affiliated social organizations like the RSS, popular religious leaders who actively engage the political sphere, etc.) would aim to provide a larger sample of the framework within which Israel is viewed by those whose views could reasonably be considered to matter most. In order to integrate more sub-state views on Israel into the equation, I would also seek to supplement these interviews through surveys or questionnaires of the general population. A solid sample size of voters across the religious demographic and the social stratum will aid in providing an overall view of Israel reflective of India's one billion-plus individuals at the sub-state (i.e. "unitary") levels.

In considering the importance conflict with bordering entities has had in shaping India's foreign policy since its inception, an analysis of parallel historical developments and the possible role of religious identity from the perspective of Pakistan would provide a more complete picture of the historical processes involved. Focus would be on the so-called "opposite side of the same coin" that is Indian history by researching the same dynamic, but as it pertains to the historical Pakistani-Palestinian relationship and Pakistan's historical views on Israel. Potential research questions would highlight processes of "Othering" of Hindu Indians in Pakistan's historical construction of threat perceptions and how this has factored into its relationship with Palestine and Palestine's own historical "Othering" of the Jewish Israeli identity in its construction of threat. What role has potential "Othering" played in Pakistan's historical and contemporary relationship with Israel, with Palestine and/or with the Arab-Muslim world? How (if at all) is the Israeli Jew's identity constructed with reference to Hindu Indians in Pakistan and how could or does this reflect in the way they deal with India, Israel and the friendly

relations they now have? Furthermore, how could the existence of such a socially constructed threat of a "Jewish" Israel have been used to create support from the Muslim world for Pakistan vis-à-vis their decades-long conflict with a "Hindu" India?

Such questions create fairly broad and deep research platform to work from in the future, but raise some intriguing and potentially significant questions given the climate of religious violence in South Asia and the role that religion considerations have in both India and Pakistan. Former Pakistani president Pervez Musharraf's desire to engage Israel several years ago, Pakistan's current alliance with the United States, its desire to maintain a well-armed military and the need to solve the widespread terror threat Pakistan deals with daily, are all factors that make study on the role of religion in Pakistani-Israel relations a seemingly important topic of study.

Summing Up Normalization and Identity in Indo-Israel Relations

Bridges of Indian-Israeli Connection and Cooperation: "Shared" Identity Reviewed

Formal diplomatic relations between Indian and Israel were established in 1992 despite the fact that interaction between the two dates back to the independence of each country over 60 years ago. The original policy of non-relations was established and maintained during a time period when the Congress Party, a party which prioritized its relations with the Islamic world and India's large Muslim minority above much else, had an essential monopoly on the rule of India. Contrast to this, normalization of relations came during the time of the BJP's initial rise to power and influence in India's lower

parliament and India's majority Hindu society. The resulting political environment was demonstrated to have significant meaning for India's foreign policy towards Israel.

While the policy of non-normalization was initiated early and fortified over several decades, normalization, by contrast, emerged and was built upon merely over several years. The Muslim-identity factor had been present for India since its very beginning as a state and even prior, whereas the "shared" identity of a Hindu India and a Jewish Israel was socially constructed only after decades of conflict and connective cultural reimagining. Given these facts, the identity-based linkages underpinning reasons for normalization were presented as key concepts for the understanding or religion's role in this process. The BJP's ascent to power was demonstrated to parallel the process of India's normalization of relations with Israel and in addition to being a primary political factor in the establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel, the BJP's Hindu nationalist discourse was also demonstrated to create or maintain other important in-roads of connection and cooperation with the Israeli state that would provide a foundation for their pro-Israeli stance.

This Hindu nationalism perpetuated by the *Hindutva* discourse that the BJP adheres to, is easily relatable to the *Zionist* ideology responsible for reestablishment of Israel. Both ideologies stress the need for a state based around the culture and religion of the native people within the borders of a sacred piece of land. The growth of nationalism in the case of each country has at least its initial roots in religious sentiment and culture; Judaism for Israel and Hinduism for India. The clashes between Hindu nationalists and Muslims continue to be primarily characterized by difference in religion. In Israel, religious differences have become a crucial point of nationalist dissention in their conflict

with Palestine and the Muslim world in the contemporary day, due in part to the rise of Muslim extremism globally and the resulting narrative of such a rise that has been perpetuated internationally by the West and its allies. The Hindu nationalist movements and Jewish nationalism find a common threat and enemy in extremist and political Islam, which is persistent to the present-day in each country and across the borders that surround each.

Since normalization occurred in 1992, no other realm of cooperation has flourished more than the India-Israel security dynamic, highlighted by an extensive arms trade. With its primary focus of concern on Islamist extremist terror, and the origins much of it is believed to have in the neighboring Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the development of this security and arms trade dynamic plays directly into Islamic "threat" narrative originally perpetuated by the BJP beginning in the 1980s. This cooperative effort between the two countries has not only grown with each passing year since the establishment of relations, but continues pointing, both implicitly and explicitly, towards Muslim factions as a primary source of India's domestic security issues. The security relationship continues to evolve, reinforcing the identity narrative underpinning Indo-Israeli relations, and creating empathetic ground from which other non-military relationships in cultural and economic sectors can be established and build a close bond.

India and Israel are both ancient nations with a majority culture based on non-universal religions of orthopraxy. The age of these nations' existence, and the traditional integration of each's orthopraxic religion into the lives and society of its indigenous majority, has made Hinduism in India and Judaism in Israel unique as modern nations-states in this regard. Furthermore, no other Jewish-majority or Hindu-majority (minus

Nepal which is a historical contingent of the territory of ancient *Bharat*) nation-states exist in this world and no other major religious traditions are believed to as ancient as these.

On-going territorial disputes can also be viewed as providing a point of connection for India and Israel via the *Hindutva* movement and also provides a major talking point regarding security issues and the "shared" historical narrative. Within the *Hindutva* narrative, historically the Kashmiri conflict has become an overarching symbol of a Hindu-majority India's "struggle" with Islam in India while reasserting and strengthening the *Hindutva* identity which has been formed over the last several decades. This resonates with *Zionism* in Israel, underscored by an identity embodied in territorial struggle with Muslim-Arab political factions over the last several decades as well. These territorial issues in Israel have come to take on a decidedly sacred and religious symbolism in some cases, especially with regards to the holy city of Jerusalem (and the Temple Mount) which has increasingly come to be viewed through the lens of *Dar-al-Islam*[53], and therefore territory that should be under the control of the Muslim world.

The growing threat of Islamic extremism, and the cross-border terrorism that is so often the characteristic of this venture, has been experience by Israel and India more than any other country statistically speaking. This commonality that these two countries share finds its roots in extremist political Islam and "justifies" the anti-Islamic rhetoric of the *Hindutva* movement, particularly as embodied in BJP agenda in the late 1980s to early 1990s. Israel and India share a history of being victims of cross-border terrorism in the

[53] Translated to "the abode of Islam" in Arabic.

past and in the present. This has resulted in cooperative efforts in areas of security and military action based in large part on this shared history which was strongly reinforced, both tangibly and symbolically during the 2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks.

Several areas of the relationship today outside of the political-military sector are flourishing including trade, technology R&D, tourism and cultural exchange to name a few. The "civilizational resonance" discussed earlier seemingly creates a unique environment that is conducive to interaction between the two societies at a variety of different levels and strata. Evidence of such resonance, and the resulting existence of such an environment, can be found indirectly in the rhetoric and language used by agents involved in some exchanges and partnerships, and directly in the candid goals and actions of others, such as the Hindu-Jewish interfaith dialogues.

All of these factors combined to create a history and on-going motivation that works to build bridges of commonality among these civilizations. The narrative surrounding a positive view of the relationship has been socially constructed to include an awareness and understanding of such common or "shared" historical notions. These notions are continually perpetuated and, at times, reconstructed in order to facilitate a progression of India's state-to-state relationship with Israel now and moving forward.

The Final Word: "Shared" Identity as Key

The aim of this dissertation was to demonstrate the significant normative and functional effects (broadly construed) that identities based in religion have had in the historical Indian-Israeli relationship. I sought to accomplish this through the combination of analysis in four identifiable areas by: 1.) explaining how religions of orthopraxis

function in society and the unique significance this would theoretically have in Hindu-majority India and Jewish-majority Israel; 2.) highlighting events or instances along the historical time where issues or concerns dealing with religion-based national and cultural identity came to play a primary role, directly or indirectly, in India's policy towards Israel; 3.) reviewing the multitude of cooperation areas that have come to exist between the two countries since normalization and how this cooperation is intertwined with identity; and 4.) placing this understanding of Hinduism and Judaism, these historical events and instances, and the major areas of cooperation, within a proper analytical framework, enabling to understand processes by which identity may function to affect a given state-society's relationship or policy towards another state-society.

Identity was demonstrated to function as both an obstacle to friendly and official relations and as a means to facilitate them, and it did so directly in some cases, but indirectly in many others. This pattern can be seen to a degree in other Indo-Israeli research as well. Much of the other research on the topic of Indian-Israeli relations is keen to discuss, at fair length in some cases, the nature of religion in this state-to-state relationship historically. Issues contributing to the non-normalization of relations between India and Israel were discussed within the context of India's large, minority Muslim population and the majority Muslim population of the many states engaged in conflict with Israel that India consistently sought optimal relations with. In similar fashion, other research also reflects cognizance of religion's presence during the normalization process as it relates to politicized versions of Hindu nationalism.

However, despite the fact that most research on India-Israel relations brings religion into the discussion to one degree or another, completely absent from this writing

has been any attempt to make primary the role of religion through social constructivist, identity-based theories or analytical frameworks. Discussion of majority orthopraxic religious societies and what this implies for the state is an original contribution in the study of Indian-Israeli relations. It is unlike previous research that present issues relating to religious identity as merely an existing fact in the historical development of the India-Israeli relationship or as one of several overarching conditions present at certain times during the evolution of India's foreign policy towards Israel. By contrast, this work focuses on religious identity as a primary ideational driving force of policy by grounding it in an understanding of orthopraxic religiosity, "shared" historical experiences and the resulting impact this theoretically has for state-society relations and the day-to-day environment within which this relationship functions.

The overall analytical framework is built around developments within the cultural sector (emanating from religion) in a way that demonstrates the theoretical significance of a relationship where a deep religion-based cultural rapport in the form of "shared" identity is functioning between the majority demographic of the two states at numerous societal strata. An approach to understanding the relationship between these two countries within such an analytical frame that highlights the centrality of a religion-based cultural sector/structure is absent from research on the subject. In this regard, the final summation of the analysis demonstrates concerns over the religious identity by and of certain actors, domestic and international, to be a consistently present condition inhibiting India from establishing relations with Israel until 1992. The analysis further posits the social construct of a "shared" identity as a highly significant concept facilitating Indo-Israeli relations at its foundation since normalization up and through the present-day.

The inherent nature of identity and identity construction as the fundamental means by which we establish our place in society and separate ourselves from that which we are not (i.e. the "Other"), makes it a condition that is omnipresent and, to a certain degree, one that is in constant flux. A primary identity based in the context of religion, however, tends to have deep foundations that are less susceptible to abrupt or immediate change due to the absolutist and infinite characteristic of the beliefs or message religion tends to perpetuate. The narrative surrounding the Hindu, Jewish and Islamic civilizations that is designed to bring India and Israel closer together implies the existence of such characteristics in each religion. It does so through an understanding designed to confirm the immutable historic and continuing truth found within each of these religious traditions. If the perception of such a truth continues to be increasingly accepted, and the accompanying understanding further perpetuated, the future of Indian-Israeli relations, for better or for worse, may find itself in a partnership with boundless potential and the possibility of near permanency.

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