Strategic ASSESSMENT

Volume 20 | No. 3 | October 2017

INSS
המכון למחקרי ביטחון לאומי
THE INSTITUTE FOR NATIONAL SECURITY STUDIES
TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY אוניברסיטת תל אביב

Strategic
ASSESSMENT

Volume 20 | No. 3 | **October 2017**

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The purpose of *Strategic Assessment* is to stimulate and enrich the public debate on issues that are, or should be, on Israel's national security agenda.

Strategic Assessment is a quarterly publication comprising policy-oriented articles written by INSS researchers and guest contributors. The views presented here are those of the authors alone.

The Institute for National Security Studies is a public benefit company.

Graphic Design: Michal Semo-Kovetz, Yael Bieber
Tel Aviv University Graphic Design Studio
Printing: Elinir

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Strategic Assessment is published in English and Hebrew.
The full text is available on the Institute's website: www.inss.org.il

ISSN 0793-8942

Abstracts

The Next Gaza: The Gaza Strip between a Dead End and a Glimmer of Hope

Yoav (Poli) Mordechai, Michael Milstein, and Yotam Amitay

This article discusses the steadily declining situation in the Gaza Strip, not only in terms of poverty and unemployment, but in terms of society and mindset as well. At the core of this reality is the growing tension between the interests that drive the Hamas government and the hopes and disappointments of the Gazan population – mainly among the young generation. The article first focuses on the ever-growing tension between Hamas authorities in the Gaza Strip and the emerging new generation there, some tens of thousands of youngsters that while not yet unified under a single body, wield much influence on the local outlook and collective sentiments (this against the background of the attempt, led by Egypt, at intra-Palestinian reconciliation in the Gaza Strip). At issue is a relatively educated but furious and frustrated generation that reflects a worldview that is radical, even compared to the Hamas government. The article then discusses the "radicalization track" and a consistent process of escalation since 1947, and considers the possible implications of the scenario whereby the new generation becomes an alternative to the Hamas government. Finally, the article emphasizes the need for genuine good news for the Gaza Strip, and proposes a process that will constitute a type of "Marshall Plan" for Gaza, which should generate substantive change in the quality of life, and in turn have a positive impact on the security situation in the region.

Keywords: Palestinians, Hamas, Gaza Strip

Egypt and Israel: Forty Years in the Desert of Cold Peace

Moomen Sallam and Ofir Winter

With the approaching fortieth anniversary of Anwar Sadat's historic peace initiative, the foundations of peace that were laid during the Egyptian President's visit to Jerusalem remain stable and strong. However, the peace is still "cold" and is a peace between governments, not peoples. This article analyzes the factors behind this configuration of relations between the

two countries; the positive changes that have taken place among Egypt's younger generation regarding their views of Israel since the revolution of January 25, 2011; and the obstacles that continue to impede warmer peace. The authors of the article, an Egyptian and an Israeli, argue that the current political, economic, and social conditions offer Israel and Egypt a window of opportunity to expand and deepen their relations, although doing so would require updating the configuration of peace into one that leverages the narrow relations of trust in the realm of security into other arenas, as well as the establishment of extra-governmental realms of cooperation between the civilians of both countries.

Keywords: Israel, Egypt, Sadat, cold peace, normalization

Iran's Land Bridge to the Mediterranean: Possible Routes and Ensuing Challenges

Franc Milburn

Reestablishment of Iran's land bridge to the Assad regime and to its Hezbollah proxy represents a potential existential threat to Israel, and is a mounting source of concern for other regional actors and the US. While this is well known, less obvious is how Iran intends to achieve this strategic objective, or the long term factors and constraints likely to impede progress and pose obstacles. While Iran has several options regarding a possible ground route, each potential course presents particular challenges and risks at the operational and strategic levels that could challenge Iranian capabilities for years to come and possibly overstretch Iranian assets and means.

Keywords: Iran, Iraq, land bridge, Kurdistan, Syria, Turkey, Israel

Iran's Shiite Foreign Legion

Ephraim Kam

Iran's military intervention in Syria offers Tehran another tool to promote its influence and interests in the region: the Shiite militias organized by the Iranian Quds Force and Revolutionary Guards. The most important militias of this kind are the Lebanese Hezbollah, followed by a number of Iraqi Shiite militias that Iran either established or helped set up during the Iraq-Iran War and the more recent war in Iraq. The newer militias were constructed over the past few years, composed of Afghan and Pakistani Shiite volunteers. All these militias were assigned combat missions in

Syria with the aim of rescuing the Assad regime, and from a numerical perspective, they make up the lion's share of the forces that Iran operates in Syria. The establishment of these militias provides Iran with another large fighting force – which in the future may be enlarged and used in other countries – that allows it to operate in a flexible manner and with reduced risks. This creates additional dangers for Israel, the United States, and other countries in the region, as Iran may attempt to leave these militias in general, and Hezbollah in particular, in the Golan Heights for the sake of establishing a new front with Israel. Addressing this threat might require US-Israeli cooperation.

Keywords: Iran, Syria, Shiite militias, Hezbollah, Revolutionary Guards

Iran's Middle Class: An Agent of Political Change?

Raz Zimmt

The political and social processes underway in Iran in recent decades, as well as the events of the so-called Arab Spring, have aroused growing interest in the expanding Iranian middle class and its potential for leading social protest and future political change. The central role played by the middle class in the 2009 disturbances and in the election of Hassan Rouhani to the presidency reflected the sector's growing dissatisfaction with the socioeconomic and political situation. The relatively large middle class in Iran, its role in previous popular protest movements, and its demands for economic and social improvements cast it as a possible agent of change. At the same time, there is a tendency to ignore the elements and constraints among the middle class that weaken its potential in leading processes of change. These elements include the heterogeneity of the sector, the economic dependence on the government, and the growing trends toward individualism and depoliticization. Iran's middle class will likely play a central role in any scenario of domestic political change, but its full potential to achieve significant change depends on its ability to overcome its weaknesses and join forces with other social groups.

Keywords: Iran, society, politics, regime stability, middle class

The Day after the Islamic State

Marta Furlan and Carmit Valensi

The territorial losses suffered by the self-proclaimed Islamic State over the past year, the fall of the stronghold Mosul, and the encirclement of the caliphate's de facto capital al-Raqqa signal the imminent military defeat of the Islamic State. However, the ideological vacuum, frustration, and alienation typical of communities in the Middle East since the so-called Arab Spring, the absence of a political alternative, and the lack of other local effective governance raise the possibility that the Islamic State will survive its military defeat. As such, it is imperative to assess how this entity is likely to evolve. Understanding the Islamic State's past evolution may help in sketching its likely future. In this context, measures can then be proposed to deal with a reincarnation of the Islamic State.

Keywords: Islamic State, al-Qaeda, jihadi terrorism, war against the Islamic State

The Israeli Withdrawals from Southern Lebanon and the Gaza Strip: A Comparative Analysis

Rob Geist Pinfold

The Israeli withdrawals from southern Lebanon in May 2000 and the Gaza Strip in August-September 2005 represented paradigm shifts in Israeli territorial policy. In Israeli political discourse, both withdrawals have been heavily criticized for lack of strategic planning that ultimately harmed the national interest by surrendering territory "unilaterally," without negotiations with opposing forces. By contrast, this paper seeks to delineate contributing factors and the logic engendering both withdrawals: ultimately, neither was strictly "unilateral," nor was either withdrawal a simple response to excessive casualties. Rather, established patterns of territorial control were undermined by declining strategic utility, with policy recalibration long overdue and essential for the pursuit of national goals.

Keywords: Israeli-Palestinian relations, Gaza Strip, Lebanon, Hezbollah, Hamas

The Demographic Threat: The Abandonment of the Negev and the Galilee

Amit Efrati

For many years the Israeli government adopted a strategic policy aimed at dispersing the local population among different parts of the country. Nonetheless, over the past three decades the preference of the Israeli population for living in the greater Tel Aviv metropolitan area has grown, resulting in a gradual "abandonment" of the Negev and the Galilee. In order to deal with this problem, which poses strategic challenges to Israel on both the social-environmental and national levels, the government intends to encourage settlement in the Negev and the Galilee through a range of measures, especially economic incentives. However, given the enormous gaps between northern and southern Israel on the one hand and central Israel on the other in many aspects of life, such as employment, education, and health, most families considering a move to the Negev and the Galilee regard these incentives as negligible. In light of this situation, this essay recommends implementing a gradual process that will first provide substantial investment in infrastructure affecting the quality of life for residents of the Negev and the Galilee in order to prevent their continued migration from the region. Only when this phase is completed can an attempt be made to encourage population groups from other parts of Israel to settle in these regions, not in order to benefit from a monetary incentive, but in order to improve their quality of life.

Keywords: Negev and Galilee development, outlying areas, demographic balance, spatial planning, population dispersal

Alexander the Great Would Not Have Been Perplexed

Gabi Siboni, Yuval Bazak, and Gal Perl Finkel

When US Secretary of Defense General James Mattis was the commander of the 1st Marine Division, he remarked that if Alexander the Great found himself on a modern battlefield, he "would not be in the least bit perplexed," because in spite of the changes in the nature of warfare in modern times, the principles remain the same. In contrast, due to the weakening of military thinking in the IDF, which was unable to cope with the changes that occurred in the battlefield and failed to formulate an updated doctrine, solutions involving standoff fire were preferred over maneuvers. The last time that the IDF operated according to its traditional security concept and took

the fighting to the enemy's territory was during Operation Defensive Shield and the series of incursions into the heart of Palestinian towns that followed. The question that needs to be asked today is, therefore, not whether maneuvers are still a central foundation of Israel's security concept, but rather which maneuvers the IDF needs in order to deal with the security challenges before it.

Keywords: IDF, doctrine, maneuvers, fire

The Next Gaza: The Gaza Strip between a Dead End and a Glimmer of Hope

Yoav (Poli) Mordechai, Michael Milstein, and Yotam Amitay

In recent years the Gaza Strip has undergone internal processes that in two main aspects reinforce the dead end that currently characterizes the arena. The first is the ongoing failure of the Hamas government to create a reality that extricates the Gaza population from the confines of poverty and neglect that they have long endured (even though Hamas is able to deter any local resistance). The second is the emergence of a new generation that is enraged, frustrated, and stripped of any personal and collective horizon and strives to influence public sentiments in Gaza with regard to opinions about the conflict with Israel, compared to those of previous generations. As a result, in the future the Hamas government is liable to be perceived by the new generation as a regime that does not understand or speak its language and is not committed to provide for its needs. This in turn may well affect the stability of this region. To be sure, this generation does not yet operate as a unified body, and to date there are only inklings of theoretical organization. Nevertheless, one can argue that the Hamas movement is no longer the exclusive shaper of the dominant mindset in

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Gaza, and in a new, symbiotic relationship with the new generation is now increasingly sharing the Gaza ideological stage.[1]

The new generation in Gaza comprises a relatively young population (ages 15-30) that has no genuine knowledge of Israel, and whose familiarity with "its neighbors, the Jews" is based mainly on the rounds of fighting with the IDF that erupt every few years. In theory, the greater the cognitive divide between Gaza and Tel Aviv, the lesser the basic dependence of Gazan residents on Israel; however, reality dictates otherwise. The use of media and social networks, the ability to influence international bodies, and the exposure to the outside world all create a mindset among the new generation that blames primarily Israel for the reality in Gaza, and even more than the past believes that Israel is responsible for the local infrastructure and poor means of subsistence. Consequently, Gaza and Israel now seem like Siamese twins whose heads were separated, but are incapable of disconnecting from each other. Moreover, the alienation and hatred continue to fester, mainly because the acquaintance between the parties and the points of interaction are steadily diminishing.

This article discusses the deteriorating reality in the Gaza Strip, not only in relation to poverty and unemployment, but also in terms of politics and mindset. It focuses on both the difficulties and failures that characterize the Hamas government in the Gaza Strip, and profiles the new generation in Gaza and its growing expectations from the government. The article presents less familiar aspects of the power centers in the region, and examines their potential ramifications for the future of the Gaza Strip. The article concludes with proposals for possible courses of action to change the current reality in the Gaza Strip and spark a glimmer of hope among the local population.

The Hamas Government in the Gaza Strip: Status Report

Since its violent takeover of the Gaza Strip in June 2007, after nearly twenty years of the movement operating clandestinely and as an opposition movement to the existing government (whether Israel or the Palestinian Authority), Hamas has gained experience in governance. The change in the modus operandi gave Hamas unprecedented power and standing, and the movement developed an appetite for governing and establishing itself as the leader of the Palestinian arena. However, this new standing also imposed a series of restrictions and constraints on the movement unknown to it in the past, primarily the need to attend to the needs of the general public,

including promoting ideas of resistance and jihad, given public sentiments and the population's capacity to "endure" (which received fierce expression during Operation Protective Edge, the most intense military campaign in recent decades that the Palestinian arena in general, and the Gaza Strip in particular, experienced).

Notwithstanding its becoming the ruler in Gaza, Hamas did not completely shed its previous identity as a militant opposition movement whose key operating engine is the idea of resistance. In fact, over the last decade, Hamas established itself as a hybrid entity that vacillates between being a government and a movement. Although it developed official civilian and security governance systems and established its domestic and foreign image as the ruler in Gaza, it continued in tandem to dominate the network of resistance movements that exist outside of the governmental purview. In this context, Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, the military wing of Hamas, and the movement's political and civilian wings were highly visible. These wings continued to operate with strong links between them, for the most part "behind the scenes" – mainly between the military wing and the internal security forces, and between the movement's institutions and the civilian government ministries.[2]

At the same time, the Gaza Strip population accepted the Hamas government favorably and almost naturally, at least at the initial stage, as a movement that emerged from within the society that continued to carry out extensive civil activities for the sake of the public and project a grass-roots image. The population perceived this government as different from Fatah and the Palestinian Authority, which over the years were regularly charged with alienation and corruption. However, over time, it appears that Hamas has had to struggle to maintain its image and its traditional support strongholds, and after a decade in power shows a rather meager list of achievements: Gaza suffered three extremely violent military operations, which occurred due to Hamas's desire to maintain its room to maneuver militarily against Israel; the situation of Gaza's population deteriorated dramatically compared to the period prior to 2007, particularly in light of the restrictions that Israel imposed on the Gaza Strip (in terms of traffic to and from the region, and in terms of economic activity); and Hamas itself has experienced acute strategic distress in recent years, due to its loss of support from the crumbling resistance camp.[3]

Yet despite the persistent distress in Gaza and the growing alienation between the Gazan public and the Hamas government, it appears that

Hamas continues to maintain its dominant position in Gaza. Indeed, there is currently no evident internal threat to the Hamas government, and in fact, the public has demonstrated its reluctance to take action against the movement, mainly due to its fear of violent retaliation. At the same time, other factions are perceived as having limited power, compared to that of Hamas. These include Islamic Jihad, Fatah and representatives of the Palestinian Authority, the Salafist faction comprising a number of "recalcitrant" organizations, and local politically unaffiliated leaders. In the current situation, sources both inside and outside the Palestinian arena tend to define the Hamas government as the lesser of two evils and as preferable to governmental chaos or the rise of factions that are even more extremist than Hamas – with the experiences of Iraq and Syria serving as highly visible warning signs.[4]

Consequently, the principal challenge threatening the Hamas government today is on the socio-cognitive level, which is highly influenced by the demographic factor. This is where the new generation comes in, which differs in many ways from the previous generation and arouses concern among government sources throughout the Palestinian arena. This is a frustrated generation. Many of the young people who acquired an education are hard pressed to find suitable employment, improve their standard of living, or identify any personal and collective horizon. This is a generation that is exposed to social networks, is aware of Western lifestyles, and wants to adopt these lifestyles too, and therefore, this generation also defies the sources of authority and is wont to display skepticism toward traditional ideology and national goals.

The principal challenge threatening the Hamas government today is on the socio-cognitive level, which is highly influenced by the demographic factor.

The Palestinian Authority has already gained first hand experience of protests by the new generation of Palestinians in several waves of violence in recent years in the West Bank.[5] Hamas has not yet experienced a similar threat in the Gaza Strip, mainly because of the public's intense fear of the government – including among the youth. Nevertheless, it appears that Hamas understands that this is just a matter of time, and given recent precedents in the Middle East in the wake of the Arab Spring, a "version of Bouazizi" is liable to emerge in the Gaza Strip, which might ignite the pent-up rage of thousands of young people in a spontaneous protest that could be directed against the Hamas movement, as it is the governing body in Gaza.[6]

The New Generation in the Gaza Strip as a Government Alternative

The new generation in the Gaza Strip comprises a large group of young people who are just now coming into their own. This generation constitutes a demographic power and is considered relatively educated compared to the previous generations, but also lacks any personal and collective horizon for the foreseeable future. As a result, the new generation feels trapped in a poor and neglected society and is estranged from the power centers in its environment.[7] This claim is substantiated in table 1.

Table 1. Gaza Strip Educational and Employment Data[8]

	Gaza Strip: Current Statistics	Implications for the New Generation in Gaza
Education	About 92,000 residents have a college education (less than 5% of the Gazan population).	About 40,000 of the college-educated in Gaza are between the ages of 20-30 (15% of this entire population).
Unemployment	The unemployment ratio is about 44% (220,000 unemployed, out of a workforce of about 500,000 people – earning an average wage of 60 NIS per day).	The ratio of college-educated unemployed is 1.5 times higher than among the uneducated or high school educated (mainly because of the difficulty in finding suitable employment).
Jobs	Only about 17% of the potential entrants into the labor market found work during the second half of 2016 (about 3,000 people, out of a population of 17,000).	About 65% of those employed work at temporary jobs and/or have no employment contract (it takes an average of about a year and a half to find a job).

At the same time, the new generation in the Gaza Strip reflects the Palestinian arena as a whole, marked by the rage of a conquered people; the ideological ideas adopted from peers in the West Bank; and impressions from the Arab Spring and its aftermath, as well as from additional flare-ups in the Middle East in recent years.

It also appears that this generation is careful not to repeat the mistakes of others and is considering its course of action carefully. Shaul Mishal and

Doron Matza argued in this context that "the Palestinian generation born after the 1993 Oslo Accord echoes the spirit of resistance that characterized the Arab Spring youth and their social, cultural, and socio-economic origins."[9] Ido Zelikovitz added that "this is a generation that no longer blindly follows the political leadership and existing political party frameworks. It wants to control its destiny and it wants to see a change in its situation in the here and now."[10]

Examples of the distress and despair among the new generation in the Gaza Strip may also be found in the nightly sagas of young people who attempt to flee to Israel and are arrested by IDF troops along the border. Most of these youths have similar backgrounds: they are in their late twenties; many of them come from the refugee camps in Gaza and drop out of the educational systems at an early age; nearly all report extreme poverty and only occasional contact with their families, who urge them to search for a "different life," even at the inherent risk of crossing the border fence. These youths have stated that they prefer sitting in prison in Israel – which offers them three meals a day and funding for their families – to unemployment and the miseries of life in Gaza.[11]

Hamas is aware of the latent dangers in those potential resistance hotspots and of the factors that are liable to threaten its rule over the Gaza Strip in the future. The movement invests considerable resources in the new generation (e.g., in youth camps and summer camps) in order to win them over. Hamas is also trying to channel the young generation's rage toward Israel and to cast itself as unable to change the situation because of Israel's policies. The movement fans the flames of this allegation and feeds a culture of hatred toward Israel through the school system.[12] As a result, even attempts with Israeli and international support to bring about change and promote normalization in Gaza have been opposed by government authorities in Gaza. It appears that this behavioral pattern is part of the Hamas DNA – which besides being the entity that governs Gaza, continues to demonstrate characteristics of a subversive organization.[13]

Hamas's repeated attempts to deflect and redirect the protests by younger Gazans attest mainly to the latent potential power of this generation.

However, Hamas's repeated attempts to deflect and redirect the protests by younger Gazans attest mainly to the latent potential power of this generation. As far as the new generation is concerned, the situation cannot get any worse and they have nothing more to lose, and this reality provides

fertile ground for a deterministic view that divides the world into "good guys and bad guys" and encourages violent confrontation as the basis for bringing about change. One could argue that this is the way that population groups that adopt a militant approach have always behaved, but in the instance of the new generation, it appears that at issue is the potential for a more violent and dangerous reality than ever existed in Gaza.[14]

"The Radicalization Track": The Dead End of the Gaza Strip

With the new generation in the Gaza Strip eager to change its reality, the urgent question is: if change does materialize, what will this change look like? The Hamas government in Gaza has already encountered resistance and threats from all sorts of "recalcitrant organizations"; in most instances, Hamas has deflected them toward convenient targets, and thus also strengthened its control. But this new generation is not another "recalcitrant organization," and over time, it is likely to constitute a threat to the government and may reshape Gaza according to its vision – with or without Hamas. Much has already been written about the radicalization of the Gaza Strip over time, while from the perspective of the population, not only is their reality not changing, but it is becoming even more harsh and frustrating.[15] Concurrently, there is an evident tendency for Gazans to consider violence as a solution that can lead to a change in their situation, even if there is no guarantee that their quality of life will improve. When there is a lack of support, then anyone who considers himself a victim of this reality believes that all means are legitimate – and the new generation in Gaza indeed sees itself as such.[16]

Here one can, with all due caution, propose another perspective on the possibility of a new entity seizing control over the Gaza Strip at the present time, by employing the concept of "the radicalization track" – a consistent process of inciting a change in the public mindset so that it embraces militarism, as a result of feelings of hopelessness (from the perspective of Gazans), tactics that have been used by the forces that have controlled Gaza, and particularly the alternatives that have arisen since 1947. This "radicalization track" raises conundrums and questions about the future and fate of the Gaza Strip since, throughout the years, the alternative to the governing entity (Egypt, Israel, the Palestinian Authority) that arose eventually obtained control over Gaza, but did not resolve the problems that it inherited and even exacerbated them. Without delving into the Israeli interest in the identity of the governing entity in the Gaza Strip

in the current reality, the "radicalization track" described here shows us that if something is not done that will bring about a genuine change in the Gazans' bleak perception of reality, a situation may well arise whereby far more extremist entities, even compared to the Hamas movement, might overthrow the government in Gaza.

Again, the new generation in the Gaza Strip is not yet unified and has not yet aligned itself with an organization that will enable it to constitute a governing alternative (existing movements, like Islamic Jihad, and even the Palestinian Authority, are not currently perceived as capable of overthrowing the government). Nevertheless, most of the past changes in government in Gaza occurred practically without warning – without it being possible to assess either their nature and implications or the identity of the entity that assumed power. The timing of the scenario whereby the new generation bands together or becomes a governing alternative in the Gaza Strip cannot be predicted, and several factors must coalesce to create a substantive threat to the Hamas government. Nevertheless, one can definitely say that this generation has the potential of becoming "the next act" in Gaza.

Conclusion: Glimmer of Hope

While in the current reality the Hamas government is losing strength due to its responsibility for the poverty and unemployment in the Gaza Strip, the new generation is seen to be gaining influence and having the potential to influence the identity of the future governing entity in the Gaza Strip. At least for the time being, this is not good news for the residents of Gaza, and certainly not for the State of Israel. The latent potential danger posed by the new generation derives, inter alia, from the claim that Gaza has been on a "radicalization track" for decades, and that despite the replacements of the governing entity there, no real solutions for the population's needs have been provided; their situation has become even more bleak; and this has spawned even more radical attitudes among opponents of the government. Thus if nothing is done to alter the "radicalization track," sooner or later the Gaza Strip is liable to find itself under the control of a more extremist entity that will strive to direct the rage and energies of the new generation and incite them to overturn the government once again.

For the time being, the new generation in Gaza is mainly preoccupied with its need to survive the economic hardships, and is less driven by political interests. This argument is reinforced by the Gordian knot between the civilian-economic situation and the security situation, since the Israeli

view of the Gaza Strip now focuses on the hardships suffered by two million Palestinians living in that congested strip of land, coupled with the understanding that their economic situation has direct, dramatic ramifications on the security situation in the region.[17] Consequently, the more bleak the situation of Gazan residents becomes, the greater the chances of additional rounds of violence in this region in the future.

In light of this, it appears that the types of solutions that are needed at this time in the Gaza Strip must include genuine prospects for the population residing there. This means that a process must be implemented to turn Gaza into a developing environment, with advanced industrial zones, tourist areas, innovative transportation solutions, and infrastructures that will meet the population's needs. Thus despite the strategic and political complexities involved in future development, a process should be designed in the form of a "Marshall Plan" for the Gaza Strip.[18] The plan should include extensive international initiatives and investments that will enable rehabilitation and authentic change in Gaza – in terms of mindset and economics alike – without Hamas being able to oppose or obstruct the plan. Furthermore, such a process should incorporate security and economic arrangements and solutions for additional issues on the agenda, mainly constraining the military growth of the Hamas government and eliminating the stipulation with regard to the return of hostages, MIAs, and casualties of Operation Protective Edge. In other words, it is imperative to create an equation whereby it would not be advantageous for any of the parties involved to oppose the process, and would be expedient for them to welcome it with open arms. Finally, this must all be assessed in light of the recent Palestinian reconciliation agreement, sponsored by Egypt, which on the one hand is improving its relations with Hamas, while on the other hand is trying to put pressure on the Palestinian Authority to restore its influence in the Gaza Strip.

> The process that could transform the Gaza Strip into a developing region is inherently complicated, but not impossible. What is mainly missing now is the good will of the parties involved, including the Gaza population.

It is true that the party that apparently will benefit, politically and strategically, from significant development in the Gaza Strip is first of all the Hamas government (which is liable to hinder the creation of a new governmental reality in this arena). Parallel to this is the dilemma about the necessity of involving the Palestinian Authority in such a process. This is a fundamental question that must be

deliberated in the political track, since one of the plausible repercussions is that the Palestinian Authority might make its support conditional upon expanding the process to include those areas of Judea and Samaria that are under its control.

The bottom line is that the process that could transform the Gaza Strip into a developing region is inherently complicated, but not impossible. At the moment, what is mainly missing in order to promote such a plan is the good will of the parties involved, including the Gaza population. At issue is a complex process that may take a long time, and building confidence in such a process requires a degree of patience and consistency by all elements involved. Furthermore, any proposal for changing the current reality in the Gaza Strip will also need to take the new generation into account, both due to its increasing potential power, and because without a solution for the current situation, the young generation is liable to join radical Islamic organizations and adopt a more militant approach, even compared to the Hamas government.

Notes

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3 Jacky Hugi, "Against the Backdrop of the Crisis in Gaza, the Severance of Arab Countries' Relations with Qatar is Increasing the Pressure on Hamas," *Haaretz*, June 5, 2017.

4 Assaf Orion, "The Next Round in the Gaza Strip: Act Urgently to Avoid It and Prepare for its Outbreak," *INSS Insight* No. 925, May 7, 2017.

5 The intention is to the waves of violence that targeted mainly Israeli citizens, but also targets in the Palestinian Authority. See, for example, Kobi Michael, "The Palestinian Terrorism of the Past Year: Causes and Policy Recommendations," *INSS Insight* No. 862, October 14, 2016.

6 Mohamed Bouazizi was a Tunisian greengrocer who set himself on fire in December 2010. This act was considered the catalyst for the people's revolution and the fall of the Tunisian government, and also the event that ignited waves of protest in other Arab countries dubbed "the Arab Spring."

7 Orit Perlov, "Children of Tunnels, Children of Knives," *INSS Insight* No. 802, March 9, 2016; and Elior Levy, "The Palestinian Youth in the Gaza Strip are Losing Hope," *Ynet*, June 13, 2013.

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16 Avner Falk, "The Psychology of the War in Gaza," *Eretz Aheret* 71 (July 2014); and Perlov, "Children of Tunnels, Children of Knives."
17 Yoav (Poli) Mordechai and Michael Milstein, "Six Brigades or Two Million People?" *Maarachot* No. 473, October 2017.
18 The example of the Marshall Plan serves to emphasize the magnitude of the investments needed in order to create a real change in the Gaza Strip, and does not purport to compare the situation in Gaza to that of Europe after the Second World War.

Egypt and Israel: Forty Years in the Desert of Cold Peace

Moomen Sallam and Ofir Winter

On November 19, 2017, Israel and Egypt will mark the fortieth anniversary of Anwar Sadat's dramatic visit to Jerusalem, when from the podium of the Knesset, the Egyptian President articulated his historic call for peace – "the last of wars and the end of sorrows…a new beginning to a new life – the life of love, prosperity, freedom and peace."[1]

The fortieth anniversary of this seminal event, which was followed by drawn-out negotiations that ultimately concluded successfully with the signing of a peace treaty on March 26, 1979, invites a reassessment of the successes and disappointments of the Egyptian-Israeli peace thus far. The hope, particularly in Israel, was that the agreement would lead to warm, neighborly relations between Egyptians and Israelis based on coexistence, an acceptance of the other, and mutual cooperative endeavors. In practice, however, the peace between Egypt and Israel has remained "cold," providing the two countries with more than the "negative peace" of an armistice but less than a "positive peace," which in its broad sense includes reconciliation, mutual acceptance, and cooperative endeavors between the states and their peoples.[2] Israel and Egypt have limited themselves to tactical security coordination between their armies, correct diplomatic relations, and specific cooperative economic endeavors, while the cultivation of civic relationships between the two peoples, such as large scale economic interactions and the exchange of cultures, remains a far-off vision.

Early in the era of peace, following three decades of hostility and bloody wars, it was already clear that the mental, consciousness-based transition from conflict to peace would be no simple matter. President Sadat himself

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estimated that the processes of reconciliation, coexistence, and normalization between Egypt and Israel would be something experienced by future generations. In an interview with the Egyptian weekly *October* in February 1980, he explained that peoples could not be forced to expunge from their hearts feelings of bitterness that accumulated over many years of conflict. As a result, he did not urge the Egyptian people to establish normal relations with the Israeli people, and instead called on them to prepare the path to such relations, in hope that time would play its part in healing the wounds.[3]

Today, in the era of the "future generations" mentioned by Sadat, it is important to consider why the changes that were envisioned have yet to occur, whether the two sides can take action to promote them, and if so, how. These questions assume even greater importance under the rule of Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, in light of the close security coordination between the two countries in their fight against the common terrorist threats from the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip, as well as the relations of trust that have been established between Egyptian and Israeli officials working in parallel in the political and the military realms. In addition, it is important to consider the shared interest that has emerged in economic activity, particularly in the realm of energy, in light of the discovery of natural gas in the eastern Mediterranean Sea. Also relevant is the decline in importance of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in Egyptian public opinion – especially among the younger generation – against the background of the internal and regional unrest that has constituted the focus of the public agenda in recent years.

These circumstances present Israel and Egypt with a window of opportunity to begin a new chapter in their relations, although doing so will require the formulation of Egyptian and Israeli government policies that encourage the institutionalization and cultivation of inter-field cooperation between the civilians of both countries. It will also require renewing the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

Roots of the Cold Peace: The Debate

The peace between Israel and Egypt is perhaps best associated with the term "cold peace," which was coined in 1982 by Egypt's then-Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Boutros Boutros-Ghali to describe the limited, reserved, and at times hostile relations between the two countries. Historians, however, engage in a lively debate regarding whether the Israeli-Egyptian

peace can be characterized as "cold," as well as the circumstances in which they became "cold."

Over the years, the peace between Israel and Egypt has been characterized by many of the attributes of a "cold" peace as defined in the theoretical literature.[4] Amnon Aran and Rami Ginat, however, have argued that since the second decade of the Mubarak regime, the term "cold peace" has not accurately reflected developments in the bilateral relations, and should therefore be replaced by the term "strategic peace," to express the gradual positive change on the scale between "cold peace" and "stable peace." As they see it, this change took the form of evolution of relations of trust between the political and security institutions of the two countries, as well as inter alia the expansion of trade volume.[5]

We contend, however, that the term "cold peace" still characterizes Israeli-Egyptian relations accurately in the current period. The stability and the strategic weight of this peace should not be measured only by tactical security coordination, which by nature is circumstance-dependent, or by political and economic relations, controlled by high national and governmental echelons; it should also be measured by the nature of relations in non-government civilian realms. The validity of the term "cold peace," therefore, derives from the narrow scope of the "normalization" (defined as "the imposition of an array of peaceful, cooperative relations, as opposed to relations that are conflictual and confrontational in nature, in a variety of fields – political, economic, and cultural – and among formal and informal echelons" [6]) that has occurred between the two countries since the signing of the treaty.

From the outset of the period of peace, Egypt has been careful to regulate and limit normalization with Israel by instituting a structured and defined framework of relations dictating the scope, depth, and permitted realms of relations from which no fundamental deviation, positive or negative, was to be made. This framework has safeguarded the invaluable national asset of peace by ensuring diplomatic and security-related channels of communication, free passage through the Suez Canal, unhindered air, sea, and land connections, well supervised minimal trade, and tourism (albeit with no active encouragement).[7] However, the framework of relations also limited non-government civilian interaction, narrowed the freedom of action enjoyed by companies and private businesspeople, and on a number of occasions, imposed sanctions on Egyptians who attempted to deviate from it. In practice, it prevented the travel of Egyptian citizens

to Israel without a special security permit,[8] and it thwarted the natural development of relations between groups and individuals in the economic, social, intellectual, scientific, cultural, and sports realms. This reality has made the development of narratives of reconciliation and good neighborly relations, which are essential for breaking the ice between peoples and establishing and augmenting the stability of peace, extremely difficult.

Egypt was the country that dictated the cooled relations, although there is some debate regarding the degree of responsibility each country bore for this process. Israel's ambassadors to Cairo between 1981 and 1988 and between 1988 and 1990, Moshe Sasson and Shimon Shamir, respectively, have testified that some of the actions of the Israeli government during the initial years of peace embarrassed Egypt in Egyptian and Arab public opinion. Most prominent were the annexation of East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, the expansion of the settlement enterprise, and above all, the outbreak of the First Lebanon War. From their perspective, these actions ridiculed Egypt's expectation of a broad regional settlement that would cast its pioneering agreement with Israel in a legitimate light; the result was a sharp decline in Egypt's willingness to promote normalization.[9] This explanation is consistent with Egypt's official position and its tendency to attribute the cooled Israeli-Egyptian relations to Israeli policy, which frustrated Egyptian hopes of turning the peace treaty into a cornerstone of overall regional peace and made thawed relations conditional upon a political breakthrough in the peace process.[10]

A competing explanation asserts that cold peace suits the ongoing strategic-regional, socio-economic, and cultural-psychological constraints that continue to affect Egyptian regimes, which as early as the Sadat era dictated a narrow framework of relations that was not dependent on Israel's actions. Proponents of this explanation include Ephraim Dowek, Israel's ambassador to Cairo between 1990 and 1992, and historian Elie Podeh. Podeh has argued that cold peace served the interests of the Egyptian governing establishment in an optimal manner, whereas the promotion of normalization would have seriously threatened its internal and external legitimacy. Egypt, therefore, had no interest in moving toward a warm peace.[11]

Egyptian liberals have highlighted Egypt's institutional interest in preserving the traditional foundation of hostility toward Israel from a different perspective: nurturing Israel's image as an "external enemy," even in the shadow of peace, they argue, has helped the Cairo authorities distract its citizens from domestic hardships, justify injury to the rights

of individuals (for example, through the application of the Emergency Law), and evade reforms that would endanger its status. Unsupervised close relations with Israel, on the other hand, could have disclosed and highlighted to the Egyptian public the political, economic, and scientific disparities between the two societies, fueled internal criticism of the regime, and encouraged demands for democratization.[12]

Egypt's Younger Generation and Peace with Israel

Although many have long viewed the prevailing hostility of Egyptian public opinion toward Israel as a major obstacle to warmer relations, today this paradigm requires reexamination, particularly when it comes to the generation under the age of 30, which constitutes about 60 percent of the total population of Egypt. After his visit to Jerusalem, Sadat was forced to contend with fierce opposition on the part of the Muslim Brotherhood and the Nasserist and Marxist parties in Egypt, and the Arab "refusal front" led by Iraq, Libya, Syria, and the PLO. His conciliatory policy unified opposition within Egypt and abroad, which based its stance on pan-Arab nationalist ideology and Islamist religious ideology and which operated under a banner of opposition to peace and normalization with Israel. The Egyptian regime tried to defend the peacemaking measures using the diverse information and propaganda mechanisms at its disposal. However, the challenge created by the longstanding incitement against Israel proved massive, and virtually no independent parties or intellectuals in Egypt were willing to support it openly.

Since the 1990s, peace with Israel has become the acknowledged strategic choice of the PLO, most of the Arab states, and the Arab League. Still, Egyptian public opinion has remained hesitant about changing its attitude. With the exception of a handful of liberally oriented or left wing writers and thinkers who have been willing to pay a personal price and risk being sanctioned by the professional unions, no significant political or social force has agreed to embrace peace with Israel, confront the opponents of normalization, or take action to disseminate values of conciliation, coexistence, and acceptance of the other. The reason is twofold. First, the Egyptian regime has prevented the evolution of a popular independent peace camp operating outside the monopoly of the regime establishment. Ironically, the same regime that signed the peace treaty with Israel permitted the opponents of peace to harass individuals who spoke out openly in favor of peace and normalization and attempted to build autonomous channels

of communication with Israel. Second, many of the activists and thinkers who belonged to the liberal stream of Egyptian society, who were the most natural candidates to lead an Egyptian camp promoting democratic peace, chose the opposite position: that is, instead of speaking out in favor of peace, they argued that an elected democratic regime would enable Egypt to stand strong against Israel with greater resoluteness than a non-elected regime.[13]

The revolutions in Egypt on January 25, 2011 and June 30, 2013 created a new dynamic with the potential to bring about historic positive change in Egyptian public opinion with regard to peace and normalization with Israel, especially among the younger generation. Although the revolutions had only limited success in instituting political reform, they did manage to create a deep cultural revolution in Egyptian society. An article published in *Foreign Policy* pointed out three manifestations of this revolution: the removal of the *hijab* in Egyptian society, an increase in the number of atheists, and the coming out of the closet of homosexuals.[14] Also relevant are phenomena such as the collapse of Islamic Arab identity in favor of Egyptian and humanistic identities; the liberation of young men and women from the dictates of their families; pre-marital sexual relations; and most importantly, the collapse of the social, political, and religious aspects of patriarchal rule.

The revolutions sprouted a young Egyptian generation with a secular-liberal orientation – a generation that does not shy away from confronting its parents and critically examining the hegemonic national, religious, and social conventions of the past. In an article published in *al-Ahram* in September 2017 under the title "The Young in Egypt Do Not Like the Old," Ahmed Abu Dawh argues that the revolutions changed the Egyptian state beyond recognition, and that the state is currently divided between two generations that speak two different languages and have trouble communicating with one another. The older generation adheres to the values on which they were raised during the 1950s and 1960s, whereas the younger generation has adopted new values and is calling for fundamental change. This intergenerational divide is not characteristic of cities alone; it exists in villages as well and is undermining Egyptian society at its foundations. Equipped with smartphones, young Egyptians today insist on reexamining "every truth" and argue with their parents, typically leaving them embarrassed and unable to respond. According to Abu Dawh, "In another decade, Egypt will not be the Egypt we know today. The state,

society, religious leaders, intellectuals, and the young and old need to prepare themselves."[15]

These deep sociocultural processes have implications for the way in which Egypt's younger generation views its country's relations with Israel. Their parents' generation imbued them with hatred for Israel through the repetition of Arab nationalist slogans that were disseminated by the Nasserist propaganda mechanisms of the 1950s and 1960s, and they accepted it without argument out of respect for parental authority. This has changed, however, since the deterioration of the social, economic, and political situation of the younger generation, which watched as their parents surrendered to the regime, refrained from all confrontation with it, and even joined it, in opposition to their children. The younger generation rebelled against the regime establishment and its supporters, even when this meant rebellion against their own parents. This intergenerational clash relegated all elements of their heritage, their hostility toward Israel included, to the status of issues demanding reexamination.

On this basis, members of Egypt's younger generation are adopting views that are more rational than those of their parents, whose views were fueled by false and inciting propaganda. Most are no longer subject to the intoxicating influence of pan-Arab and Islamist propaganda; they formulate their views on Israel in accordance with Egypt's pragmatic interests and oppose a war that would destroy the Egyptian economy and result in bloodshed. These young Egyptians, who receive their information from the internet, have started asking new questions: Is the hostility for Israel real or imagined? Does this hostility serve or harm Egypt's interests? What is better for Egypt – a state of war or a state of peace? Who is the enemy – the states that support political Islam and the terrorists in the Sinai Peninsula, or Israel, which aids the Egyptian army in its fight against terrorism? Such questions have created a new discourse, for example, a July 2014 article by Muhammad al-Shimi, a member of the Free Egyptians Party, titled "Israel Is Not the Enemy." According to al-Shimi, the real enemies threatening the wellbeing of Egypt include "the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas, ISIS, Qatar, Turkey, and all those that support the values of backwardness and terrorism within Egypt or along its borders."[16]

The younger generation in Egypt does not suffer the scars of violent conflicts and wars, which occurred before their time. Rather, young Egyptians observe the close cooperation between the regime and Israel, and naturally wonder why civilians are prohibited from what is permissible for the

government. This approach was evident in the sympathetic responses received by one of the authors of this article on the social networks in light of a post he wrote in January 2017 after he was denied permission to accept an invitation to a conference in Israel.[17] Despite the absence of public opinion surveys on the subject, conversations with hundreds of young Egyptians – particularly liberals – reveal that the majority of them support peace and normalization.[18] These new forces have yet to be represented in a broad movement or a political party due to the limitations that are in place in Egypt, and it is therefore difficult to estimate their number accurately. Translating their positions into electoral power and ultimately political power will require a climate of democracy and freedom of expression.

Today's Stumbling Blocks on the Path to Warmer Relations

The rise of a liberal and secular younger generation in Egypt that rejects pan-Arabism and Islamism and applauds peace with Israel brings with it an opportunity for warmer relations between the Egyptian and the Israeli peoples, and for the addition of a civilian dimension alongside the close security coordination that has long existed between both countries. However, establishment of this generation as a dominant and influential camp still faces three primary obstacles in Egypt and Israel that must be overcome in order to take full advantage of the current opportunity to shape a new configuration for peace based on coexistence, acceptance of the other, and people to people relations.

The first and foremost significant obstacle stems from the Egyptian establishment's persistent tendency, for political and economic reasons, to maintain a monopoly over peaceful relations with Israel. On the political level, limiting the civilian expression of peace helps strengthen the regime's international image as the only political force in Egypt that is committed to preserve the peace treaty with Israel, whereas any democratic alternative would result at best in the termination of the peace treaty, or at worst, in the outbreak of an Israeli-Egyptian war. On the economic level, peace with Israel provides the business elite with a narrow, exclusive opportunity to amass capital in sectors such as natural gas, maritime trade, and textiles (by means of the QIZ Agreement), whereas only a small portion of this revenue actually trickles down to the general Egyptian population.[19] This economic reality has a detrimental impact on the image of peace with Israel among the Egyptian people, who see it as a "corrupt peace." It also links Israel with phenomena associated with the internal corruption of Egypt,

deprives rank and file Egyptian citizens of the sense that peace benefits them directly, and denies them a sense of enthusiasm for peace that would otherwise encourage them to deepen its roots.

In order to preserve and tighten its monopoly over peace, the Egyptian establishment does not hesitate to tarnish the names of civilian elements seeking their own share of relations with Israel. Past experience shows that Egyptian thinkers and activists who dare try to build bridges of cooperation with Israel outside the institutional umbrella risk sanctions, which make the price of speaking in favor of normalization and highlighting its benefits for the Egyptian people too heavy to bear and deter political and civic voices from engaging in the issue of peace. In this context, consider the dismissal of Egyptian parliament member Tawfik Okasha after he hosted former Israeli ambassador Haim Koren in his home in February 2016. The prevailing propaganda disseminated by the media outlets of the Egyptian establishment regarding Israel's "plots" against Egypt and the countries of the region[20] also inhibit advocates of peace. It exacerbates the incitement against Israel and delegitimizes Egyptian elements that attempt to promote "positive peace" and take action toward further coexistence outside the institutional monopoly.

A second obstacle to the advancement of peace between the two peoples is the continued sense of solidarity with the Palestinians. The past few years have witnessed less interest among Egypt's young generation in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which is a trend that is not unique to Egypt. A survey conducted in early 2017 among young adults in Arab countries, including Egypt, ranked the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as the eighth greatest threat, far below threats such as unemployment, terrorism, and the cost of living.[21] At the same time, however, from a pragmatic Egyptian perspective, the establishment of a Palestinian state within 1967 borders is an Egyptian national interest. This reality has become even clearer since Hamas's seizure of the Gaza Strip in 2007 and its transformation into a stronghold that supports the Salafi jihadist terrorist groups in the Sinai Peninsula, thereby posing a threat to Egypt's national security. The absence of a political settlement between Israel and the Palestinians strengthens Hamas and intensifies the threat to Egypt from the Gaza Strip. Moreover, the Egyptian people cannot ignore the human tragedy caused by the continuation of the conflict with the Palestinians. This does not mean that the Palestinian issue constitutes the single, or even the primary reason for the "cold" nature of Israeli-Egyptian peace. However, its resolution will strengthen those in

Egypt who support peace and will strip the opponents of normalization of the most important card they currently hold.

A third obstacle to warmer relations is the deep political and ethical abyss that currently separates the liberal peace camp in Egypt and the right wing government in Israel. The new generation in Egypt is liberal in orientation, and those among them who have adopted Egyptian nationalism emphasize its human dimension as opposed to its chauvinist-nationalist one. They oppose the killing of Israeli children and civilians by Palestinian terrorist groups just as they oppose the killing of Palestinian children and civilians by the IDF. Many of them also express an understanding of Israel's security needs. However, they view the measures taken by the Israeli government – such as the expropriation of land for settlements in the West Bank, the use of collective punishment against the families of terrorists, and the use of excessive force against the Palestinian civilian population – as acts of racism and rejection of the other that run counter to universal values. Moreover, extremist elements in Israel breathe life into national-religious extremist counterparts in Egypt, which is used by opponents of peace in Egypt to stir up hostility toward Israel and prove that Israel's hand is not extended in peace, with an eye toward shared living. For example, statements by right wing politicians regarding the establishment of a Palestinian state in the Sinai Peninsula and threats to blow up the Aswan Dam have been used over the years to incite anti-Semitism and justify the assertion that Egypt should regard Israel as an enemy state.[22]

In addition, one trait of the new liberal camp that emerged in Egypt against the background of the recent revolutions is its insistence on the secular nature of the Egyptian state and opposition to any kind of mixture between religion and state. This camp opposes the establishment of states on a religious basis, regardless of whether the state in question is Islamic, Jewish, or Christian. On these grounds, what is sometimes perceived as a mixture of religion and state in Israel creates significant difficulty for the young generation in Egypt, which asks itself how it can oppose a religious state in Egypt yet at the same time enter into partnerships with another state of a nationalist-religious character.[23]

Conclusion and Recommendations

Forty years after Sadat's visit to Jerusalem, the Israeli-Egyptian peace remains "cold." However, the current circumstances present the sides with an opportunity to update its configuration. Prospects of a warmer

peace are supported by shared regional interest and threats, the intimate counterterrorism security coordination, the relations of trust between the working echelons of government and military officials in both countries, and the potential for economic cooperation, particularly in light of the discovery of natural gas in the eastern Mediterranean. Also important are the positive changes in the views on Israel of young Egyptians following the upheavals of the past few years.

These trends have created a window of opportunity for the warming of relations between the two countries and peoples, although doing so will necessitate groundbreaking measures on both sides. The Egyptian regime, which shaped the spirit of the cold peace, is not working effectively to refute the negative myths about Israel and Jews that are embedded in the discourse of the Egyptian establishment, and to disseminate messages of peace and reconciliation. In addition, on a practical level, the Egyptian regime continues to limit expressions of normalization that deviate from the formal framework of relations between the two governments and does not permit sufficient freedom of action to groups and individuals in Egypt and Israel interested in developing mutual relations in the realms of the economy, civil society, science, and culture. In this sense, it is deviating from the original vision of President Sadat, who in one of his later interviews expressed hope that "through direct and daily free interactions, relations between Egypt and Israel will gradually assume their natural scope and weight."[24]

A significant obstacle facing Israel today, though less important than it has been in the past, is the ongoing stalemate in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. The Egyptian regime and the Egyptian people still feel a sense of solidarity with the Palestinians and their suffering. More significant, however, is the fact that they regard a solution to the Palestinian problem as an Egyptian national interest. Large circles in Egypt consider the establishment of a Palestinian state, or at least progress toward it, as a measure that would help address the threat of the spread of Islamic radicalism within Egypt and throughout the region. The nationalist extremist voices of elements in Israel also serve to exacerbate parallel trends within Egypt and to perpetuate the demonization of Israel in Egyptian public opinion.

Both the Egyptian and Israeli governments now have the opportunity to leverage the relations of trust that have developed in the realm of security into other arenas, and encourage the establishment of legitimate spaces of extra-governmental cooperation that could develop naturally and authentically

between the two peoples. To do so, the official echelons will need to relinquish the monopoly over managing the relations of peace they have appropriated and allow interested civilian parties to establish interactions based on mutual desire and interest. A number of measures could inject new life into the economic relations between the countries, which have thus far alienated the broad Egyptian population and been viewed as corrupt. Such measures could include the provision of freedom of action to companies and businesspeople from both countries; the promotion of cooperative technological endeavors in relevant fields, such as water desalination, desert agriculture, renewable energy, and medicine; the development of joint tourist projects; the establishment of professional advanced education programs and student exchanges; and reduced bureaucracy on travel between the two countries and acquisition of employment permits. These measures could be woven into future regional Middle East and Mediterranean integration plans. The desired economic cooperation is what will provide concrete benefits to both Egyptian and Israeli citizens, make peace present in their lives, and establish it in their hearts and minds.

An important constructive role is also reserved for civilian elements on both sides, which can join together in promoting a new kind of peace, based on a desire for shared lives and mutual recognition of the values of peace and reconciliation. The contemporary new media, including the internet – which is particularly popular among the young generation – has overcome many of the obstacles and limitations dictated from above. Peace activists can meet, have discussions, disseminate their ideas via online conferences, and make use of the platforms offered by the social media. These platforms have become stronger and more effective than the traditional media outlets, some of which are controlled by opponents of normalization. If the willingness of the younger generation in Egypt to cultivate Israeli-Egyptian peace relation is legitimized by the Egyptian establishment and met with an outstretched arm by the Israeli public, these responses will help accelerate the transition from the formal peace that already exists to a longed-for civil peace.

The historic peace that the Egyptian and Israeli nations inherited from Sadat and Begin constitute a strong basis that must be nurtured and developed. The "future generations" to which the Egyptian President referred forty years ago are already here, but the potential they bear for Israeli-Egyptian peace has yet to be realized. They have the capacity to leave a new kind of mark on the relations between the two countries.

However, today – as in the past – these generations are in need of resourceful leadership with a vision in order to remove the obstacles from their path, open the gates before them, and encourage them to break through to the next stop in history.

Notes

The authors would like to extend their gratitude to Kobi Michael for his helpful comments.

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Iran's Land Bridge to the Mediterranean: Possible Routes and Ensuing Challenges

Franc Milburn

Iranian Objectives in the Region

Tehran has a number of overlapping strategic goals in its quest to reestablish a secure land bridge from Iran to Syria and Lebanon – a link that was severed following the onset of the Syrian civil war, and from 2014, damaged by the loss of large areas of Iraqi territory to the Islamic State. Iranian objectives include: road and rail access along secure main supply routes (MSRs) controlled by Iran, its Shiite proxies, and axis of resistance allies Hezbollah and the Assad regime, from Iran to the Mediterranean coasts of Syria and Lebanon. This is an Iran-dominated Shiite Crescent, encompassing Iran, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, the Gulf, Red Sea, Bab-el-Mandab, the northern Indian Ocean, and encircling the GCC states.

Iran also needs MSRs to complement its vulnerable air bridge to its allies: as an alternative to sea routes; for long term economic domination of the region; to circumvent sanctions via third countries; and with Moscow, to supplant the United States as the preeminent actor in the Middle East. The land bridge is likewise the key element in Iran's forward defense and strategic deterrence of Israel, as Tehran seeks to develop its ballistic, cruise missile, and nuclear capabilities. If unchecked, this arguably presents the most serious long term existential threat to Israel and other regional states, given current circumstances whereby:[1]

a. Iran and Russia have established increasing dominance over the Assad regime.
b. Hezbollah exercises increasing influence over Lebanon's political and security structures.

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c. Iran seeks a second front in southeast Syria opposite Israel in the Golan Heights and aims to pressure Jordan from two directions.
d. Hezbollah has greater numbers of rockets, precision missiles, and UAVs than in the 2006 war, and is able to threaten Israeli population centers and infrastructure, potentially with WMD, and deter attacks on Iranian strategic facilities.
e. The axis has established advanced weapon production facilities in Lebanon and Syria.
f. Hezbollah and Syria can threaten military and civilian shipping, onshore/offshore infrastructure, and aircraft with long range anti-ship missiles and SAMs.
g. Iranian influence is present in Gaza.
h. Israeli/US/NATO operations over and adjacent to Syria are complicated by Russian anti-access area denial (A2/AD) capabilities, which benefit the axis while threatening the Bosphorus and Suez choke points.
i. The Russian military is supporting axis forces in Syria to reestablish MSRs.
j. Iran could deploy SAMs such as S-300 or future clones to protect MSRs.
k. Axis activities are complemented by sophisticated cyber capabilities.
l. A totally Iran-dominated Iraq would result in Tehran controlling the world's largest proven oil and second largest gas reserves. This is in addition to the billions Iran has received under the JCPOA.

The land bridge is the key element in Iran´s forward defense and strategic deterrence of Israel, as Tehran seeks to develop its ballistic, cruise missile, and nuclear capabilities. If unchecked, this arguably presents the most serious long term existential threat to Israel and other regional states.

However, there are a number of elements likely to impede progress and provide obstacles to achievement of Iran's objectives, possibly leading Iran to overstretch its capabilities and those of allies and proxies. These include: the topography of proposed MSRs, human terrain and religious issues, competing objectives and capabilities of global, regional, and sub-state actors, and not least, axis military and financial resources. This article will examine the most plausible direct MSR options for Iran and examine the complicating factors associated with each potential course.

Land Bridge vs. Sea and Air Routes

While Tehran may be interested in establishing port facilities on the Mediterranean coast, for the foreseeable future Iran will not have the naval capacity to ensure protection of long sea routes to Syria and is vulnerable to Israeli and US military power; previous weapons shipments to Hezbollah have been intercepted.

Iran's use of an air bridge for power projection and logistics is vulnerable for several reasons. Airlines operating as "IRGC Air" are threatened by terrorism sanctions the Trump administration imposed on the entire group in October 2017. This could prompt difficulties in obtaining spare parts and technical assistance for US-manufactured aircraft and parts and foreign aircraft; reluctance of foreign companies to do business with IRGC-associated airlines and entities; recourse to old, dangerous-to-maintain airframes; loss of international status; and reverberations throughout Iran's economy, given the pervasiveness of IRGC business activities. Even before new sanctions, Iran's aviation purchases risked violating the JCPOA's prohibition on selling aircraft for military purposes with the possibility of their being used to support terror activities, sanctions evasion, nuclear proliferation, and war crimes – though prior to October, these were ignored because of complex political and commercial factors and the potential to undo the JCPOA. The key vulnerability of the air bridge, however, is the ability of external actors like the US, GCC, or Israel to intercept Iranian/Syrian military and pseudo-civilian aircraft during conflict. In contrast, one principal advantage of land MSRs is the ability to move bigger loads more cheaply. Another is Iraqi or Syrian flagging of convoys, making it much harder militarily and politically to identify and destroy legitimate targets; yet another advantage lies in obviating potential airport denial in Syria and Lebanon.

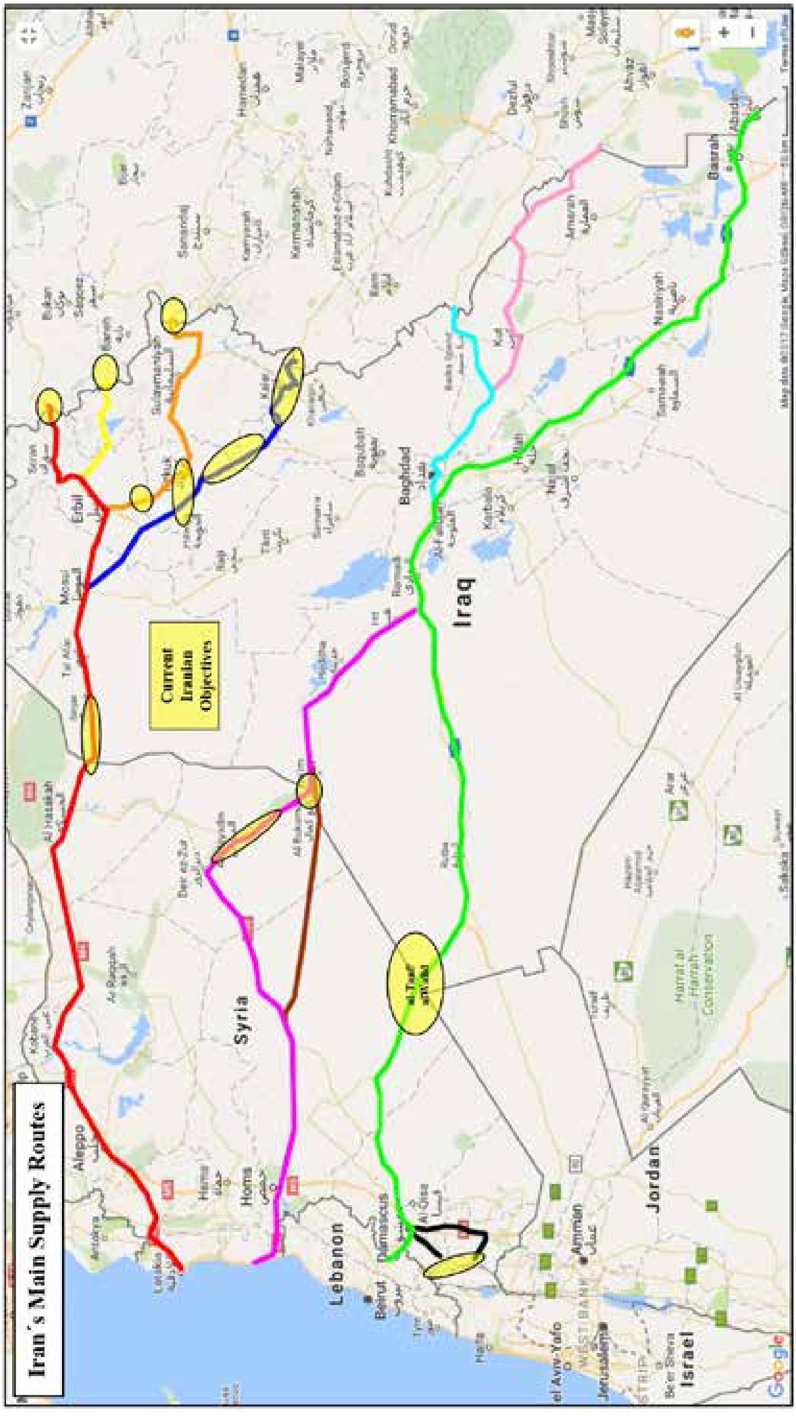
Tehran has also posited a rail link to the Mediterranean. Whether through the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) or from the Gulf through central Iraq, the project would be subject to the range of factors listed below, as well as financing and sanctions issues. Both Iraqi and Syrian rail networks are dilapidated and have been subject to insurgent activity. Roads are easier and cheaper to repair/circumvent, while railways have advantages of capacity and speed.

Northern Route from Iran through the KRI to Syria

Achievement of a secure route through the KRI via Mosul and Tal Afar to Syrian territory controlled by the YPG (Syrian Kurdish group) and PKK is problematic (see map). First, the orange, yellow, and red MSRs traverse the rugged Zagros Mountains on both sides of the Iran-Iraq border, presenting choke points and environmental hazards during winter and Ramadan. The Zagros range, vital ground for Iran, is seeing renewed insurgency from armed Kurdish groups opposed to Tehran.[2] The red MSR passes through the Qandil region stronghold of the PKK and PJAK (the Iranian Kurd sister group). It is not just immediate local force protection that concerns Iran; the Zagros represent a key element of Tehran's control of disparate ethnic and religious groups, a region that it has long struggled to subjugate and a black hole sucking in military resources needed elsewhere. External support to Iran's Kurds would complicate the situation considerably. Another source of threat (ironically) in the Zagros is the Islamic State, which may have made inroads with local Iranian Kurds traditionally associated with al-Qaeda and projected into northern Iraq from Iranian sanctuaries.

Enlisting the PKK

In November 2016, Quds Force commander Qassem Soleimani approached the PKK, which holds vital terrain around Sinjar and the Syrian border. This ploy likely aimed to have the PKK rein in PJAK operations inside Iran and secure access through PKK/YPG territory in Syria to the Assad regime. The Syrian Kurds might in turn receive a westward outlet through the KRI.[3] However, this ran afoul of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) in Erbil, which resisted Iranian pressure to act as a conduit to Syria and experienced a tense stand-off with the PKK/YPG and affiliated Yezidi units around Sinjar, and aroused consternation in Ankara, the KDP's ally against the PKK. Turkish concerns were exacerbated by the prospect of Iranian-backed Iraqi Shiite Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) entering the Turkmen town of Tal Afar, with Ankara threatening intervention, heightening Iraqi-Turkish and Turkish-Iranian tensions. The long term disputes between the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) and Baghdad, put on hold during the fight against IS, are now coming to the fore while exploited by Tehran.



Iran´s Main Supply Routes
Current Iranian Objectives
Syria
Iraq
Lebanon
Jordan
Israel
Aleppo
Damascus
Beirut
Amman
Baghdad
Mosul
Erbil
Basrah

Turkish Concerns

Recognizing that the red MSR passes through areas of northern Iraq that Ankara considers within its historical sphere of influence, recent Iranian overtures to Turkey have reiterated common ground, such as opposition to the PKK/YPG/PJAK and de jure KRI independence, which both fear for domestic Kurdish reasons. Tehran has cleverly exploited the referendum crisis to align Ankara with its goals in Iraq. These are: preventing KRI independence, decoupling energy-rich Erbil from Ankara and Washington, tightening control over Baghdad, and consolidating MSRs through northern Iraq. While Ankara was broadly supportive of a de facto KDP-dominated KRG, historically Tehran has been closer to the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) in Sulaymaniyah and has used the crisis to exacerbate intra-Kurdish tensions and secure Peshmerga withdrawal from vital ground it seeks to dominate.[4] Tehran has regularly engaged in meddling and military operations affecting the KRI and now seeks to split the autonomous region further, control KRI border crossings, and gain access to KRI airports. A unified, de jure KRG threatens to make use of northern MSRs much more problematic for Iran, together with the proximity of Turkish and US military power, Western and Israeli support to the KRG, and long term Sunni insurgent significant activity (SIGACTs).[5] The orange MSR passes though relatively secure PUK territory.

Problems with Northern Syria

Across the border from Sinjar, the red MSR presents a multitude of problems for Iran. First are long term PKK/PYD objectives[6] in seeking to join the divided Syrian-Kurd cantons they control, aspirations to a Kurdish Mediterranean port, and the drive to link up with PKK/PJAK territory in the Qandil Region of northeastern Iraq. US support to the YPG-dominated Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), including ground forces and airpower, if only as long as anti-Islamic State operations last, is another factor. The Turkey-PKK/YPG conflict in northern Syria and Iraq, together with Iranian-Turkish competition in those areas and empowerment of local proxies, increases the risks of military confrontation where spheres of influence collide, despite current alignment against Iraq's Kurds.

A fundamental dichotomy of Tehran-Ankara relations is that the former seeks the preservation of the Assad regime, while the latter has supported rebel groups and allowed Sunni jihadists to cross Turkish territory en route to Iraq and Syria, complicating Iran's ground link to axis allies. Ankara

has been alarmed by perceived Iranian acquiescence toward Kurdish autonomous zones along Turkey's southern border, the influx of Syrian refugees, and threats to Sunnis and Turkmen. Ankara sees Iran trying to reestablish a Persian Empire with Shiite characteristics in formerly Ottoman provinces of Iraq and Syria. It views use of Shiite militias to maintain Alawite minority rule as stimulating Sunni insurgency, including terrorism affecting Turkey. For its part, Iran has carried the military and financial burden of supporting a key ally and earning the enmity of much of the Sunni world in the process.

Balancing the PKK

Tehran must carefully balance the PKK/YPG as local tactical allies in Iraq and Syria, against a source of long term strategic threat, given Iran's own Kurdish problem as well as a thorn in relations with Ankara. Even though Iran and the PKK share a short term interest in defeating the Islamic State, long term interests do not align. Iran seeks to preserve the existing order, the PKK/YPG to overturn it. Territorial gains, US and Russian support, and Assad's relative weakness gave the PKK/YPG confidence that any Ankara-Tehran cooperation against them could be neutralized. That and pursuit of further territorial objectives has already put them on a collision course with Turkey and Iran in Syria and northern Iraq as Islamic State territory shrinks. In military terms, Iran is faced with US-supported YPG/Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), plus Turkish airpower and ground units in close proximity to axis forces. Additional challenges are the Islamic State, as well as rebel activity, especially in Idlib and Homs.

The Arab-Kurd Trigger Line and Islamic State Regeneration

The blue MSR, snaking from the Iranian border town of Qasr-e Shirin northwest toward Kirkuk and Mosul, initially traverses relatively secure PUK territory, but then essentially follows the Arab-Kurd "trigger-line," areas subject for the foreseeable future to ongoing Islamic State and Sunni insurgent activity.[7] Ironically, this was also an Iranian MSR for projection of Sunni terrorists into northern Iraq, both during and after the US occupation, and has seen regular SIGACTs since then. At the time of this writing, Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and Iranian-dominated PMF are seizing vital ground along the whole length of the trigger-line stretching from the Iranian border to Sinjar, to secure Iranian use of this MSR.

Like the blue MSR, the pink and turquoise routes pass through Diyala Province, which recent scholarly analysis indicates could be an area for Islamic State regeneration after the loss of territory elsewhere in Iraq. Northern Diyala is likely to be a focal point for Islamic State efforts to exploit Arab-Kurd, Shiite-Sunni, and Kurdish-Iranian seams. It could also become a principal IS safe haven, together with Tarmiyah, the Jallam Desert, Hamrin Mountains, Iranian border, and eastern approaches to Baghdad.[8] Analysis indicates that Diyala is currently seeing "a more intense insurgency than at any time since al-Qaida in Iraq's heyday in the province in 2007-2008." Significantly, in both Diyala and Salah al-Din, the deployment of non-local Shiite PMF coincided with "the strong and near-immediate bounce-back of the insurgency to 2013 levels."[9]

Resurgent Iraqi Shiite Nationalism

Iranian military planners may have more confidence in the green and pink MSRs, as these pass through Shiite-majority areas of southern and southeastern Iraq, where Sunni jihadist activity has had far less impact.[10] Potential problems derive from intra-Iraqi Shiite politics and, as viewed from Tehran and Qom, resurgent Iraqi Shiite nationalism affecting Iran's regional ambitions. Muqtada al-Sadr's courting of Saudi Arabia and his maverick existence as a third force in Iraq's Shiite community are deeply troubling for Tehran. Sadr has called for the disbandment of the PMF, the essential and largely Iranian-controlled proxy force and power broker in Baghdad, which Iran has trained, supplied, and deployed across Iraq and Syria to fight the Islamic State, crush Sunni populations, reestablish MSRs, and bolster axis forces.

Iran has clipped al-Sadr's wings before, but the Shiite leader should not be underestimated as a populist nationalist cleric able to cause problems, despite the weakening of his movement and splitting away of various pro-Iran groups. He launched a 2004 uprising in Baghdad and towns across the Shiite south, denied the Baghdad-Fallujah MSR to American use, took on the Iraqi army and coalition forces in Basra in March 2008, stormed Baghdad's international zone in 2016, and put thousands of supporters on the streets in 2017. If one Shiite cleric can defy Iran, then others can too. Interestingly, Iraq's ambassador to the United States recently highlighted the need to redeploy ISF back to Basra, likely to counter local forces and regionalism.[11]

Tehran must also factor in Ayatollah Ali Sistani and "the fierce debate between the [Iraqi] Najaf and [Iranian] Qom schools." [12] The former represents Shiite opposition to clergy in political power; the latter represents the *velayat-e faqih* doctrine that gives supreme state power to a religious figure. While the division gradually widened with Iraq's descent to instability, it now encompasses detailed issues of state politics. Thus Qom, Najaf, and Sadr all compete for the hearts and minds of Iraq's Shiites, and both Sadr and Sistani command loyalty from substantial armed groups. Sistani's camp has also called for PMF disbandment, citing their use as Iranian attempts to expand power and influence in Iraq.

ISF and PMF Fault Lines

The PMF, together with the ISF's Iranian-dominated interior ministry and army units, are at the heart of a larger contest for power inside Iraq's divided Shiite camp. The winners will likely control the government and guide the post-Islamic State reconstruction and the very nature of Iraq's identity. Key challenges involving the ISF and PMF will determine Iraq's political and security futures.[13] Both contain three distinct factions, with respective allegiances to Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the Supreme Leader of Iran; Sistani; and al-Sadr. Both are central to the growing intra-Shiite power struggle, pitting pro-Iran figures such as former Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, who seeks to use them as a vehicle to return to office, against Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi, who is trying to maintain power and who advocates controlling the PMF and Sadr and Sistani, who are wary of Iranian influence.

Tehran wants strong PMF allies to curb the Iraqi state were Baghdad ever to pursue anti-Iran policies. Some pro-Khamenei PMF leaders have attempted to assume a political role to leverage popularity to win votes in Iraq's 2018 elections, or could be used in a Baghdad coup scenario. A crucial factor that will help determine who gains the upper hand will be whether the PMF are integrated into ISF loyal to Baghdad and used to reinforce the political status quo, or if they remain a separate parallel force used to increase Tehran's control over Iraq. Pro-Khamenei PMF are supportive of fighting in Syria under the Quds Force to achieve Iran's strategic objectives, while the Sadr and Sistani factions are opposed to Iraqi Shia fighting abroad. Another fault line is the perception of popular protests against the government's inability to provide basic services, with pro-Iran PMF groups calling for a heavy handed response, Sistani showing sympathy,

and Sadr's active involvement; yet another is the pro-Iran camp's control of PMF purse strings.

From Baghdad to the Border

The magenta and green MSRs run from Baghdad through Iraq's Anbar Province to the Iraq-Syria border crossings of al-Qaim/Abu Kamal and al-Walid/al-Tanf, respectively; they are likely to present significant force protection challenges for Iran, its proxies, and allies for the foreseeable future. The open western desert spaces bordering Syria in Anbar and Ninawa Provinces are large, porous, and difficult to control. Despite successes in the ISF's 2015 Anbar campaign, there are many reasons to be concerned about potential Islamic State resurgence in Anbar.[14] The proximity of Syria and the difficulty of securing the border mean that IEDs and heavy weapons may continue to move into Iraq as long as the Syrian conflict continues. The Islamic State has been mounting hit-and-run rural insurgency in Anbar, using the ungoverned spaces to mount attacks where mainly non-local Shiite PMF and their Iranian advisors are deployed to control roads to Syria. Analysis suggests that "embedded advisor and intelligence cells" will be needed for years to come to maintain the tempo of counterinsurgency operations in Anbar, Salah al-Din, and the Baghdad belts."[15]

Syria Confliction

Across the Syrian border, Russian-supported axis formations are in close proximity to US-backed SDF forces around al-Tanf, Raqqa, and Deir ez-Zor. Despite the capture of the latter and the crossing of the Euphrates, Iran and its allies face the difficult task of capturing vital ground, and holding towns and key terrain along the Euphrates River valley, Iraqi border crossings, and vast interior spaces of Syria. The axis offensive into Deir ez-Zor Province is heavily dependent upon Russian air support and Russia's negotiation of de-escalation zones that freed up pro-regime troops. The challenges posed by US air dominance and confliction were highlighted in June 2017, when the US air force shot down a Syrian warplane and Iranian drone, and in September, when Russian aircraft engaged SDF across the Euphrates from Deir ez-Zor. The US attacked pro-Syrian regime forces, including Iraqi Shiite militias,

> The Trump administration needs a comprehensive regional strategy toward Iran that mobilizes key US allies; collectively, they far surpass the Iran/axis-Russia alliance in terms of military and financial resources.

near al-Tanf close to the tri-border area of Syria, Iraq, and Jordan. There is an ever-present risk of armed contacts as axis forces continue operations towards the Iraqi border.

Israeli Red Lines

In Syria's far west, Hezbollah, regime forces, and the Lebanese Army have successfully conducted operations through August 2017 to clear the Qalamoun region of the Islamic State and al-Qaeda-linked groups. The axis has been less successful in southwestern Syria in opening MSRs to the Golan (black MSR), as Israel has used a combination of kinetic and non-kinetic means and deterrence to enforce red lines regarding the proximity of Iranian proxies and allies with sophisticated weaponry. Israel remains wary of de-escalation zones, and its strategic depth is shrinking. Observers will be closely monitoring future US involvement in Syria and Iraq (if any) and wondering whether Iran will be left to fill completely the void left by the Islamic State. Another question is whether this results in an Israeli-axis conflagration (in the absence of plausible US-Iran or Saudi-Iran showdowns), and if Russia will constrain or enable axis activities that threaten Israel. In a conflict scenario, Moscow might protect axis forces in Syria that are vital to support Damascus and thus Russia's position.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Recommendations concerning restraint of Tehran's ambitions in Syria and Iraq have recently been recently explored elsewhere;[16] this paper adds to these with some specific courses to counter Iranian power projection via MSRs.

a. Overall, the Trump administration needs a comprehensive regional strategy toward Iran mobilizing key US allies; collectively, they far surpass the Iran/axis-Russia alliance in terms of military and financial resources. US military credibility and leadership are critical. Tehran has long acted on its own strategy and arguably poses a greater long term threat to the US and its allies than Sunni jihadism, while stimulating the conditions that drive insurgency; watch for al-Qaeda exploiting the decline of the Islamic State. The US should lay down red lines (as it did with Syrian WMD followed up with cruise missile strikes) and use its footprint and airpower to curtail Iran's power projection, control of Iraq and Syria and Iranian/Shiite/Alawite sectarian polices that fuel Sunni alienation. The US needs to demonstrate that it is "the strongest tribe."[17]

b. The US should carry out strikes on Iranian personnel and associated designated terrorists for attacks on Americans and allies.
c. Israel/US/GCC should consider covert support to Iranian-Kurd Peshmerga and other select forces opposed to Tehran, so as to impose costs for malicious behavior and complicate power projection. If Iran favors operating in a grey zone short of conventional conflict, then this can work both ways. If Tehran is preoccupied with internal security and regime survival, it will have fewer resources available and less inclination towards destabilizing regional activities.
d. The same logic can be applied in Syria, with new support for non-Islamist rebel groups, increased pressure on Assad over war crimes and WMD and on Russia, Tehran, and Damascus over weapons transfers to Hezbollah.
e. Israel should consider supporting the YPG if US assistance ends. This would provide leverage against the axis, stymie Iranian plans for an MSR through northern Syria and Iraq, and counter Turkish support to Hamas.
f. The US should draw an immediate red line against offensive Iraqi operations towards the KRI, backed up with military force. US armor and heavy weapons used against the Kurds should be threatened with destruction and the Peshmerga provided with the means to defend themselves. In the long term, an independent Kurdistan would make a stable ally, deny Tehran a route to the Mediterranean, and present both Iran and Iraq with insecure flanks.
g. Support for the Abadi camp in Baghdad should be developed against pro-Iran elements. Military and other assistance should be leveraged toward integration of PMF groups into the ISF, with disbandment of all existing pro-Tehran units. Iranian-inspired power shifts must be countered and the detrimental effects to Baghdad of having designated terrorists in the ISF highlighted. Saudi/GCC elements should reach out to anti-Iran Shiite and Sunni leaders.
h. Reconstruction assistance in Iraq and Syria can be used to counter Iranian influence.
i. The US and allies should continue to spotlight Iran as a dangerous, destabilizing, proliferating, subversive state sponsor of terror across the region and globe.
j. New terrorism sanctions against the IRGC and affiliated individuals and entities should include a terror designation. Sanctions should be

applied to the Artesh (regular armed forces), given their involvement in Syria and presence in Iran's economy. Any and all sanctions on Iran and the axis make power projection and malign activities more problematic.

k. The US should revoke export licenses for US aircraft and parts destined for Iran.

l. The international community needs to pursue inspections of Iranian military facilities and undeclared sites, as well as investigation of a possible parallel nuclear program. Increased pressure is required to curtail ballistic and cruise missile projects. The JCPOA should be tightened, leaving to Iran the hard task of returning to crippling sanctions.

m. Given that that the Lebanese political and military leadership are all Hezbollah-aligned, military assistance to the Lebanese Armed Forces should be suspended (as Saudi Arabia has done). Existing sanctions against Hezbollah must be strictly enforced, sources of its global financing targeted further, its terror designation among certain US allies tightened, and it should be designated as a transnational criminal organization.

n. Threats posed by axis and Russian A2/AD need to be framed in Israeli/US/NATO/EU/regional terms and dealt with accordingly.

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Iran's Shiite Foreign Legion

Ephraim Kam

A significant and troubling phenomenon has been taking shape in Iran's regional conduct over the past few years. Iranian military advisors, operating under the authority of the Quds Force, have been involved in the fighting in Syria since 2012, almost from the outset of the civil war. A turning point occurred in 2014, with the emergence of the Islamic State organization and its seizure of large areas of Syria and Iraq. Following this dramatic development, Iran sent ground forces into Syria, under the leadership of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards and the Quds Force, to fight alongside the Syrian army in extricating the Assad regime from its difficult situation. However, as more details emerge regarding Iran's military involvement in Syria, the more it is evident that from a numerical perspective, the bulk of the Iranian forces that Iran has dispatched to Syria do not comprise Iranian forces but rather Shiite militias fighters from other countries such as Lebanon, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, all under Iranian leadership.

The Operational Model

The idea of building armed Shiite militias to do Iranian work is not new to Tehran's strategic concept. As early as 1982, three years after the Islamic Revolution, the regime established Hezbollah in Lebanon to fight on its behalf against IDF forces in southern Lebanon. In recent years, Iran has sent thousands of Hezbollah fighters to Syria to help the Assad regime fight its opponents. In addition, over the past decade, Iran has either established or helped establish armed Shiite militias in Iraq. These frameworks were meant to promote Iranian aims, such as assisting the Shiite camp in Iraq – which constitutes the majority in the country – to seize control of government institutions and security forces, push out the American forces operating

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there, and consolidate Iranian influence in the country. The Afghan and Pakistani militias are newer forces set up by the Iranians in recent years, built on Afghan and Pakistani Shiite refugees who fled to Iran and remained there. These refugees volunteered in large numbers for the Shiite militias established by Iran, in exchange for payment or the assurance that they would be granted Iranian citizenship or Iranian work and residency permits. To build the Afghan militias, the Quds Force apparently recruited volunteers from the Shiite minority in western Afghanistan as well.

The Shiite militias were organized and trained by Iran's Revolutionary Guards and the Quds Force, which technically operates under the authority of the Revolutionary Guards (although General Qassem Soleimani, commander of the Quds Force, reports directly to Iran's Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei), and Iranian officers were assigned to them as commanders and instructors. After undergoing basic training, they were sent to Syria to take part in combat, where many were killed or wounded in battle.

While Russia's position on the militias in Syria is unclear, it appears supportive of their participation in the fighting, and in any event, certainly does not oppose it. This position may be influenced by the fact that Russia itself used irregular volunteer forces, inter alia in its military action in Ukraine. Note that since Russia intervened in the fighting in Syria, Russian officers, with representatives of Iran, Hezbollah, and Assad's army, have manned joint operations centers. Less clear is how Russia's interest in working with the United States in brokering a settlement in Syria will influence Russia's views on the future use of militias.

From Iran's perspective, Hezbollah is the preferable model of a Shiite militia. Inherently linked to Iran to a much greater extent than the other militias, the mutual obligation between Iran and Hezbollah is more substantive than the mutual obligation between Iran and the other militias. Hezbollah adopted the Iranian model, with a religious leader rather than a political or military figure at the helm of the organization. Hezbollah's military capability is highly significant: it has existed for 35 years and has more than 18 years of experience of warfare against Israel. In its activity in Lebanon, it regards itself as fighting for its home. In addition, its religious and sectoral Shiite motivation is more prominent and significant than that of the other militias, which also makes it more dangerous. In contrast, it is difficult to imagine fighters from Pakistan or Afghanistan – and to a certain extent, even Iraq – fighting with such devotion for a land that is not theirs,

hundreds and thousands of kilometers from their homes, even if they are following Iranian orders and are driven by strong Shiite religious motivation.

Hezbollah serves as the preferred model of a Shiite militia for another reason as well. It began as a small terrorist organization whose primary aim was not only to bring about the withdrawal of IDF forces from southern Lebanon but also the withdrawal of American and French forces from Beirut by means of attacks against their soldiers. However, over the years, with the assistance of Iran, Hezbollah has transformed itself into a military organization that though small, is armed with quality weaponry, including a large rocket arsenal, which has made it the most important military force in Lebanon. Moreover, Hezbollah has become an important religious organization, political party, and social movement in Lebanon, which has also helped the country's Shiite population develop into the strongest and most important minority in Lebanon while taking advantage of the weakness of the Lebanese government and its military system. Based on this example, Iran appears to harbor expectations that the other militias linked to it – particularly the Iraqi militias – will attain political power and assist in the expansion of Iranian power in their respective countries.

The second most important group of militias consists of the Iraqi Shiite militias, which after 2014 united under an umbrella framework known as the Popular Mobilization Units (PMU). From Iran's perspective, the advantage of these groups lies in their longstanding ties to Iran, which reach back more than a decade, as well their combat experience against the American forces stationed in Iraq since 2003. Iran seeks to make use of these groups to strengthen the Shiite camp, establish its desired corridor from Iran to Syria, consolidate Iranian control along both sides of segments of the border between Iraq and Syria, and reduce US influence in the region and in Iraq itself.

The older Iraqi Shiite militias were established when US forces operated in Iraq following the conquest of the country, as a response to the American occupation. The militias can be divided into two principal groups. The larger of the two consists of militias that were established and trained by Iran and/or receive support from Iran in the form of arms and financial assistance, and whose members were trained by the Quds Force. The largest, strongest, and most important militia in this category is the Badr organization, which fought beside Iran against Saddam Hussein's army during the Iraq-Iran War, and whose commander, Hadi al-Amiri, is reportedly a close friend of

Quds Force commander Qassem Soleimani. The two smaller militias with ties to Iran are Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq and Kata'ib Hezbollah.

These three militias attacked the US forces in Iraq, fought against Iraqi Sunni militias, took part in liberating parts of Iraq from the Islamic State, and sent contingents to fight in Syria under the command and control of Iranian officers. They are loyal to Iran, which relies on them to carry out sensitive tasks, even if their loyalty is less certain than that of the Lebanese Hezbollah. Nonetheless, Iran is presumably not eager for the Iraqi militias to become too strong to the point of shaking off its leadership, and it therefore encourages competition among them. These Shiite militias increased in strength after the appearance of the Islamic State in Iraq in 2014. After the collapse of the Iraqi security forces in the face of the Islamic State's conquest of Mosul in mid 2014, the Iraqi government relied to a great extent on the Shiite militias in order to stave off the organization. However, in the battle to liberate Mosul in 2016-2017, the government preferred to distance the Shiite militias that Iran had sent in by the thousands to take part in the fighting and promote Iranian influence and intervention in Iraq.

The second group of Iraqi Shiite militias includes those with ties to the Iraqi religious establishment and other Iraqi organizations. The most important are the militia that operates under the authority of religious leader Muqtada al-Sadr and the militias that are influenced by Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, the senior religious leader in Iraq. These militias have reservations about the growth of Iranian power in Iraq and, despite Iran's limited ties with them, have not helped Iran in the fighting in Syria.[1]

The Scope of the Forces

It is difficult to assess the scope of the manpower at the disposal of the Shiite militias. However, most estimates place the number of fighters in their ranks at more than 100,000. According to one assessment, the militias include the following numbers of fighters:[2]

a. Lebanese Hezbollah: 45,000 fighters, including 6,000-8,000 who have been dispatched to Syria.
b. The Iraqi militias: approximately 100,000 fighters, including 80,000 members of Iranian-supported organizations. These include 10,000-20,000 al-Badr fighters, of whom a few thousand were sent to Syria; 10,000 fighters of Kata'ib Hezbollah, of whom 1,000-3,000 were sent to Syria; and comparable numbers for Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq.
c. The Afghan Fatemiyoun Brigade: 2,000-3,000 fighters.

d. The Pakistani Zainebiyoun Brigade: 2,000-3,000 fighters, of whom 1,000 were sent to Syria.

Iran prefers to use primarily the Shiite militias in the fighting in Syria as opposed to its own forces for a number of reasons. One is its desire to preserve its freedom of action and to avoid involvement in direct fighting against enemies such as the United States and Israel. Iran also finds it important to be able to demonstrate, as it continues to maintain today, that Iranian military personnel are not fighting in Syria but rather only serving as advisors and instructors. However, the heavy losses inflicted upon the Iranian forces indicate that they have indeed been engaged in the fighting. Iran also seeks to show that the struggle in Syria is not only an Iranian matter but rather a cause embraced by the entire Shiite camp, and to display the power of this camp. However, the use of the militias enables Iran's enemies – led by the United States and Israel – to strike at the militias when the need arises, without necessarily being involved in direct fighting against Iran itself, as it can be assumed that Iran itself will be in no hurry to launch a significant response to an attack on its proxies. In this manner, Israel launches attacks on Hezbollah from time to time, particularly against weapons shipments to the organization, or in exceptional cases, against Hezbollah preparations for an attack on an Israeli target. Indeed, outgoing Israeli Air Force Chief Maj. Gen. Amir Eshel said that since 2012, Israel attacked convoys loaded with arms and weapons intended for Hezbollah and other groups on almost 100 occasions.[3] In most cases, Hezbollah did not respond, but more importantly, Iran did not respond to the attacks against Hezbollah. Iran and the militias also failed to respond to the US attack on a militia force in eastern Syria in June 2017.

Hezbollah's behavior demonstrates that the organization can be deterred. After the IDF withdrawal from southern Lebanon in June 2000, Hezbollah continued to provoke Israel, mostly by attempts to kidnap IDF soldiers. The major intentional provocation of Israel by the organization occurred in June 2006 and led to the Second Lebanon War. However, Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah has openly acknowledged that the war was the result of an error in judgment on his part. Indeed, since this war, Hezbollah has generally refrained from provoking Israel, based on the fear that Israel's response will target not only Hezbollah but Lebanon as well. This means that the militias that were established later may also potentially be deterred, particularly as their motivation to provoke the United States and Israel may be lower than that of Hezbollah.

The militias' military power is of course not comparable to that of the United States or Israel. The militias have no air forces and no precision guided weapons; their tank and artillery forces are limited, as is the quality of their intelligence; and they are not trained to operate in large frameworks. As they operate far from their bases of origin, Iran's ability to assist them is also limited, even if Iran succeeds in building and solidifying a corridor linking Syria and Lebanon. If such a corridor is established, convoys that pass through it, escorted by militias, will be vulnerable to air strikes by Iran's enemies.

The level of motivation among the militias is also uncertain. For example, the factors motivating many members of the Pakistani and Afghan militias are not nationalist-religious in nature but rather stem from promises of benefits such as salaries, citizenship, and work permits in Iran. Some of the Shiite leaders in Iraq who have no ties to the militias operating in Syria have expressed reservations about the expansion of Iranian influence in Iraq, which may influence the willingness of the Iraqi militias to fight for Iran. Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi, who is a Shiite, reportedly does not support the Iraqi Shiite militias' entry into Syria, out of a desire to prevent Iraq from becoming mired in the civil war there.

Yet despite the militias' limited military strength, their ability to carry out terrorist attacks against the ground forces of their enemies should not be underestimated. US forces, stationed in Iraq between 2003 and 2011, lost approximately 4,500 troops, a few hundred in attacks carried out by militias like the Shiite militias. For its part, Hezbollah grew from a small terrorist group into an organization that poses a serious threat to Israel. In the long term, it is possible that if not checked, the Shiite militias could, with Iranian support, develop into a strategic threat to their rivals.

Significance

If not blocked, the array of armed Shiite militias can be expected to expand, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Iran will presumably take action to increase the number of fighters in their ranks and improve the quality of the weapons they possess. In any event, the continued fighting in Syria, the joint military activity with Iranian units, the cumulative experience and lessons learned, and the improved weaponry can all be expected to improve the performance of the militias. If Iran succeeds in establishing and maintaining a corridor from Iran to Syria and Lebanon, the militias will grow stronger both as a result of the increased strength of Hezbollah

and the Iraqi militias, and the creation of a strong and stable framework of militias.

The establishment of a large and increasingly strengthening array of Iranian-led Shiite militias in the area between Iran in the east and Syria and Lebanon in the west – especially if accompanied by Iranian success in establishing the corridor between Iran and Lebanon – will pose threats and dangers to a number of countries in the region, as well as to the United States and Israel. First, this measure would solidify Iran's grip and influence as the major force in this area and would compel the states and organizations located within it to take Iranian interests, influence, and activity into consideration. In turn, Iran is liable to take advantage of its rising status and the new tools at its disposal to intervene in countries in the region and influence their internal systems in its favor. Such intervention could undermine the internal stability of these countries. The development of a Shiite stronghold in the Iraqi-Syrian-Lebanese region could also pose a threat to Jordan and Turkey, although presumably Iran is in no hurry to provoke Turkey and would actually prefer to cooperate with it, especially as the Shiite militias are currently operating far from Turkish soil. Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states stand to be concerned by the use of such a multinational Shiite army and regard it as part of the Shiite-Sunni struggle. They will also likely be concerned that the use of the militias in Syria could serve as a precedent for the use of similar militias in other countries, such as Yemen.

In addition, Iran may pose new dangers to Israel. Signs are already visible that Iran is considering placing a force linked to it in the Syrian Golan Heights, based on the idea of expanding the front with Israel from southern Lebanon into the Golan Heights and threatening Israel from another angle. Iran will presumably prefer to refrain from stationing Iranian forces in the Golan Heights out of concern that they will constitute an easy target for attacks by Israel if the need arises. It is therefore likely to elect to dispatch Hezbollah forces or those of other Shiite militias – perhaps of Iraqi origin – to the Golan Heights for a protracted period, and to extend the front with Israel from southern Lebanon into the Golan Heights. The provision of weapons to the forces at this front will be quicker and easier via the corridor, if Iran is able to thwart Israeli attacks on arms convoys en route from Iran to Syria and Lebanon. From Hezbollah's perspective, maintaining forces in the Golan Heights would allow it greater flexibility

and a larger variety of possible courses of action vis-à-vis Israel. It might also reduce the danger of an Israeli response against Lebanese targets.

What can be done to stop the construction of the corridor between Iran and Syrian and Lebanon and to prevent Iran's Shiite proxies from infiltrating the Golan Heights? For Iran, the corridor is important as an additional or alternative route to the air route for the transport of weapons and troops, particularly to Hezbollah. A shorter and quicker means for Iran to provide weapons to Hezbollah could be construction of weapons factories in Syria and Lebanon. For this reason, an understanding must be reached between Israel and the United States regarding the measures necessary to keep Iran and its proxies out of the Golan Heights. It is important for these measures to be taken as early as possible, as once Hezbollah and the militias entrench themselves in the field they will be more difficult to uproot. Inter alia, it is important for a future settlement on Syria to keep Iranian forces and the Shiite militias out of the Golan Heights as much as possible. If forces of Hezbollah or other Shiite militias are in any event stationed in the Golan Heights, Israel will need to make it clear that its response to attacks on Israeli targets launched from the Golan Heights will not be limited.

Second, in the framework of disrupting the construction of the corridor, it will be necessary to prevent the passage of Shiite military units and convoys carrying high quality weapons toward the Golan Heights and Lebanon, and to deter Iran from using the corridor freely. For a number of years Israel has launched periodic attacks against the convoys transporting weapons from Syria to Hezbollah in Lebanon. Striking at the corridor would be more meaningful if the American government were to assume some of the role of deterring the Iranians by attacking convoys deep inside Syria and Iraq, far from Israel. The fact that in June 2017 Defense Secretary James Mattis announced that the United States was making an effort to prevent Iran from infiltrating the areas vacated by the Islamic State, and that US planes attacked a motorized convoy of the militias in the region of the tripartite border between Syria, Iraq, and Jordan, may indicate that under certain circumstances, the Trump administration will be willing to take action to stop Shiite militia activity in eastern Syria and western Iraq.

However, the Trump administration's future policy on this subject is difficult to predict. Reports from Washington suggest division on the issue among senior government officials. They may also indicate that the Secretary of State and the leaders of the US military are not eager for a serious clash with Iran and its proxies over their involvement in Syria, as

from the perspective of these officials the priority should be defeating the Islamic State, as opposed to toppling the Assad regime or curbing Iran.[4] Trump himself has defined Iran as a high level threat, with a substantial portion of this threat stemming from Iranian regional activity. In the future, the US administration may understand that the greatest beneficiary of the defeat of the Islamic State and a settlement in Syria is likely to be Iran, and that no one regional player can stop Iran on its own. This is particularly true now that it has added the Shiite militias to its arsenal, which are likely to continue gaining in quantity and in quality. If these indeed are the conclusions reached by the Trump administration, there may well be increased efforts to curb Iran and its proxies.

Third, the chances of driving a wedge between Hezbollah and Iran are slim, due to the deep and wide ranging nature of their relationship. There is, however, a chance of creating divisions between the Iraqi Shiite militias and Iran. Although tens of thousands of fighters from the Iraqi Shiite militias followed Iranian orders during the fighting in Syria, a substantial number of Iraqi Shiites have reservations about the intensification of Iranian influence in Iraq and Iraqi intervention in Syria. Memories of the Iraq-Iran War, which took the lives of hundreds of thousands of soldiers on both sides, also do little to encourage improved relations between the parties. Consequently, it is possible that an increased US effort to improve its relations with the Iraqi government, strengthen the Iraqi security forces vis-à-vis the militias, and highlight the discord between Iran and the Iraqi Shiite militias could serve to distance the militias from Iran.[5]

Finally, both the United States and other countries in the region must acknowledge that for several reasons, the Iranian and proxy forces are likely to end up stronger due to their participation in the fighting in Syria and the settlement that may ultimately be reached. Iran has gained experience in warfare that it had not experienced since its war with Iraq, while Hezbollah and the other militias gained experience in a what for them was a new kind of warfare. Iran and its proxies now have an opportunity to observe first hand how Russia conducts a modern war effort, and overall, the Shiite militias will grow into a larger and more effective force that will be at Iran's disposal. Iran will likely attempt to open up another front against Israel from the Golan Heights, apparently by means of Hezbollah, which will be aided in this effort by the establishment of the corridor from Iran. Moreover, a large weapons deal that is currently on the agenda between Russia and Iran will upgrade the outdated weaponry of the Iranian forces,

and possibly also facilitate the provision of higher quality weapon systems to Hezbollah.

Notes

I am grateful to my friend and colleague Michael Eisenstadt from the Washington Institute for Near East Policy for his important and beneficial comments.

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Iran's Middle Class: An Agent of Political Change?

Raz Zimmt

The political and social processes underway in the Islamic Republic in recent decades have aroused growing interest in the Iranian middle class. Over the years Iran's middle class has played a central role in leading political and social change, and it is perceived as having the potential to lead public processes and even spearhead future political change. The central role of members of the middle class in Green Movement demonstrations after the presidential elections in 2009, in the election of Hassan Rouhani as president of Iran in 2013, and in his reelection in 2017 reflected their growing dissatisfaction in two main areas: socioeconomic and political. Rouhani was elected on the basis of his promise to improve the economic situation, rescue Iran from its long political isolation, and limit government interference in the private lives of citizens. His election after eight years in office of President Mahmoud Ahmadenijad (2005-2013), who adopted a populist policy designed especially to please the weaker strata of society, was seen to embody a process of change in Iranian society, reflecting the desire of the public, particularly the middle class, for substantive change.

Elsewhere in the Middle East, the events of the so-called Arab Spring, which were linked to the rise of the middle class in the Arab world, aroused new interest in this sector. The central role played by middle class youths in political developments in the region in recent years signaled the revolutionary potential of this class, which could help promote future democratization processes. In view of the growth of the Iranian middle class and its historic role in popular protest movements and deeper social and cultural processes sweeping Iranian society, it is impossible to ignore its potential as an agent of future changes and democratization processes. At the same time, specific

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weaknesses and limitations are likely to impede the implementation of these processes.

Who are the Iranian Middle Class?

Both the use of different indices to define the middle class and methodological difficulties of collecting data in the Islamic Republic complicate the attempt to define the Iranian middle class and estimate its size. Most of the accepted definitions are based on a variety of indices intended to reflect features that are usually linked to the middle class, particularly employment, education, income, lifestyle, and place of residence. Most researchers distinguish between the traditional middle class, which took shape in Iran before the modernization processes of the twentieth century, and the new middle class, which emerged as a result of the modernization processes, economic development, urbanization, bureaucratization, and expansion of higher education. The traditional middle class included primarily traders, property owners, and religious leaders. This class grew weaker during the twentieth century following the reforms introduced by the Pahlavi regime during the period of Reza Shah (1925-1941) and Muhammad Reza Shah (1941-1979), while a new middle class began to take shape. The creation of new modern institutions, the expansion of higher education, the establishment of a modern administrative system, and the rise of a new army led to the creation of a new middle class composed of civil servants, independent professionals, and intellectuals.[1]

The Islamic Revolution (1979) brought about significant changes in Iranian society, and the middle class shrank. The first decade of the revolution was shaped by the establishment of religious leaders in government, and by the Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988). The expectations of economic improvement were limited, and the revolutionary situation and ongoing war aggravated the economic distress. At the end of the war and during the second decade of the revolution, the private sector grew stronger, thanks to the liberalization of economic policy introduced by President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani. With the improved economic situation in the late 1980s, the middle class began to grow in numbers again.

Two economists of Iranian origin, Farhad Nomani and Sohrab Behdad, who studied class divisions in Iran, included in the middle class civil servants and people engaged in managerial and technical-professional jobs in the private sector. In their research they found that as in every other society, the Iranian middle class was not homogeneous and includes highly skilled

workers, highly paid professionals, managers, and administrative personnel in urban centers, as well as poorly trained and low paid individuals such as educators and paramedical staff, many of whom are employed in rural areas.[2]

It is difficult to estimate the size the middle class, in light of the many definitions and indices used to characterize it. In a survey of values and trends carried out among Iranian citizens in ten central cities between 2000 and 2003, over 50 percent of respondents defined themselves as middle class. This definition is not, however, based on objective economic measures.[3] The economist Djavad Salehi-Isfahani, who defined the middle class on the basis of expenditures of at least $10 per person per day, combined with basic education, estimated the middle class in Iran in 2007 at about 32 million salaried employees (46 percent of the work force).[4] Iranian sociologist Hamid-Reza Jalaeipour estimated the middle class at about 60 percent of the population, although he admitted the difficulty of estimating the size due to its heterogeneity.[5] Yet notwithstanding the differing estimates, there is no doubt that the middle class is expanding, not only in size but also in social, economic, and political influence.

The Effect of the Economic Crisis on the Middle Class

The economic crisis in Iran in recent years deeply affected the middle class. Some of the crisis was due to structural problems in the Iranian economy, such as the country's dependence on income from oil, the weakness of the private sector, and widespread corruption; some was the result of poor economic management; and some can be ascribed to the economic sanctions imposed on Iran by the international community. Although signs of the crisis were evident throughout the population, the blows sustained by the middle class were the most severe. While the upper classes were generally able to withstand the effects of the economic crisis and the lower classes received partial government compensation in the form of benefits and subsidies for basic imported goods, the middle class had to bear the brunt of the burden. In October 2012 the reformist newspaper *Ebtekar* defined the economic crisis as "the last nail in the coffin of the middle class," and warned that this class was being eroded and pushed below the poverty line.[6]

The economic damage to the middle class was aggravated further by the economic policy of President Ahmadinejad. Ahmadinejad was elected to the presidency largely because of his promises for a more equitable distribution of the country's resources, improvement in conditions of poor sections of

society, and a struggle against economic corruption. In order to implement these promises, the government took a series of steps intended to narrow social gaps and promote the President's idea of "social justice," but within a short time the economic policy became the government's Achilles' heel. Not only did it fail to improve the economic situation of Iran, but it even harmed the economy, as indicated by the rise in rates of inflation and unemployment and the drop in economic growth. In recent years the Iranian press and the Western media have published considerable evidence of the harsh effects of the economic crisis on the lives of middle class Iranians and their consumption patterns,[7] and overall, the galloping inflation and erosion of pay exacerbated the economic distress of the middle class. The President's critics claimed that the government's policies, particularly the subsidy reforms he introduced, were deliberately aimed at the urban middle class as part of the effort to suppress the reform movement after the 2009 disturbances that erupted following the presidential elections. A manifesto published by a group of students from universities in Tehran on November 6, 2010 stated that the government saw the middle class as enemies and wanted to impoverish them so that "they would not be able to think about anything except how to fill their bellies and won't think about the government." [8]

Since implementation of the nuclear agreement between Iran and Western powers signed in the summer of 2015, there has been an improvement in Iran's financial situation. However, the country is still having difficulty releasing tens of billions of dollars that were deposited in overseas accounts and frozen following the sanctions, and banks and companies in the West are wary of resuming business with Iran, mainly due to concerns about the reactions of the United States. Figures published in February 2017 by the International Monetary Fund show a mixed trend. The IMF estimates the rate of economic growth during the Iranian year that ended on March 20, 2017 at 6.6 percent and the rate of growth in the medium term as 4.5 percent. It also pointed to a dramatic drop in the rate of inflation. On the other hand, the Fund pointed to the high rate of unemployment and warned about consequences of the secondary American sanctions for Western companies willing to return to do business and invest in Iran.[9] In any event, effects of the economic improvements on the Iranian population in general, and the middle class in particular, could take a long time.

The Iranian Middle Class as a Possible Lever of Political Change

An article published in September 2009 on the reformist website Ayandeh ("future") defined members of the middle class as the "first and most important bearers of the Green Movement" and as "the engine" that drove the movement.[10] In a study based on field work done during the 2009 disturbances in Iran, the American sociologist Kevan Harris stated that the Green Movement was largely based on the urban middle class, which had emerged in Iran during the previous two decades.[11] However, the economic crisis and its effects on the middle class raised doubts regarding its continued ability to act as a central agent of change in Iranian society, as it did during the rise of the Iranian reform movement in the late 1990s and the disturbances of 2009.

The reform movement provided the Iranian middle class with an infrastructure through which it could present its demands not only for economic improvements but also for greater individual freedom. Alongside the financial distress, recent decades saw a growing gap between the institutions of the regime and the religious establishment on the one hand, and the Iranian public, particularly the younger generation, on the other. Many young people, particularly among the educated urban middle class, have moved away from the revolutionary values and adopted a Western lifestyle, in spite of the authorities' attempts to block what they perceive as the West's cultural offensive. Another social trend of concern among the religious establishment is the secularization process in Iranian society, alongside the erosion in the status of clerics in recent years. The leader of Friday prayers in the city of Mashhad, Ayatollah Seyyed Ahmad Alam ol-Hoda , expressed the concern of the religious establishment regarding society's movement away from the values of Islam when he warned, on the eve of the anniversary of the revolution, that Iranian society is in a worse state in terms of culture than before the revolution. He complained that young people prefer to watch satellite television and movies and listen to music instead of engaging in religious matters.[12]

The economic crisis forced the middle class to focus on the struggle for daily survival and left it little time to continue the struggle to promote political freedoms and change.

However, the erosion of the middle class has undermined one of the centers of power in the reformist camp. The economic crisis forced the middle class to focus on the struggle for daily survival and left it little time to continue the struggle to promote political freedoms

and change. Moreover, the financial crisis reinforced the middle class's dependency on the government, as most are employed in the public sector, and therefore reduced the chance that they would risk their economic security and employment for political and civic involvement. In a report published by the International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN) in 2012, it was argued that the urban middle class, which historically played a central role in bringing change to Iran, was the main victim of the sanctions, and that the sanctions were driving it out of existence.[13] Iranian economist Mousa Ghaninejad claimed that the economic crisis was damaging the potential of the middle class to demand political changes. The improvement in the economic situation in the 1990s was, he claims, what enabled the middle class to raise political demands and achieve them by electing a reformist government in 1997 led by President Mohammad Khatami. When citizens have to think about how to improve their economic situation, Ghaninejad said in an interview to the financial daily *Saramayeh*, they think less about politics, civil liberties, and freedom of the press.[14]

The head of the Iranian Association of Sociologists, Amin Ghaneirad, defined this trend as "the proletariatization of the middle class." He claimed that along with economic decline, the Iranian middle class was also experiencing a cultural and political decline. Like the lower class, members of the middle class were concentrating on improving their financial situation and therefore cutting back on political participation, and no longer filling a leading cultural role in education, arts, and cinema, as was the case during the reform period in the late twentieth century and the first decade of the current century.[15]

The Iranian Middle Class: Agent of Change or Prisoner of its Own Weaknesses?

The relatively large proportion of the middle class in Iranian society, its involvement in popular movements for change, and its identification with demands for economic improvements and greater civic freedoms make the middle class a potential agent of social and political change. However, in referring to the Iranian middle class as a catalyst for processes of political change, particularly the promotion of democracy, there is a tendency to ignore its weaknesses and constraints, which affect its ability to lead meaningful processes. Among these are its heterogeneity, its economic dependency on the government, and its growing tendency toward individualism and de-politicization, particularly among the younger constituents.

The considerable heterogeneity of the Iranian middle class, while contributing to its ability to represent a range of sectors in Iranian society (e.g., urban as well as rural, highly skilled managers as well as low skilled junior employees), also hurts its sense of cohesion and ability to unite in a joint struggle around shared ideological goals. Moreover, as most members of the middle class are employed in the public sector, their economic dependency on the government reinforces the tendency to "obedience." One of the features of the Iranian economy is the weakness of the private sector compared to the public sector. As a result, many members of the middle class are employed by the state, which provides job security, pensions, some medical insurance, and regular wages, and perhaps even housing benefits. This creates a middle class that is dependent on the state and therefore less likely to engage in political protest. The Iranian researcher Masoud Matlabi argued in this context that most managers belonging to the middle class are employed in the government sector, depend on the regime, and therefore avoid political involvement. This is also true of the liberal professions, such as doctors, engineers, and lawyers, whose financial position is relatively good. The only group within the middle class that is more likely to be involved in politics is the slice comprising students and intellectuals.[16]

In addition, researchers, social critics, and journalists in Iran point to the ethical weaknesses currently characterizing the middle class and affecting its historical role as an agent of social change. It is true that the growing exposure of Iranian society in general and the middle class in particular to Western culture encourages processes of social change, including secularization, and accelerates the demand for civic and political reforms that pose a challenge to the rule of the religious establishment. The middle classes are adopting a Western way of life, go to parties, consume Western products, and enjoy Western music, but these processes also encourage ethical changes that can hinder changes led by the middle class. In recent years there has been growing internal criticism in Iran regarding the weakness of the middle class, shown by the adoption of Western ways, the absence of social solidarity, and the growing trend toward individualism and escapism. For example, an article published by an Iranian journalist

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in March 2010 described the "double life" of members of the middle class who seize every chance to have fun, drink alcohol, and attend parties, while ignoring their social obligations.[17] In another social critique, reformist student activist Alborz Zahedi complained that members of the middle classes want all the rights of civilians in a modern democratic society, but are not interested in the social obligation to go out to the streets. They are not even interested in simple tasks, such as cleaning the streets around their houses, or demonstrating basic social solidarity: they act only for themselves and not for others.[18]

An expression of the growing trend toward individualism is clearly seen in the social media in Iran. In June 2016, for example, there was a heated discussion following large social encounters organized by thousands of young Iranians on social media in order to celebrate the end of the academic year. Many of the responses included scorn and mockery of the Iranian "Generation Z," born in the 1990s and the first years of 21st century, claiming that they prefer to have fun and pursue entertainment and shopping activities, with no proper purpose. They were compared to those born in the 1950s and 1960s who led the 2009 disturbances. The striking preference of today's urban middle class youth for encounters with no political-social purpose was presented by the critics as an expression of political escapism and a flight from engagement in political affairs to purposeless entertainment and leisure activity.[19] This does not necessarily mean that young middle class Iranians are not committed to any national or cultural collective, but they want to define these collectives for themselves, and their willingness to sacrifice for the collective has diminished.

Iranian middle class identification with secular and liberal world views is also in doubt. A study by two Iranian sociologists published in 2008 found that there was no definitive link between the urban middle class and support for liberal, secular, and Western ideas. The study looked at the degree of support among the urban middle class for various types of regimes, and showed that most of the respondents indicated a religious regime as their preferred model of governance.[20] Another Iranian researcher argued that it is not possible to define the Iranian middle class as having secular perceptions, since Iranian society is inherently religious. He estimated that the middle class was not interested in another revolution and was content with achievement of demands for gradual reforms.[21] Although a degree of skepticism regarding studies carried out under the watchful eye of the conservative religious establishment is in order, even the commitment of

the middle class with its heterogeneous composition to social and political changes in the spirit of the democratic-liberal West is in doubt. Indeed, conservative Iranian politicians, such as the Mayor of Tehran, Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, and the chairman of the Majlis, Ali Larijani, enjoyed fairly broad support among the middle class in previous elections.

Conclusion

The social and political changes in Iran since the Islamic Revolution, and even more so in the last two decades, raise the question of whether significant change in Iran is possible under current conditions, and how the middle class can promote such change. Although it is clear that no single answer can be given to these questions, it is possible to define some of the important elements that could influence Iran's political reality in the coming years.

First is the attitude of the Iranian public to the regime. More than 38 years since the Islamic Revolution, the Iranian regime has not yet managed to meet the public's needs, and the gap between the public and the revolution's institutions is growing wider. However, it also appears that many Iranian citizens, including the middle class, have chosen gradual change over another revolutionary change with unpredictable results.

Second is the regime's ability to bring about economic improvements. The removal of economic sanctions following the nuclear treaty strengthened the citizens' expectations of a rapid improvement in their finances. There is a question over government's ability to keep its promises of dealing with financial distress, and above all with growing unemployment, in view of a whole string of structural failures in the Iranian economy. Any improvement that involves the penetration of Western companies into Iran may well contribute to regime stability in the short range, but at the same time, in the long range increase the society's exposure to Western influences and reinforce people's expectations, particularly among the middle class, for the achievement of civilian and political reforms.

It appears that many Iranian citizens, including the middle class, have chosen gradual change over another revolutionary change with unpredictable results.

Third is the political reality in the post-Khamenei era. As long as government is in the hands of the current leader, it is very doubtful whether those seeking change in Iran will succeed in promoting far reaching reforms. The departure of the Supreme Leader, however, could uncover deeper social processes that could work to accelerate change.

The middle class stands to play a central role in any scenario of future political change in Iran as a large and important force that wishes to introduce changes into the revolutionary ideology in the spirit of modern reality and contemporary circumstances. The realization of this potential for political change is nevertheless dependent on its ability to overcome its weaknesses and join with other social forces, such as the working class.

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The Day after the Islamic State

Marta Furlan and Carmit Valensi

The Evolution of ISIS: 2003-2014

A brief overview of the evolution of the Islamic State sheds light on its capacity to adapt and re-organize and serve as a possible indicator for future transformation.

The origins of the Islamic State reach back to the Iraq of 2003 and to the insurgent group al-Tawhid wa al-Jihad (TwJ), which under the leadership of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi launched a ruthless campaign of terrorist attacks against the forces of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF).[1] However, the group's operational capability was constrained by a lack of financial resources and by an excessive reliance on foreign fighters that impaired the group's integration in the Iraqi insurgency.[2]

To deal with these weaknesses and enhance the image of TwJ among the Iraqi militancy, al-Zarqawi in 2004 pledged *baya'a* (allegiance) to bin Laden, who for his part was interested in extending al-Qaeda's influence over the Iraqi theater after the setback suffered in Afghanistan. After this association with al-Qaeda, TwJ was rebranded the Land of the Two Rivers, or al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), and became a prominent actor on the Iraqi militant scene. Its influence grew particularly after the parliamentary elections of December 2005, when al-Zarqawi united the insurgent groups close to him under an umbrella organization known as the Mujahidin Shura Council (MSC) in order to co-opt the other jihadist organizations,[3] and increased AQI's violent attacks on Shiite targets in order to create inter-communal tensions that would strengthen the Sunnis' support for the insurgency.[4]

In 2006 al-Zarqawi was killed in a targeted killing by a joint US force, and his death became a major impediment for AQI. From the outset, in fact, the group's internal cohesion, the inner coordination among its ranks,

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and the identity unifying its members was dependent on the presence of a centralized structure built around the figure of al-Zarqawi. With his demise, the centralization that had enabled the group to assert itself as one of the most prominent actors of the Iraqi insurgency collapsed, and AQI underwent a significant process of organizational restructuring and strategic reorientation.[5] The group was reorganized under the dual leadership of Abu Ayyub al-Masri and Abu Omar al-Baghdadi; its cadres were "Iraqified"; and its cells underwent a process of "bureaucratization and dilution" that subjected them to an inefficient bureaucratic apparatus and that led them to be unduly widespread across Iraq.[6] As a result, AQI came to experience a high level of internal fragmentation and a fundamental lack of coordination that restrained its operational capability, and that became the major weakness of the group.

In terms of modus operandi, the military and terrorist operations that had characterized the activity of the group since its earliest stage remained the core of AQI's strategy. However, these were redirected toward a new objective as the group endeavored to create an Islamic State in Iraq, and in 2006 it rebranded itself as the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI). However, the violent military campaign embraced by the group was met with resistance in several areas of Iraq, such as the Anbar Province. There, the local Sunni tribes resisted ISI's attempt to impose its rule, and in 2008 created military councils (*sahwa*) that fought the group, undermined its operational capacities, and damaged its credibility.[7]

Therefore, when in 2010 al-Masri and al-Baghdadi were killed, the general perception was that ISI was doomed to dissolution. However, in that same year Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi became the new leader of the group and promoted a comprehensive reorganization on the basis of past successes and mistakes: he strengthened ISI's internal bonds so as to increase its cohesiveness; reintroduced a centralized leadership revolving around himself that enabled the achievement of high levels of operational capability and coordination; and simplified the inefficient bureaucratic apparatus of the previous stage.[8] On the strategic level, he moderated the brutal approach that al-Zarqawi had adopted against his enemies − in particular against the Iraqi Shiites − that had ultimately alienated much of the Iraqi people,[9] divided the ranks of the Iraqi Sunni resistance,[10] and aroused the criticism of al-Zarqawi's mentor al-Maqdisi and of most of al-Qaeda's leadership, including bin Laden and al-Zawahiri.[11]

In addition to this restructuring endeavor and strategic rethinking, al-Baghdadi adapted the group's goal of building an Islamic State to the destabilizing changes throughout the Levant in the immediate aftermath of the Arab Spring that erupted in December 2010, and in particular the collapse of traditional nation states; the loss of legitimacy on the part of most regional governments; and the exacerbation of the Sunni-Shia sectarian divide. Against the background of these developments, al-Baghdadi extended ISI's tactics beyond the purely militant-terrorist dimension in order to enhance the effectiveness of the group's activity. After identifying in the Sunni heartland of western Iraq and eastern Syria the preferred location of his future Islamic State, al-Baghdadi advanced the group's activities in both countries thanks to the high coordination enabled by the renewed centralized leadership. In both contexts, ISI proved its capabilities at the military as well as at the social level: it fought successfully against the enemies encountered on the ground; in tandem, it attempted to adopt a more state-like structure and provided the population with goods (e.g., food) and services (e.g., education) that their governments were incapable of providing.[12] Exploiting factors such as the incapability of the governments in Baghdad and Damascus to address the people's basic needs and political demands; the weakness and ultimate collapse of the state structure in Iraq and Syria after the Arab Spring, which exposed the illegitimacy of their central governments; and the alienation experienced by the local Sunni communities, ISI managed to present itself as the only legitimate alternative and to gain popular support among the Sunnis. In this way, ISI succeeded in extending its territorial control over several portions of Iraq and Syria, and on June 29, 2014, after dissociating itself from al-Qaeda,[13] proclaimed the establishment of the Islamic State (IS), the caliphate of Iraq and al-Sham, thus realizing the aspiration of its founding father al-Zarqawi.

From the Early Successes to Recent Defeats: 2014-2017

With the proclamation of the caliphate, the group led by al-Baghdadi completed its transition from traditional terrorist group engaged in violent military activity to quasi-state organization engaged in the provision of governance, including goods and services as well as order and security through the use of policing and law enforcement apparatuses. In effecting this transition, the group adopted an efficient governmental pyramid structure; it established ad hoc state-like institutions; and it expanded the range of its non-violent activities. At the top of the pyramid are al-Baghdadi

and his two direct deputies who constitute the executive branch, known as *al-Imara,* and who are in charge of transferring al-Baghdadi's orders to the provincial governors. Below *al-Imara*, the pyramid comprises eight councils:[14] the Shura Council (responsible for religious affairs); the Legal Council (responsible for resolving family disputes, violations of the law, and the imposition of penalties); the Security Council (responsible for internal security and the enforcement of public order); the Intelligence Council (which supplies and conveys information to the leadership regarding rivals and opponents); the Military Council (which deals with warfare and military preparations in IS territories); the Economic Council (responsible for the movement's financial resources, including the sale of oil and weapons); the Fighters' Aid Council (responsible for receiving foreign volunteers, smuggling them to different areas, allocating housing, and addressing their different needs); and the Media Council (responsible for disseminating IS messages and official declarations, and managing the group's accounts on social networks and monitoring other sites in coordination with the Legal Council).[15] At the bottom of the pyramid, there is a large pool of both foreign and local fighters who are organized in three levels. This structure enables the leadership to control members more tightly, assign military and governmental tasks more efficiently, and deploy fighters more effectively in the areas of combat.

By means of this strong state-like structure that distinguishes IS from traditional terrorist entities, the group led by al-Baghdadi has managed to assert its control over large spheres of public life and expand its social activities:[16] it has built roads and bridges; organized economic recoveries for the poor; provided electricity; established lines of telecommunication; set up markets for the trade of goods; created offices for the collection and the distribution of the *zakat* (alms donated out of religious obligation); opened schools; maintained public order and security through the deployment of police forces; and guaranteed law and order through the establishment of *sharia* courts.

In addition to the provision of civil services, IS has continued to rely on military means to fight its enemies and employ violent tactics such as public executions and torture to instill terror among the population and thus prevent popular uprisings. By means of this duality of tactics, IS has managed to consolidate its territorial control over the Sunni-dominated Jazira region and enforce its rule there;[17] to seize control of the natural resources of the conquered territories and exploit them to finance its

activity;[18] and to garner support, or at least acquiescence, on the part of a frightened and disaffected local population.[19]

However, IS's early success began to decline after the group's expansion peaked in mid 2015. Since then, IS has suffered several defeats that have considerably reduced the territories and the population under its control: as reported by HIS Conflict Monitor[20] and by the RAND Corporation,[21] IS's territorial control declined by 60 percent from 2015 to 2017, and the number of people living under IS rule dropped from 9.6 million in the fall of 2014 to 2.6 million in the winter of 2016-17. In tandem, the group's income has declined over the past few years, dropping from $1.9 billion in 2014 to $870 million in 2016.[22] As highlighted by a recent ICSR study, the loss of territorial control has implied for IS the loss of its major sources of revenue, above all, the oil reserves that were a foundation of the group's income and that contributed to making it the "richest terrorist organization in the world."[23]

This combination of territorial and financial losses has undermined IS governance capabilities because the group has found itself without the territorial control necessary to enforce a cohesive rule and a viable state-like structure, and without the financial resources necessary to sustain an efficient governance apparatus. Consequently, IS has diminished its governance dimension and focused instead on military activities aimed at ensuring the group's survival and rebuilding its presence in the lost areas.[24] Indeed, it is noteworthy how IS's territorial and financial losses have led it to abandon the conventional military campaigns mounted by al-Baghdadi in the early days of his leadership and return to the guerrilla warfare launched by al-Zarqawi during AQI's first phase.[25] Guerrilla warfare, in fact, has considerable advantages vis-à-vis conventional military operations: it can be sustained by a group even when financial resources are limited; it can be carried out effectively by small cells; it does not require territorial control. This shift in modus operandi could be seen during the battle for Mosul, when IS relied mostly on tactics of asymmetric urban warfare, including mortar shells, booby traps, IEDs, and suicide car bomb attacks.[26]

> The imminent military defeat of the Islamic State does not imply its complete disappearance. Rather, it implies the end of its existence in its current form and the emergence of a different but not less threatening entity.

Finally, in the framework of the recent territorial losses, IS has undergone an adaptation of its strategic thinking, whereby it increasingly emphasizes the importance of striking the "far" Western enemy and the necessity for

its fighters to spread beyond the Jazira region and join jihadists all over the Muslim world.[27] In other words, IS seems to have extended its previously localized strategy and to have embraced a more internationalized strategic discourse similar to the one traditionally espoused by al-Qaeda. It is in the context of this rethinking that IS-inspired individuals have directed their terror activities against major European cities, including Paris, Brussels, and London, and that IS loyalists have joined the jihadist battlefields in places like Libya, Afghanistan, and Southeast Asia.

Nevertheless, IS continues operating in the Levant area and has not completely abandoned its local territorial feature. According to the Pentagon, in August 2017 some 20,000 IS fighters still control several areas in Syria and Iraq. Between 5,000 and 10,000 fighters are now in the middle Euphrates Valley area from Deir ez-Zoor to the Iraq-Syria border region.[28]

These recent developments and adaptations within IS raise important questions over the next phase of the group's life and urge an assessment of how IS is most likely to evolve.

The Islamic State's Future after its Military Defeat

In light of the resilience and capacity for adaptation that the group has displayed over its 15-year existence, it is likely that even if militarily defeated, the Islamic State will not disappear but will rather evolve and adapt to the changed circumstances. Among the most plausible scenarios as to the group's internal evolution in the context of organizational restructuring and strategic rethinking are the following:

a. *Mini-emirates*: Evolution of the group into several mini-entities scattered across the Middle East and beyond (e.g. North Africa, South Asia) in what would be a much looser network, highly similar to the post-2001 so-called al-Qaeda nebula. Rather than surviving as a single and unified group, IS might split into sub-groups, ideologically linked one to another but inherently independent in terms of financing, definition of objectives, strategic planning, and actual conduct of operations. At the core of this scenario lies the assumption that the Salafi jihadi current is deeply rooted and established in the Islamic world, and does not necessarily depend on a central and well-structured organization in order to flourish.
b. *Jihadi merger*: Rejoining – more or less tightly – al-Zawahiri's al-Qaeda in order to regain the lost status and deal with the setbacks suffered in terms of financial sustainability, ideological credibility, and recruitment

ability. Once defeated militarily, IS might find it worthwhile to resume the "marriage of convenience" with al-Qaeda that first took place in 2004 so as to expand its ranks, acquire more operational capabilities, and enhance its status in the global jihadist world. This scenario presumes that despite some setbacks, al-Qaeda has remained strong, resilient, and guided by a prudent strategy of winning over populations and exploiting local conflicts to its own ends. This move would not only give new life to IS but would also reassert al-Qaeda as the uncontested leader of the jihadi movement and probably encourage it to learn from IS's experience and adopt more state-like tasks and features. However, this scenario is less likely to be manifested in the short term, as the level of mutual hostility between IS and al-Qaeda would be hard to overcome. Al-Qaeda loyalists describe IS operatives as "extremists," "Kharijites," and "takfiris"; in turn, the Islamic State has named al-Qaeda devotees as "the Jews of jihad" and loyalists of the "Sufi" leader of the heretical Taliban. Hence, this split might be unbridgeable.

c. *IS.com*: On July 2017, the IS information office in Raqqa province in Syria released a 30-minute video that focuses particularly on foreigners from various countries who came to join IS: "This is a message to the new pharaoh of today, Donald Trump, you may have your eyes on Al-Raqqah and Mosul, but we have our eyes on Constantinople and Rome. 'Bi Idhn Allah, Bi Idhn Allah [with Allah's permission], we will slaughter you in your own houses."[29] This scenario includes the maintenance of a small and underground nucleus in the Jazira region (namely the Sunni tribal region stretching across western Iraq and eastern Syria) where IS first emerged and expanded and a shift of strategic focus to attacks in foreign countries (e.g., in Europe and the United States) by means of an ad hoc ideological propaganda conducted primarily online. The end of the "caliphate dream" will thus lead the group to revise its original objectives and strategy and shift from aiming to hit the "close enemy" by means of military campaigns and territorial conquests, to aiming to hit the "far enemy" by means of online radicalization and recruitment of sympathizers abroad. This relies on the robust external operations arm that was built over three or four years even before the caliphate or the Islamic State was declared. This network exists in Europe and elsewhere, including Southeast Asia and North Africa. In September 2016, al-Baghdadi called on his followers not to come to the Levant to

fight, but instead to migrate and strengthen the branches precisely so that the branches could continue the struggle.

d. *Comeback*: this scenario sees a resurgence of IS in the areas from which it was expelled. This resurgence is a possibility that is likely to concretize under three specific circumstances: first, if the international coalition fighting against IS makes the same mistakes that it did when it withdrew too promptly from Afghanistan, assuming erroneously that the al-Qaeda menace had been successfully and permanently eradicated and that the mission had been accomplished. However, that assumption stemmed from a fundamental underestimation of al-Qaeda's capacity to survive and reinvent itself, and indeed bin Laden's group proved able to transfer its base to the Afghanistan-Pakistan region and evolve into a more complex and less easily detected "nebula." Second, IS might revive if the different actors currently involved in the fight against the group refrain from properly addressing the problem of the "day after IS" and do not draft any coherent and viable politico-social plan of reconstruction for the liberated areas. Third is the permanence of the factors that enabled IS's rise in the first place. In other words, if the root causes that created a fertile ground for the group to find support among a Sunni population that felt marginalized and estranged from the Iraqi nation-state are not addressed, it is likely that the remnants of IS will regroup. Similarly, if the Salafı jihadist ideology inspiring IS's *weltanschauung* is not countered with a credible and appealing ideological religious alternative, IS or new IS-like manifestations are likely to (re)appear on the scene.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The imminent military defeat of the Islamic State does not imply its complete disappearance. Rather, it implies the end of its existence in its current form and the emergence of a different but not less threatening entity. In light of the possible scenarios regarding the future evolution of IS, the following measures are necessary to deal effectively at the local and international levels with the new threat posed by the group.

At the local level, the possibility of a resurgence of IS (or like entities) can be reduced by addressing the causes that paved the way for the group's emergence and the factors that favored its consolidation. In this regard, it will be crucial for the Iraqi government to address the grievances, alienation, and disaffection that the Sunni communities felt under Nuri al-Maliki's

tenure and that led many among them to see in IS a desirable alternative to the sectarianism of Baghdad. For this to be done, a political compromise that ensures power-sharing between the country's ethno-religious groups; reforms that guarantee that state institutions offer national rather than sectarian representation; and the effective implementation of a 2013 decentralization law[30] that devolves more autonomy and responsibilities to the single local governments will need to be encouraged and emphasized as the only way to resolve those inter-communal tensions that foster insurgencies and state failure.

Both urban and rural areas freed from IS must be rebuilt by means of ad hoc cooperation among the Iraqi government, its partners in the US-led coalition, the United Nations, and aid agencies so as to address effectively the economic, security, and social needs of the local communities and offer credible alternatives to the institutions and services provided by IS at the apex of its state-building project. Training, equipment, assistance, and consulting for the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) as developed in the framework of the Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve (CJTF-OIR) should be continued and improved in order to enhance the effectiveness of the ISF in countering terrorism and countering insurgencies and to increase their legitimacy, credibility, and trustworthiness in the eyes of the local communities.

At the international level, the security threat posed to Western countries by IS, particularly IS-inspired individuals and returning foreign fighters, should be confronted by addressing both the pre-recruitment and the post-recruitment phase. Other measures include countering and obstructing IS's online propaganda; increasing intelligence cooperation and database sharing to detect radicalized individuals; and addressing the problem of returning foreign fighters with responses that can range from "hard" measures such as revoking citizenship, confiscating passports, and issuing arrest warrants, to "soft" measures such as developing programs of de-radicalization, psychological counseling, and social reintegration.

Finally, past experience shows that these measures are more likely to be effective when local actors and international actors coordinate their endeavors and share responsibilities. Therefore, while preparing for the day after the Islamic State, efforts first need to be invested in building this crucial coordination.

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The Israeli Withdrawals from Southern Lebanon and the Gaza Strip: A Comparative Analysis

Rob Geist Pinfold

In 2002, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon rejected public pressure to withdraw from the Gaza Strip, declaring that "the fate of Netzarim [a settlement in the Gaza Strip] is the same as Tel Aviv," i.e., leaving Gaza would be equivalent to abandoning Israel's commercial and cultural heartlands. Three years later, with no Israeli-Palestinian negotiations underway, Sharon ordered the "unilateral disengagement" of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and nearly 8,000 Israeli civilians from the Gaza Strip. In southern Lebanon, a similar policy reversal ended the Israeli military presence in the so-called security zone, though unlike the Gaza Strip, southern Lebanon contained no Israeli civilian settlements. Israel controlled the territory in Lebanon from 1985-2000, with successive governments pledging to withdraw in the framework of a peace treaty. However, Israel finally left the security zone unilaterally on May 24, 2000, acting on Prime Minister Ehud Barak's pledge to "bring the boys home." Both withdrawals overturned decades of established Israeli policy paradigms, with observers producing competing explanations of the logic underpinning them.

This article traces the policy goals and actual outcomes of the withdrawals from southern Lebanon in 2000 and the Gaza Strip in 2005. It begins with a brief history of Israeli policy in both areas, examines the factors contributing to the withdrawals, and maps the intended policy outcomes. It then assesses the implementation and aftermath of the withdrawals to determine whether the goals were achieved. The article contends that the withdrawals were neither the result of insufficient strategic foresight nor shortsighted political considerations. Rather, Israel withdrew due to

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ineffective methodologies of territorial control that failed to benefit the national interest, minimize mounting costs, and create a more strategically beneficial outlook.

Southern Lebanon and the Gaza Strip: Historical Background

On June 6, 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon, seeking to expel the Palestine Liberation Organization – which exploited the impotence of the Lebanese central government following the outbreak of the civil war in Lebanon – and establish a zone of control in southern Lebanon. When Israeli-Lebanese talks failed to secure negotiated withdrawal, the Israeli cabinet voted in 1985 to withdraw from Lebanon, while permitting the IDF freedom to "guarantee the safety of northern residents."[1] By virtue of this clause, the IDF did not withdraw completely, instead controlling 1,100 square kilometers over another 15 years in what became known as the "security zone," employing at any one time approximately 1,500 IDF troops and 2,500 local allies from the Christian-led South Lebanon Army (SLA) to control the area, home to 200,000 Lebanese citizens.

While successive Israeli governments voiced a desire to leave, officials doubted the Lebanese government's ability to control its own territory. Withdrawal was made conditional on an agreement with Syria, a state exercising extensive political influence in Lebanon and over Hezbollah. Overall, the underlying logic of the security zone was straightforward, encapsulating classic Israeli doctrine on the use of foreign territory as a containment mechanism, to ensure that violent conflict was kept outside of Israeli sovereign territory. The pitfall of the security zone was its longevity: then-Prime Minister Shimon Peres claimed that 1985 would "be the IDF's final winter in Lebanon."[2] This was not to be the case. From 1985 until the late 1990s, Israel policy vis-à-vis the security zone remained decidedly static.

While security concerns defined the Israeli presence in southern Lebanon, a complex interplay of factors affected policy regarding the Gaza Strip. Israel captured the Gaza coastal enclave of 360 square kilometers in June 1967 in the Six Day War. As was the case in Lebanon, control of the Gaza Strip was deemed justified to prevent attacks within sovereign Israel. In addition, however, Gaza lies within the historic Land of Israel and therefore resonates ideologically among many Israelis. Reflecting a desire to retain the territory, civilian settlements were established, and before the withdrawal some 3,000 IDF troops were stationed in Gaza to protect 8,000 civilians and guard the border. In 2005, Gaza was also home to some 1.4 million

Palestinians;[3] this asymmetry was cited as an argument against annexation because of the difficulty of absorbing such a large hostile population.

In 1992, then-Prime Minister Rabin expressed hope that Gaza would "sink into the sea,"[4] reflecting Israeli decision makers' difficulty with strategic plans for the territory. Eventually, under the Oslo Accords, Rabin ordered withdrawal from 80 percent of the territory, while leaving the settlements intact. The second intifada, which erupted in 2000 with violence that cost more than 1,000 Israeli and 3,000 Palestinian lives, sparked new deliberations on withdrawal from the remaining 20 percent of the territory held by Israel. During the 2001 election campaign, the Labor Party pledged to leave Gaza, even without an agreement.[5] Prime Minister Sharon initially rejected any withdrawal – before himself subsequently implementing the disengagement. Perhaps most of all, this incongruity demonstrates the need to assess the strategic underpinnings of withdrawal.

The Logic of Withdrawal: Gaza and Lebanon

In the case of southern Lebanon, the security zone concept enjoyed majority support within Israel from 1985 to 1996.[6] 1997, however, constituted an *annus horribilis*: on February 4, 73 soldiers were killed en route to southern Lebanon by a collision of two IDF helicopters. The accident precipitated the formation of the Four Mothers Movement, an influential pro-withdrawal advocacy group. In addition, on September 5, 1997, twelve IDF commandos were killed in an ambush. Israeli casualties in southern Lebanon had been approximately 20-30 annually, but by 1997, Hezbollah and the IDF shared a 1:1 fatality rate, reversing the previous trend of greater Hezbollah casualties at a rate of 3:1.[7] That IDF fatalities then declined in 1999-2000 is sometimes attributed to the security zone's effectiveness. However, declining losses primarily resulted from incremental withdrawal, rather than increased policy effectiveness: in April 1999 Defense Minister Moshe Arens admitted that 80 percent of IDF positions had been turned over to the SLA, while May 1999 saw the security zone contract in size.[8]

In early 1999, polls registered the first majority support for unilateral withdrawal. In response, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu suggested partial, unilateral territorial retrenchment, but backed down before going public.[9] Subsequently, Labor leader Barak, competing against Netanyahu in the 1999 prime ministerial elections, pledged to withdraw within a year of taking office, expressing a preference for negotiated withdrawal. As Head of Military Intelligence, Barak had opposed the creation of the security

zone in 1985, but was overruled by the political-military consensus.[10] By mid-2000, however, the security zone, which was tailored to prevent hostile border infiltrations, the predominant threat of the 1980s, was less relevant to security. By the late 1990s, Hezbollah rarely attempted to infiltrate Israel, instead inflicting losses on the IDF in the security zone, while also firing rockets into Israel.

Military campaigns to suppress Hezbollah, in 1993 and 1996, ended prematurely. The international illegitimacy of the security zone constrained IDF operational freedom, with Israel seen as an illegal occupier of Lebanese land. Yitzhak Mordechai, then-head of the IDF Northern Command, recalled that "there were all sorts of American conditions about what was off-limits: no attacking the Lebanese army, no attacking water plants, infrastructure, electricity plants."[11] Barak proposed reversing this dynamic, hoping withdrawal would "drain the swamp" and deprive Hezbollah of political legitimacy as a "resistance movement" against Israeli occupation.[12] If Hezbollah continued to employ violence, the IDF would have more legitimacy to respond, because any attack would be on sovereign Israeli territory.

Macro-level changes to IDF operational doctrine also promoted withdrawal. Beginning in 1999, Israel constructed an elaborate system of fences and sensors along the Israeli-Lebanon and the Israeli-Gaza borders. Technological advances in precision-targeted ordnance benefited Israel, while Hezbollah lacked the ability to shoot down aircraft. Longer range ordnance delivery became the military bargaining method of choice: in 1998, Israel launched 150 airstrikes on Lebanon, compared to 21 in 1990. In the Gaza Strip, Palestinian attacks were answered by airstrikes on August 21, 24, 26, 28, 30, and September 1, 2003.[13] Employing coercive ordnance in conjunction with sealing the border could advance some objectives while minimizing the need for protracted infantry operations in foreign territory.

As in Lebanon, increased violence undermined the logic of territorial control in the Gaza Strip. From the beginning of the second intifada until the disengagement, attacks from the Gaza Strip killed 162 Israelis.[14] The Gaza border fence ensured attacks were primarily confined to the Strip itself, around Israeli settlements, military positions, or access roads. Consequently, settlements began to be perceived as harming the national interest: an entire infantry company and armored platoon defended an isolated hamlet of 26 families. The IDF Strategic Planning Division suggested that abandoning Gaza-based settlements could allow a reduction in active

troop levels by one third without compromising security.[15] It was hoped that disengagement would allow Israel to practice deterrence by denial: curtailing the enemy's ability to inflict costs by reducing contact points, and restricting the Palestinian ability to escalate violence. By contrast, the IDF would meet provocations with low cost, high impact ordnance responses.

The intifada also precipitated a collective appreciation of the demographic threat to Jewish sovereignty posed by control of millions of Palestinians. Alternatives to the status quo were formulated, including the Geneva Accord, drafted by Israeli and Palestinian figures, and the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative, which offered Israel full diplomatic relations with the Arab world in return for full withdrawal to the June 1967 lines and an agreed solution to the Palestinian refugee issue. The Geneva Accord was backed by 40 percent of the Israeli public, and then-President Moshe Katsav offered to fly to Saudi Arabia to negotiate the Arab Peace Initiative.[16] However, the Israeli government opposed the initiatives, partly because of the extent of required West Bank withdrawals, with Sharon claiming: "only an Israeli plan will keep us from being dragged into [the] dangerous...Geneva and Saudi initiatives."[17] Less than two weeks before Sharon announced the disengagement, US Secretary of State Colin Powell met publicly with supporters of the Geneva Accord. In addition, the United States, under President George W. Bush, pressured Israel to accept the Roadmap for Peace,[18] an initiative proposed by the Quartet, comprising Russia, the United States, the European Union, and the United Nations, to break the Israeli-Palestinian impasse.

Before the disengagement was announced, 600 IDF personnel refused to serve in the West Bank or Gaza Strip, and four former heads of the Shin Bet warned that Israel was facing disaster. These standpoints damaged Sharon's poll ratings, which according to Dov Weisglass, once Sharon's chief of staff, also personally affected him.[19] Sharon's perception of Palestinian President Yasir Arafat as untrustworthy preempted the demand for negotiations, and Arafat's action in September 2003 to force the resignation of Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas (seen at the time as a reformer) seemed to vindicate Sharon's stance. Israeli decision makers were therefore influenced by two competing elements: the need to change the status quo, and the perception that no Palestinian partner existed. Thus, withdrawal was framed as a unilateral move to "disengage" from the Palestinians and mitigate the demographic and security threat, while alleviating international and domestic pressure.

Decision Making and Implementation of Withdrawal

In his first speech as Prime Minister, in July 1999, Barak reiterated his campaign pledge for a negotiated withdrawal from Lebanon within one year, within the framework of Israeli-Syrian peace. In January 2000, following failed Israeli-Syrian negotiations, Barak asked the IDF to plan for unilateral withdrawal; the cabinet endorsed the policy in February. Barak broke with protocol by declining to invite senior IDF figures to the cabinet meeting, due to widespread military opposition to the plan.[20] Danny Yatom, Barak's then-bureau chief, recalls that: "[then-head of the IDF Research Division] Amos Gilad claimed Israeli citizens in the north would not even be able to put their noses out of their windows, or a sniper would shoot them" if withdrawal took place.[21] Nevertheless, Barak overrode military opposition, including from IDF Chief of Staff Shaul Mofaz.

After failed eleventh-hour talks between US President Bill Clinton and Syrian President Hafez al-Assad in Geneva in March 2000, unilateral withdrawal was scheduled for July 2000. However, Hezbollah followers orchestrated unarmed marches on SLA positions in May, routing the demoralized militia. On May 22, 2000, Prime Minister Barak was presented with two options by the IDF: replace the routed SLA forces with IDF troops, or immediately implement withdrawal. Barak saw little utility in sending troops to positions due to be abandoned in less than two months;[22] withdrawal was therefore completed in just over 24 hours, without any casualties. Widespread public support and the lack of ideological ties and civilian settlements ensured that leaving southern Lebanon would create little domestic protest; the Likud opposition backed withdrawal.

In contrast to Lebanon, the Gaza disengagement divided the nation. On December 18, 2003, at the annual Herzliya Conference, Sharon announced unilateral disengagement; at the same event Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom declared his opposition. In February 2004, Sharon delineated that disengagement involved withdrawal from the 20 percent of the Gaza Strip directly controlled by Israel. The cabinet approved the measure in June 2004, followed by the Knesset in October 2004. However, several ministers were fired and parties ejected from the coalition due to their opposition; in May 2004, Sharon's Likud Party rejected withdrawal by a 60-40 margin in a members' vote. Withdrawal was consistently supported by a majority of the public,[23] yet the settler community and many others were firmly

In neither case was withdrawal a mere retreat or purely the product of domestic politics.

opposed, petitioning the Supreme Court and on one occasion forming a human chain from Gaza to Jerusalem. The evacuation operation began on August 15, 2005 and ended on September 11, 2005. Though scenes of residents being forcibly evicted from their homes touched Israelis of all political stripes, the much-prophesized civil war did not materialize and there were no Palestinian attacks.

Supporters and detractors alike framed the withdrawals from southern Lebanon and Gaza as "unilateral," i.e., policy shifts undertaken without the agreement of the opposing actors involved. Though the withdrawals were unprecedented, breaking from previous Israeli bargaining equation of land for peace, neither was strictly "unilateral": while agreement was not sought from the enemy, the strategy and praxis underlining both withdrawals were shaped by negotiations with external parties. Then-bureau chief Danny Yatom argues that the Lebanon withdrawal "was not a unilateral withdrawal... we coordinated with the UN, with the Americans."[24] The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs recommended conforming to UN Security Council Resolution 425, widely interpreted to demand Israeli withdrawal to the international border. Because Lebanon refused to cooperate, Israel turned to the UN, whose staff delineated the international border, while Barak overruled IDF objections, forcing the army to abandon tactically expedient ground in order to achieve international legitimacy. Thus, withdrawal was undertaken with the full cooperation and legitimization of the UN, which determined the depth of the Israeli withdrawal.

Similarly, the extensive external involvement in the withdrawal from Gaza contradicts the popular conception of unilateral disengagement. The Quartet, the G8, and the World Bank endorsed disengagement; the Egyptian government and the Palestinian Authority coordinated security aspects of the withdrawal with Israel. Intensive Israeli-American negotiations between February-March 2004 defined the plan's contours. Then-US Ambassador to Israel Daniel Kurtzer recalls: "We made clear to Sharon that this could not be Gaza only."[25] Israeli negotiators actually proposed an additional withdrawal in the West Bank from seventeen settlements, but US officials rejected this option in favor of more limited withdrawal. Disengagement eventually encompassed four northern West Bank settlements, home to 450 Israelis.[26] When prompted by the Israeli team for concessions, an American official stated: "We will make it clear that Israel will be allowed to keep the major [settlement] blocs, without going into detail what that

means, and that the Palestinian resettlement of refugees should take place in the Palestinian state, not Israel."[27]

Consequently, on April 14, 2004, President Bush issued a letter to Sharon guaranteeing that the US would oppose "any other plan" being imposed on Israel, assuaging Israeli fears of the Geneva and Arab Peace initiatives. The letter pledged that the US would only support the resettlement of Palestinian refugees outside of Israel. Furthermore, the US would not demand Israeli withdrawal to the June 5, 1967 lines, legitimizing potential Israeli annexation of many West Bank settlements. The Bush administration therefore entered into a bargaining relationship with Israel, rewarding disengagement by tailoring US positions on a final status agreement to reflect Israeli interests. In the cases of both Gaza and Lebanon, although Israeli decision makers broke conventional norms by failing to achieve a negotiated withdrawal with hostile forces, "unilateralism" was coordinated with external partners, in a bargain where territorial concessions were exchanged for political and/or security guarantees. Thus despite the absence of the opposing party, Israel's coordination with other elements mitigated the sense of unilateralism.

Successes and Failures: The Aftermath of Withdrawal

The UN validated the Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon on June 16, 2000. In the two months following the withdrawal, Israel, empowered by its renewed international legitimacy, filed 199 complaints with the UN concerning border activity.[28] However, Hezbollah did not transform into an internally-focused, non-violent political force, and instead concentrated attacks in Shab'a Farms, a section of the Golan Heights conquered by Israel from Syria in 1967 over which Lebanon exercised a territorial claim, thus maintaining the image of a resistance movement. The lack of Israeli-Syrian peace meant that Syria had no interest in restraining Hezbollah, which occupied the evacuated territory. Nevertheless, Hezbollah attacks against Israeli targets decreased drastically, from 1528 in 1999 to just 50 from 2000-June 2006.[29]

The soft power gained from international legitimacy was reinforced by threats of force: Barak warned that "Lebanon will be set on fire" if attacks continued after the withdrawal.[30] Yet Israeli responses were in fact often lackluster, as encapsulated by then-Prime Minister Sharon's demand that: "whatever doesn't have to be done there [in Lebanon] shouldn't be done."[31] Israeli failures to respond to multiple Hezbollah attempts to kidnap Israeli soldiers, followed by a successful kidnapping by Hezbollah, led to the

Second Lebanon War in July-August 2006. Approximately 500 Hezbollah combatants, 121 Israeli soldiers, and 1000 Lebanese civilians died, denying the perception that withdrawal had brought quiet. Nevertheless, the war was more a failure of Israeli deterrence than of the withdrawal itself: Hezbollah leader Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah acknowledged that he would not have ordered the kidnapping had he known Israeli retaliation would be so severe.[32]

In the eyes of many Israeli commentators, disengagement facilitated rocket attacks from Gaza into Israel, which increased from 401 in 2005 – before the disengagement – to 1722 in 2006, following the withdrawal. Rocket attacks prompted several rounds of combat, most recently the seven weeks in the summer of 2014, with 73 Israelis and over 1000 Palestinians killed. However, the preferred methods of attack before withdrawal – small arms, roadside bombs, or suicide attacks, which caused more fatalities than rockets – all declined steeply after disengagement.[33] From 2005-2015, 140 Israelis were killed by attacks from Gaza, whereas 162 Israelis were killed in the five years before withdrawal.[34] Thus, the post-disengagement emphasis on rocket fire was a direct product of the withdrawal's effectiveness: hostile actors were unable to employ their preferred low cost, high impact attacks, and switched to rocket fire, which was less effective in generating casualties. In addition, the claim that withdrawal engendered a higher volume of rockets was not consistently correct: rocket fire from Gaza in 2004 was higher than in 2006 and in 2009-2012.[35]

The increase in rockets was boosted by the Hamas takeover of the Gaza Strip from the Palestinian Authority in 2007. It has been argued that disengagement facilitated the coup: by withdrawing from Gaza, the IDF was unable to prevent the Hamas military takeover. Disengagement undoubtedly emboldened Hamas, removing direct IDF control inside the territory and increasing freedom of movement for the Islamist group. However, disengagement only concerned the less than 20 percent of the territory that Israel still controlled. Had Israel retained a security presence in 2007, decision makers would still have been faced with the dilemma of whether to re-enter dense, hostile urban territory, where de facto authority had long been ceded to the Palestinians.

> Rather than represent an act of weakness, withdrawal from Gaza and Lebanon represented a recalibration of established paradigms of territorial control that no longer served stated goals.

Disengagement did fail to meet some core expectations. Israel's goal of relieving itself of responsibility for Gaza's population, while motivating the Palestinian leadership to turn from violence to state-building, failed abjectly, as demonstrated by the Hamas coup and the allegation that because Israel controls access to Gaza by sea, land, and air, it continues to occupy the territory. Finally, in both Gaza and Lebanon, IDF kinetic responses to continued provocations have confronted Israel with extensive international opprobrium, suggesting that any net gain in legitimacy and tactical freedom was limited.

Conclusions and Implications

Though the withdrawals from southern Lebanon and Gaza were supported by a majority of popular opinion, the perceived and actualized failures of the policies generated significant ex post facto opposition within Israel. Speaking in 2009, incumbent Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu referred to the Gaza disengagement as a "mistake" that brought "neither peace nor security";[36] in 2015, then-leader of the 0pposition Yitzhak Herzog argued that withdrawal turned the Gaza Strip into "one big rocket base."[37] Similarly, Israeli military commentator Gal Luft framed the Lebanon withdrawal as strategically unsound, claiming that "considerations of popularity and expediency outweighed strategic interests." Efraim Sneh, Deputy Minister of Defense during Barak's administration, attributed the Lebanon withdrawal to the "populist wailing" of domestic, pro-withdrawal groups.[38] This narrative continues to frame the withdrawals as irrational and endemic of societal weakness.

By contrast, this article seeks to demonstrate that in neither case was withdrawal a mere retreat or purely the product of domestic politics. Instead, Israeli decision makers sought to reduce costs and break harmful stalemates by altering tactics, leveraging Israeli military potential and realizing international legitimacy. In both Gaza and Lebanon, hostile actors utilized the Israeli presence to escalate costs, influencing policymaking. Rather than represent an act of weakness, withdrawal from Gaza and Lebanon represented a recalibration of established paradigms of territorial control that no longer served stated goals.

While neither withdrawal fully met its objectives, gaps between actualized and desired outcomes were also the result of a subsequent inability to establish effective deterrence. Nevertheless, these case studies can provide relevant policy recommendations. Policymakers should recognize that

withdrawal does not end involvement with a territory; territorial evacuation is not a panacea for national security challenges such as rocket fire. In neither Gaza nor Lebanon did withdrawal transform the worldview of the hostile actor, though territorial retrenchment did limit the enemy's ability to actualize hostile intent, at least of a particular form. Finally, both cases represent the danger of path dependency: the prolonged continuation of policies whose usefulness has long expired. Thus, a constant reevaluation of costs and benefits is necessary for sound policy vis-à-vis ongoing conflict over territory. In both Gaza and Lebanon, policy recalibration undermined a paradigm with declining strategic validity and preempted significant further human and economic capital expenditure on territory deemed not essential to the national interest.

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The Demographic Threat: Israelis Abandon the Negev and the Galilee

Amit Efrati

Background

Since the State of Israel was founded, spatial planning by its successive governments has included a strategy of population dispersal. This policy initially aimed to protect a geographic area against invasion by Arab armies as part of a spatial defense concept in which the communities in the outlying areas played a key role in the border defense system. At a later stage, this policy was designed to influence the demographic balance between Jews and Arabs in the outlying areas. In the framework of this policy, large budgets were allocated to build new communities and strengthen older ones in the Galilee, the "Triangle" (in the eastern Sharon area), the Negev, and other regions. Despite these efforts, and as with corresponding demographic patterns throughout the world whereby population groups migrated to large cities in their countries' economic and social centers, the preference of the Israeli population for living in central Israel has grown stronger in the past three decades. This trend is reflected in a massive move of Negev and Galilee residents to the center and in an ongoing preference among residents of the center to remain there (table 1).[1]

Table 1. Internal Migration, Central District, 1985-2015

	1985	1992	2000	2008	2014	2015
Entering	34,100	56,900	62,800	73,700	74,400	74,100
Leaving	30,100	48,900	47,600	62,000	62,300	63,300
Balance	**+4000**	**+8000**	**+15,200**	**+11,700**	**+12,100**	**+10,800**

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This trend has resulted in a concentration of 40.6 percent of Israel's population in the greater metropolitan Tel Aviv area, a region constituting 7 percent of Israel's physical space. This region includes the central and Tel Aviv districts (from Netanya in the north, to Maccabim-Reut in the east, and to Rehovot in the south). On the other hand, 8 percent of Israel's population lives in the Negev (the Beer Sheva district), stretching from the Beer Sheva valley to Eilat and constituting 60 percent of Israel's area. Similarly, 15 percent of Israel's population lives in the Galilee (the Tzfat, Kinneret, Acre, and Jezreel districts), stretching from the border with Lebanon to the Jezreel Valley, which constitutes 16 percent of Israel's area (table 2).[2]

Table 2. Population Dispersal in Israel

	Central Israel (Central and Tel Aviv Districts)	**Negev (Beer Sheva Sub-District)**	**Galilee (Tzfat, Kinneret, Acre, and Jezreel Sub-Districts)**
Proportion of the country's land (20,770 sq km)	**7%** (1,479 sq km)	**60%** (12,918 sq km)	**16%** (3,319 sq km)
Proportion of the total population (8,380,100)	**40%** (3,407,400 people)	**8%** (687,400 people)	**15%** (1,322,600 people)

The "Abandonment" of the Negev and the Galilee: A Strategic Threat to Israel

The Social-Environmental Level

The main reason for the migration of residents of the Negev and the Galilee to greater metropolitan Tel Aviv and the continued desire of residents of greater metropolitan Tel Aviv to remain there lies in the district's social and economic strength. This in turn has spawned the damaging idea about the link between residing in this region and the ability to acquire an education and become wealthy. Due to the high cost of living in central Israel, however, it is mainly the wealthy families from the Negev and the Galilee who migrate, while the economically disadvantaged remain in the geographically outlying areas. This process is liable to aggravate the socioeconomic gaps in Israeli society, increase inequality, exacerbate the feeling of alienation and division, and perpetuate an imbalanced distribution of resources between different parts of Israel.

At the same time, the excess demand among the Israeli population for living in central Israel is likely to have a negative impact on the quality of life there.[3] First, it may lead to massive construction and to establishment of supporting infrastructure on a large scale, which in turn causes the gradual loss of open space. These processes have already resulted in the destruction of seacoasts and agricultural areas, the elimination of green vistas and spacious areas for the population, and the inability of water to penetrate to the groundwater levels. This excess demand also affects the central region's ability to treat sewage and waste, which will have a negative impact on water quality and the extent of ground pollution. In addition, the excess demand is likely to cause an ongoing rise in housing prices in central Israel (thereby increasing the cost of living), due to the difficulty in meeting this strong demand.

Second, excess demand will significantly increase population density in central Israel, which by Western standards is already extremely crowded.[4] This density is liable to cause the collapse of the local transportation system. As of 2016, Israel's roads were rated the most crowded of the developed countries (over 2,500 vehicles per kilometer of road).[5] In the absence of suitable public transportation, the excessive use of private transportation (a natural increase of 500,000 vehicles a year) causes 700,000 vehicles to enter metropolitan Tel Aviv daily (a 55 percent increase since 2000), at an average speed of 11 km/hr on its roads. In this context, the filling in of open space in central Israel threatens the ability to expand the existing roads. The demographic changes will therefore necessarily lead to a worsening of the traffic jams, which will negatively affect the ability to reach workplaces, and will damage economic growth. The burdening of the transportation system in the center also has additional consequences in the form of irritating noise and air pollution emissions that cause an increase in mortality and morbidity.

Population density in itself is not the problem. In New York City, for example, whose area is less than half the size of the Tel Aviv and central districts, two and a half as many people live in relative comfort. The difference between the two cases lies in the municipal infrastructure in New York City, which is designed to accommodate this size population, while the corresponding infrastructure in the greater Tel Aviv metropolitan area was neglected for years. For example, work on the light rail project in Tel Aviv began only in 2015, even though the plans were approved in 2001. Furthermore, three months after the work began, the Ministry of Finance

ordered a reassessment of the project, claiming that it could not meet the load stemming from the unanticipated rate of population growth in the metropolis. In tandem with continuation of work on the light rail, the current disputes between local authorities about a considerable part of the route are liable to delay completion of the project still further.

As a result of the infrastructure gap, population density in central Israel is likely to increase, followed by a decline in the quality of life and social deterioration that may be reflected in demonstrations, non-enforcement of the law, and a decline in the sense of personal security. This situation is likely to result in apathy to the country among residents of central Israel whose way of life, economy, and expectations are similar to those of people in Western countries, and lead them to invest overseas at the expense of the local economy, and perhaps even to leave Israel.[6]

The National Level

The massive migration of residents from the Negev and the Galilee to central Israel over the past three decades is prominent almost entirely among the Jewish population, while at the same time, these regions have experienced substantial growth in their Arab population. These changes are undermining the demographic balance between Jews and Arabs in the Negev and the Galilee, which together comprise 76 percent of the area of Israel. In the Galilee, starting in 1961, the proportion of the Jewish population began to fall consistently, reaching 43.1 percent in 2015 (table 3),[7] while in the central Galilee highland (the Nazareth Illit, Misgav, and Karmiel region), the proportion of the Jewish population has dropped to 20 percent.[8]

Table 3. Demographic Balance, Northern District, 1948-2015

	1948	**1961**	**1972**	**1983**	**1995**	**2008**	**2014**	**2015**
No. of Arabs	90,600	142,800	218,200	329,000	486,400	693,300	770,700	784,400
Percentage of Arabs	**63.0%**	**42.4%**	**46.1%**	**50.2%**	**51.4%**	**56.7%**	**56.8%**	**56.9%**
No. of Jews	53,400	194,300	255,700	327,000	460,500	548,800	587,900	596,000
Percentage of Jews	**37.0%**	**57.6%**	**53.9%**	**49.8%**	**48.6%**	**43.3%**	**43.2%**	**43.1%**

This trend is expected to continue, given the annual rates of natural increase of the Jewish population (1.4 percent) and Arab population (1.7

percent) in the Galilee,[9] and in view of the continued migration from the area by the Jewish population (table 4).[10]

Table 4. Internal Migration of Jews, Northern District, 1985-2015

	1985	1992	2000	2008	2014	2015
Entering	14,400	25,200	17,800	21,000	22,100	23,600
Leaving	15,400	28,300	19,800	20,500	23,300	23,700
Balance	**-1000**	**-3100**	**-2000**	**+500**	**-1200**	**-100**

The Negev is experiencing a similar phenomenon. Starting in 1995 (following the waves of Jewish immigration from North Africa and the former Soviet Union), the proportion of the Jewish population began to fall gradually, reaching 59.7 percent in 2015 (table 5).

Table 5. Demographic Balance, Beer Sheva Sub-District, 1948-2015

	1948	1961	1972	1983	1995	2008	2014	2015
No. of Arabs	13,000	18,300	29,800	43,700	95,800	219,500	270,400	279,700
Percentage of Arabs	**91.6%**	**18.9%**	**18.5%**	**15.9%**	**22.8%**	**36.4%**	**39.8%**	**40.3%**
No. of Jews	1,200	78,900	171,400	231,300	323,100	383,000	409,200	415,600
Percentage of Jews	**8.4%**	**81.1%**	**81.5%**	**84.1%**	**77.2%**	**63.6%**	**60.2%**	**59.7%**

In addition, besides the migration of the Jewish population from the southern district (table 6),[11] the annual rates of natural increase among the remaining Jewish population (1.6 percent) are more than 60 percent lower than the corresponding rates among the Arab population (3.7 percent), which result from polygamy in the Bedouin communities.[12]

Table 6. Internal Migration of Jews, Southern District, 1985-2015

	1985	1992	2000	2008	2014	2015
Entering	16,800	37,200	26,300	26,300	27,800	28,200
Leaving	20,300	27,700	27,300	29,600	29,600	29,700
Balance	**-3,500**	**+9,500**	**-1,000**	**-3,300**	**-1800**	**-1500**

The undermining of the demographic balance in the Negev and the Galilee poses a geopolitical threat to Israel. This threat is highlighted by international history, which shows that minorities with national awareness and leadership that constitute a majority in their territory will take action to realize national aspirations through the use of demands, violent or peaceful, for autonomy (the Catalans in Spain), or alternatively for being annexed to another country, possibly with a common border (the Crimean peninsula).[13] Consequently, it cannot be ruled out that the Arab society in Israel, which frequently expresses dissatisfaction with the political and social status quo in the country, will utilize the same measures taken by other minorities around the world. The continued convergence of the Jewish population in central Israel is therefore liable one day to turn greater metropolitan Tel Aviv into a city-state without a logistical rear. In tandem, Arab territorial continuity between the Galilee, Judea and Samaria, the Negev, the Gaza Strip, and Jordan will complicate military and civilian passage between different parts of Israel, and make the Jewish public, which will be concentrated in one place, very vulnerable.

This scenario, however, does not appear likely in the near future, as long as Israeli citizenship is the most attractive alternative for Israel's Arab sector. Yet the emergence of a substantial Arab majority in the Negev and the Galilee will gradually weaken Israel's essential sovereign borders and reduce its ability to enforce the law there. The government's difficulty in enforcing the law against illegal Bedouin construction in the Negev is a major symptom of this. In addition, the emergence of a substantial Arab majority in the Negev and the Galilee, with many cultural norms (e.g., polygamy among the Bedouin community), law, community format, religion, and language that are materially different from those of the State of Israel, is likely to have a critical effect on the character and identity of the state.

Why the Israel Population is "Abandoning" the Negev and the Galilee

A survey conducted in April 2015 shows that 85 percent of the population in central Israel are not interested in moving to the Negev and the Galilee, mainly because of the absence of jobs (27 percent) and the poor quality of life (15 percent).[14] Not surprisingly, the survey shows that these very reasons are the main reasons that 78 percent of the residents in the Negev and the Galilee consider a move to central Israel.

In employment, for example, the average monthly salary in the Tel Aviv and central districts is more than double the corresponding salary in the Galilee and the Negev.[15] A Bank of Israel report in 2015 found that for every 100 kilometers from Tel Aviv, the average household income was 15 percent lower.[16] In addition, the unemployment rates and proportion of employees earning less than the minimum wage in the southern and northern districts were much higher than the corresponding rates in the Tel Aviv and central districts, while the rates of participation among residents in the labor force were significantly lower.[17] These gaps are the result of differences in the types of economic activity between the districts. Thus, while employment in the Negev and the Galilee is based on conventional industries that have moved there in search of cheap land and government incentives, employment in central Israel is based on hi-tech and services sectors, such as banking, insurance, and software (table 7).[18]

This difference has a number of important consequences. First, while the Israeli service sectors compete among themselves for local clients, the conventional industrial sectors are forced to compete with overseas manufacturers (textile plants in China, for example). Second, while the number of jobs in the service sectors has grown enormously in recent years, the number of jobs in the conventional industries has grown very little, and the supply of jobs in the Negev and the Galilee has therefore remained small (and there is accordingly no competition for the employment of local workers). These figures, combined with low productivity in conventional industry (where there are constant demands for streamlining), are leading employers in the Negev and the Galilee to employ the local workers at low wages. Third, the reliance of the economy in the Negev and the Galilee on conventional industries poses a future challenge and creates employment uncertainty, given the processes of digitalization, automation, and artificial intelligence that are rendering many human jobs unnecessary. Furthermore, the conventional industry in the Negev and the Galilee suffers from a high degree of concentration, in which a limited number of very large enterprises, such as SodaStream and Israel Chemicals, employ most of the local residents. Therefore, if these enterprises encounter hard times, or choose to relocate elsewhere, this can pose an employment challenge to entire regions.

Table 7. Gaps between the Negev and Galilee and Central Israel in Employment

Comparison Index	Southern District	Northern District	Tel Aviv District
Average monthly wage	7,439 NIS (focusing on the Beer Sheva sub-district)	7,035 NIS	**9,444 NIS**
Unemployment rate	6.6%	6.2%	**3.7%**
Percentage of those earning less than the minimum wage	39.8%	42.1%	**33.1%**
Percentage of all residents of the region participating in the labor force	61.7%	58.3%	**69.5%**
Ratio of hi-tech industry jobs to all jobs in the district	22.4%	20.3%	**30.15%** (average for Tel Aviv and central districts)
Ratio of conventional industry and mixed-conventional industry jobs to all jobs in the district	56%	66%	**53.5%** (average for Tel Aviv and central districts)

There are also prominent gaps in education, with the average investment per student by the local authorities in the Tel Aviv and central districts more than double the educational investment by local authorities in the Negev and the Galilee.[19] Accordingly, the average marks on the standardized tests are significantly higher in the Tel Aviv and central districts than in the southern and northern districts for all the subjects examined,[20] a meaningful difference that is also expressed in the gap between the proportion of those qualifying for basic matriculation and outstanding matriculation in the various districts (table 8).[21]

These gaps result inter alia from the government's budgeting process for education. Thus, other than the basic budget for education, which the government allots almost equally between the local authorities, the government applies a matching policy, in which the Ministry of Education helps supplement financing for educational projects initiated by the local authorities. In view of the inability of some of the disadvantaged local authorities in the Negev and the Galilee to provide a minimum budget for initiating these projects, however, the process generates inequality in the level of education provided in different regions. Nonetheless, some of the poor local authorities in the Negev and the Galilee have managed to bridge

the gap by raising donations and activity in the third sector. However, this pattern has created a large number of individual unsupervised and short term projects in their vicinity operated by non-profit organizations, thereby creating inconsistency in the system. Also, these projects are not measurement-oriented, and are not committed to output. The prominent gaps between the districts also extend to access to institutions of higher learning; the vast majority of universities and colleges are located in central Israel (table 8).[22]

Table 8. Gaps between the Negev and Galilee and the Center in Education

Comparison Index	Southern District	Northern District	Average of Tel Aviv and Central Districts
Average mark in achievement exams in Hebrew sector (2012-2013 school year)			
Mark in Hebrew	64.3	64.3	**71.1**
Mark in English	64.3	67.6	**76.2**
Science and technology	44.5	48.4	**53.4**
Mathematics	58.7	60.9	**72.3**
Average investment in a student by the local authority (in the 2013-2014 school year)	Beer Sheva: 3,780 NIS Dimona: 2,877 NIS Yeruham: 3,572 NIS	Afula: 3,129 NIS Tiberias: 3,663 NIS Acre: 1,959 NIS	**Tel Aviv: 8,504 NIS** **Herzliya: 7,608 NIS** **Kfar Saba: 7,196 NIS**
Percentage of 17 year-old students qualifying for matriculation (in the 2015-2016 school year)	Beer Sheva: 70.5% Dimona: 63.8% Yeruham: 69.3%	Afula: 59.7% Tiberias: 60.7% Acre: 66.8%	**Tel Aviv: 72.2%** **Herzliya: 85.4%** **Kfar Saba: 83%**
Percentage of students qualifying for outstanding matriculation (in the 2015-2016 school year)	Beer Sheva: 3.8% Dimona: 3.4% Yeruham: 7.9%	Afula: 3.1% Tiberias: 4.6% Acre: 4.1%	**Tel Aviv: 9.7%** **Herzliya: 14.7%** **Kfar Saba: 10.1%**
Percentage of undergraduate students in higher education according to the district of the institution (in the 2015-2016 school year)	14.2%	9.7%	48%

In healthcare, the rate of doctors and nurses employed in the southern and northern districts is 50 percent lower than in the Tel Aviv and central districts, and there are also substantial differences in the number of available beds for general hospitalization, intensive care, children's wards, operating rooms, and emergency medicine centers. These differences lengthen the waiting time for medical treatment in the southern and northern districts, and create a difference in the medical standard from the one prevailing in central Israel. The result is a higher infant mortality rate and a shorter life expectancy in these regions. Recent surveys also indicate that a considerable portion of residents of the south and the north complain about the absence of emergency medical services where they live, and have to forego medical treatment due to considerations of distance; Such occurrences are much less frequent in the Tel Aviv and central districts (table 9).[23]

Table 9. Gaps between the Negev and Galilee and Central Israel in Health

Comparison Index	Southern District	Northern District	Tel Aviv District
Rate of employed doctors (per 1,000 people)	2.3	3.1	**5.1**
Rate of employed nurses (per 1,000 people)	3.3	4.4	**6**
Rate of beds for general hospitalization (per 1,000 people)	1.35	1.57	**2.02**
Rate of beds for emergency medicine (per 1,000 people)	0.09	0.16	**0.14**
Complaints about an absence of emergency medical services in the region of their residence	23%	29%	**14%**
Percentage of people reporting waiving medical treatment because of distance	17%	12%	**4%**
Infant mortality rates (per 1,000 people)	5.3	3.9	**2.1**

In all, it is unreasonable to expect the Negev and the Galilee to attract a massive influx of new residents while it is substantially inferior to central Israel in so many important aspects of life.

Governmental Efforts to Encourage Settlement in the Negev and the Galilee

The national effort to encourage settlement in the Negev and the Galilee is divided among a large number of government ministries.[24] However, despite some cooperation among them, a single agency for integrating all this activity is conspicuously absent. This role was originally designated for the Ministry for the Development of the Negev and the Galilee, but this ministry lacks in resources and exclusive authority, leading to duplication in its efforts with the other ministries and much confusion. In addition to the problems created by the absence of an integrating agency, the main argument expressed in this essay is that the principal reason for the government's lack of success in encouraging settlement in the Negev and the Galilee lies in the fact that most of the efforts are not designed to bring about a strategic, organized, and comprehensive change in the quality of life in these regions; they are based on two questionable strategies: providing economic incentives for development and settlement, and solving local problems.

The first strategy is reflected, inter alia, in the classification of most of the communities in the Negev and the Galilee as "national priority areas," whereby people settling there are granted benefits in the form of reduced leasing fees for an allocation of land, subsidization of development costs for construction, and mortgage benefits. In this framework, residents of these communities receive tax benefits in the form of tax credits amounting to 7-21 percent of their monthly income. The Ministry for the Development of the Negev and the Galilee also offers 10,000 NIS to immigrant families moving to the Negev and the Galilee, and a grant for finding work or opening a business for returning residents. In addition, in order to encourage settlement by creating jobs, the Ministry of Economy and Industry grants monetary aid for establishing enterprises or moving them to the Negev and the Galilee, and substantial tax concessions for a number of years. Local businesses also enjoy reduced leasing fees for an allocation of land for industry, crafts, tourism, and commerce; subsidies for production in specific sectors; and a loan fund with a state guarantee.

The economic incentive strategy is likewise prominent in the housing sphere and in the attempts to attract students to the Negev and the Galilee. In the housing sphere, the Ministry for the Development of the Negev and the Galilee subsidizes rent for dozens of families and students in urban communities, and initiates special projects in rural councils. For example, the "Association Homes" project enables those considering settling to rent

apartments at a controlled rent and to buy the apartments at the end of the lease periods, while deducting the rent paid up until then from the price. Where students are concerned, the Ministry funds the first year of studies for military or national service graduates at colleges in the Negev and the Galilee, and initiates programs such as "Students Building the Future," which offers a scholarship to students in exchange for employment in one of the local companies.

Despite this strategy, the demographic changes prove that the high price in employment and quality of life of living in the Negev and the Galilee makes the economic incentives offered by the government negligible, in comparison with the disadvantages. Furthermore, the monetary incentives strategy is perceived as "compensation" for moving to a place that is not good on its own merits, and reinforces the negative image of the Negev and the Galilee. This image persists despite the efforts to counter it through campaigns, fairs, and conferences, and also through the Negev and Galilee Settlement Information Center, which provides consulting for those interested in moving and puts them in touch with the various communities and councils.

Nonetheless, action taken by the government in the framework of the second strategy, solving local problems, has a positive, albeit limited, effect on settlement and development in the Negev and the Galilee. For example, in 2011, a faculty of medicine was inaugurated in Tzfat, followed by 600 students and 100 medical personnel moving to communities in the area. At the same time, even though this step was accompanied by financing for the purchase of advanced medical equipment for hospitals in the Galilee and upgrading of the medical infrastructure in the area, the medical standard in the Galilee remains far lower than in central Israel. As for other measures, the government is continuing its efforts to move some IDF units from central Israel to the Negev. As part of this measure, which is designed to involve the migration of 3,000 families of soldiers in the standing army to communities in the region, special neighborhoods were built in Yeruham, Meitar, and Omer. An administration was established for the southward move aimed at guiding and advising these families in their move. However, in addition to the fact that to date only some 100 families have moved, the move to the Negev by the IDF is liable to have the opposite effect, because the IDF is vacating 236,000 sq m of land in central Israel on which thousands of housing units are to be constructed. This is likely to lower housing prices in central Israel, thereby giving many people an incentive to live there.

With respect to small and medium-sized businesses, the Ministry of Economy and Industry is a partner in planning and building industrial parks, and also operates entrepreneurship centers for young people and business centers, both providing management, guidance, and market services at low cost. In addition, the Ministry for the Development of the Negev and the Galilee recently published an "aid procedure for companies" offering local companies budgetary assistance in return for hiring more workers. Similarly, a "BizNegev" portal was founded in order to leverage the procurement budgets of major institutions in the Negev for the purpose of increasing the economic activity of local businesses by enhancing cooperation between them. Nevertheless, the proposed solutions do not solve the many bureaucratic difficulties faced by small and medium-sized businesses in the Negev and the Galilee, such as obtaining permits for opening a business and filing for tenders, nor do they significantly improve the ability of those businesses to compete against their counterparts in central Israel.

In education, the government has initiated a number of projects for computerizing the educational systems in the Negev and the Galilee for the purpose of improving access to information technology for local students. Furthermore, the Ministry for the Development of the Negev and the Galilee operates five science and excellence centers, providing those students with exposure to a broad range of subjects. In informal education, the Ministry subsidizes enrichment groups and kindergartens for 80,000 children, and operates centers for local young people as a comprehensive and organized response to their needs in order to provide them with tools for personal and professional development. These measures, however, have not yet shown concrete results, and do not provide a solution for the inability of the local authorities in the Negev and the Galilee to invest as much in local students as their counterparts in central Israel. They therefore do not eliminate the need for supplementary programs operated by non-profit organizations.

In transportation, the Ministry of Transport is promoting a project to improve access to central Israel for residents of the Negev and the Galilee and access to the Negev and the Galilee for residents of central Israel. The southern part of Highway 6 is under construction in the Negev, and work is continuing on its continuation in the direction of Lehavim and Negev Junction. In addition, the frequency of trains from Tel Aviv to Beer Sheva has doubled. In the Galilee, the northern part of Highway 6 reaching Somekh Junction is under construction, and work will later begin on its continuation in the direction of Shlomi. In addition, an "eastern arm" has

been paved connecting Highway 6 at Yokneam, Amiad Junction, and the Galilee Panhandle. This makes it possible to travel directly, with no traffic lights or intersections, from the Negev through the central region to the northern Galilee. In another project, a Jezreel Valley railway has been built between Haifa and Beit Shean, and tracks have been built between Acre and Karmiel. At the same time, the effort to shorten travel times between central Israel and the Negev and the Galilee is liable to increase the phenomenon of commuting, by enabling people to continue living in central Israel even if they are employed in the Negev and the Galilee.

From a settlement standpoint, along with the Ministry of the Interior's measures to strengthen the local authorities in the Negev and the Galilee through equalization grants and development budgets, the Ministry for the Development of the Negev and the Galilee is budgeting the establishing and reinforcement of settlement cores in these regions, in which a group of people wishing to live together in an existing community or establish a new community settle in one of the regions. At the same time, the Ministry of Construction and Housing is working on a community planning program and a new city in the Negev and the Galilee. Constructing new communities has a number of prominent disadvantages, however, including the need to build expensive infrastructure from scratch, e.g., roads and electricity, and increase dependence on the use of private vehicles. In comparison with the major cities, these small communities are likely to suffer even more from an absence of employment diversity and limited access to health and educational centers. Their establishment is therefore liable to aggravate the gaps described in this essay. In addition, establishing new communities will exacerbate the dispersal of government budgets for the local authorities as part of the effort to develop the Negev and the Galilee. This dispersal already contributes to the weakness of many local authorities, especially in the Galilee. Note in this context that the effectiveness of the regional blocs plan currently promoted by the Ministry of the Interior, which is designed to provide an appropriate solution to this problem, is limited, because these blocs lack authority.

What Can Be Done

The process of encouraging settlement in the Negev and the Galilee should encompass two stages. First, it is important for the government to make major investments in upgrading infrastructure that affects the quality of life

of residents in the Negev and the Galilee in order to prevent their continued migration from the region. This process requires the establishment of an independent agency under the Prime Minister's Office that will integrate the activity of all participating ministries, mediate disputes between them, and provide an organizing and guiding concept for developing the Negev and the Galilee. In addition, this agency must have the backing of influential political groups with a vital interest in developing the Negev and the Galilee. The absence of such groups has been felt deeply over the years, and is due in part to under-representation of these regions in the Knesset. The efforts should involve the development of three core fields, and should focus on the major cities in the Negev and the Galilee, such as Beer Sheva, Dimona, Karmiel, and Tiberias.

In employment, it is important to transfer public institutions and state offices to the Negev and the Galilee in order to enhance employment diversity and possibilities, and to bolster the municipal property tax payments collected by the local authorities. It is also recommended to establish substantial employment anchors in these regions, such as an international airport at Nevatim or in the Jezreel Valley, that will provide tens of thousands of jobs in the long term. In addition, it is important to map the small and medium-sized businesses in the Negev and the Galilee, study their needs, and change government actions accordingly. In this context, because of the bureaucratic difficulties encountered by the local businesses, money should be allocated for business development coordinators representing the Ministry of Economy and Industry in the local authorities, who will provide a solution for problems in real time. It is also recommended to consider amending the Mandatory Tenders Law in order to give affirmative action preference and credit points to small and medium-sized businesses from the Negev and the Galilee in everything pertaining to public procurement by government ministries and local authorities from all parts of Israel. In addition, the rate of corporate tax and other taxes that international companies are charged for activity in the Negev and the Galilee should be reduced in order to give them an incentive to operate in these regions.

In education, it is important to consider a differential budget policy for education in which the state takes into account the economic situation of the local authority and its ability to invest independently in the residents of its city, from kindergartens and schools to informal education. The extra budget, which does not require cutting the budgets of wealthier local authorities, will reduce the dependence of disadvantaged local authorities

in the Negev and the Galilee on third sector organizations, and enable them to provide supervised and measurement-oriented study programs and enrichment activities (in cooperation with the Ministry of Education). In this aspect, but not only there, the need to bolster cooperation between the local authorities in the Negev and the Galilee should be emphasized, and it is therefore recommended that the government take action to establish a common administration that includes representatives of the Ministry of Education and the heads of the education departments in the local authorities. In this forum, it will be important to make both formal and informal educational services provided in a specific local authority (such as specialized subjects) available to students from other local authorities in the region. Accordingly, the Ministry of Education should budget extra money for local authorities providing regional educational services. Cooperation in transporting students from one local authority to another is also recommended, and it is desirable to create another university in the Galilee and the Negev.

In healthcare, it is important to amend the State Health Insurance Law, so that it includes precise definitions for the section stating that a health fund member is entitled to obtain all the services included in the based of health services "with reasonable quality, within a reasonable period of time, and at a reasonable distance." Over the years, efforts to create precise definitions of the term "reasonable" have failed, and the health funds are therefore allowed room for broad interpretation and varying medical standards in different parts of Israel. As a supplementary measure, it is best for the Ministry of Health to supervise the health funds' budget allocations – which rely on health insurance payments by Israeli citizens – between the various districts and to demand transparency in the process. This measure can be made part of the national program for community health quality indices in Israel. Building another hospital in the Negev and the Galilee and substantially expanding the number of beds in the existing hospitals is also recommended. In addition, it is important to expand the system of emergency medical centers, attract medical personnel, and increase financing for patient transportation, treatment, and rehabilitation services. Government decisions in recent years seeking to accomplish these tasks were not implemented, due to the budget and management difficulties of the local authorities in the Negev and the Galilee.

When this stage has been completed, and the residents of the Negev and the Galilee themselves realize the potential of their locales and the value of

remaining in their regions, it will be possible to move to the second stage, and attempt to "attract" people from other parts of Israel to the Negev and the Galilee, not in order to benefit from a monetary incentive or a lower cost of living, but in order to improve the quality of their lives.

Notes

The author would like to thank Brig. Gen. (ret.) Shlomo Brom and Brig. Gen. (ret.) Ruth Yaron for their helpful comments.

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Alexander the Great Would Not Have Been Perplexed

Gabi Siboni, Yuval Bazak, and Gal Perl Finkel

War is above all a human-social phenomenon, and as such its principles remain, and will apparently remain for the foreseeable future, faithful to the unchanging nature of human beings. Based on this understanding, former Marine Corps General James Mattis, currently US Secretary of Defense, emailed his officers when he was the commander of the 1st Marine Division, before the division left for operational duties in Iraq. In reply to those who claimed that the nature of war had fundamentally changed and the tactics were wholly new, Mattis said: "Not really. Alexander the Great would not be in the least bit perplexed by the enemy that we face right now in Iraq."[1]

Similarly, we can ask if in 1967 or 1973 Arik Sharon had faced the challenges of the Second Lebanon War with his battalion, would he have been perplexed? Or in other words, would the change in warfare have been as dramatic as the theorists of the post-modern school try to argue? Have there indeed been changes in the nature of warfare that make the experience to be gained from past wars superfluous and irrelevant, or are changes a case of another development, deriving from a specific context, and requiring the adaptation of old but solid principles to a reality that is different, sometimes extremely so, from the reality in which these principles were defined.

While human nature remains fixed and dictates universal principles, the changing environment demands adaptation of implementation, sometimes in far reaching ways. This is apparently the most significant challenge in the world of warfare – how to adapt fixed principles to changing circumstances.

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Conservatives remain faithful to traditional templates that ultimately blow up in the first encounter with the new reality, while others create new templates that are not anchored in the universal principles. Both types are destined to fail.

One of the founding principles of the security concept of the State of Israel was the principle of taking the war to the enemy's territory. This led to the establishment of the strike force and embrace of the maneuvers approach, which sought to seize the initiative and penetrate deep into enemy territory in order to subdue the enemy as quickly as possible. Over a few years, the IDF developed impressive maneuvering capabilities, which led to victories on the battlefield and undermined the enemies' belief in their ability to realize their strategic goal – the conquest and destruction of the State of Israel.

Since the end of the 1970s, the enemies of Israel have adopted new approaches to achieve their goal of eliminating the Zionist project. At the same time, the IDF has changed its tactics to adjust to the emerging reality, which included an almost complete abandonment of the maneuvers approach that had characterized its spirit and action, as a new belief took shape that this approach was no longer suitable for the "new wars." Is this correct?

This paper contends that it is not a change in the nature of warfare that has led to the preference for standoff fire over maneuvers. Rather, it is the weakening of military thinking, which has not managed to deal with the changes in the nature of the battlefield and not shaped a new doctrine[2] to confront the new challenges, based on the principles of the security concept. As a result, maneuver has been neglected, and emphasis has shifted to technology-based concepts of fire.

Doctrine as a Formative Element

War is a social phenomenon, and as such it mirrors features of the period, the spirit of the times, the perception of the threat, social mobilization, national resources, available technologies, and so on. Of course, war is also influenced by the balance of power between the enemies, knowledge of the other side, development of strategic and operational perceptions, and the processes of building forces. All these mean that no war is the same as any other.

That is also the reason why above all war is a deeply intellectual challenge. The element of surprise likewise plays a central role, because surprise undermines confidence in perceptions and causes embarrassment,

confusion, disorientation, and eventually, defeat. That is what happened to the French facing the Germans at the start of World War II;[3] that is what happened to the IDF at the start of the Yom Kippur War, when its perceptions regarding air superiority and defenses against attack were shattered before the eyes of military and civilian leaders; that was also the position of Arab countries facing the surprise of the Six Day War. The inability to function was not only due to physical failures, but above all, to the gap between expectations of how war would develop and the way in which it actually developed.

Since the 1980s, the IDF has not managed to develop a doctrinal response that is suited to the fundamentals of the security concept and simultaneously deals with the new challenges of the battlefield. Meanwhile, maneuvering has dwindled and been replaced by fire and intelligence capabilities based on technology. In an article dealing with the challenges of force buildup in the IDF, a senior commander argued that the attempt of the IDF, in response to changes in the nature of war, "to avoid fighting on land, ultimately led to longer and less effective wars. We continue to strengthen our 'healthy leg' – the ability to assemble and counter attack, and are amazed that we can't get rid of the 'limp' coming from the leg dealing with overland maneuvers."[4] However, thinking based on ruses must be strengthened, along with the approach that direct contact and rapid and aggressive maneuvering into enemy territory is the key to a decisive victory on the battlefield.

In the Yom Kippur War, after 48 hours of confusion, the IDF ground forces managed to recover and regroup, on the basis of a clear doctrine, well trained troops, and an experienced command array.[5] To be sure, the fact that both the Egyptians and the Syrians decided to halt their offensives contributed to the ability of the IDF to regain its composure, seize the initiative, and turn the situation around in spite of the difficult opening conditions and the surprise that undermined the confidence of the decision makers. Even though it is seared into our consciousness as a failure, the Yom Kippur War was actually an impressive military victory, the outcome of a security concept and doctrine that were shaped during the 1950s and refined by means of developing military thinking and drawing on vast amounts of accumulated experience.

In 2000, the IDF was fighting the Palestinians with no suitable doctrine and without the capability of dealing with the challenges created by the conflict. The result was that for a year and a half the Palestinians controlled events, while the IDF and the security system had no effective response.

Determined political leadership and the initiatives of field commanders led the security establishment, including the IDF, to shift the existing perceptions of leverage and erosion, and to formulate an approach of decisive victory based on recapturing territory and taking the initiative. The IDF demonstrated that with the help of rapid maneuvers that it utilized in Operation Defensive Shield and the transfer of the fighting to enemy territory – fundamentals of the doctrine that developed during 1950s and 1960s – it was possible to overcome the Palestinians and create the conditions for defeating terror, even in conflicts with completely different features. These military moves provided the infrastructure for a dramatic improvement in the security of the Israeli population, and later for economic growth and the creation of conditions for political moves.[6] In Judea and Samaria, the IDF returned to the idea of maneuvers within enemy territory, albeit maneuvers completely different from those of other wars, and it led to a huge achievement that has still not been replicated in any other arena of war in the world.

In the Gaza Strip, on the other hand, the IDF continued the concept of using standoff fire, mainly out of a sense that terror could be contained by the security fence.[7] When Ben Gurion spent time in London during the blitz, he came to the conclusion that people are not broken by bombing; the attempt to prove otherwise always collapses in the face of reality. However, in Gaza this approach failed. While terror from Judea and Samaria, which constituted an acute strategic problem, was reduced dramatically, the threat from the direction of Gaza grew stronger. Nonetheless, this is the same war, with the same enemy, the same society, and the same international arena. The main difference between the two arenas lay in the decision to adopt the paradigm of decisive victory in Judea and Samaria while maintaining the paradigm of containment in Gaza. The results are clear to this day.

There are two traditional concepts for fighting an enemy that use guerilla and terror methods – counter warfare that includes accurate remote fire, and the direct contact approach, which seeks direct combat with the enemy on its territory. Using the counter warfare tactic ensures operational gains but has many limitations: first, the duration of technological advantage is limited, and the enemy will find ways to overcome it; second, counter warfare glorifies opposition, because the frequent use of smart weapon systems creates "a platform for glorifying the stone in the hand of a child against a helicopter, and the improvised explosive device against an airplane"; third, the collateral damage caused by counter action includes killing and injuring

innocent civilians alongside the terrorists. Alternatively, the direct contact approach requires moving the fighting to the enemy's territory, high speed movement and fire, and a high rate of incursions, while pursuing secret activity, utilizing surprise, and minimizing collateral damage.

The difference between these operational perceptions is also expressed in the commander's dimension. In the counter warfare approach, commanders of operations are located in remote technology centers, while in the direct contact approach, the commander has "direct, unmediated contact with the ground forces in the operational space."[8]

Over many years, beginning in the years when the IDF was present in the security zone, in a slow, ongoing process, the IDF began to abandon the fundamental elements of its doctrine. Ground maneuvers, which were the heart of the strike force, lost their centrality,[9] and even more so, began to lose their defensive nature. It was only in 2006 that this trend was formally articulated in an official IDF document. The operational approach published that year by the General Staff stated that the nature of war had changed and it was necessary to adopt a new approach, centering on fire based on intelligence. Ground maneuvers were given only a secondary role in this perception. Keshet, the long term plan devised by General Staff divisions, reflected this approach and prompted a sharp cutback in the capabilities and battle order of the ground forces, including dismantling the regimental headquarters. The Second Lebanon War, which broke out a few months later, forced the IDF to reconsider this route. Indeed, every doctrine is the result of the military leader's decision.

> It is neither any change in the nature of war that led to the neglect of ground maneuvers, nor changes in society, but doctrinal weakening that caused the growing reliance on technology, at the expense of the art of war.

A doctrinaire approach is almost never the only choice; in most cases it is chosen by the military leader. It is certainly possible to imagine that under a different leadership, the wars between Israel and the Arab countries in the early years of the state would have been conducted differently. The decisive victory approach propounded by Ben Gurion was not the outcome of a factual situation that could lead to only one definitive outcome, but mainly the result of a leadership decision by Ben Gurion, who spent much time studying the security problems predicted for the State of Israel, and who understood that protracted wars, such as the War of Independence, with the heavy

price it exacted from the newborn state, would work against the essential interests of the Zionist project.[10]

Moreover, the War of Independence fought first by the pre-state Jewish settlement (*yishuv*) and later the state, had features that were entirely different from those around which Ben Gurion designed his security approach and the doctrine he later formulated. His understanding that the coming wars would be essentially different and that the IDF had to be built as a professional army with an offensive doctrine was at the core of the argument between him and the former Haganah fighters. In other words, the choice in the decisive victory approach adopted by Ben Gurion was not the necessary conclusion or the "natural" choice in view of the given factual situation at the end of the 1940s and start of the 1950s – far from it. Few at that time saw the whole picture as it took shape in Ben Gurion's head. The dynamics of the security mechanisms pushed in quite different directions.[11]

Military Thinking at the Heart of Warfare

War changes its face all the time. The winner is the first one to understand the singular features of future wars and acquire the ability to change in order to operate effectively in these conditions. The phenomenon of preparing for the wars of the past is familiar, and usually derives from conservatism and stagnant thinking.[12] There are few military leaders who are able to look beyond the fog and decipher the signs of the future battlefield. The rarest among them are those who are prepared to use their weight to shatter paradigms that are no longer valid and replace them with a new foundation.

In its early days Israeli military thinking drew from three main sources. The first was British military thinking brought by veterans of the Jewish Brigade in World War II, whose approach to the military trade was based on professional methodology. The second was the extensive battle experience accumulated by Haganah commanders before and during the War of Independence.[13] They emphasized the special spirit of its military arm, the Palmach, and tended to reject the idea of professionalization and establishment in the transition from *yishuv* to state. The third was the extensive universal experience acquired during the Second World War, for example, the idea of the blitzkrieg, which was translated into the Israeli strike force based, and not by chance, on an air force and mobile ground forces whose purpose was to take the fighting quickly deep into the enemy's territory. In addition, the process of training senior commanders in overseas

military colleges constituted an important factor in the development of Israeli thinking, and served as the basis for its professional and intellectual development.

Since the Six Day War, and even more so after the Yom Kippur War, Israeli thinking has undergone a transformation, moving more and more toward the American way of thinking – toward an approach based on technology. The American approach of erosion or exhaustion[14] was the complete opposite of the Israeli maneuvers approach that was dominant until the early 1980s. The idea that it was possible to erode the enemy's capabilities based on technological advantages and superior power, thus leading to its defeat, is the typical American approach, but it was completely unsuitable for the IDF, because of the required patience, the element of international legitimacy that provides the necessary freedom of activity to implement this approach, and the ongoing threat to the civilian front. The attempts to develop a pattern of technology-based erosion, a pattern that the IDF began to adopt in the early 1990s, was destined to fail. The IDF attempt to retain this approach, which was from the start completely contrary to its proven security concept, is the core of the problem, and not the change in the battlefield.

The art of war is a slippery profession. It involves enormous danger as well as elements of honor, prestige, human life, and national interests. These are what have made outstanding military leaders into admired heroes and condemned the failures to eternal shame. Military leadership demands a deep understanding of the history of war, the lessons learned from battles, and the principles and rules derived from them. It also requires the ability to conceptualize, imagine, and create; the skill to analyze developments on the battlefield in order to prepare the troops for a future war whose features will be completely different from those of previous wars; and a deep understanding that the battlefield will continuously change and surprise those who are not properly prepared for it. Above all, supreme military leadership demands courage when preparing an army for battle and leading the troops when it occurs. Courage demands difficult decisions, the ability to adopt new approaches, and patterns of action, in order to adjust the army and its ways of thinking to future challenges.[15]

Development in the IDF

Over the last two decades the conventional threat against Israel posed by the militaries of Arab countries has declined, but the sub-conventional threat

from military organizations such as Hamas, Hezbollah, and other terror organizations has increased. The risk of a wide ranging invasion of Israel has become almost anachronistic, but the threat from non-state military organizations, which have acquired considerable high trajectory weapon systems, has grown. This change requires Israel to develop the ability to deal with conventional – classic military – threats; sub-conventional threats from military organizations and terror groups; unconventional military threats – nuclear, biological and chemical weapons; and cyber threats – damage to computer systems and communications.[16] Notwithstanding the change in the threats, there is a greater disconnect between the IDF General Staff and force buildup processes, which for the General Staff have turned into a collection of projects initiated by the respective branches. At the same time, the General Command HQ, which was always in charge of the ground forces, "handed over the reins" to the ground forces command and later to the ground forces.[17]

These processes, along with hesitant operation of ground forces in conflicts fought by the IDF in the last thirty years, have created a sense among decision makers that the IDF ground forces are less relevant than the air force and intelligence to current and future battlefield challenges. While the IDF has invested more and more in these elements, the fitness of the ground forces for extensive maneuvers on the fighting front and deep in enemy territory has been weakened, and this includes the fitness of the reserve ground forces, which were once the backbone of IDF maneuvering.

In its early years, the IDF benefited from the intellectual input of veterans of the British army, who laid the groundwork for theories of warfare and training, and from an officer class with extensive battle experience in war, but over the years it has gradually lost this support that formed the core of its quality. As its knowledge of doctrine declined, the IDF turned more and more outwards, to industry, to find technology-based solutions, while neglecting to "develop its intellectual element." As this aspect eroded, the IDF found itself without sufficient doctrinal knowledge on which it could base its response to the growing challenges. At the tactical level, IDF officers still received orderly training and accumulated some experience on the limited conflict battlefield, but it was clear that there were widening and deepening gaps in the higher levels of strategic and operative thinking that are mainly responsible for the development of concepts that shape IDF force buildup as well as the approaches to its utilization. The technological dominance that has gradually taken hold at the expense of doctrinal quality has led

to a dramatic increase in investments in pinpoint fire and intelligence, alongside ongoing investment in ground maneuvers. The deficiencies of this perception were striking during the Second Lebanon War.[18]

When Gadi Eisenkot was named Chief of Staff in 2015, this trend began to change, and considerable emphasis was placed on ground maneuvers as the IDF's main tool to defeat the enemy. Although the divide between the General Staff and the ground forces staff was not yet bridged, in early 2017 the IDF decided that General Command HQ would formulate the ground maneuvers approach and thus direct the building of ground strength (which would be continued by the ground forces arm). This decision in fact returned the General Staff to the role of commander of the ground forces, which had been denied to it for many years. This is an important step toward a solution, but there is still a long way to go to the required amendment.

Conclusion

It is not any change in the nature of war that led to the neglect of ground maneuvers, nor changes in society, but doctrinal weakening that caused the growing reliance on technology, at the expense of the art of war. Since the 1980s, the IDF has tried time after time to operate according to the erosion approach while making use of leverage, an approach that is strikingly opposed to the security concept that sought to shorten wars by achieving a quick decisive result based on taking the fighting to enemy territory, and maneuvering quickly deep into this territory. Time after time the IDF ends its campaigns with a sense of a missed opportunity, and time after time it returns to the approach of strengthening intelligence and fire in order to improve its performance in the next round of fighting. From functioning as the decisive element, ground maneuvers have become something used hesitantly and in small doses, if at all, usually at a fairly late stage and for limited tasks. It is a vicious cycle: as the expectations of the maneuvering forces decrease, so does their fitness to perform, and perhaps more than anything, the spirit that characterized it – the spirit of galloping horses – is gradually evaporating.

The only time in the last 30 years that the IDF operated according to the security concept of the State of Israel and took the fighting into the territory of the Palestinian Authority was during Operation Defensive Shield, when the forces of the Central Command[19] and "the lawn mower" that followed, in the form of a long series of incursions into Palestinian towns, managed to contain terror and create the conditions for achieving its strategic goals.[20]

Thus it was not war that changed its character, but rather it was a decision, very likely an unconscious one, of the security establishment. The question therefore that has to be asked now is not whether maneuvers are still relevant as the foundation of Israel's security concept, but what maneuvers are required by the IDF, and what is their ability to deal with the security challenges that Israel confronts.

The great military leaders understood people, what motivates them, what frightens them, what breaks them, and what makes them rise above themselves. These were and remain the foundations on which they waged war. The more the leaders can rise above the tactical level that is influenced by changes in the environment and technology, to the operative and strategic level that is mainly influenced by the awareness of human beings, the more the art of war becomes dominant. In this they can express genius, and the dominance of military leadership that knows how to turn deep understandings into winning patterns of warfare. Alexander the Great was a genius who fully understood the art of war.

Notwithstanding the time that has passed, the advanced technology, and the changes and upheavals that have occurred in the nature of campaigns since the days of Alexander the Great, ultimately the same principles that guided him, that obliged him to study war as a profession, to use stratagems, to recognize the importance of the territory, to know how to get the most out of it, and the need to have direct contact with the enemy remain as relevant as they were in his time. Indeed, it seems that if he faced the challenges of the present-day battlefield, equipped with ancient principles and his military genius, Alexander would need some time to study the unique features of the modern battlefield, but he would likely not be perplexed.

Notes

1 Thomas E. Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), p. 317.

2 In this essay, the term "doctrine" expresses the broader meaning of the word in the accepted British usage: "The whole array of military knowledge and military thinking (mainly from studying and analyzing military experience) that is accepted by the military as suitable for a specific time. This array includes matters such as the nature of present and future conflicts, preparing forces for the conflicts, and methods of warfare to be adopted to achieve success" (Dictionary of IDF Terms, 1998).

3 Andrew Roberts, *The Storm of War* (Or Yehuda: Dvir, 2011), pp. 95-109.

4 Aharon Haliva, "More of the Same," *The Dado Center Journal for Operational Art* 9 (December 2016): 17.
5 Amiram Ezov, *Crossing* (Or Yehuda: Dvir, 2011), p. 276.
6 Eitan Shamir, *Mission Command* (Ben-Shemen: Modan and Ma'arachot Publishing, 2014), pp. 157-59.
7 Moshe Tamir, "Dilemmas of Warfare in Densely Populated Civilian Areas," *Military and Strategic Affairs* 4, no 2 (2012): 3-10.
8 Gabi Siboni, "The Military Battle against Terrorism: Direct Contact vs. Standoff Warfare," *Strategic Assessment* 9, no. 1 (2006): 42-47.
9 The most faithful illustration of this matter is the erosion in the readiness of reserves units whose training became significantly more superficial while the condition of their equipment in storage units was deplorable. These units, which formed the heart of the IDF strike force and were intended to defeat the enemy, were given a minor role in both regular operations and war plans.
10 Isaac Ben-Israel, *Israel's Security Concept* (Ben-Shemen: Modan, 2013), pp. 27-34.
11 On this subject, see a review of the security challenges facing Israel written and presented to the government by David Ben Gurion in 1953. This review was published many years later for the public as an article: David Ben Gurion, "Army and State," *Maarachot* No. 279-80, June 1981, pp. 2-11.
12 David Ben Gurion, *Uniqueness and Destiny*, 3rd ed., edited by Gershon Rivlin (Tel Aviv: Ministry of Defense, 1980), pp. 166-67.
13 Gershon Hacohen, *What's National about National Security?* (Ben-Shemen: Modan, 2014), p. 90.
14 The erosion approach is based on the idea of overcoming the enemy by eroding its capabilities. This approach puts the emphasis on physical aspects of military power and assumes that the cumulative effect of the lengthy attack on the enemy will, at a certain point, break it.
15 John Kegan, *The Mask of Command* (Tel Aviv: Dvir, 1993), pp. 11-20.
16 *IDF Strategy*, Office of the Chief of Staff, August 13, 2015.
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18 Amos Harel and Avi Issacharoff, *Spider's Web* (Tel Aviv: Yediot Ahronot, 2008), pp. 76-85.
19 Amos Harel and Avi Issacharoff, *The Seventh War* (Tel Aviv: Yediot Ahronot, 2004), pp. 235-69.
20 Ofer Shelah and Raviv Drucker, *Boomerang* (Jerusalem: Keter, 2005), p. 348.

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