REVIEW ESSAYS

An Intellectual Journey through the Civil-Military Relationship in Israel

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Mordechai Bar-On, *Moshe Dayan: Israel's Controversial Hero* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012), 247 pp.

Stuart Cohen, *Divine Service? Judaism and Israel's Armed Forces* (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2013), 201 pp.

Yagil Levy, *Israel's Death Hierarchy: Casualty Aversion in a Militarized Democracy (Warfare and Culture)* (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 269 pp.

Gabriel Sheffer and Oren Barak, *Israel's Security Networks: A Theoretical and Comparative Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 184 pp.

Among democratic nations, the State of Israel provides a unique example of the centrality of the military. Throughout Israel's history—in its experience of statehood and in its very ethos as a nation—the security establishment and particularly the military have wielded extensive influence over civil society and politics. This exceptional situation is the result of the persistent threats that Israel has faced, the numerous wars and violent conflicts it has fought, and the deep sense of existential anxiety that dwells in the consciousness of the Jewish people, both in the Diaspora and especially in the homeland.

By 1947, David Ben Gurion, Israel's founding father, laid the foundations for its view of national security; in 1953, he presented his views to the government. He built his model on both a conceptual analysis of geopolitical reality and his understanding of the significance of the asymmetry between

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