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Contents

Incendiary balloons launched toward Israel from Bureji, in the Gaza Strip. Photo: MinoZig (CC BY-SA 4.0)

By Sling and by Stone: A Strategy of Technological Reduction

Eviatar Matania and Erez Seri-Levy

In recent decades, scholars have commonly thought of military superiority as contingent on advanced military technology. So did national security establishments, which dedicated an increasing share of military buildup efforts to the development and acquisition of advanced systems. As such, what options are available to the side that suffers from inherent technological inferiority? This article introduces, discusses, and demonstrates a strategy of technological reduction for military force buildup strategy, which calls for the deliberate development of weapons that are simple, compared to the prevailing technology. This strategy has been adopted in several cases in recent years, and seems most popular among those suffering from technological inferiority compared to their rivals. Armed non-state actors and militaries opt to abandon the hopeless technological race and turn to cunning force buildup; in the same way a force in a state of operational inferiority seeks cunning doctrines, such as guerrilla warfare, for contending with a much stronger rival.

Keywords: technological reduction, technological superiority, military superiority, force buildup, force buildup strategy, asymmetric conflict, technological R&D, incendiary kites, armed drones, midget submarines

Introduction

Three fundamental components underlie the measurement of military power: quantity, meaning the number of soldiers and weapons at the disposal of the military; quality, that is, the professional level of the soldiers and the technological level of the weapons; and the operational component, which is also known as "conversion capability,"[1] meaning the ability to plan and carry out a military action with the help of complementary components such as command and control (C&C), logistics, intelligence, and information and communications technology (ICT). Military power can be measured on a certain dimension of warfare (land, sea, air, space, or cyber) or in absolute terms, regarding superiority in all dimensions of warfare, i.e., full-spectrum superiority (JCoS, 2020, p. 90).

Throughout modern military history, military technology has been considered as a foundational element of the qualitative component in military power. Azar Gat states that since the industrial revolution, the side that succeeds in acquiring and implementing technologies that are a generation ahead of those of its adversaries has acquired a substantial advantage on the battlefield, which leads to victory (Gat, 2012).

The approach that technology is capable of leading to military victory peaked in the early 1990s, with the emergence of the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) concept, whereby precision strike capability combined with sophisticated information technology, alongside doctrinal and organizational adjustments, enables the defeat of adversaries efficiently, quickly, and at a lower cost in blood and treasure (see for example FitzSimonds & Van Tol, 1994). This is the prevailing approach in the United States and other Western militaries, including Israel.

As a rule, American military superiority relies on advanced technological solutions to diverse threats, whether tactical or strategic (Posen, 2003; Paarlberg, 2004), and is grounded in a culture with a tendency toward technological optimism. Technological dominance is so deeply rooted that some hold that the balance between the qualitative component and the quantitative component in the United States armed forces has been upset. The excessive emphasis on technological quality has led to a drop in the number of combat soldiers, in a way that greatly limits American military options (Lake, 2012).

The United States is not alone. In Israel, for example, advanced military technologies and in-house weapons research and development are seen as key elements in the qualitative component of its military power. Since the IDF was founded, the entire security establishment aimed to enhance quality as a source of strength for the fledgling army instead of quantity, which was lacking. At the outset, heavy emphasis was put on achieving a technological edge (Ben-Israel, 2013, pp. 51-58). The emphasis on technological superiority as the way to achieve an advantage over adversaries intensified over the years (Finkel & Friedman, 2016) and became a fundamental pillar of Israel's national security strategy. Technological superiority enables it to deter and defeat enemies, thanks to advanced weapon systems combined with skilled and well-trained personnel (Meridor & Eldadi, 2018; Amidror, 2020, p. 20).

Some are less convinced of the close ties between elite military technology and true military superiority on the battlefield, and doubt the degree of influence of a technological edge on winning wars (Raudzens, 1990; Thompson 1999). However, on a conceptual level they do not deny the ability to achieve victory through technological superiority, but rather oppose the deterministic approach whereby advanced weapons win wars.

An outcome of viewing technological progress as a key for military power is, therefore, that militaries aspire to equip themselves with advanced weapons as much as possible, and first and foremost weapons whose quality exceeds that of its adversaries. In turn, their rivals aspire to equip themselves with higher quality weapons, and thus in effect a technological arms race is launched.

But what if one of the parties is in a state of inherent technological and resource inferiority, and cannot sustain a technological arms race? What will it do if, for economic or other reasons, it has no prospect of overcoming the absolute technological superiority of the other side?

The fast pace at which technology develops, and the proliferation of asymmetric conflicts in recent decades, has put more and more countries and other fighting organizations in such a situation. The Iraqis against the United States, the Serbians against NATO air forces, the Georgians and Ukrainians against Russia, and Hamas and Hezbollah against Israel are all examples of inherent asymmetry, not only in the military balance of power but also, and perhaps especially, in the technological balance of power.

The specific rivalry, of course, defines the relative state of inherent asymmetry. Even a strong national military can be in a state of inherent asymmetry against a superpower. Israel is an example of a country with inherent technological superiority throughout its close surroundings, but not over Russia, for example, whose air force is deployed in the region. In contrast, the United States as the dominant world power today strives for undisputed military technological superiority in every field and on every issue vis-à-vis any adversary.

Thus, against a force with clear technological superiority, the side suffering from inferiority has no possibility of competing in the technological arms race. Its qualitative component of power is fixed in a state of inherent inferiority. Must it surrender in advance in every clash? Is there no response to technological superiority?

Despite the prevailing consensus today that technological superiority is essential to the achievement of military superiority, the side in a state of technological inferiority has significant strategies for response. The most prominent among them, which are materially distinct from one another, are quantitative compensation as a response to the qualitative gap, or a strategic decision to develop and acquire nuclear weapons, which offsets the advantage of conventional military superiority.

The first possibility is also the most natural, as military might is defined first and foremost by the quantitative component, even if during the past few decades emphasis has actually been placed on the qualitative component. This path is effective as long as the qualitative gap is not too wide, meaning there is no absolute gap between an entirely new technology and its predecessor, but rather a gap between different generations of the same technology. For example, the transition from one generation of tanks to a newer generation, reflected by 120 mm guns replacing 105 mm guns or upgrading command and control systems, creates a technological advantage on the battlefield, but one that can still be overcome with the help of reinforcing forces, or alternatively, by adapting a different method of warfare. In contrast, as the United States proved in the 1991 Gulf War, connectivity between different forces, which enables fast intelligence sharing and targeting, creates a technological advantage that enables local superiority (Biddle, 1996; Mahnken & Watts, 1997) that cannot be overcome merely by an increase in the quantitative component.

At work is intended technological regression and the use of means that make it difficult for the adversary to utilize its technological advantage. We call this approach to force buildup "a strategy of technological reduction."

The second possibility, which is substantially different and more politically challenging, is to acquire nuclear weapons in order to enable the creation of strategic deterrence against an existential threat, even under a state of technological and numerical inferiority. Such a possibility is only relevant for countries, not for non-state actors, and is pursued by North Korea, for example, which is in a state of absolute conventional technological inferiority compared to the United States. However, this possibility is highly difficult to implement, as other examples in the world demonstrate.[2]

But alongside these two prominent possibilities, we identify a third strategy that can be used to offset the advantage of technological superiority. Recent years have shown first signs of this strategy in several cases. It involves abandoning a futile attempt to chase the adversary in a technological arms race, and instead turning wisely to weapons that are technologically very simple; in other words, intended technological regression and the use of means that make it difficult for the adversary to utilize its technological advantage. We call this approach to force buildup "a strategy of technological reduction."

The paper opens with a definition of the concept, followed by a theoretical discussion to analyze this strategy vis-à-vis its operational analog, meaning a type of warfare used by forces that are inferior in military operative terms, usually guerrilla warfare—an ancient type of warfare that has been discussed extensively. This analysis of the similarities and differences between the parallel approaches helps characterize and shed light on the strategy of technological reduction. The paper sketches the possible space along two axes, organizational and technological, where technological reduction can be applied. It then presents three case studies of the use of technological reduction in the space described—a basic case study of Hamas's use of incendiary kites, and two advanced case studies: first, the use of midget submarines by the Iranian navy, and second, the use of armed drones. The case studies are positioned along the said axes. Finally, the paper analyzes the advantages and limitations of the technological reduction phenomenon, and explains whom it might suit and when. We illustrate that a strategy of technological reduction is in essence suitable for a side in a fundamental defensive state[3] that tries to prevent victory from the technologically superior adversary, and it is not a strategy that leads to decisive victory.

This conceptual paper attempts to characterize and theorize a phenomenon that has been evident in recent years and grown increasingly common and relevant in a world in which technology is a central element of countries' national security, and in their military capabilities in particular. The increasing gap between those that are highly technologically advanced and those that are not naturally leads to the development of a new type of force buildup response against the emerging polarity. This will be of special interest to researchers and practitioners who deal with non-state actors, as well as those who research the military strategy of countries standing against forces that are technologically inferior to them, such as the United States, or in the Middle East—Israel.

Technological Reduction: Definition and Theoretical Outline

Definition

"So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, and smote the Philistine and slew him; there was no sword in the hand of David" (I Samuel 17:50). David's victory over Goliath serves to this day as an allegory for the small and weak overcoming the big and (ostensibly) strong. Goliath was equipped from head to toe with the best military technology of the time, while David, inexperienced in such armor, preferred not to try the shields and swords with which he was outfitted by King Saul. In other words: David didn't enter a hopeless "arms race" with Goliath, but rather turned to a primitive technological option—sling and stones—and used them effectively and cunningly to kill Goliath even before the Philistine giant began the battle itself.

In the spirit of the story of David and Goliath, we define technological reduction as a force buildup strategy that given inherent technological inferiority, abandons a hopeless technological race with the adversary, and instead intentionally focuses on an inferior, non-advanced, and sometimes even primitive technological solution, whether by developing it or acquiring it. This solution is cheaper, simpler, and most of all cunning, in that it exploits vulnerabilities in the adversary's reliance on its advanced weapons.

Technological reduction is in essence a force buildup strategy of abandoning the technological arms race. In this it departs from the accepted approaches to force buildup, all of which take up the race and aspire for more advanced technology, even if in different ways and using detours. Azriel Lorber (2016, p. 32), for example, analyzes three approaches to developing weapons: "duplication," meaning the identical development of the advanced technology of the adversary (such as Russia and China's efforts to achieve stealth fighter aircraft following the success of the United States); "bypass," such as developing surface-to-surface missiles as an alternative for airpower, in a state of air inferiority; and "direct response," meaning nullifying the adversary's advantage (such as Iron Dome, an active air defense system against rockets). All of these possibilities that Lorber presents assume that the solution to a certain technological inferiority lies within the framework of developing advanced weapons, within the technological arms race. Isaac Ben-Israel suggests that those who have a substantial technological advantage over their adversaries (e.g., Israel) choose a technological force buildup strategy that aims at achieving superiority in a particular technological dimension in which it has a relative advantage (Ben-Israel, 1997).

Technological reduction is an essentially different concept: no longer participating in the technological arms race, whether by duplicating, bypassing, or pursuing a direct response, or by looking for the technological dimension in which an advantage can be created. On the contrary: technological reduction calls for abandoning the race, for the sake of a completely different strategy that is cunning, simple, and cheap.

Technological reduction does not take the path of competing over technological advancements, but rather advocates leaving the arms race and focusing on technological cunning.[4] In other words: it takes the sting out of the side with inherent technological superiority, which continues to invest enormous resources over long periods of time on technological advancements, while the inferior side moves in a completely different direction. According to the principle guiding reduction, the use of advanced means or the aspiration to acquire them should be abandoned. Instead, simple and cheap means that can be used plentifully at almost no cost compared to the other side's costs are pursued. The achievement of these means may be physically limited but surprising and significant in terms of achieving the broader objective. Furthermore, it is possible to acquire and use other reductive means with relative ease. Technological reduction is not just a compromise. In asymmetric circumstances, it is a conscious choice of simple and cunning arms as a preferred alternative to advanced arms that are expensive, limited in quantity, and require complex development process.

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A weapon that has been developed according to the principle of reduction will require a suitable utilization tactic in order to contend with the more advanced adversary. The sling and stone that David used demonstrate exactly that: a weapon of a previous generation that tactically suited the specific event of the battle against Goliath more than available modern weapons, and together with a suitable tactic—coming close to the target and slinging the stone before the enemy's assault—brought the necessary achievement at that moment: the death of the Philistine giant, to the shock of the entire Philistine army.

Between Technological Reduction and Operational Reduction

A strategy of reduction is better known in the field of force application than in the field of force buildup, even though the term "reduction" is missing from this literature. Operational reduction is the counterpart of technological reduction, and thus insights on the latter can be derived from the analogy. For the sake of simplicity, consider the most common operational reduction—guerrilla warfare. At its core, guerrilla warfare is cunning: it withdraws from conventional warfare against a strong and well-equipped enemy, and develops a primitive but effective form of combat that aims at the vulnerabilities of the enemy military. Guerrilla was adopted by the Hasmoneans during their initial wars against the Seleucid enemy, or by Bar-Kochba and his men against the Romans, as well as by many other groups throughout history. Guerrilla is evident in situations where societies that were conquered, or found themselves needing to defend their land against significantly larger and stronger enemy forces, tried not to surrender. The Viet Cong in Vietnam in the 1960s and 1970s are an especially successful modern example of this, as are the Afghan rebels fighting against the Soviet Union in the 1980s.

The transition from conventional warfare to guerrilla warfare derives from a deep understanding that the gaps in strength do not allow for defeating the adversary in a regular method. Lawrence of Arabia emphasized this in his article on guerrilla warfare, which he wrote after the victory of the Arab tribes under his command over the Ottomans (Lawrence, 2014). Turning to guerrilla warfare constitutes a paradigm shift that emphasizes surprise, agility, camouflage, and attrition—physical and psychological. Guerrilla warfare uses the adversary's strength against it. Size and order are features exploited by guerilla warfare, and guerrilla fighters consciously give up heavy weapons, infrastructure, and organization of forces. Chinese leader Mao Zedong described: "The enemy advances, we retreat; the enemy camps, we harass; the enemy tires, we attack; the enemy retreats, we pursue" (Mao, 1965, p. 124). Mao's approach to achieve victory without defeating the enemy on the battlefield acknowledges the power gap, gives up on frontal combat, emphasizes being on the defensive, and calls for tactics that exploit the adversary's vulnerabilities.

Referring to the Middle East, Brun and Valensi (2010) have pointed out another method of operational reduction, an evolved form of guerrilla warfare, that has been implemented with significant success by Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in the Gaza Strip: warfare of "victory by non-defeat," a doctrine that is closely related to their being "hybrid" organizations. On the one hand, they are not the official rulers of the states or territories in which they are located, and they operate as civilian-military organizations alongside the official authorities. On the other hand, they have also amassed political power and involvement in the public sphere. Hezbollah in Lebanon is involved in the government and constitutes a force that the government of Lebanon cannot resist, and Hamas rules the Gaza Strip, against the will of the Palestinian Authority. The "victory by non-defeat" doctrine is a form of operational reduction. For example, Hezbollah has proven its ability to use armored forces and to maneuver in the civil war in Syria, but against Israel it refrains from this tactic and prefers defensive entrenchment in order to exploit vulnerabilities in Israel's tactics.

While operational reduction takes place on the level of force application, technological reduction is on the level of force buildup, but it is similar in its approach: it implements the principles of guerrilla warfare within the world of force buildup. It constitutes a paradigm shift in the accepted way of thinking about weapons development. Instead of competing in a technological arms race whose outcome is a foregone conclusion, those who adopt reduction give up on superiority and defeat of the enemy. They prefer simplicity, proliferation, survivability, and damage to the adversary's morale.

Furthermore, technological reduction, like guerrilla warfare, achieves an important psychological achievement against an adversary with a technological advantage, because it enables harming it precisely in the dimension in which it feels strong. Just as size, order, and organization become an obstacle in the face of guerrilla warfare, the reliance on advanced weapons and confidence in their ability to bring about victory lead to psychological despair in the face of technological reduction. When simple and cunning weapons bypass advanced defense measures, create resilience over time, or harm targets that are many times more valuable, the results of the damage they inflict are amplified. Against the simplest measures, technological superiority or a tendency to rely on advanced solutions on the battlefield could prove to be useless.

The Space for Application of Technological Reduction

The space for application of technological reduction can be charted in an area that extends over an entire quadrant within two intersecting axes. One dimension positions those who adopt this strategy on the spectrum between an improvised force and an institutionalized military. This is the organizational axis. On another axis we can classify the cunning weapons according to their level of technological innovation, from primitive and ancient weapons, to early industrial technology (motor vehicle, simple submarine, light aircraft), to state-of-the-art weapons based on computerization or miniaturization technology. This is the technological axis.

Technological reduction can be manifested in ways that are very different from one another, depending on where these cases are positioned in the quadrant. However, all of the cases in the space have a prominent common denominator: all describe force buildup in a technologically asymmetric conflict that focuses on weapons with reduced capabilities compared to their advanced alternative.

This article reviews three case studies. The first is Hamas's use of incendiary kites, which is the most basic example of a strategy of technological reduction. In its technological characteristics, it is closer to the sling and stone than to the rocket; with respect to who uses the strategy, it is a hybrid terrorist organization that wields governing power in a small territory; and in terms of the overall achievement of using this strategy over time, it has shaken Israel and caused prolonged psychological damage.

The two other case studies represent progress along the two axes of applied technological reduction. The first case, midget submarines in the service of the Iranian navy, demonstrates that technological reduction is used not only by non-state actors, but in certain circumstances is also adopted by institutionalized militaries. It also evinces a higher level on the technological axis, with the Iranians focusing on industrial technology, albeit decades-old, which is more developed than kites. The second case, the armed drones in Gaza, does not represent a significantly different application on the organizational axis, but on the technological axis it demonstrates a considerable change. Drones, even if they do not have the sophistication of other aerial weapons, illustrate the use of modern developments as part of a strategy of technological reduction.

Figure 1 charts the space for application of technological reduction, its axes of development, and the positions of the three case studies described below. On the organizational axis: starting from a small terrorist organization (Palestinian Islamic Jihad) to a hybrid terrorist organization (Hamas) to an institutionalized military (the Iranian navy). On the technological axis: from an ancient and primitive technology (kites) to an industrial technology (midget submarines) to a modern technology (drones).

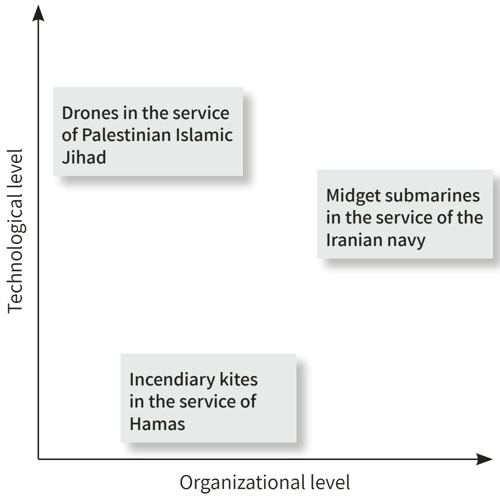

Figure 1. Space for application of technological reduction
Organizational and technological levels

The figure charts distribution of the area for application of technology reduction between two axes (organizational and technological), and the positions of the three case studies in the article. The distribution emphasizes that there is a variety of ways of applying technological reduction.

Case Studies

Incendiary Kites in the Service of Hamas

A clear example of technological reduction are the incendiary kites, which were launched toward Israel beginning in April 2018 and at their peak caused several fires per day in the Gaza envelope region, and prompted concern and fear among residents of the region and anger among the general public at the lack of response to such a primitive measure by the IDF, the strongest military in the region.

The launching of incendiary kites by Palestinians in the Gaza Strip began against the backdrop of the wave of Palestinian protests near the border fence, first held in March 2018 under the banner of the Great March of Return. The first launch took place on April 13, 2018. The early kites were built in an improvised manner by civilians, including youths, from simple, readily available materials that connected Molotov cocktails or hot charcoal to kites in order to set fire to fields near the fence. By June the improvised incendiary kites developed into helium balloons carrying explosive devices. The explosive kites flew to greater distances, such that they could be launched at a distance from the fence, and they also expanded the range of the threat within Israeli territory. Because they carried explosives, they constituted a danger to residents who encountered them and not only to agricultural produce (IHCC, 2018a; Zych, 2019).

The success of the popular arson terrorism led Hamas to sponsor the launches and even to institutionalize them. First, Hamas committed to protect those launching kites and balloons, and later it took an active part in producing the kites, arming them, transporting them to the launch point, and timing the launches. Furthermore, a unit specializing in launching incendiary kites and explosive balloons was established. In the cognitive sphere, Hamas's media outlets waged a campaign to leverage the achievement of the launches and emphasized the organization's auspices (IHCC, 2018b).

In the summer months of 2018, the number of launches and resulting fires increased, with an average of 12 fires per day. According to the Israel Nature and Parks Authority, by December 2018 over 32,000 dunams (about 8,000 acres) of groves and agricultural produce had been set on fire. According to one of the estimates, the economic damage in the summer of 2018 was about $3 million (Zych, 2019, pp. 75-76).

Aside from the physical and economic damage, it seems that the effectiveness of the incendiary kite attacks was measured mainly in the cognitive sphere. As in any terrorist attack, the arson terrorism created fear among the population of the Gaza envelope region, especially given the lack of an operational response by the IDF to this primitive weapon. The fear and helplessness led to popular protest, which peaked with a march from the Gaza perimeter to the Knesset in Jerusalem. Subsequently as well, the local public continued to experience terror and despair, similar to the feelings that resulted from the launching of rockets over the years (Tzuri, 2018, 2019; Zych, 2019, p. 76).

The incendiary kites are a weapon with an indirect trajectory and are inferior to the rockets, which were developed and produced by Hamas over the course of years. The kites and balloons are the primitive response to the Israeli Iron Dome system, which made the routine rocket fire ineffective and almost irrelevant, aside from the tension that it continues to arouse. Compared to rockets, incendiary kites have significant distance and precision limitations. At the same time, kites have considerable advantages over rockets: first in the Iron Dome's inability to intercept them, which left Israel without effective active defense against the arson terrorism. In addition, the cost of a kite is more than a hundred times lower than the cost of producing a rocket, and its preparation is simple and quick. Another important difference between rockets and incendiary kites is the way Israel responds to the attack. Rocket fire is seen as a significant military action, which is met with an Israel military response as part of the balance of mutual deterrence between the sides. In contrast, Israel's legitimacy to respond with force to the launching of incendiary kites is considerably lower, as is its legitimacy to strike those launching them.

Hence, the use of a more primitive measure actually succeeded in fulfilling the military objective. The reduction enabled terrorizing and harming the Israeli home front, while fostering a certain sense of helplessness on the Israeli side regarding response possibilities. In this way the strategic purpose of gaining attention for the conflict in the south and the need to reach political agreements was achieved, all at very low costs to the Gazan side.

Midget Submarines in the Service of the Iranian Navy

Iran's use of midget submarines represents a higher level on the technological axis, and in addition, shows an application of a technological strategy at the other end of the organizational axis. Several series of submarines operate in the ranks of the Iranian navy (Singh, 2011): three Kilo-class submarines—large Russian-made submarines that were built in the 1990s; two Fateh-class submarines—domestically produced medium submarines; and 27 midget submarines—four Yugo-class submarines acquired from North Korea and 23 Ghadir-class submarines, an Iranian development of the North Korean Yugo series from the 1960s. Most of the Iranian acquisition and development in this field lies in midget and medium submarines that operate mainly in the continental shelf off the coast of Iran, in the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz. In other words, they can be called littoral submarines (HSDL, 2009; NTI, 2019).

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The Ghadir-class midget submarine is armed with two torpedoes. Its tiny size provides stealth and high maneuverability, which enable it to operate within ports, but it is big enough to carry frogmen or to lay naval mines. Alongside its advantages, the midget submarine is very limited in the quantity of weapons that it can carry, and in the possible duration of its mission and the depth of its operation (Reich, 2009). Accordingly, this submarine is used mainly to defend the coast against invasion, but in the Iranian case it is also part of the range of measures for developing the ability to block the Persian Gulf easily and with a very low footprint, as well as to ambush ships at ports in the Gulf.

The three Kilo-class submarines, which Iran acquired in the 1990s and are also used by the Russian and Indian navies, weigh about ten times as much and can carry more weapons. They can undertake prolonged defensive and offensive actions far away from the coast of

Iran, and carry advanced systems. However, they have difficulty operating effectively in the shallow water of the Strait of Hormuz. In addition, their maintenance is expensive and complex, and generally necessitates assistance from the Russian producer (Singh, 2011).

Thus from a purely technological perspective, Iran possessed advanced submarines before it started to acquire Ghadir-class submarines, which are based on an old platform and whose capabilities are limited. Still, Iran chose to focus its force buildup efforts on Ghadir submarines, which are seemingly from an earlier technological generation (Roblin, 2019). The prevailing assessment is that Iran chose to do so as a result of an asymmetric doctrine that it developed.

Iran, a country that is preparing for conflict with a great power, is working under a clear assumption of built-in operational and technological inferiority and has formulated an integrated doctrine of technological reduction with asymmetric warfare.

Iran's threat reference in this context is an American attack or an attack by a coalition of countries that would include the massive presence of naval forces off the coast of Iran, whether for the purpose of landing forces (amphibious warfare), providing fire support (aircraft carriers and missile boats), or imposing a naval blockade that would harm the export of Iranian oil (Arasli, 2007). In other words, the main scenario that the Iranian navy is preparing for is a confrontation with a stronger navy. Iran has neither the resources nor the pretensions of building a navy that is strong enough to be comparable to the strength of the attacking navy, especially if it is a great power's navy. This means that unequal forces, both operatively and technologically, constitute the Iranian premise when formulating an operational doctrine (Haghshenass, 2008).

Therefore, in order to repel a naval attack, Iran must be cunning. This will be manifested in an asymmetric defense system, that is, one that does not aim to fight against the adversary using the same methods that the adversary uses, rather, in our terms, through a force buildup strategy of technological reduction, accompanied by operational reduction in the use of force. The Iranian naval defense system aspires to be covert, decentralized, and not dependent on central operation, with the ability to cause significant damage to the adversary, even if not to defeat it, in a way that harms its morale and the drive to continue the attack. In light of this operational doctrine, Iran has focused its naval buildup on acquiring many midget submarines, even if they have limited capabilities, along with developing other operational tools such as fast boats ("mosquito fleet") and naval mines (Arasli, 2007; Singh, 2011), and with them, a suitable strategy.

The large Kilo-class submarines are capable of sinking large warships. However, due to their small number, it is likely that at an early stage of the war the opposing navy would succeed in disabling them. In contrast, the adversary would have much more difficulty locating the dozens of midget submarines. Thus they could defend Iran's coast over time and take a high cumulative toll on the attacking navy.

In conclusion, Iran, a country that is preparing for conflict with a great power, is working under a clear assumption of built-in operational and technological inferiority and has formulated an integrated doctrine of technological reduction with asymmetric warfare. This is in order to deny the great power significant achievements in the field over time until the attrition of the enemy's forces, in the hope that the repeated attacks would harm morale and influence decision makers on the other side to retreat from their initial objectives, or at least to limit them considerably.

Armed Drones in the Service of Palestinian Islamic Jihad

In recent years there has been extraordinary acceleration in the development of inexpensive advanced drones with a wide variety of functions, some of which can be used for diverse military needs, from photographing intelligence targets to carrying warheads and homing in on targets.

The first unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) were in effect cruise missiles in the shape of an airplane, which were developed between the two World Wars. They were similar to an airplane in their horizontal flight path, but were very different in that they served as a bomb and not as a guided platform for carrying a load (weapon, camera, or person) (Pearson, 1969). UAVs resurfaced in the 1970s in operational use by the United States in Vietnam (Hall, 2014), and since then have gained great momentum in their military uses.

There are two primary areas of use: the first involves advanced UAVs for intelligence gathering and attack missions, which are capable of staying above remote hostile territory for prolonged periods; the second refers to tactical collection UAVs for accompanying maneuvering forces. Their small dimensions allow them to be carried by the fighting force, but naturally their capabilities decline accordingly. Both advanced UAVs and tactical UAVs are generally produced by military industries, and their development takes place in accordance with the stringent requirements of militaries. Consequently, their cost can be very high, from tens of thousands to tens of millions of dollars; their development can take many years; and their distribution remains limited due to foreign and defense considerations.

The development of drones by civilian industry has opened the way for new operational possibilities, both for armies and for armed organizations. Drones in effect constitute a third family of modern UAVs, whose development accelerated in the 21st century. Unlike military UAVs, the main producers of drones are private companies. Despite their civilian nature, a considerable potential military threat is inherent in drones (Lifshitz & Meents, 2020). Aside from the threat to the airspace of airports, a drone can be converted into an explosive drone relatively easily (Yishai, 2020).

For example, two incidents on the Gaza-Israel border involved the use of a civilian-produced drone to drop munitions on IDF forces. In May 2019, Hamas used a drone produced by DJI to drop an anti-tank warhead at an Israeli tank. That same month, a Palestinian Islamic Jihad drone also dropped an explosive device toward an IDF tank (Zeitun, 2020).

Technologically, a drone from the model that Hamas used, the Matrice 600 produced by DJI, can carry a load of up to six kilograms, and its maximum speed under optimal conditions is about 65 km/h. Its operational duration ranges from 15 to 40 minutes, depending on the load and other variables, and its performance can be highly affected by the weather (DJI, n.d.). Compared to this state-of-the-art drone, a military UAV with attack capabilities has much better figures. For example, the model MQ-1B Predator American drone, which was launched in the 1990s, can carry a 200 kilogram designated load and reach a range of 1,200 kilometers. Its maximum speed surpasses 200 km/h and it has the ability to drop laser-guided precision munitions. Needless to say, the UAV can be controlled out of sight, and its communication is secured (USAF, 2015).

The comparison between a military UAV and a drone indicates enormous gaps in their capabilities, to the point where one might wonder if they should be compared at all. Nonetheless, they follow each other and evince a series of technological developments, as they address a similar operational need. This statement should of course be qualified, but even if we look only at the following basic operational need, we will realize that this is the same family of platforms: an unmanned, remotely controlled aerial means for precision kinetic attack (dropping munitions or "suicide"-type bombs). This operational objective, general as it may be, can be implemented by an armed drone or by a UAV with attack capability. While modern UAVs were developed in the 20th century by military industries, are used by militaries, and continue to evolve in this direction, drones were developed in the 21st century by civilian industries and armed for the purpose of warfare by militaries as well as armed organizations.

However, can we relate to an armed drone as an example of technological reduction? The development of such a drone uses state-of-the-art technologies, based on making advanced communication, navigation, and computer components cheaper and smaller, causing a dual effect: creating significant differentiation between those that are technologically strong and others (polarization), as well as distributing advanced components and technologies to sub-state organizations (democratization) (Gat, 2012). This is precisely the case with drones.

However, we contend that from the perspective of developing military weapons, we can also relate to these technologies as technological reduction, compared to the quality and capabilities of unmanned aerial vehicles developed by defense industries. Someone who comes to the battlefield with a tank does not see an electric scooter, sophisticated and modern as it may be, as part of an arms race against it in the field of armored vehicles. And the party who brings to the battlefield a cutting edge knowledge of unmanned aerial vehicles that can reach considerable distances, communicate with encryption, carry advanced munitions, avoid tracking, and carry out missions autonomously, does not see a cheap and simple civilian-produced drone as part of the arms race against it.

The development of armed drones as a technological reduction of UAVs enables addressing the basic operational objective presented while maintaining secrecy, at a much lower cost, with a broad distribution and without the need for a military industry.

Discussion and Analysis

The three case studies describe different applications of technological reduction: the Palestinians make use of civilian technology—in the case of the kites, it is ancient and is used for attack, and in the case of the drones it is contemporary, and is used for both attack and defense. In contrast, the Iranians rely on decades-old industrial military technology and use it for defense. In all of these cases, the technological reduction is adopted in a fundamental defensive state. These are not effective means for offense and decisive victory. However, on the tactical level (as opposed to the operational and strategic levels), it is clearly possible to employ technological reduction for both attack and defense, depending on the kind of weapon or the way it is used. Hence, technological reduction may constitute a central force buildup strategy that provides means for a wide variety of tactics.

Both the Palestinians and the Iranians possess more advanced weapons in the same dimension of warfare than their reductive alternative. However, neither the Palestinian rockets, nor the UAVs in the Gaza Strip (Rossiter, 2018), nor the Kilo-class submarines can deliver the desired result, due to their technological deficit. Reductive weapons, in contrast, are simple weapons that can evade the advanced defensive measures of the adversary, which were not designed for this kind of threat. This is especially true of the incendiary kites vis-à-vis the Iron Dome active air defense system, true of the drones that are difficult to intercept using the standard air defense, and also true to a certain extent of the covert midget submarines.

The relatively few resources that reductive weapons demand compared to their advanced counterparts enable proliferation. More kites enable sowing chaos in large areas of the Gaza envelope. More midget submarines provide the naval defense line with survivability and resilience to stand up to a prolonged attack on the coast of Iran. More armed drones constitute a broad, material threat to Israeli forces, and not just to a local threat. Proliferation is therefore not just a by-product, but also a substantial objective in choosing to develop reductive weapons.

Since we are essentially discussing arms, it is necessary to discuss the expected potential damage of reductive developments compared to standard weapons. As a rule, it seems that the damage expectancy of reductive weapons is lower. For example, incendiary kites threaten the lives of Israeli civilians less than rockets with an exploding warhead or shrapnel. While the midget submarines can sink a ship of any size, they only carry a tiny amount of torpedoes, and this greatly limits their hit probability and the number of ships that they can attack in a single journey. With regard to the armed drones: while their precision capability is high, their limited payload capacity greatly limits their ability to cause damage.

Nevertheless, reductive weapons allow significant damage, and their absence would have led to much less cumulative damage in a certain dimension of warfare. While incendiary kites have lower damage capability than rockets, the psychological damage that they succeed in causing, despite the superiority of Israeli active defense, is invaluable for the Palestinian organizations. In the naval warfare dimension, Iran can maintain an ongoing threat and extract a painful toll over time from any strong attacker that comes close to its coast, due to the large number and stealth of the midget submarines. While a drone can only carry a small explosive charge, it is capable of striking precisely, for example, an Israeli tank. This kind of threat has so far been posed mainly by advanced and expensive anti-tank missiles, which the organizations were forced to smuggle into the Gaza Strip at great effort and risk. On the operational and psychological level, IDF soldiers now also face a threat from above, and not just a ground threat.

To understand the effectiveness of technological reduction, it is highly necessary to consider the life expectancy of its cunning. In other words, how much time does it take for the adversary to develop a response to the reductive weapon, from the moment it is discovered? It will be considered a response when the marginal utility achieved thanks to the reductive weapon is neutralized or significantly reduced. The response can be technological, doctrinal, or deterrent. At least in terms of the technological response, the assumption is that the adversary has a qualitative technological advantage, so presumably it could succeed in overcoming the reductive development at a certain stage. In addition, the relative simplicity of the reductive weapons is an inherent weakness, as they are less resistant to various responses.

Reductive weapons allow significant damage, and their absence would have led to much less cumulative damage in a certain dimension of warfare.

As for incendiary kites, Israel has not found a doctrinal solution that prevents the arson terrorism, but it has succeeded at times in deterring the Palestinian organizations from using this means. Technologically, as early as the summer of 2018, only a few months after the arson terrorism began, Israel introduced the ability to intercept incendiary kites using drones. Thus, in effect, a simple response was given to a primitive threat. It is for good reason that the intercepting drones were called “shekel and a half” (Ziegler, 2018). Alongside the simple response, Israel also demonstrated advanced technological answers to the arson terrorism—the same technology that it uses to fight the drone threat. As early as 2018, the Sky Spotter optical positioning system developed by Rafael Advanced Defense Systems was set up, which is capable of locating incendiary balloons and drones and tracking their flight (Dvori, 2018). In addition, the Israel Police operates the laser defense system Lahav-Or for intercepting incendiary balloons, also an Israeli development (Yagna, 2020). In comparison, developing a response to the threat of rockets and missiles was more challenging. For example, the development and deployment of the David’s Sling system for coping with medium and long-range rockets and missiles lasted about a decade (State Comptroller, 2009; Levav, 2017).

As for the Iranian midget submarines, figures have not been published on their depth range, but we can assume that it is limited. If this is the case, this limitation places them in danger, despite their miniature size, which provides them with stealth. And as for the armed drones, aside from the Sky Spotter system and the Lahav-Or system that threaten them, they are exposed to cyberattack or electronic warfare. For example, DJI is capable of preventing drones produced by it from operating in designated regions of conflict (Corfield, 2017). Hence, in cases in which the reductive weapon is based on civilian technology, it is more exposed to a response developed by civilian industry.

Ignoring technological reduction as a real strategy could exact considerable tolls of strong militaries, which ought to understand this rationale when deciding to develop and acquire more advanced and expensive generations of military technologies.

Conclusion

The extensive preoccupation with technological quality as a central component of military superiority can make us forget that many militaries and non-state actors in the world are unable to seek superiority through elite technology, because of their inherent technological inferiority compared to their adversaries. This inferiority can be a result of a lack of resources, skilled technological personnel, or long-term technological industrial depth, but sometimes simply due to the fact that the adversary is significantly stronger.

The technologically inferior side can give up in advance, or in contrast, it can adopt one of the following strategies: quantity as a response to quality; acquisition of nuclear weapons as a regime "protector;" or—what seems to be an increasingly common strategy among those that cannot achieve technological superiority—a strategy of technological reduction. In the realm of force buildup, this strategy is the equivalent of guerrilla warfare and the attempt to achieve victory through non-defeat.

Technological reduction is a deliberate choice to abandon the arms race in favor of primitive technological means that are simple to use, cheap, and easily acquired, and which strike the vulnerabilities of adversaries that rely on technological superiority. These means do not enable defeating the enemy on the battlefield, yet although they are not decisive capabilities, a series of marginal achievements can also have great impact. Technological reduction ironically enables transitioning from defeat to a state of tactical advantage, albeit temporary. It enables achieving strategic objectives at an affordable price and preventing the other side, the side with technological superiority, from reaching a decisive victory with ease.

Furthermore, the more asymmetric conflicts there are and the more the use of civilian technology for military purposes increases, the more common the strategy of technological reduction in force buildup is expected to become. Therefore, ignoring technological reduction as a real strategy could exact considerable tolls of strong militaries. They ought to understand this rationale when deciding to develop and acquire more advanced and expensive generations of military technologies, and to specify clearly their strategic objective.

On the other hand, the limitations of technological reduction must also be understood. It is not an ultimate solution against elite technology. Its use is limited to the side that is mainly on the defensive, and not for defeating the other side. It has a short shelf life, and over time it cannot compensate for substantial military and technological inferiority, except at specific times and in specific scenarios, and mainly against a strong side that, due to various limitations and constraints, not necessarily operational, does not operate with all of its force to defeat the weaker side.

Looking toward other dimensions of warfare, it will be interesting to look for cases of technological reduction in the cyber dimension. Will militaries adopt civilian developments and utilize relatively simple malware for causing significant damage to cyber powers? Will more basic malware be developed, to the point that it will not be possible or worthwhile to develop a response to them? Could the cyber domain in general, in which elite technology is such a dominant component, enable the application of technological reduction? Focused research on these and other questions is valuable, in light of the conclusions of this article.

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Notes

1 From "conversion capability" (Tellis et al., 2000, p. 143), which refers to the ability of a country to convert national resources into military power.

2 For example, over the course of two decades (the 1970s and 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s) Iraq attempted to achieve nuclear capability, but failed. For over two decades Iran has tried to achieve this capability and paid heavily for this effort, which so far has not succeeded.

3 Being on the defensive is a fundamental state on the operational and strategic level, which is opposite of a fundamental state of being on the offensive. When on the defensive, the military force is given the task of defending its territory from the enemy's attack. During defense it is also possible to use various types of warfare to attack and defend, and thus it is important not to confuse between being on the defensive and defending as a type of warfare.

4 Yaakov Amidror (2007) on the principle of cunning in the IDF's principles of war: "Surprise serves as a basis, but the main thing is identifying the vulnerability and the point of victory, and exerting most of the effort toward it" (p. 6). "The essence [of cunning] is exploiting the surprise to create the ability to strike the enemy at its vulnerable point" (p. 8). Because we deal with inherent technological inferiority that forfeits military decisive victory, we adopt Amidror's emphasis on the connection between cunning and vulnerability (and in the technological sphere, technological cunning that is aimed at a technological vulnerability), and not the emphasis on victory.

IDF exercise in southern Israel. Photo: IDF Spokesperson's Unit

From "Decision" to "Victory": Resolving the Confusion in Israeli Military Terminology

Or Barak

This article traces the relatively late evolution of the Hebrew term *hachra'a* (decision) in its military context in Israeli society and examines the ensuing conceptual confusion. It also points out the many original and borrowed meanings that have been attributed to this term over the years in military contexts and elaborates on the dangers inherent in this trend, especially obfuscation of the meaning of "victory." This conceptual failure is expressed not only in the IDF's language, but also, and more critically, in IDF doctrine. Hence, resolving the confusion created between the term *hachra'a* and the term victory can help not only by restoring the meaning of victory to its rightful place in the military context, but also by clarifying Israel's security concept.

Keywords: decision, victory, IDF strategy, security concept, national security

Introduction

Upon assuming his post as Chief of Staff in 2019, Lt. Gen. Aviv Kochavi sought to reexamine the meaning of the term "victory." To this end a three-day "victory workshop" was convened, led by the head of the Operations Directorate, Maj. Gen. Aharon Haliva, during which the members of the IDF General Staff and senior brigadier generals discussed various approaches to victory, with the aim of incorporating them into multi-year plans (Shoval, 2019).

This is not the first time the term has been examined in the IDF. As early as 2001, a large-scale symposium was held in which the defense and military leadership examined the term victory in relation to the meaning of the term *hachra'a* (commonly translated as decision)[1] from a large variety of military and defense aspects.

There is no consensus regarding the meaning of the terms *hachra'a* and victory. Furthermore, alongside similar but different approaches to the respective terms, over the years contradictory and even opposing perspectives have developed regarding their meaning.

On the one hand, the fact that the term victory (*nitzahon*) was examined in light of the term *hachra'a* seems to indicate that victory is not *hachra'a* and *hachra'a* is not victory, as why would one definition have two different names? On the other hand, the symposium (and dozens of other discussions and studies on the issue) clearly proved that there is no consensus regarding the meaning of the terms *hachra'a* and victory. Furthermore, alongside similar but different approaches to the respective terms, over the years contradictory and even opposing perspectives have developed regarding their meaning.

This article argues that the source of the contradictory and opposing views that have developed in relation to the terms *hachra'a* and victory lies in terminological confusion. This confusion took root gradually in the military and security establishment and then penetrated the Israeli media, generating conceptual confusion not only in security settings but in Israeli society as a whole. Accordingly, the article discusses different sources that led to the terminological confusion between the two terms in an attempt to resolve it. The meanings of the terms are based on their definitions in the *Dictionary of IDF Terms* (1998). The article focuses on the term *hachra'a*, examining how it finds expression in various fields in an attempt to clarify the meaning of the term victory. The article contends that the meaning of the term *hachra'a* as a "military outcome" is unclear and that the damage caused by this confusion primarily affects the meaning of the military outcome contained in the term victory.

The Questionable Term

What is the meaning of *hachra'a*? The first meaningful theoretical discussion on the topic of *hachra'a* in the military context was published in Israel in the 1990s, in Avi Kober's book *Hachra'a* (1995). This book explores the term *hachra'a* through a structured, focused comparative study and through an outline that takes into account both its universal aspect and its particular Israeli aspect. In the *Dictionary of IDF Terms,* Kober's broad and comprehensive definition of the term *hachra'a* was watered down to the following official definition:

> Breaking the enemy's power of resistance to take effective action against us, by creating a situation in which (*in the assessment of the decider*) the conditions exist for achieving the stated mission. The state of *hachra'a* is usually evident from the fact that the enemy has lost its ability to operate against us effectively. (*Dictionary of IDF Terms*, 1998, p. 136)[2]

Presumably an explicit dictionary definition of the term *hachra'a* would offer a precise and exhaustive linguistic description of the term’s meaning, thus preventing different semantic interpretations. The reality was far different. Over the years, the term *hachra’a* has been given a wide variety of interpretations. These interpretations, which were provided first and foremost by the highest military echelons and leading national security researchers, contained meanings that differed completely from one another. Furthermore, stark contradictions were also found between a series of definitions that referred to this term and the official definition formulated in the *Dictionary of IDF Terms*. For example, at a symposium titled “Between Decision and Victory,” Isaac Ben-Israel claimed that *hachra’a* “is entirely, or almost entirely, aimed at breaking the will to fight—and not the ability” (Ben-Israel, 2001, p. 83). In contrast, on the same occasion Shlomo Yanai stated that “*hachra’a* is an abstract concept” (Yanai, 2001, p. 109). Dan Halutz argued that *hachra’a* is a cognitive matter and proposed deleting the notion of “physical *hachra’a*” from the lexicon (Halutz, 2001, p. 100). Shaul Mofaz, in contrast, held that *hachra’a* “is made up of a series of victories in the air, at sea, and on land” (Mofaz, 2001, p. 127). Moshe (Bogie) Ya’alon contended that the correct definition of *hachra’a* is “the achievement or fulfillment of the objectives you set for yourself” (Ya’alon, 2001, p. 75), while Herzl Shafir claimed that *hachra’a* is measured in quantitative, geographical, and psychological parameters (Shafir, 2001, p. 141).

If all these are not sufficient to illustrate the lack of clarity surrounding the term *hachra’a*, Kober himself stated at the symposium:

> My name is connected with the concept of military *hachra’a* because I wrote a book about military *hachra’a*, but as you will see, I am not so committed to military *hachra’a*. Military *hachra’a* played a central role in Israel’s military life, but I will attempt to show that we must rethink the concept using more complex thinking than we had become accustomed to. Along with this concept are two additional concepts that, when combined with the concept of *hachra’a*, help us think about achievements in war: victory and the test of history. (Kober, 2001, p. 13)

In the following years, more interpretations were added to the list of definitions, further deepening the existing terminological confusion surrounding the term *hachra’a* and its relation to the term victory, defined as follows:

> *Victory*: overcoming the enemy and creating a situation in which the victor in a war, campaign, or battle has fully or largely achieved its military objectives, at a cost that can be tolerated. Achieving victory is the constant and overriding aim of every soldier in every situation. (*Dictionary of IDF Terms*, 1998, p. 424)

For example, Yaakov Amidror published an article criticizing the military for beginning to refer to the concept of *hachra’a* as a cognitive concept, thus generating “the belief that there is no military way to cope with terrorism in order to defeat it” (Amidror, 2006, p. 6). Yaakov Zigdon thought that *hachra’a* is an objective concept and victory is a subjective concept, such that “when *hachra’a* is not achieved, each side can claim victory” (Zigdon, 2008, p. 45).

The IDF Strategy document published a few years later distinguishes between tactical *hachra’a* (on the tactical level IDF commanders will strive to achieve *hachra’a* in every mission they are charged with) and strategic *hachra’a* (the IDF strives for *hachra’a* as manifested in the enemy’s lack of ability or lack of desire to operate against us and its inability to defend itself). Nonetheless, the term *hachra’a*, which the document names as one of “the IDF’s four general principles for applying force” (*IDF Strategy*, 2015, p. 14), is at the same time linked to the term “victory” and not differentiated from it.

Israel's security concept was also examined by a committee headed by Dan Meridor, which assumed that in order to achieve victory in all kinds of conflicts and at all levels of intensity, *hachra'a* "alternatives" must be developed (Meridor & Eldadi, 2018, p. 25). A recent book by Amiram Ezov titled *Hachra'a: Who Won the Yom Kippur War*? (2020) likewise grapples with the meaning of the terms *hachra'a* and victory. The fact that Ezov believes that Clausewitz's parameters define victory (p. 341), while according to Amidror (2001, p. 113) these same parameters in fact define *hachra'a*, is one of many examples pointing to the problematic nature of the many original and borrowed meanings attributed to the term *hachra'a* in military contexts.

The Importance of Terminology

A lack of conceptual clarity is a dangerous phenomenon that leads to terminological confusion. Indeed, the importance of concepts and their defined meanings is no less than critical in the eyes of many national security researchers. For example, in his article "The Military Aspects of Limited Operations," Moni Chorev presents a series of lacunae that in his view exist in the concepts of *hachra'a*, deterrence, and victory. He insists on the need for more precise terms to incorporate the concept of security, as "the planning discourse today adheres to concepts, some of which are no longer valid but are used to anchor situation assessments and plan a campaign's operational efforts." Hence, greater precision in the meanings of concepts "is not a semantic change, but rather a substantive issue that dictates the way leaders and chiefs of staff think and manage strategic operations" (Chorev, 2017, pp. 121-122).

Similarly, former Armored Corps brigade commander Yehuda Wegman states that "conceptual confusion among the senior echelons always also leads to practical confusion at the operational levels" (Wegman, 1999, p. 90). This statement is in line with the conclusion of the important terminological discussion in the study by Yossi Baidatz and Dima Adamsky about the development of the Israeli approach to the concept of deterrence. In this study, they state that "the Israeli concept of 'deterrence' that is accepted today—which is very similar to the simple and traditional dictionary definition—not only is insufficient, but can also cause strategic damage" (Baidatz & Adamsky, 2014, p. 7).

Damage of this type indeed made a mark over the years, both in the context of operational military activity and in relation to national security issues. Ben-Israel offers a prominent example, explaining how a misleading definition or distorted terminology can lead to mistaken conceptual thinking, and in turn, to erroneous conduct:

> For years, out of mistaken thinking whose source is beyond me, we divided our wars in two: we said there are "real" wars, like the war against Syria or against Egypt, and there is routine security…It is not so clear why we thought this, but it is clear this is a mistake…I do not know why we thought this way, but I can state the contrary: From the moment we understood this—only three or four years ago—from the moment we understood this, we understood our mistake. (Ben-Israel, 2001, pp. 89-90)

Another example appears in the conclusions of the Agranat Commission, charged with investigating the Yom Kippur War. The commission members pointed out a series of hazy operational expressions and meanings, among them orders to "hold back" and "advance cautiously." In later wars as well, unclear conceptual definitions led to terminological confusion that influenced operational and strategic aspects. One example was the report of the commander of the 91st Division in the Second Lebanon War about control of Bint Jbeil. The report created a mistaken impression from which it could be concluded that the IDF forces had conquered the town (Kober, 2017, p. 220). These examples illustrate Wegman's argument that "underlying the process of creating vague terms is a foundation of commanders who evade responsibility for their subordinates as they are unable to inject any practical content into these terms" (Wegman, 1999, p. 91).

Hence, Dov Tamari's warning—that the frequent and incautious use of the concepts of *hachra'a* and victory "could return to the army and the chief of staff like a boomerang, because civilians, journalists, members of Knesset, commentators, and others are liable to understand and interpret the results of the next campaign in light of the concepts of *hachra'a* and victory as they were traditionally understood from the wars of the past" (Tamari, 2016, p. 148)—not only strengthens the argument that the meanings of the terms are insufficiently clear, but also has actual expressions in reality.

One of the most prominent cases illustrating the confusion of Israeli society regarding the precise definitions and meanings of terms emerged in the public discourse following the Second Lebanon War. Vague interpretations and unclear definitions of the military terms *hachra'a* and victory were a central source of controversy that arose not only in Israeli society and the Israeli media but also in military and political forums. These were also reflected in the Winograd Commission report, which used the concept of victory over 60 times without defining it and without its being clear that everyone involved necessarily interpreted the term in the same way. Ultimately, the terminological confusion was so great that a situation arose in which entire systems had difficulty identifying who was the victor at the end of a round of fighting, whether this "victor" had won or had decided (*hichria*) the battle, and what is the actual difference (if at all) between victory and *hachra'a*.

A similar situation emerged following the September 11, 2001 attacks in the United States, which reawakened theoretical discussions of the concept of victory that sought to sharpen the interpretation and meaning of the term. Among these were the monograph by theoretician Colin Gray (2002) on the possibility of achieving decisive victory and the book by William Martel (2007) that Bartholomees (2010) used as a basis for developing his theory of victory. A recently published book titled *Moral Victories* discusses, inter alia, the changing attributes inherent in the concept of victory and the challenges and problems contained in the concept of victory in the modern era (Hom et al., 2017). Another relevant book is *Extreme Ownership: How U.S. Navy SEALs Lead and Win* by Jocko Willink and Leif Babin, which was published in 2017 and translated into Hebrew under the title *Responsibility and Victory* (Willink & Babin, 2020). This book associated the concept of leadership with that of victory. In addition, *Victory*, by researcher Cian O'Driscoll (2019), examines in depth the success and failure inherent in the term "just war," while referring to the definitions of "morality" and "victory" in the modern era.

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The Conceptual Failure in the Term *Hachra'a*

Before delving into the arena of national security and military boundaries in an attempt to prove the article's claim that the term *hachra'a* in its military context involves a conceptual failure that has taken root over the years, an initial but fundamental distinction must be made between "military *hachra'a*" and other forms of *hachra'a*, such as "halakhic [Jewish law] *hachra'a*," "legal *hachra'a*," and "*hachra'a* in sports." What these three fields of *hachra'a* have in common is the necessary presence of a judicial authority. For example, the rabbinical judge decides in halakhic *hachra'a*, the court judge decides in court, and the referee decides on the sports field. The society in which these judgments take place accepts the authority of all these judges, and their decisions—which rely on systems of rules—are valid and binding within the society. Hence, the act of *hachra'a* depends on the decision of an actual entity in context. This entity is accepted by the society in which it operates, and for its part, the society is obligated to behave according to its decisions.

In this context, it is interesting to note that Kelsay's in-depth study "The Bible and Notions of Victory in War" (2017) relates to the topic of *hachra'a* in the Bible in a similar manner. Kelsay puts forth the thesis of a warrior god who fights for the chosen people. This God is also the commander, takes on the role of judge, and attaches conditions to the promise of victory: obeying the laws leads to victory, while disobeying them leads to defeat. God, according to Kelsay, takes on the role of judge. Only God has the power to decide (*lehachria*) the wars of the Israelites against their enemies. Hence, in the arena of the Bible as well, while military victory is attributed to the Israelites, the more basic underlying assumption is that the *hachra'a* (that is, decision) is in God's hands only.

This understanding raises an important question in relation to military *hachra'a*: What is the actual and authoritative position that ostensibly decides the war on the battlefield? Who is the authority whose decision is accepted by all? Is there a military judge standing in the middle of the military campaign and deciding the war on the battlefield? Has a military (or political) entity been determined as having the authority to declare a military decision?

These questions correspond with the warning by Gabi Ben-Dor regarding the tautological danger inherent in the term *hachra'a* (Ben-Dor, 2001, p. 25). They are also in line with the statement by linguist Ruvik Rosenthal referring to the Hebrew term *hachra'a* as a verbal noun, exemplifying what Rosenthal calls "the curse of the verbal nouns." Rosenthal believes that this grammatical form, which illustrates that social and cultural issues also have a direct impact on the adoption of the term *hachra'a* in Israeli society, is too well-liked in Israeli society, for the simple reason that "verbal nouns enable them [Israeli politicians] to free themselves of personal or ministerial responsibility for every action taken in their field of responsibility. They don't do anything; the deed is done by itself." "In the field of defense," Rosenthal states, the use of verbal nouns has proven to be "an especially effective rhetorical tool" that produces headlines such as "*Hachra'a* imminent at Qatar Conference." This headline, which does not provide the public the information (who decided), seeks to convey the message that "the action has become a completely abstract or indefinite matter, and the person carrying out the action is unknown, [i.e.,] is not important and should be entirely ignored for the purpose of voicing the idea" (Rosenthal, 2001).

Ostensibly, it seems that the *IDF Dictionary* deliberates the very same question, as its definition of the term *hachra'a*—"breaking the enemy's power of resistance to take effective action against us, by creating a situation in which (*in the assessment of the decider*) the conditions exist for achieving the stated mission" (*Dictionary of IDF Terms*, 1998, p. 136)—in effect proves the need for a tangible entity to carry out this decision, yet such an entity is absent from the military arena.

It is interesting to note that Bartholomees (2010) also dedicates a significant portion of his article "A Theory of Victory" to the question of who actually decides who the winner is in the sports and games arena, where there is a tangible entity that decides, and who decides who has won in the arena of battle and war, where there is no such tangible entity that decides.

The fact that there is a distinct difference between all other kinds of *hachra'a* and military *hachra'a* at the very least makes military *hachra'a* an unusual case.

In English the Term *Hachra'a* Does Not Exist

The claim that the concept of *hachra'a* in its military context is at the very least unusual in comparison to all other meanings of the term also corresponds with the position of Yehezkel Dror, who claims he was not able to find a precise definition of the word *hachra'a* in its military sense in the English language or any other corresponding or similar term to the term *hachra'a* in the global strategic literature (Dror, 2016, p. 75).

Israeli security researchers, including the IDF and government bodies, agree that the word *hachra'a* in English is "decision." Nonetheless, this consensus does not suggest that the word "decision" has a military connotation in the English language. Indeed, a dictionary check shows that the adjectival form of this word (decisive) is defined in three ways: having the power or quality of deciding; determined; unquestionable.[3] Hence, the meaning of the word *hachra'a* in English in its various forms (decision, deciding, decisive) is similar to its meaning in Hebrew in its "natural" fields (such as the courtrooms and sports fields described above, where it refers to decision, ruling, determination).

A specific examination of military contexts in English also indicates that the term is absent. Ron Tira's statement that "American documents on doctrine generally do not define and do not even use the term" (Tira, 2010, p. 17) finds expression, in part, in the notion that losing the center of gravity leads to "defeat" and in definitions of the objective of military force in war that use the term "to prevail." Hence, the expression "decisive point" is also not understood as a point of decision, but rather as a deciding point (Tira, 2010, pp. 16-17).

In addition, the phrase "military decision" in the American context refers to the United States Army's Military Decision Making Process (MDMP),[4] which includes seven stages and is applied in military camps in tactical contexts. The Hebrew interpretation, which often attributes the Israeli meaning of the term to the phrase "military decision," corresponds with Moshe Sokolow's determination in his 2013 article titled "*Rahamim* [generally translated as mercy, compassion, or pity] Is Not Mercy." In this article, Sokolow clarifies and emphasizes the great importance of etymological rigor in preventing what he calls the "difficulties and dangers" in the context of exchanging information and ideas when they are translated from Hebrew to English and vice versa.

The fact that there is no mention of the term *hachra'a* (decision/decisive) in *The Oxford Essential Dictionary of the U.S. Military* (2001) bolsters attempts by made by Martel in his book *Victory in War* to replace the term "victory" with a series of alternative terms: "conquest, triumph, vanquish, subdue, subjugate, and overcome" that do not include the term decision (Martel, 2011, p. 22).

In conclusion, the word "decisive" in English can only be an adjective and not a verbal noun. Hence the word is only capable of *describing* (i.e., describing the victory as a "decisive victory"). Consequently, the Hebrew meaning when the adjective "decisive" (*machria*) is turned into a verbal noun (*hachra'a*) does not have a linguistic equivalent in English. This means, then, that the English phrase "decisive victory" is often interpreted in Hebrew as "the determination of victory," a phrase that differs completely from its original meaning.

Hachra'a in Sources Inspiring the IDF

Let us begin with the father of modern warfare theory, the military theoretician Carl von Clausewitz, whose influence on IDF doctrine since its establishment is undisputed (Handel, 2011). The current conclusion of the head of the Center for Military Studies at the Command and Staff College, Sagi Torgan, whereby "it is important to adopt the political and military terminology of Clausewitz" (Torgan, 2016, p.

41), shows that central elements underlying IDF doctrine were based on his teachings. These teachings were originally formulated in German and translated into English, and include a series of specific military terms that are still relevant to the IDF's security concept today. Because the Israeli security concept is based in part on doctrines written in foreign languages, there is no choice but to relate to the translated versions, despite the inherent challenges of translation, whose significance is discussed below.

Consider first the meaning of the term *hachra'a* as expressed in Clausewitz's writings. In his seminal book *Principles of War*, the word *hachra'a* is used beginning with the first principle, which is formulated thus: "First and foremost, the doctrine of war deals with the ways in which you can achieve superiority in forces and physical advantages at the decisive point" (Clausewitz, 1950, p. 21). The word *decisive*, which is an adjective (and not a verbal noun), is not assigned the meaning of a result but merely of a *description* of the result. Clausewitz's perception of the meaning of the word decisive is further clarified in the formulation of the second principle: "In war, you always seek to tilt the chance of *victory* in your favor" (Clausewitz, 1950, p. 22). Presumably had Clausewitz attributed a military meaning to the word "decision," he would have formulated the second principle using the words "the chance of *decision* (and not *victory*) in your favor."

This assumption is further substantiated in the next (third) principle, in which Clausewitz attributes the following meaning to the term decisive: "It is the nature of war to advise the most decisive, that is, the most daring" (Clausewitz, 1950, p. 23). This principle, in which he compares the term decisive with the term daring, explicitly demonstrates the *theoretical* meaning he attributes to the term.

In the twelfth principle, Clausewitz returns to and summarizes the two immediately preceding principles (10-11), that together provide us with "a maxim that should take first place among all causes of victory in the modern art of war." His recommendation to "pursue one great decisive aim with force and determination" (Clausewitz, 1950, p. 31) shows again that the term decision is used as an adjective (decisive) whose function is *to describe* the "aim" (which is victory). This is different from the way the term is used in Hebrew—as a verbal noun (*hachra'a)* that acts as if it were the aim itself.

An examination of the wording of Clausewitz's other principles reinforces the argument that he relates to the term decision (*hachra'a)* and its various declensions as adjectives (and not as verbal nouns) and interprets its meaning in contexts that describe "*the extent* of a military result" and not "the military result itself."

Clausewitz goes on to describe advantages as decisive advantages and points as decisive points, and even explicitly notes: "The plan of battle must be directed toward this end [which is *victory*—not decision]. For it is easy to change an *indecisive victory* into a *decisive* one through energetic pursuit of the enemy" (Clausewitz, 1950, p. 36). In other words, here too the word decisive serves to *describe* the victory and does not function in the sense of "the victory itself."

Likewise, in examining the principles of war in their strategic sense, Clausewitz remains faithful to his use of the term decisive in its original context, as a description of victory. For example, in principle 11 he speaks about the term "decisive victory" and states that sometimes a victory is "great" (meaning "decisive") and sometimes a victory is not great (meaning "not decisive"). Later he even explicitly notes: "If you remember, Most Gracious Master, the few defensive battles that history notes as campaigns that ended in *victory* [as opposed to 'those that ended in decision' or 'that were decided'], you will find that the conditions in which they were conducted were in the spirit of these principles" (Clausewitz, 1950, p. 32).

In conclusion, examining the term *hachra'a* in Clausewitz's writings explicitly and consistently demonstrates that he makes use of this term in three contexts: in the context of *describing* a victory or a defeat; in the context of *[making a] decision*; and in the context of a *great and significant occurrence*. Emerging from his writings is the understanding that while victory can be decisive, decision *(hachra'a)* in itself is not a military situation.

Unlike Clausewitz, David Ben-Gurion was not a military theoretician. However, there is no dispute that the seminal writings of the individual who founded the IDF are relevant to this day in understanding Israel's security concept—not only on the level of research and knowledge development but also for drafting current security policy.

An in-depth reading of Ben-Gurion's teachings sketches a clear and unequivocal picture of his doctrine, in which the term *hachra'a* means decision and/or something that is important (i.e., decisive). The IDF collected and published hundreds of pages in a book titled *Uniqueness and Purpose* that includes "all of the speeches of the State of Israel's first Defense Minister to the IDF, about the IDF, and about Israel's defense."[5] In this book, the word *hachra'a* does not describe an outcome of war. Furthermore, in referring to the results the IDF achieved in battles, struggles, wars, and relations with its enemies, Ben-Gurion is careful to use the word *victory*—which also substantiates the thesis of this article.

For example, in discussions about the wording of the order establishing the Israel Defense Forces, Ben-Gurion stated that everything serves "one objective—*victory*" (Ben-Gurion, 1971, p. 36). Regarding "the language of war," Ben-Gurion said: "We should all …focus the essence of our lives, all our senses, and every fiber of our being on the one and only desire—the desire *to be victorious*…the true, only test is—*victory* in war; this is the test of our desire" (Ben-Gurion, 1971, p. 20).

In the context of military parades and lectures to officers, Ben-Gurion stated:

> War is not an aim. We will not live on wars—nor on *victories* in war.…When we fought—we were *victorious*, and when we are forced to continue to fight, I believe we will be *victorious* again. But we do not seek wars or *victories*… we have spared nothing for the sake of *victory*. But *victory* is only a means and not an end. (Ben-Gurion, 1971, p. 49)

Furthermore,

> The test will not end even on the day of *victory*, because *victory* in war, by its very nature and essence, is not a final *victory*, even if there is such a thing as final *victory*.…We knew from the first moment that the secret to *victory* is not in weapons or in training and organization, although these are important and essential, but rather in the human spirit.…We are *victorious* not by the power of the orders but by the power of the mission. (Ben-Gurion, 1971, p. 217)

Finally, in his parting letter to the IDF, Ben-Gurion ties the IDF's victories to the victories in the Bible and notes explicitly:

> Upon the declaration of the state—the Israel Defense Forces, established for salvation and glory, was attacked by all the Arab armies and was *victorious* over all its enemies. This *victory* ensured our independence

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> and made us a sovereign nation. In the War of Independence the IDF also knew failures and retreats, mild and serious, but not many armies in the world have had more glorious *victories* than those our young army has had the honor of winning. This episode of war will hold a place of honor in the series of great *victories* of the armies of our people in the days of Joshua; King David; Jeroboam son of Yoash, King of Israel; and Uzziah (Azariah) son of Amaziah, King of Judah. (Ben-Gurion, 1955, pp. 361-362)

Including all of Ben-Gurion's statements using the term *victory* to define a military result is beyond the scope of this article. The few examples provided here serve to illustrate and substantiate the argument. However, it is important to note that these examples are from three different decades (1940s, 50s and 60s). This indicates that the terminology chosen was not dependent on a specific zeitgeist, but rather matched the principles of the security concept as a whole.

This terminological examination has proven itself again and again in the years in which Ben-Gurion was no longer active in defining Israel's security concept. One of many examples can be found in the lecture by Chief of Staff Haim Bar-Lev in May 1978 titled "Introduction to the Theory of War." In this lecture to students at the Command and Staff College, the Chief of Staff discussed fundamental questions in the art of war through an examination of the wars of the IDF. The lecture included an in-depth discussion of fundamental military concepts, including the essence of war and the achievement of victory in war, and examined these concepts in light of the IDF's wars (with emphasis on the War of Attrition, which occurred during the period Bar-Lev headed the General Staff, and the Yom Kippur War, when he commanded the southern front). Throughout this lecture, which focused specifically on "the results of war," the word *hachra'a* was entirely absent from the Chief of Staff's lexicon. Clearly Bar-Lev, like Ben-Gurion, made sure to use the term victory (and not *hachra'a*) in order to describe military results. For example, he described the political conclusion of the War of Attrition as follows:

> The political conclusion was that despite the Israeli *victory* in the Six Day War, the existence of Israel must not be accepted…This conclusion surprised Israel because it was logical to assume that after *the great rout suffered* by Egypt and after *the unequivocal demonstration of Israel's military advantage*, the Egyptians would look for the solution in the political arena. (Bar-Lev, 1978, p. 4)

Bar-Lev later described the military conclusions drawn from each of the wars and mentioned the Egyptian doctrines and conclusions reached in consultation with the Russian advisors. In these contexts as well, Bar-Lev did not use the term *hachra'a* at all in order to describe the aims, intentions, or results of warfare.

As in Ben-Gurion's writings, in Bar-Lev's lectures the word *hachra'a* was almost completely and sweepingly absent from the war terminology and from the goals and results of the various wars, indicating that this omission was not incidental, but rather deliberate.

How the Term *Hachra'a* Became Embedded, Erroneously, in Military Contexts

Many paths led to the erroneous entrenchment of the term *hachra'a*, some known and some unknown. Obviously, this did not occur at any specific point in time but was rather a gradual process. Moreover, there was not one determining factor, but rather a variety of overlapping factors. Several examples can illustrate how this occurred.

We begin with the sources of Ben-Gurion’s security concept, which unquestionably shaped the Israeli military doctrine. This doctrine incorporates Israel’s security doctrine, which determines the overall organization of the IDF, including preparing for and waging wars, campaigns, and battles in accordance with orders from the high command.

This doctrine, which is based mainly on the notion of an “iron wall” formulated by Ze’ev Jabotinsky in the 1920s, developed “as an approach commonly known as ‘deterrence, warning, and decision [*harta’a, hatra’a v’hachra’a*]’” (Henkin, 2018, p. 17). It is no wonder, then, that over the years many researchers and military figures adopted the term *hachra’a* as an inseparable part of the military doctrine. Yet as Henkin indicates in his study, to this day no one knows the identity of the person who formulated the essence of the doctrine (and its three-word summary, including *hachra’a*). Therefore, it is also impossible to know whether this anonymous writer had certain ideological motivations or personal conceptualizations, and if so, what they were. This understanding takes on new meaning when we examine Ben-Gurion’s security concept in depth and realize that Ben-Gurion himself never speaks about *hachra’a* in the sense of a military result. Furthermore, the only time he uses the term *hachra’a* (as a verbal noun) is in the sentence: “A clear and permanent *hachra’a* [in the sense of making a decision] is required” (Ben-Gurion, 1981 [1953], p. 8).

Not only does the document in question not mention the term *hachra’a* even once in the context of the desired result of war; throughout the article the results of wars are referred to again and again using the term *victory*. For example, in discussing army issues Ben-Gurion emphasizes that “the main question of course is: 1) is a war expected; 2) can we stand our ground and be *victorious*” (p. 2). Later he notes that “every military expert knows that the morale—in Hebrew the spirit—of the army is the primary, if not the only, element in *victory*” (p. 9). He further emphasizes: “If we again face a war with the Arabs—and no one in the world can promise us that this war will not occur, all of our chances of *being victorious* (and I certainly believe in *victory*) depend on the extent of our fighters’ morale” (p. 10).

To this day no one knows the identity of the person who formulated the essence of the doctrine (and its three-word summary, including *hachra’a*). Therefore, it is also impossible to know whether this anonymous writer had certain ideological motivations or personal conceptualizations, and if so, what they were.

Finally, the most unequivocal example illustrates the claim of this article, not only from a terminological perspective but also from a conceptual one:

> We must not depend on the *victories* of the past, and we must not rely on the weakness of the enemy. The former *victor* can fail in the future, as happened to the French in World War II. The French relied on their experience in World War I, and the Germans learned from their failure in that same war, and prepared for war under new conditions, and if not for America, England, and Russia, France would have been wiped off the map of the world’s independent nations. (p. 5)

Another reason that may have led to the erroneous entrenchment of the term *hachra’a* lies in mistakes in translation. In this context, it is important to distinguish between difficulties in translation that emerge from cultural and national meanings attached to a certain term in a certain language and are lost in translation to another language, and mistakes that stem from fundamentally incorrect translation. Translation mistakes of both kinds are so common that the American military historian Christopher

Bassford, who for the past few decades has managed a website about Clausewitz,[6] notes that his keen awareness of the distortion of Clausewitz's original intentions is what led him to refrain completely from relying on Clausewitz's translated writings in his many studies.[7]

Furthermore, the website about Clausewitz distinguishes between translations into English directly from the German source (although Vom Kriege's various editions differ significantly) and foreign editions that rely on other translations (e.g., a Vietnamese version based on a French edition and early translations into Chinese based on Japanese or French versions). The website manager explicitly warns that in all of these cases, it is impossible to escape from the limitations based on the influence of time and place, or from technical mistakes, interpretations motivated by political fear or personal aspirations, controversial conceptual beliefs based on conceptual confusion, ideologically based attempts at counter-persuasion, and in certain cases—completely false beliefs.

For example, in the Israeli context, Clausewitz's book *The Principles of War* was translated from English to Hebrew by Shimon Yiftah. The publisher notes that "the English translation is deficient in many places in terms of accuracy, understanding, and being faithful to the original (necessitating thorough secondary editing of the first Hebrew version, which was translated at the time from the English version)" (Clausewitz, 1950, p. 6). This comment joins the fact that Yiftah's training was in nuclear physics and not in translation. In effect, of the eight books Yiftah wrote (all of them in Hebrew and all on nuclear physics), *Principles of War* was the only book he ever translated. Hence, as talented as he was, it appears only natural to expect various translation difficulties throughout the book and to accept them with a measure of understanding.

For example, Clausewitz's statement that "the most important thing in war will always be the art of *defeating* our opponents in combat" (Clausewitz, 1943, p. 17) was translated from the German original (Clausewitz, 1834, p. 213), in which the meaning of the German word *befiegen* is none other than "defeat" or *havasa* in Hebrew. Yet in the sentence in question, the word was translated into Hebrew using the term *hachra'a*: "The most important thing in war will always be the art of [deciding] our opponents in combat" (Clausewitz, 1950, p. 27). Hence it is obvious that translating this statement in a way that is faithful to the original would have yielded a completely different meaning (the art of *havasa* [defeat] of our opponents in battle). Indeed, unlike the term *hachra'a*, the terms defeat and victory describe a military result.

Another example appears in in the following sentence from Chapter 4, titled "The Existence of These Principles in Times of War": "If we lend our ear to all these difficulties, as Frederick II called them, we shall soon *nichara* [the passive form of *hachra'a*], and we will collapse under the weight" (Clausewitz, 1950, p. 87). Ostensibly the expression "we shall soon *nichara*" attributes a military result to the term *hachra'a*, but in this case as well, the choice of the word *nichara* in the translation into Hebrew is not compatible with the definition in the *Dictionary of IDF Terms*. Here this is a clear translation error, as checking the wording of the original principle in English shows unequivocally that Clausewitz is not speaking about *hachra'a* [decision] at all, but rather about succumbing (and thus uses the word succumb): "If we lend our ear to all these difficulties, as Frederick II called them, we shall soon *succumb* completely…we shall be reduced to weakness and inactivity" (Clausewitz, 1943, p. 52). In this case too, the German original proves that the precise word is not *nichara*, we shall be decided, but rather *nikana*, we shall succumb, from a different etymological root.

Hence, in this case too, if we had sought to convey to Hebrew-speaking Israeli society, including the IDF, the literal meaning of the principle, we would have worded it as "we shall soon *nikana* [succumb]," whose practical, and not only implied, meaning is completely different from that resulting from using the term "we shall soon *nichara* [be decided]" when speaking about a military result.

Because in German there is an intentional and explicit distinction between the terms, the two above examples provide evidence that the source of the meaning of the term *hachra'a* in the context of a military result is an inadequate and insufficiently precise translation. The fact that this term was once translated in the context of "defeating" and another time in the context of "succumbing" not only connects the terms but also directly influences the Israeli interpretation in general, and the military conception in particular.

One example among many is Gadi Eisenkot's attempt to implement the content of the *IDF Strategy* document as Israel's current security concept. This attempt also led him to refer to the term *hachra'a* and to state explicitly: "The meaning of this [systemic and tactical] *hachra'a* creates a reality in which the adversary's capability is eliminated, such that it reaches a situation of helplessness or physical destruction and *succumbs*" (Eisenkot & Siboni, 2019, p. 50).

The linguistic confusion that appears in this explanation corresponds well with the choice of terms in the translation into Hebrew. In the original, a situation was defined in which the enemy *succumbs*. This was translated into Hebrew in a way that was not sufficiently precise, suggesting that the enemy *huchra* (*was decided or overcome*). This finding may substantiate the assumption that if the translations of Clausewitz's terms had been precise, they might have clarified the distinction between "succumbed" and "was decided or overcome" according to the definitions in the *Dictionary of IDF Terms*, possibly yielding the following wording: On these levels of operation, it is necessary to *subdue* the enemy. The meaning of *subduing* is creating a reality in which the adversary's capability is eliminated, it has reached a situation of helplessness or of physical destruction, and thus *succumbs*. The definition of the term *kni'a*—succumbing or surrendering—in the *Dictionary of IDF Terms* also describes a military result and thus fits well with this meaning.[8]

Another kind of lack of clarity is liable to develop in cases in which there are no translation obstacles but there are other influences, such as worldviews, personal perspectives, and ideological bents, that find expression in biased conceptual formulation.

Examples of this can be found in Kober's book (1995), in which among the ways he substantiates his arguments regarding the term military *hachra'a* is by using a series of cases of reliance on the term *victory*. For example, Kober bases the argument that will and capability contribute to "generating the *hachra'a*" (p. 27) on a quotation attributed to Clausewitz that actually relates to the influence of *victory* on the course of the war. According to Clausewitz, there are influences that "always appear with every *victory*…and they increase as the size of the *victory* increases" (Leonard, 1977, p. 149).

Kober also begins the section titled "The *Hachra'a* Process and the Threshold of *Hachra'a*" with the words: "Clausewitz described the process an army undergoes until it is *muchra* [decided, overcome]" (p. 53, in Leonard, 1977, p. 148). Yet it is "the influence of *victory*" that is discussed throughout the reference (to Volume A, Book 4, Chapter 10 of Clausewitz) (Leonard, 1977, pp. 147-149).

In the chapter that analyzes the "*hachra'a* process," Kober relies on Bernard Brodie's book *War and Politics*, "which emphasizes the psychological necessity of *lehachria* [deciding]… to achieve *hachra'a* in war." Yet Brodie himself speaks in terms of *victory*, and to his wording "the total commitment to *victory*," Kober attaches the word *hachra'a* in square brackets (Kober, 1995, p. 45). The subsequent substantiation as well, in which the German army is pushed "to continue fighting even after the battles of 1914-1915 showed the lack of a chance of achieving German *hachra'a* in the war," relies on Gordon Craig's research conclusion "in stubbornly rejecting any opinion that complete *victory* was impossible." Kobler adds his own interpretation to this by adding the words "in the sense of *hachra'a*" in square brackets (Kober, 1995, p. 46).

The fact that the term *hachra'a* is explained, demonstrated, and justified repeatedly using the term victory speaks for itself.

Additional examples can be found in the second part of the book, which discusses the Israeli case. For example, the demand "to understand that in fact we have very little time *lehachria* [to decide, overcome] the enemy" (Kober, 1995, p. 160) is based on Moshe Dayan's statement, which is phrased using the term victory. Later Kober relates to *hachra'a* of the enemy by means of the air force, "which is capable of creating the conditions for *hachra'a* on land." He bases this on Ben-Gurion's statement that "the control [of the air force] in the air ensures us *victory* more than any other factor" (Kober, 1995, p. 178). In addition, the statement that Operation Horev was "aimed at completing the *hachra'a* process" and that "the order of the day of the southern front commander on the day the operation began (December 22) reflects Israel's desire to achieve final *hachra'a* in the war" is based on a statement by Netanel Lorch, which speaks of "a final and decisive *victory* over the invader" (Kober, 1995, p. 193).

The fact that the term *hachra'a* is explained, demonstrated, and justified repeatedly using the term victory speaks for itself. An examination of various aspects of the term *hachra'a*, including through a series of explanations that rely explicitly on the term victory, shows the similar meaning of the two terms, or at least the conceptual confusion between them.

Along with linguistic and translation issues, reasons tied to cultural and national processes contributed to the penetration of the term *hachra'a* in the sense of a military result. For example, Eitan Shamir attributes the evolution of the term *hachra'a* in the IDF to an ideological and image-related response to the terms "strategy of annihilation" (in German, *niederwerfungsstrategie*) and "strategy of exhaustion" (in German, *ermattungsstrategie*), which were cultivated in the late 19th century by the German military writer Hans Delbrück and adopted by all of the European and American armies. According to Shamir, public and ideological connotations caused the IDF to gradually move away from the term annihilation. These motivations are what led the IDF to look for ways to defeat the enemy while minimizing IDF losses, and to this end they adopted the unique term *hachra'a* (Shamir, 2017, p. 22). Ido Hecht, in his article "Mechanisms of Defeating—How To Win in War?" describes the "doctrine of *hachra'a* by means of annihilation," pinpointing the 1990s as a period in which the IDF began gradually moving away from striving for large-scale annihilation as an expression of military *hachra'a* (Hecht, 2004, p. 6).

Over time, ideological assumptions also arose. Moreover, additional motivations, both overt and covert, emerged that were influenced by political, diplomatic, military, and social processes and that may have led to the adoption of the term *hachra'a* as an alternative to the term victory in its traditional sense. For example, in her article "The Fog of Victory," Gabriella Blum argues that since the clear victory in 1967, it seems that no one has updated Israeli society that the term victory in its modern sense is far from the term victory in its traditional sense, the one that Israelis were raised on (Blum, 2013, p. 418). For Blum, this "absence of updating" is what makes it difficult for Israeli society to define the results of war as victory in the modern era. She claims that in this era victory in war depends in part on political and economic factors and civilian forces—and not only on answering the question of whether or not the military objectives defined at the beginning or during the operation have been fulfilled.

In contrast, Gabi Siboni explicitly relates to this point in this context:

> As far as one can see, it is unlikely that the Six Day War and its confluence of conditions will ever recur. [Therefore] a new conceptual framework is required to coordinate expectations among the IDF and the political and the civilian echelons….The strategic discourse in Israel must rid itself of concepts such as quick and absolute victory and decision, or at least redefine them in the context of the present threat. (Siboni, 2009, p.47)

The fact that Siboni links the term *hachra'a* to the term victory, including in relation to the result of the Six Day War, is one more example among many that indicates the terminological confusion between the two terms that has apparently developed over the years. Yet while Siboni proposes looking for alternative definitions, a contrary view contends that the traditional definitions should actually be preserved. For example, in their book *Navy SEALs*, Willink and Babin consciously, explicitly, and intentionally define the Battle of Ramadi, which was the heart of the rebel area and considered the “decisive battle” (as they define it) over the Anbar Governorate, as a *victory* in the full sense of the word. This is despite the clear understanding that this was “not a military victory in the traditional sense of the word,” nor did they have any expectation that the enemy that they fought against *would succumb*, or that as a result of the fighting, peace agreements would be signed. Rather, *victory* here means just that Iraq would become a relatively safer and more stable country (Willink & Babin, 2015).

On the linguistic level, the American terminology provided in this example further strengthens the article's claim that the term *hachra'a* does not have the meaning of a military result and again demonstrates that the result of the war is defined using the term victory (and not *hachra'a*) and using the verb “was subdued” (and not *huchra*). On the conceptual level, this example demonstrates well that while the Israeli concept has chosen to relinquish the term victory and replace it with new definitions for a new situation, the American concept has sought to adapt the new situation to the original definitions, including defining victory as a term that describes a military result. In this way it has consciously raised the possibility of continuing to evaluate military achievements using the term victory. This decision also involves preserving the awareness of victory as a military result, and of course this awareness likewise affects national and social resilience.

Conclusion: *Hachra'a* is None Other than Victory

Bogie Ya'alon's stated expectation that leaders should not assume that longstanding practices are necessarily correct by virtue of their longevity (Ya'alon, 2007) is echoed in this article by the understanding that while the term *hachra'a* has been used for years to define a military result, this fact does not necessarily indicate that the term *hachra'a* actually defines a military result.

Indeed, this understanding has been substantiated in principle. The fact that dozens of military and national security figures have discussed and continue to discuss the collection of definitions and meanings that have accumulated over the past few decades regarding the term *hachra'a* speaks for itself, pointing to an inherent lack of clarity in the term *hachra'a* in the sense of a military result. These are joined by scores of professional discussions focusing on the term *hachra'a* and linking its definitions with the term victory, thus underscoring the confusion between the meanings of these terms.

In the seven weeks in which Ben-Gurion took upon himself to reexamine the army's situation and security needs, he came to the conclusion “that the means, the forces and *the thought habits* of the members of the Haganah do not meet the needs of the future. *And the* *most difficult thing then was to change the thought habits of our best men in the Haganah*" (Ben-Gurion, 1981 [1953], p. 2).

An echo of this conclusion appears in Ya'alon's claim that "the military system is prone to conservativism, rigidity, and adherence to preconceptions" (Ya'alon, 2007, p. 11). To a certain extent this may explain why a prolonged period of time and the awareness of the military and security leadership are not sufficient for ending the terminological confusion that has developed between the two terms. Furthermore, this may indicate why discussions on the issue focus repeatedly on the question of the

Resolving the terminological confusion means relinquishing the term *hachra'a* and consciously choosing the term victory instead. The significance of this is complex in itself. First and foremost it requires accepting the statement that "the question of what meaning is should not be answered, unless we are ready to accept as an answer the statement that meaning is what people mean."

differences between the two terms rather than on the question of why two different terms with the same meaning have emerged.

This article sought to breach the conventional boundaries in order to prove that the term *hachra'a* in its military context does not express a clear meaning, and that the damage caused by this mainly affects the term victory. In my opinion, the collection of examples presented above are only some of the elements that led to the gradual but consistent adoption of the term *hachra'a* in the sense of a military result, and to the conceptual confusion that has taken root. Yet the reasons that led to the entrenchment of the term *hachra'a* in military terminology are secondary to the implications and consequences of this process, the main one being the *obscuring of the meaning of the term victory*. This obfuscation shows that the conceptual failure is not only expressed in the IDF's *language,* but also, and more critically, in the IDF's *doctrine*. Hence, the main contribution of this article is to restore the meaning of the term victory to its rightful place in its military context.

Resolving the terminological confusion means relinquishing the term *hachra'a* and consciously choosing the term victory instead. The significance of this is complex in itself. First and foremost it requires accepting the statement that "the question of what meaning is should not be answered, unless we are ready to accept as an answer the statement that meaning is what people mean" (Strauss, 1977, p. 127). This also echoes Clausewitz's original message, whereby there is no point splitting hairs about one concept or another, and it would not be right to relate to theory as instructions, as the principles do not exhaust the entire theory and their purpose is not "to provide prescriptions for victory in battle, but rather to provide the fundamental concepts that will enable any military leader to formulate the 'prescriptions' that are suitable for the specific military problem that he is facing" (Y. B. Y., 1988, p. 17). This message fully corresponds with Chief of Staff Kochavi's directive, which was published as these lines were written. According to Kochavi, "*the core of the change that needs to happen*" is to abandon the term proportionality [which contains a cautious or minimal meaning, as he defines it] and replace it with the concept of relativity" (Kochavi, 2021).

This approach strengthens this article's main proposal: to abandon a term that does not faithfully serve the military interests in favor of a different term, whose meaning improves or clarifies the security concept. That is, the term *hachra'a* in the sense of a military result should be relinquished, thus allowing the term victory in all its glory to express the meaning of a military result.

In practice, even if there are those who oppose this approach, they will have difficulty ignoring the reality in the field, which speaks for itself, as *hachra'a* is no longer defined "as the only aim of the military campaign, and instead of it comes victory. In order to achieve victory, the political leadership must define it unequivocally in advance, and in terms that are understandable to both sides" (Michael & Even, 2016, p. 34).

This reality—which is expressed well in the *IDF Strategy* document (2015) and in its updated version (2018), and more clearly outlined in the approach of the current Chief of Staff, Aviv Kochavi—is what has laid a new foundation for civil-military relations, whose essence is none other than clearly defining the meaning of the term *victory* (Michael et al., 2020).

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Notes

1 Much of the article that follows is linguistic in nature. The word "*hachra'a*," which is the subject of this article, functions in Hebrew both as a noun and a verbal noun, and in English only as a noun. Hence the translation of this article from its Hebrew original incurs particular challenges as it seeks to bring to the English reader a sense of the difficulties and conundrums of the use of the Hebrew term.

2 The emphases in all of the quotations throughout the article are added by the author.

3 Merriam-Webster dictionary, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/decisive

4 US Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 6-0 (2014). Commander and staff organization and operations. Government Printing Office.

5 According to Gershon Rivlin, who "brought it to the publishing house," on the first page of the book.

6 See Clausewitz, http://www.clausewitz.com

7 Private email correspondence between us from the dates January 25-28, 2021.

8 "*Kni'a*—succumbing, surrendering: accepting the authority of the enemy that threatens to use force or dictates with the force of its weapons to the individual, the unit, the force, or the country that is in a state of war, that has accepted its will and given up on demands, control, or ownership. *Kni'a* has several senses: loss of the ability or breaking of the will to fight; reaching the conclusion that continuing the fighting involves such losses that doing the will of the enemy is preferable to them" (*Dictionary of IDF Terms*, 1998, p. 260).

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Israel's first state visit to Chad, January 20, 2019. Photo: Kobi Gideon / GPO

The Security Element in Israel-Africa Relations

Yaron Salman

Over the past decade Israel's relations with African countries have grown closer, and in tandem, the importance of security ties and security exports invites special scrutiny. This article discusses the warming of Israel-Africa relations, and focuses on the role played by security ties. Review of Israel's security ties in general and with Africa in particular is absent from academic research and surfaces only minimally in the media and public discourse, in contrast to the wide-ranging discussion of Israel's civilian ties with the developing world. This is a deliberate decision by Jerusalem to limit the debate on Israel's security ties overall and with Africa in particular as much as possible. The article looks at what has driven Israel and African countries to promote relations over the past decade, and for the first time, the importance of security ties in these relations is examined in order to confirm the argument that contrary to official efforts by the Foreign Ministry to underscore civilian relations and Israel's foreign aid to Africa, security ties play a more significant role in the process.

Keywords: Israel-Africa relations, security ties, security exports, arms deals, diplomacy, foreign relations

Introduction

Recent diplomatic meetings, including a meeting by Prime Minister Netanyahu with a delegation of senior officials from Chad in September 2020, and his meeting in February 2020 with the leader of Sudan in Uganda and in January 2019 with the leader of Chad, join the political developments of past decades in which Israel established, renewed, and strengthened diplomatic ties in sub-Saharan, central, western, and eastern Africa. The trend of renewing ties, which started in the mid-1990s following the Oslo Accords, has expanded in recent years, shown for example by the fact that since 2009, when the process accelerated at the initiative of then-Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman, there have been a number of prominent official visits. In September 2009 Lieberman visited Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria, and Ghana. In the summer of 2014 he returned to Ethiopia, Kenya, and Ghana, and added Rwanda and the Ivory Coast. In 2018, this time as Defense Minister, Lieberman visited Rwanda, Zambia, and Tanzania. The visit to Africa by Prime Minister Netanyahu in the summer of 2016 included Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, and Rwanda. Netanyahu returned to the continent the following summer to participate in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) conference, and during his visit to Kenya in November that year, he met with leaders of other African countries.

Although the scope of Israel's security exports and arms deals in Africa is limited compared to other regions of the world, this article looks specifically at the security aspect of Israel-Africa relations, for several reasons. First, in spite of the broad debate in the literature about Israel's civilian relations with countries in Africa, I believe that the security component has actually been dominant in the establishment of ties over the past decade. This argument mirrors the historical and recently expanding trend of a significant rise in the influence of the security establishment—in all its aspects—on the shape and implementation of Israel's foreign and security policy in general, and in particular, in African and other countries with which it has no formal relations. For example, Efraim Halevy announced that the military level played an important role in Israel's foreign policy, and that it was responsible for Israel's ties with various Arab countries (Oren, 2020).

In other words, while the security establishment is perceived as ever more relevant in the field of foreign relations, the Foreign Ministry is perceived as secondary with regard to security issues. This dovetails with a background of complaints about the theoretical nature of its activity, reflected by the avoidance of risks and adherence to the official-traditional line (Oren, 2020). Moreover, Israel is wont to see the security element as a nearly exclusive component in the creation and reinforcement of national security, while downplaying the contribution of diplomacy; one of the consequences of the "over-securitization" of the discourse is that the security element is considered existential, and the diplomatic-political element is not. This was well expressed by Alon Liel, who claimed that the Foreign Ministry had failed to persuade the public that foreign relations are a "super important" component of national security (Michael & Salman, 2020).

The tension between diplomatic and security elements has existed since Israel declared its independence, whereby security is considered of existential importance and diplomacy is seen as something auxiliary, even marginal; in other words, it is not essential, and certainly not existential. The large and intensifying involvement of the security establishment in Israel's foreign relations is also evident in the impact of the growing dominance of the security aspect of Israel's relations with African countries over the past decade.

The tension between diplomatic and security elements has existed since Israel declared its independence, whereby security is considered of existential importance and diplomacy is seen as something auxiliary, even marginal; in other words, it is not essential, and certainly not existential. The traditional reasons for this derive from the significance attributed to the many military threats Israel has faced since 1948. Today, this attitude is to a large extent also based on the inability of the Foreign Ministry to demonstrate its contribution and relevance to the showcasing of Israel's advantages in hi-tech, technology, economy, and civilian society as branches of Israeli exports that contribute to its national security (Michael & Salman, 2020). Consequently, the large and intensifying involvement of the security establishment in Israel's foreign relations is also evident in the impact of the growing dominance of the security aspect of Israel's relations with African countries over the past decade.

Second, this study represents an attempt to fill a gap in the research literature on Israel's security ties in Africa. As a rule, Israel does not provide information about its worldwide security ties. In its annual report of 2019, the Small Arms Survey organization defined Israel as the least transparent country with respect to security ties, together with North Korea, Iran, and Saudi Arabia (Small Arms Survey, 2019).[1] The centralized security policy and the tendency among Israeli decision makers and security elements to limit any discussion of security issues as much as possible are even more acute when it comes to relations with Africa, apparently due to the dominance of light weapons deals (rifles and machine guns, artillery systems, mortars, tracking devices, and protection services, as well as combat training) between Israel and African countries. The reason that the volume of Israeli security exports to African countries is limited when compared to other areas, and consists of light weapons rather than major platforms (planes, sea vessels) lies not in the lack of willingness by Israeli arms manufacturers to expand their exports to Africa, but in the meager budgets of those countries, which prevent them from entering into larger and more varied deals (Melman, 2016; Nir, 2016).

On the other hand, the low cost of light weapons, their wide distribution, easy operation, use by the regular forces of national armies as well as rebel organizations, and the fact that small arms kill and wound more people in internal disputes than heavy weapons (aircraft, sea vessels, and tanks) all intensify the criticism of small arms deals (Adetiba, 2019; Boutwell & Klare, 1998). Thus, the combination of the nature of security links (small arms deals and training for presidential guards, which are often responsible for violations of human rights) and the increasing number of violent and unstable conflicts in the continent invites growing criticism of Israel, and this has led Jerusalem to adhere to a policy of lack of transparency and limited discussion. As described below, Jerusalem's lack of transparency imposes a methodological constraint with consequences for the empirical database that underlies the analysis of this article. For example, it is impossible to obtain full and accurate data regarding weapons deals brokered by third countries. Therefore this article refers only to openly available data, and the estimate is that the real figures are higher.

The Goal and Structure of the Article

The civilian aid in medicine, water, and agriculture that Israel provides to African countries, which in recent years has been largely linked to Jerusalem's efforts to enhance its international image as a liberal democratic country against the background of the Israeli-Palestinian dispute, has been widely discussed in the literature (Divon, 2006; Fried, 2006). This article focuses on Israel's security ties in Africa. Over the past decade, security exports, which have become a dominant element in Israel's relations with African countries in an attempt to strengthen these relations, are hardly mentioned in either the academic literature or the media, and there are very few official reports on security cooperation in Africa. Thus the following questions arise: What motivates Israel and African countries to seek closer ties at present? Has the volume of Israel's security exports to Africa increased? Is this part of Israel's foreign policy, intended to strengthen links with African countries? And what are the benefits of an increase in security exports?

The central argument here is that contrary to the attempt to point to the significance of the elements of soft power in Israel-Africa relations, including the provision of technical assistance for the needs of development, the closer ties have actually been achieved through security exports and the involvement of the security establishment in the elements of hard power, in a way that serves both parties.

The contribution of this article, therefore, rests on its comprehensive and up-to-date view of the spectrum of interests of Israel and African countries over the past decade. While the literature has concentrated on a historical review of Israel-Africa relations and a survey of Israel's interests, mainly during the state's initial decades or the process of severing ties in the late 1960s, which reached its peak after the 1973 war (Erlich, 2013; Levey, 2012; Ojo, 1988; Peters, 1992), the current article has a broader scope, and includes reference to the interests of African countries in the past decade, particularly security interests. Another contribution of this article lies in its broadest possible examination of security ties with Africa, with the emphasis on light weapons deals. While the literature deals mainly with aspects of "soft" aid, certainly in the formative decades (Schler, 2018; Levin, 2015; Beker, 2006), here there is a broader examination of security ties, including arms deals, knowledge and intelligence sharing, help in the fight against terror, and training for the security forces.

In order to examine the scope of security ties, arms deals, and security aid, I used an empirical database that was as comprehensive as possible, although the ability to retrieve official data, certainly primary data, showing the extent of Israeli security exports is limited due to the confidential nature of arms deals between Israel and countries in Africa, and since some of the deals are brokered by third countries. As a way of overcoming the methodological and empirical challenge that demands a cautious approach to the data, I tapped a large number of academic, official, and media sources in order to obtain the most comprehensive picture possible. The data was assembled from prior studies, reports issued by UN research institutes and human rights organizations that operate in Africa, official reports from the Security Export Division of the Ministry of Defense, and media reports; it was encoded, cross-referenced, and examined in a way that facilitated analysis and produced extensive validated findings, in spite of limited availability of data.

This article has three parts: the first is a presentation of the theoretical framework, with a definition of the term "power" in international relations. This is followed by a discussion of trends that have characterized Israel-Africa relations over the decades, with a focus on the recent growth of the security element. The second part discusses the motives of Israel and African countries behind the efforts to strengthen ties. The third part examines the security ties and tries to assess their scope and importance in these relationships.

Hard Power in International Relations

In the context of international relations, power refers to all the factors that enable one actor to influence the conduct of other actors, and is defined as "the ability to achieve various objectives using various means and thus influence the conduct of a system of relationships" (Tzabag, 1997, p. 5). According to the traditional definition, hard power is based on the ability to persuade other players by economic means (material rewards for supporters and withdrawal of material rewards from the recalcitrant) or by military means (one actor's ability to use military threats in order to impose its will on other actors); soft power rests on the attempt to persuade and shape preferences without using force (Nye, 2004).

Three methods can be cited for influencing the conduct of others: coercion, payment, and attraction. Coercion and payment are characteristic of hard power; attraction is linked to soft power and the ability of one country to influence another by means of its culture, values, ideology, assistance with civilian needs, technology, norms, and institutions (Nye, 1990, 2004, 2009). This article does not refer to the concept of hard power in the narrow traditional way, usually tied to the ability to impose a position on other actors, but in a broader sense, and includes exports and security aspects such as weapons deals, training of forces, and knowledge and intelligence sharing as elements of hard power. In addition, security exports are linked to economic aspects (another foundation of the traditional definition of hard power), and together with the approach that usually sees military and economic ability as tools to force a position on others, this article argues that security exports, as an expression or component of hard power, are also a tool for strengthening international relations.

Israel is eighth in the list of the world's ten largest weapons exporters, with a share of 3.1 percent of all security exports worldwide.

In the early 1950s, the attempt to influence the conduct of other actors largely relied on the components of hard power, elements linked to geography, territory, economy, and means of warfare. From the early 1990s, as the global arena changed following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the end of the Cold War, and an overall decline in international warfare,[2] new methods of exerting influence emerged based on developments in technology and education, and the assumption that a country's ability to provide technical assistance in order to reduce poverty, hunger, and disease would raise its stock on the world stage. However, the proportion of elements of hard power linked to security exports and arms deals all over the world has actually grown, as shown by SIPRI's latest annual report,[3] whereby in 2015-2019, the volume of exports of the leading arms exporters was 5.5 percent higher than in 2010-2014, and 20 percent higher than in 2005-2009. The report also illustrates Israel's hard power in the context of its varied abilities in the security sphere, as shown by the broad scope of its weapons deals and security exports. Israel is eighth in the list of the world's ten largest weapons exporters, with a share of 3.1 percent of all security exports worldwide (SIPRI, 2019). Clearly, then, Israel uses the elements of hard power (security aid and arms sales) in addition to the elements of soft power (technical assistance in the fields of agriculture, education, infrastructures, and health) to strengthen its ties in Africa.

Israel-Africa Relations

In the 1950s and 1960s, Israel's relations with Africa were characterized, inter alia, by the provision of aid to newly-independent countries, and by the forging of relations with non-Arab countries with Western or Christian links, such as Ghana, Ethiopia, and the Christians in South Sudan (Alper, 2015; Guzansky & Lindenstrauss, 2012; Shavit, 2018; Gidron, 2020; Bar Zohar, 2008). In order to establish these ties, Israel granted aid in agriculture, education, and medicine, and David Ben-Gurion and Golda Meir saw this as a fundamental component of Israel's foreign policy (Oded, 2011). At the same time, Israel gave security aid to African countries, and converging security interests also helped strengthen the ties, so that the heads of many of the continent's military regimes saw Israel as a desirable partner that could secure their survival with assistance that included the supply of weapons and training for their armed forces and presidential guards (Butime, 2014; Gidron, 2020).

After the Six Day War (1967), Israel's relations with African countries deteriorated, reaching a low point after the Yom Kippur War (1973), when countries throughout the continent severed ties with Israel (Oded, 2011; Bishku, 2017). In the

1990s there was some improvement following the Oslo Accords. Further improvement was achieved in 2009 in view of the work of Foreign Minister Lieberman to strengthen ties throughout Africa, including sub-Saharan Africa. Shared security challenges, the growing threat of international terror, and the rise of fundamental Islam were the basis and the incentive for this trend.

Today Israel has diplomatic relations with 41 African countries,[4] and with 11 of them it has an embassy (Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, South Africa, Angola, Rwanda, Senegal, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Nigeria, and Cameroon); more recently there have been signs of potential normalization and expansion of relations following contacts with Chad, Morocco, and Sudan and the Abraham Accords. In some cases, the security links are extensive. For example, Israel is one of Ethiopia's most important arms suppliers and supported it in its recent war with Eritrea. The same goes for Kenya, where closer ties with Israel are partly due to the terrorism challenges it faces in East Africa (Butime, 2014). The security dimension is also reflected in Israel's relations with Nigeria; back in the 1960s the Foreign Ministry was determined to establish diplomatic ties with this large country, rich in minerals and a central actor in Africa. The Defense Ministry encouraged these ties, and in 1961 began to penetrate the Nigerian weapons market (Levy, 2012). Israel's security expertise is currently very relevant for Nigeria, which faces threats from radical Islamist groups that are flourishing in West Africa. One of Israel's indirect contributions to Nigeria's struggle against terror can be seen in the cooperation between Nigerian armed forces and the Cameroonian army, which was formerly trained by Israeli military advisers and whose basic equipment is of Israeli manufacture.

The Islamist threat has boosted the interest of Ghana, Ivory Coast, Rwanda, and Kenya in Israel's knowledge and intelligence capabilities (Melman, 2016). Relations with Uganda were renewed in 1994, and have improved steadily since then (Oded, 2002a), as shown for example by Uganda's willingness to allow the passage of Sudanese and Eritrean asylum seekers repatriated by Israel, in return for Israeli security exports (Bishku, 2017; Martin, 2013). Israeli-Ugandan relations were apparent in the context of Netanyahu's meeting in Uganda with the Sudanese leader in early February 2020. During the visit, Netanyahu and Ugandan leader Yoweri Museveni announced the possible opening of embassies in Kampala and Jerusalem (Landau, 2020). Cooperation between Israel and Uganda has increased in recent years, evidenced by the granting of agricultural and medical aid, and above all in security cooperation, which even included the renovation of Ugandan Air Force planes in Israel (Ravid, 2014).

Another country where the security aspect is a central feature of relations with Israel is Eritrea. The ties that were first established in 2013 have become steadily stronger, following the life-saving hospitalization of Eritrean President Isaias Afewerki in Israel (Dibon, 2002). Relations with Eritrea are complex, against the background of Israel's historic support for Ethiopia in the suppression of the Eritrean revolt against Ethiopian imperial and then revolutionary rule (after the overthrow of the Emperor), but are essential for preserving Israel's security interests in view of its proximity to Somalia and its ability to serve as a barrier to Somalia's Islamist organizations that cooperate with Hamas and Iran (Butime, 2014).

Unlike other countries that see in Eritrea an economic opportunity, in Israel's case the interests are largely security-based due to the country's location east of Sudan, on the Red Sea coast, and its proximity to the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, the sea route to Eilat, Yemen, and Saudi Arabia (Melman, 2011). In Eritrea, Israel has operated shipping harbors and a surveillance station, as part of the effort to stop Iran smuggling arms to Hamas and Hezbollah (Beres, 2019).

Official diplomatic relations were established between Israel and South Sudan in 2011, but there were actually relations between the two countries since the late 1960s (Gidron, 2018). Israel's former ambassador to South Sudan, Haim Koren, claims that their "attitude toward us borders on love" (Michael & Salman, 2020). Koren also claims that South Sudan is one of Israel's most consistent supporters in international forums, including the UN (Koren, 2019), due to the aid that Israel gave the southern rebels in their struggle for independence from North Sudan, a sense of shared alienation from the Arabs, and as Christians, their perception of Israel as the cradle of Christianity (Guzansky & Lindenstrauss, 2012; Rolandsen, 2011; Levey, 2004; Gidron, 2018). Since then, the security aid provided by Israel to South Sudan has been an important element in relations. On the other hand, Israel's name is also linked to the civil war in South Sudan, which has continued since its declaration of independence. In this context, there has been criticism of Israel's security exports to a divided country, and of the Ministry of Defense's policy of concealing security ties (Harel, 2019; Cohen, 2015; Tzuriel & Passovsky, 2019; Melman, 2017a, 2017b).

African regimes want Israeli security assistance as a means of securing their own survival. Another striking motive, at least in some countries, is that good relations with Israel are perceived as a way of promoting relations with the United States. It is possible, for example, that South Sudan's consistent political support for Israel in the UN derives partly from its attempts to forge closer ties with the United States .

Israel's relations with Rwanda also reached new heights with the opening of the Israeli embassy in Kigali in April 2019. Beyond the tendency in Rwanda to identify with Israel against the background of a comparison between the Holocaust of the Jewish people and the genocide of the Tutsis, relations have become closer in recent years, mainly due to Israel's security exports to Rwanda, which began officially in the early 1990s (Cohen, 2014), and the subsequent economic opportunities. In addition, there were attempts to reach an understanding over Rwandan acceptance of asylum seekers from Israel (Lior, 2018; Keinon, 2017).

The Motives Driving Closer Relations between Israel and African Countries

The interests of African countries in stronger ties with Israel derive from their fears of infiltration of global jihad elements into their territory and what they see as the necessity of security, economic, and technological cooperation with Israel. African countries have many needs in areas such as communications, health, agriculture, infrastructure, defense, security, and intelligence. Alon Liel notes the admiration for Israel's economic and technological achievements, claiming that what interests African countries is survival, and they need "everything—communications, agriculture, health, technology; they want to receive and Israel is the source" (Liel, quoted by Michael & Salman, 2020). Moreover, African regimes want Israeli security assistance as a means of securing their own survival. Another striking motive, at least in some countries, is that good relations with Israel are also perceived as a way of promoting relations with the United States. It is possible, for example, that South Sudan's consistent political support for Israel in the UN derives partly from its attempts to forge closer ties with the United States (Gidron, 2020).

From Israel's perspective, closer ties with countries in Africa meet a number of its vital interests—strategic, economic (general exports, security exports and arms sales), military, and political (support in UN institutions):

Strategic interests: The importance of the Horn of Africa lies in its geographical proximity to the Red Sea coast. In the mid-1960s, stronger ties with Ethiopia and its neighbors became Israel's most important objective in Africa, arising from its interest in "protecting its flanks" and securing the maritime lanes in the Red Sea, which were the conduits for trade with Asia (Levey, 2004). The need to secure the maritime routes to the Far East and South Africa encouraged closer ties with Ethiopia and Kenya, and the port of Mombasa was a central station on the way to these destinations. Moreover, the need to maintain El Al Airlines routes to Kenya and South Africa added to the importance of the air space over East Africa. In addition, in strategic terms, the locations of Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda at the rear of Arab countries also contributed to their importance for Israel (Oded, 2002b). Israel has attached importance to Ethiopia in particular for many years. For example, Ben-Gurion saw it as part of the "Middle East periphery" and a potential pro-Israel base on the Red Sea shores. It was thus the most important African country, and Israel invested more in Ethiopia than in any other country (Butime, 2014; Oded, 2011).

Economic interests: In 2018 general Israeli exports to African states totaled $725 million, while in 2019 the value was $600 million (Export Institute, 2019, 2020). Security exports are vital for the activity and maintenance of Israel's security industries and "the most valuable industry for the State of Israel" (Wezeman, 2011, p. 9). Apart from the aspiration to realize economic opportunities (Sabhat, 2018), the purpose of Israel's attempt to promote the economic involvement of the private sector is to increase its influence all over the continent, inter alia through development assistance (Gidron, 2020).

A central element of the economic aspect is the sale of knowledge and security equipment, as well as weapon systems. According to Sibat figures,[5] in 2018 Israel's security exports worldwide amounted to $7.5 billion, roughly 27 billion NIS (Ministry of Defense website, 2019), and in 2019 amounted to $7.203 billion, almost 25 billion NIS (Ministry of Defense website, n.d.). These figures show the importance of security exports and their contribution to the Israeli economy. Apart from Israel's clear economic interest, there is also a mutual security interest that has strengthened over the past decade, largely as a reaction to growing Islamic terror, and driven African states to purchase Israeli weapon systems.

Military interests: These are linked mainly to the fight against Islamic terror, as shown by the statement "Kenya's enemies are Israel's enemies," attributed to Netanyahu, referring to Kenya's struggle against the al-Shabaab organization (BBC News, 2011) and the attempt to block Iran in Africa (Tardiman, 2016; Melman, 2016; Gidron, 2020).

Israel assisted in the attempt to build a coalition of Kenya, Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Tanzania to combat Somali and other Islamic groups, which threaten them directly. Over the last 15 years, thanks to its contacts in the east of the continent, Israel has managed to track the Islamic groups in the region and collect information about Iran's attempts to smuggle arms. For example, according to Galia Tzabar, in 2009 Israel stopped a delivery of weapons from Iran to Hamas that passed through Sudan. She claimed that this was just one example of many (Tzabar, quoted by Martin, 2013).

Israel seeks to limit the influence of Iran, which is trying to strengthen its grip on Sudan through a variety of channels, including economic investments, military aid, and cultural-ideological influence. Because of its access to the sea, Iran sees Sudan as a channel for smuggling weapons to Hamas, Hezbollah, and Islamic organizations in the Maghreb through the Sinai Peninsula (Guzansky & Lindenstrauss, 2012). Evidence of Israel's attempts to block Iranian influence in Africa was referenced by Defense Minister Lieberman, who at the end of his visit to the continent in 2018 said: "Unless we can succeed in strengthening cooperation, we'll miss an enormous opportunity and others, particularly the Iranians, will do it instead of us. We have to understand, in every country where we have alliances and cooperation, we are pushing Iran out and isolating it" (Yisrael Beytenu website, 2018).

Political interests are linked to the attempt to undermine Palestinian diplomatic efforts in the international arena (Gidron, 2020), largely in response to Palestinian use of UN voting processes to promote its political aims. Israel has recently intensified its activity in UN institutions, as reflected in its efforts to achieve political support from African states (Salman, 2019, 2020). The Prime Minister's remarks at a meeting with Israeli representatives in Africa in February 2017 leave no room for doubt over Israel's political motives in the continent: "If I look at our foreign policy interests as a pyramid, Africa is very high…The first interest is to dramatically change the way Africa votes at the UN and in international bodies, from opposition to support" (Prime Minister's Office, 2017). This is also the belief of Knesset Member Avraham Neguise, leader of the lobby for Israel-Africa relations, who said in a television interview:

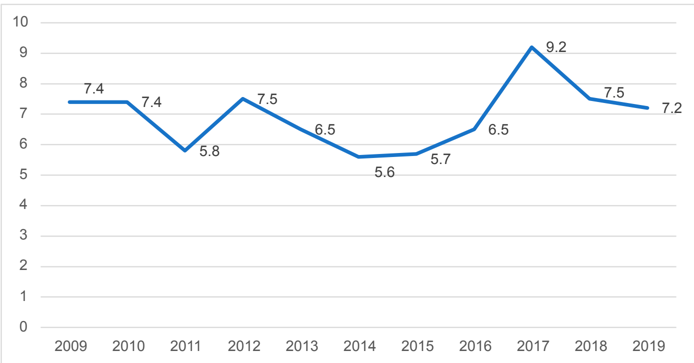

Figure 1. Total security exports, 2009-2019 (in billions of dollars)

Source: Azoulai, 2013; Dagoni, 2011; Milman, 2018; Mack, 2019; MOD website, 2017, 2018, 2019

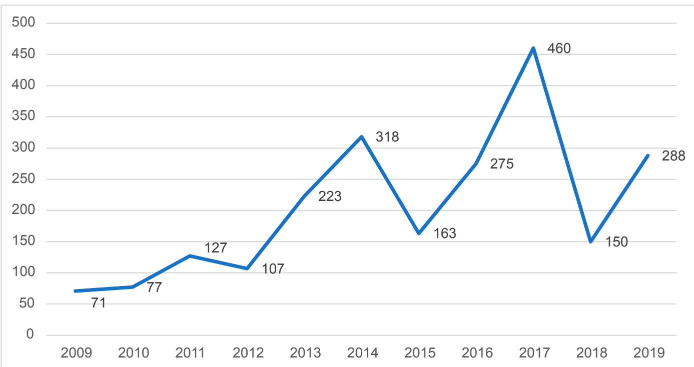

Figure 2. Security exports to Africa, 2009-2019 (in billions of dollars)

Source: Azoulai, 2013; Dagoni, 2011; Milman, 2018; Mack, 2019; MOD website, 2017, 2018, 2019

"We need Africa to vote for us in UN institutions. For example, today Ethiopia is a member of the Security Council….We want Ethiopia to be with us, and the same goes for other countries in various UN organizations, such as UNESCO" (Channel 20, 2016). Gil Haskel, head of Mashav (the Foreign Ministry Agency for International Development Cooperation) said: "We are more motivated to help countries that are particularly friendly. The basket of considerations for where to direct our aid absolutely includes a political consideration" (Kahane, 2018). Arieh Oded, Israel's former ambassador to a number of African countries, discussing Netanyahu's visit to Africa, said that "one of the goals of the visit is to change the situation, so that they won't automatically vote against us, or that they'll at least abstain" (Cohen, 2016). These expressions indicate the importance Israel attaches to the political motive in its contacts with Africa.

The Security Aspect of Israel-Africa Relations

As a rule, information about Israeli exports of large weapons (aircraft, naval vessels, and tanks) is more available and usually revealed in reports that Israel sends each year to UNROCA.[6] However, these reports do not include information about deals involving light weapons. The same applies to information provided by Sibat, which does present official data about the scope of Israel's security exports to Africa—which amounted to 2 percent of all deals in 2018, and even doubled in 2019 to 4 percent of all deals (Ministry of Defense website, 2019, n.d.)—but still gives no information about the types of weapons, the destination countries, or sales brokered by third parties. The average annual value of Israel's security exports is about $7.5 billion, of which $200-400 million annually comes from Africa (Tzuriel & Passovsky, 2019). Over the past decade there has been a gradual increase in security exports to the continent, as shown in Figures 1 and 2.

The data show that from a global perspective, the scope of Israel's security deals in Africa is marginal compared to other regions. However, although an analysis of the export reports that Israel sent to UNROCA in 1992-2018 reveals that they are partial since they do not include information about light weapons deals,[7] Figure 2 indicates the trend of moderate but consistent growth in sales to Africa. An examination of the last decade in Figure 2 shows that while security exports to Africa totaled $71 million in 2009, by 2019 they had reached $288 million, that is, an increase of 306 percent (notwithstanding the fluctuations in 2012 and 2017). Moreover, when compared to general security exports, which have remained stable and even declined slightly—from $7.4 billion in 2009 to $7.2 billion in 2019 (a decrease of 3 percent)—there is a more significant growth in the size of security exports to Africa. This is particularly striking over the last two years, in which general exports shrank from $7.5 to 7.2 billion, while security exports to Africa doubled. In other words, while general security exports declined, security exports to Africa increased. Although these trends point to a growth in security exports, they also show that security ties are a basic and important building block in Israel's relations with countries in Africa, which is largely due to the fact that Israel's security interests coincide with those of African states and the survival of their regimes. The widely-reported 2009 visit of Foreign Minister Lieberman to five African countries included a large delegation of businesspeople, some representing companies engaged in security exports. Lieberman's last visit to Africa as Defense Minister in 2018 also demonstrated Africa's importance to Israel and the scope of the security aid it provides to countries in that continent.

According to SIPRI, in 2006-2010 Israel supplied various types of large weapons to Cameroon, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Lesotho, Nigeria, Rwanda, the Seychelles, South Africa, and Uganda. Nigeria is the leading importer in Africa of Israeli weapons, accounting for almost 50 percent of all Israel's security exports to the sub-Sahara (Wezeman, 2011). Israel is one of the six main suppliers of light weapons to Africa, together with Russia, China, the United States, Germany, and Belgium (Boutwell & Klare, 2000). Additional information about Israeli exports of light weapons to Africa can be gleaned from evidence gathered from photographs of armies and national guards in African countries (in Cameroon, a unit of the national guard was even nicknamed "the Israeli unit"), showing soldiers equipped with rifles and other weapons manufactured by Israeli Military Industries (Mack, 2019; Wezeman, 2011). These photographs are evidence of Israeli-manufactured weapons (improved Galil, Uzi, and Tavor rifles and Negev machine guns) in the hands of various African security forces, and they also tell us about the destination countries for security exports (including Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lesotho, Swaziland, Botswana, Nigeria, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, and Djibouti) (Wezeman, 2011).

Evidence of the use of Israeli light weapons in African states can also be found in reports from human rights groups. For example, an Amnesty International report states that Galil assault rifles made in Israel are among the main weapons used in the civil war in South Sudan (Amnesty International, 2014); this joins cooperation with the South Sudanese Ministry of Internal Security, including Israeli assistance to install and operate surveillance equipment for internal checks (Gross, 2015). In addition, Kenya and Uganda, countries that are worried about the growing influence of extremist Islamist organizations in their territory against a background of instability, particularly in Somalia, make use of Israeli security light weapons assistance to deal with this challenge (UPI, 2010; Bishku, 2017). According to SIPRI, since 2002 Uganda has been one of the Israeli security industry's largest clients, with purchases including rifles, mortars, and even upgrades of MIG planes (Wezeman, 2011).

In addition to exports of weapon systems, Israel is also involved in the maintenance, renovation, and upgrade of the systems, including fighter planes from other manufacturers, in countries such as Uganda, Angola, and Kenya (Melman, 2016; Wezeman, 2011). Moreover, Israel provides assistance in the training of security forces and presidential guards. For example, Israel trained the presidential guard in Equatorial Guinea, and the special forces of Uganda and the Nigerian navy. Israel also trained pilots for the Ugandan Air Force and updated its fleet of fighter planes, which participated in Uganda's war against the LRA (Lord's Resistance Army). Israel has brokered security deals between African countries and global arms suppliers, for example between Serbia and Chad, Niger, Nigeria, and Uganda, and in general, former senior members of the Israeli security system living in Africa play an important role in closing arms deals. Private security firms and private businesspeople often replace official security ties between countries—for example, in Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cameroon, Liberia, and Angola, in which there are violent internal conflicts—in a way that does not usually reflect Israeli policy and may even damage its image (Melman, 2016; Wezeman, 2011; Chazan, 2006).

For Israel, security exports are a vital element of economic development and maintenance of its military industries, certainly since the local market is limited when compared to the international market.

Assessment

Israel has several obvious interests to promote in Africa: the economic interests of expanding the activity of its military industries and increasing security exports; strategic interests connected to the Red Sea coast and the need to secure its shipping routes; military interests, such as the efforts to keep Iran out of the continent and block Islamic terror; and political interests, relating to the attempt to gain the support of African states in UN institutions. In order to achieve these objectives, Israel uses security exports and aid (in addition to civilian aid) to meet its own needs as well as those of the client countries. The central argument of this article refers to the prominence of the security dimension represented by security exports, partly against a background of an ongoing decline in "soft" aid from Israel, certainly in comparison with the 1950s and 1960s (Belman Inbal & Zahavi, 2009).

The Foreign Ministry makes efforts to highlight Israel's contribution to countries all over the world, including in Africa, with aid for agricultural, medical, and water development, as well as targeted aid following natural disasters, so-called "disaster diplomacy." But Israel's foreign aid budget, which was only 20 million NIS in 2017, is one of the lowest among OECD countries.[8] Moreover, in total contrast to the 1950s and 1960s, when Mashav was one of the Foreign Ministry's largest departments, today it operates on a tiny budget. For example, Israel allocates only 0.07 percent of GDP to foreign aid—only a tenth of its OECD requirement (Landman, 2018; Mitvim, 2018).

These figures—minute foreign aid budgets on the one hand, and security cooperation worth billions of shekels in 2019 on the other hand—show the dominance of the security component in the expansion of Israeli activity in Africa. Taking a broad view, they also reinforce the claim of the dominance of the security establishment in Israel's considerations and decision making processes in the field of foreign relations. For Israel, security exports are a vital element of economic development and maintenance of its military industries, certainly since the local market is limited when compared to the international market. Corroboration for this view comes from Itai Mack, who states that 70-80 percent of security production is for export and not the IDF (Mack, 2019). Moreover, African countries that have already bought Israeli security equipment represent a potential for further deals, such as the need to upgrade systems (UPI, 2010). In addition, Israel's willingness to supply weapon systems, knowledge, and security equipment to regimes whose sensitivity to human and civil rights is low may be at the center of controversy, but it also contributes to the competitiveness of Israeli security companies (Wezeman, 2011).

One of Israel's goals is to limit Iranian influence in the region. The development of military ties is essential to promote this goal, and it appears that Israel is managing to achieve its strategic, security, and military objectives in Africa. On the other hand, the response to its political goals of achieving the support of African countries in international institutions, particularly the UN, is limited. One way to assess political support is to examine the voting patterns of African countries on anti-Israel resolutions passed by the UN General Assembly. It is possible to discern a positive trend, but this is largely expressed by abstentions or absences from voting, rather than voting directly for Israel (Salman, 2020).

So what are the contributions of the growth in security exports and in security ties to the expansion of Israel's relations with African states? Taking a broad view, security exports represent a considerable contribution to Israel's economy and national security. Security exports account for 10 percent of total industrial exports and are an important growth engine (MOD website, 2019). Moreover, it is not impossible that Israel's position as one of the world's ten leading security exporters improves its standing in the international arena. The analysis of data in this article indicates that while the volume of general security exports remained stable over the past decade, there has been a moderate but steady rise, notwithstanding some fluctuations, in security exports to Africa. Although the volume of security deals in Africa is marginal compared to other regions of the world, it has features that support the claim that the security dimension is an increasingly important element, becoming stronger than economic and other considerations, in Israel's attempts to achieve closer ties in Africa.

As a rule, the explanation for closer ties lies in a number of factors. In South Sudan there are very positive feelings toward Israel, mainly thanks to Israel's support and assistance in their revolt against Arab Sudan in the late 1960s, part of their struggle for independence (Gidron, 2018), but also because of their Christian identity and the religious significance they attribute to Israel. Rwanda identifies with Israel, partly because of its own experience with genocide. In addition to the historic ties between Israel and some African countries, Israel's close ties to the United States also likely play a part for African countries that believe that good relations with Israel could "open doors in Washington" (Michael & Salman, 2020; Gidron, 2020). In this context, the recent normalization of Israel's relations with Sudan is striking, where Sudan's main motives are stronger ties with the United States, receiving US economic aid, and removing itself from the list of terror-supporting countries (Bergman & Walsh, 2020).

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Israel's civilian contacts in Africa also have a positive effect on relations between the countries. Although this may not be expressed in voting patterns at the UN, it can be seen at other levels, as indicated by Gil Haskel's remarks on Kenya: "Kenya [is] a country that supports us politically and where we have the most extensive economic activity in Africa. That doesn't mean they're with us at every UN vote, but political support means that in their political statements…they have good things to say about Israel and Israel's other activity" (Kahane, 2018). Indeed, with Kenya, as with Ethiopia, Israel has broad and open civilian and security ties that serve the interests of Jerusalem, Addis Ababa, and Nairobi, and yet both of them tend to vote

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against Israel. So the ability to translate Israel's civilian (and security) contacts into political support, certainly in the short range, exists but is limited, as Haskel explains:

> It is very difficult to prove an unambiguous link between foreign aid and an immediate political dividend. It is far easier to prove the long term benefit, both political and economic… When you look at it over the years, you see that in countries where Israel has invested, ultimately there is more economic activity and more political benefit. (Kahane, 2018)

At the same time, security ties have acquired increasing importance for Israel-Africa relations in recent years, in spite of the official efforts by Jerusalem to minimize this trend. This is particularly striking in the case of countries for which it is possible to say with confidence that the security element is central, such as Eritrea, Uganda, and even Chad, whose official relations with Israel are growing closer. The threat of Islamic terror in the east and west of the continent, and the need for regimes to ensure their survival, helps to reinforce the security dimension of African relations with Israel.

A number of conclusions emerge. First, Israel uses hard power by granting military and security aid, and soft power through other aid—to promote shared interests, mainly relating to security. Contrary to the nature of Israel-Africa relations up to the 1970s, which had an ideological dimension of identification between states that had struggled for independence, current relations are based more on a confluence of interests for mutual benefit.

Second, the security links point to the prominence of the security-economic element in Israel's relations with African countries. Once again we see a change in the trend of Israeli policy toward Africa; in the 1950s and 1960s support was based on soft power and technical assistance provided by Mashav, while in recent years security exports have become significantly stronger, as technical assistance aspects have declined. Nevertheless, the official tendency among security elements in Israel remains—to limit as far as possible any public discussion of Israel's security links worldwide, including Africa. There is much discrepancy here, because there is a large official propaganda effort to publicize civilian links, even though the scope of Israeli foreign aid has shrunk dramatically over the years, compared to security links in Africa, which in 2019 were worth billions of shekels. This was well expressed by Yossi Melman: "There is no other democratic country in the world that censors information about its security export deals" (Melman, 2017a). Therefore, considering the importance of security exports for Israel's relations with African countries, and leaving aside any ethical questions that arise (which are important in themselves, but outside the scope of this article), it would be possible to limit the policy of non-transparency and give some expression to the security dimension, because of its important role in promoting Israel's foreign relations in Africa.

In conclusion, this article highlights the goals of Israel and African states in seeking closer ties, and analyzes at length the security contacts that Israel uses in order to increase its influence in the continent. But although the security channel is prominent, it is likely that the whole fabric of civilian and security links helps accelerate the process of strengthening ties and helps Israel to establish its status on the African continent, which is a contribution to its own national security.

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Notes

1. Support for this claim can be found with Itai Mack, a lawyer who deals with human rights and works to increase transparency and supervision of Israel's security exports. In an email exchange with me, Mack said he had no data about security exports, and that he was not sure if anyone had all the data, "because of the secrecy in this field."
2. This refers to the smaller number of wars between states, alongside a growing number of internal conflicts. See Pettersson et al., 2019; Pettersson & Eck, 2018.
3. Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.
4. See: Foreign Ministry, List of Countries and Status of Relations with Israel: https://www.gov.il/he/departments/general/israeli_relations
5. Sibat—the Security Export Division of the Ministry of Defense.
6. United Nations Register of Conventional Arms.
7. See https://www.unroca.org/
8. The OECD requires its members to allocate 0.7% of GDP to foreign aid as a target for their development budgets, http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/the07odagnitarget-ahistory.htm

Bedouin children in the Judean Desert. Photo: Dror Avi (CC BY-SA 3.0)

Tribalism, Religion, and State in Bedouin Society in the Negev: Between Preservation and Change

Havatzelet Yahel and Atef Abu-Ajaj

This article deals with Bedouin society in the Negev, which is positioned on Israel's social, economic, and geographic margins. Using Bourdieu's field theory, it examines the three main fields in which Bedouin society is active: tribalism, religion, and state. It then demonstrates the dynamic between the fields in the tension between preservation and change by analyzing four issues: higher education, polygamy, the call of the muezzin, and police stations. The principal findings indicate that tribal norms currently determine much of Bedouin society's way of life. At the same time, in recent decades, the force of religion has increased significantly. Together with religion, the influence of the state has become stronger and is challenging tribal rules, and even to some extent the religion field. Nevertheless, to date, the force of the other two fields outweighs the state's influence. The field theory enables a new analysis of the forces operating in Bedouin society, and allows a better understanding of its complexity.

Keywords: Bedouin, Negev, Israel, Islam, tribalism, polygamy, education, social resilience, social cohesion, national security

Introduction

Social resilience, a key component of national resilience, is recognized in the literature as an important element in national security. Studies have emphasized that national security should not be addressed in a narrow fashion; rather, it is essential to consider a broader range of topics, including issues pertaining to social cohesion (Elran et al., 2015; Michael & Fishman, 2019; Kahan et al., 2005; Amit & Fleischer, 2009). The resilience of a society with many deep rifts, when certain elements feel excluded and alienated, is greatly reduced. It detracts from the society's national resilience and its ability to cope with challenges. In 2018, recognition of the connection between social cohesion and national security issues prompted the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) to conduct a number of studies on the subject, among them an extensive survey of the Bedouin population in the Negev. The current study makes use of this survey's findings.

The discussion of social cohesion and social resilience in the context of Bedouin society in the Negev can address various facets. For example, internal cohesion can be examined, or alternatively, the focus can be on cohesion of Israel society in general, in which Bedouin society is one of the components. This article examines aspects affecting the internal cohesion of Bedouin society, which also impact on the state-wide context. The analysis relies on social cohesion theory and the assumption that the integration of the Bedouin society in the Negev in Israeli society is desirable and a matter of national importance (Goldberg Commission, 2008; Yahel, 2019). Our goal is to provide insights into Bedouin society in the Negev and its existing dynamic that will enable the recommendation of new processes leading to better integration of that population into Israeli society.

There are many theories that address interaction between individuals and groups in society and their identities. One is social constructivism (Wendt, 1987), which holds that social identity is based primarily on the definition of the "I" versus the "other." According to this approach, identity is dynamic, as individuals in society change their identity according to changing interactions and interests (Jepperson et al., 1996). To the best of our understanding, while this theory of identities and similar approaches are useful in understanding the identity dynamic existing in the Western world, which is based on concepts of freedom and individualism, they are less suitable for describing processes and phenomena in conservative societies operating according to rigid rules, and whose focus is more on the group and less on the individuals themselves. Bedouin society is a fundamentally conservative society divided into distinctive sub-groups with a clear hierarchy between them. Consequently, analyzing it on a dynamic individualistic identity basis will not provide the necessary broad picture. The same applies to the structuration theory of Giddens (1989), which concentrates on understanding social practices over axes of time and space, with an emphasis on the activity of agents. Despite its advantages, it has been adapted to explain processes in post-traditional societies but lacks the depth necessary for understanding processes in societies with prominent traditional elements.

The analysis relies on social cohesion theory and the assumption that the integration of the Bedouin society in the Negev in Israeli society is desirable and a matter of national importance.

Bourdieu's field theory was chosen because of its suitability for understanding social processes and phenomena in a broad variety of societies, including conservative collectivist societies. It can be used simply and effectively in order to understand specific events, and provides tools for evaluating trends as they unfold, including an explanation of dialectic relations. Furthermore, it allows connecting subjective dimensions to objective dimensions existing in social life (Abu-Ajaj, 2019).

Relying on the field theory, the study analyzes the dynamic existing between three main fields in which Bedouin society operates: tribalism, the Islamic religion, and the State of Israel. It further examines how this dynamic shapes the attitudes of the Bedouins, with an emphasis on four topics: higher education, polygamy, the call of the muezzin, and police stations. The current study stresses previously unexamined phenomena, while taking into account the findings of a 2018 survey commissioned by INSS and conducted by Public Opinion Research of Israel (PORI).

Along with the selected fields, there are additional fields that influence Bedouin society, including Palestinianism and Arabism. This study does not deal with these fields, because they are less suitable for applying the tools offered by Bourdieu's theory. First, the existing research literature cites tribalism, religion, and the state as the main influence on the lives of the Bedouin (Abu-Rabia, 2011; Stewart, 2006).[1] Second, only the fields that we selected have a clear and tested system of laws and binding behavioral norms that cover a broad range of human activities and have penetrated into many spheres of life. This significance exists only to a lesser extent, or not at all, in other fields. Needless to say, this does not negate the importance of future studies involving additional fields.

The first part of the article offers a brief literature review, including data about the Negev Bedouins and general principles of the field theory. The second part applies the theory to the three designated fields through a specification of the fields and a presentation of their respective rules, capital, and primary agents. The third part presents the survey and samples the findings about four topics. The final part summarizes and provides recommendations.

Literature Review

The Negev Bedouins: General Background

A review of the literature reveals that the Bedouin population in the Negev is among the most highly researched populations in Israel. The accelerated modernization processes it has undergone, the end of nomadism, and the transition to permanent settlements have attracted researchers from a variety of disciplines. For the purpose of the current study, studies dealing in processes of change undergone by Bedouin society in the Negev, such as those of Ben-David (2004) and Marx (2006), are especially relevant. A number of studies have delved into the changes that took place in Bedouin identity in recent decades (Algoran, 2006; Al-Atawneh, 2015; Dinero, 2004), while the study by Kressel et al. (1991) emphasizes the changes in land uses relating to the transition from a tribal-traditional-nomadic society to a permanently settled society. The reciprocal relations between the groups within Bedouin society have also affected the changes undergone by this society, as shown by the studies of Marx (1967), Kressel (1976), and Ben-David and Gonen (2001). Other aspects are cited in the study by Mintzker (2015), which deals with groups in the Negev Mountains that did not move to regular settled communities, and a study by Galilee (2013), which deals with the changes as reflected in burial customs. These studies fit in with broader studies about the processes of change underway in nomadic and tribal societies around the world in their interface with religion and with the modern state (Ayubi, 1991; Khazanov, 1995; Khoury & Kostiner, 2004; Rabi, 2016).

Other matters addressed in the literature involve the relationship between the state and the Bedouins in the context of settlements founded for them and the question of land ownership. There is extensive criticism of the existing Israeli policy in the literature, including charges that the government policy is discriminatory because it was designed to deprive the Bedouins of their rights (Ben-Israel, 2009; Yiftachel, 2000; Meir, 2006; Porat, 2009; Nasasra, 2011); there is also criticism of the central government's inconsistency and lack of interest in dealing with the subject, symptomatic of the government's general neglect of the Negev and its population (Yahel, 2019). There are likewise studies on the Bedouins in the context of majority-minority relations and in the context of issues concerning indigeneity (for example, see Kedar et al., 2018, as opposed to Yahel et al., 2012). Furthermore, there is a range of publications in additional fields dealing with educational, social, health, and other matters (Abu-Naja, 2004; Al-Krenawi & Slonim-Nevo, 2005).

According to an analysis of figures from the Central Bureau of Statistics and the Population and Immigration Authority, nearly 280,000 Bedouins live in the Negev (as of January 2021). This is the youngest population in Israel, with 51 percent children under 18. A majority of the Bedouins live in 18 settled communities founded and recognized by the state. Approximately 70,000 people live in the city of Rahat, about 100,000 residents live in other towns, and 20,000 more in two regional councils. These communities are run by local authorities and local committees. At the same time, nearly 80,000 Bedouin live outside the localities recognized by the state (Online database, n.d.). There is a shortage of employment in all of these communities (Abu-Bader & Gottlieb, 2009); the population is the poorest in Israel; and their communities figure among the two lowest socioeconomic groups. Due to a combination of factors originating in failures by the authorities and the existing norms in Bedouin society, the communities suffer from a shortage of available lots for construction. Although the prices of the lots and development in the Bedouin communities are subsidized by the state, some young people find it difficult to shoulder the costs. The conditions outside the established communities are more difficult, because there is no regular connection to infrastructure, such as water, sewage, and electrical systems, and the services provided to them by the authorities are extremely limited.

The population is the poorest in Israel; and their communities figure among the two lowest socioeconomic groups.

Bourdieu's Field Theory

French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu sought to explain the daily behavior typical of societies (Silverman, 2011). He developed a series of concepts, headed by "field," "agent," and "capital," to argue that in contrast to existing one-dimensional approaches, man is not merely a subject or object in society (Swartz, 1992; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1997; Abu-Ajaj, 2019).

Bourdieu borrowed the term "field" from physics, which is based on forces and objects operating in space (Thomson, 2008). A social field is an arena created in an environment of people and institutions organized around an important shared interest. Various spheres of social and cultural life are organized as a field, each with its own coherence. A "game" takes place in a field, meaning permitted structures and paths in which "agents" act (Bourdieu, 1993). Each field has an internal logic, and a variety of forces operate in it: autonomous, oriented, dynamic, inflexible, and others. The rules of the game determine the internal hierarchy, the control mechanisms in the field, the types of "capital" that the field can offer, and the "habitus"—a system of behaviors acquired by individuals as part of the socialization process. This refers, among other things, to habits, qualifications, and even physical inclinations. The agents can influence and change the rules, and their success is reflected, inter alia, in their ability to determine the rules (Osnat, 2004), for example by setting a rule whose control they are allowed to bequeath to their descendants (Gelernter, 2006).

The characteristics of the field, its independence, the clarity of its rules, and the force of the struggles taking place within it have a direct impact on the agents' activity. The affinity between the fields is connected to the separate historical development of each field and how they integrate (Tubin & Tal, 2011). Since the rules of the game in a field are determined by the agents operating in it, the success of external agents in introducing new rules indicates a weakening of the field's autonomy. At the same time, the force of each field and the relations between the fields result from the ability of one field to change the rules of the other field. The extent of each field's autonomy can be measured according to the extent, quantity, and force of penetration of the rules that it applies to the organization, management, and supervision over those in it.

The agents within each field influence the types of capital from which the hierarchies and positions of power are derived. There are various compositions of capital. In addition to economic capital, which consists mainly of money and assets, there is also cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986; Gelernter, 2006), social capital representing a network of social connections with individuals and institutions (Bourdieu, 1983), and symbolic capital, which reflects how the individual's status is perceived by others (Bourdieu, 1991).

There are conversion ratios between the different types of capital that can take place between the fields. It is thus relatively easy to convert economic capital to cultural and social capital. The agents need this conversion of types of capital because certain elements are sometimes unobtainable with economic capital alone; a specific social capital is needed. An agent's social capital consists of ethnic origin, religion, and family origin, as well as education and qualifications acquired or expertise in a given sphere. Bourdieu contends that non-material capital gives added social and cultural capital to the agents operating within the fields. By using symbolic capital, for example, actors can legitimize balances of power within symbolic structures. This can be demonstrated in the religion field, for instance, when the cultural capital in general, and particularly linguistic capital, enables agents to improve their social status. This linguistic capital is expressed in the knowledge of religious terms that refer to sources from the ancient culture of Islam. The image of senior agents in the religion field such as imams and preachers is linked to the status of their rhetoric, or in Bourdieu's terms, the strength of their linguistic capital.

The field theory, with all its advantages, also has considerable drawbacks (Thomson, 2008), led by the difficulty in defining the fields and delineating the boundaries of each field. This involves the continual changes within each field and the changing affinities between the fields. Furthermore, defining the world as a collection of fields results in a large number of fields, which makes it difficult to count them and assign a higher priority to the more relevant fields over less relevant ones. Beyond this, it is asserted that the theory does not provide an adequate separate response to the spatial expressions of each field. Despite these criticisms, the theory's advantages, which lie in the explanation that it provides for the phenomena existing in Bedouin society in the Negev, outweigh its drawbacks (Abu-Ajaj, 2019).

The Fields and their Relationships in the Context of Bedouin Society in the Negev

The study focuses on applying Bourdieu's field theory to Bedouin society in the Negev, with an emphasis on tribalism, the religion of Islam, and the state.

Tribalism

Tribalism in general and nomadic tribalism in particular is a form of life with deep roots in human history. The phenomenon came into being primarily as a result of the difficult living conditions of nomads who lack permanent walls. Regulating the social, cultural, economic, and political aspects of life, it is based on blood ties of dynasties of relatives on the father's side, and is built on a hierarchal network of connections and obligations that includes, inter alia, the solidarity group also known as the blood money group or *hams*, the tribe, and the confederation (El-Aref, 1944; Algoran, 2006; Ashkenazi, 2000; Ben-David, 2004; Ben-David & Gonen, 2001; Bar-Zvi, 1979; Marx, 1967).

In the Middle East, cultural-tribal frameworks were preserved from the period preceding the establishment of modern states. The rules, customs, and traditions followed by the Bedouin tribes in the region are similar (Stewart, 2006), and they all share the Arabic language in local dialects. Tribalism still occupies a prominent place in the Middle East, even after most of the Bedouins have undergone processes of permanent settlement in countries such as Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Yemen, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, and others (Rabi, 2016). Although researchers have noted the difficulty in defining "tribe" and "tribalism," in the Bedouin context, the tribe is usually regarded as a social and political organization incorporating within itself groups having a common culture, customs, and language, while the glue connecting them is the idea that they are descendants on their father's side of a common ancient ancestor (Tapper, 1983; Stewart, 2012). The question of a shared past is significant in preserving the traditional structures (Algoran, 2006).

Rules of the game in the tribal field include an assortment of customs and patterns of acceptable behavior assimilated over many years (Tapper, 1983). This refers to what is allowed and what is forbidden in the framework of relations within the family and between families, the arrangement of weddings and funerals, customs for receiving guests, and the like. One important rule is the obligation of uncompromising solidarity in the tribal collective (Salzman, 2004; Steward, 2012). Another element is the tribal legal system and the method of settling disputes (Abu-Rabia, K., 2011; Abu-Rabia, 2018; Alsraiha, 2016; Bar-Zvi, 1979; Shahar, 1997; Stewart, 2006).

Types of capital in the tribal field include numerical size, which dictates the balance of power between the families and the tribes, the purity of the dynasty and the origin, and the extent of control of land as an expression of power (Kressel et al., 1991). After the founding of the State of Israel, land became a source of friction with the field of the state (Yahel, 2019). Another kind of capital is honor (Stewart, 2000).

Key agents in the tribal field are the sheikhs and tribal leaders, the large groups (Alon, 2007; Mor, 1971; Marx, 1967; Alon, 2016), and senior figures in the tribal legal system.

Religion

Islam arose in the seventh century in the Arabian Peninsula and swept through the Bedouin tribes. It offers a comprehensive way of life that combines religious activity by man toward God, belief in God, religious rites, and a system of moral values between men and between man and society, such as honesty, sincerity, good behavior, and more (Abu-Freih, 2014). Islam can be viewed as a technical label, a folkloristic-cultural framework, or a binding and comprehensive framework of religious law. There are various movements within Islam. One, which has garnered substantial support among the Bedouin in the Negev, is the Islamic movement, whose southern branch developed there. According to Uriya Shavit, this movement promotes a concept that incorporates three fundamental assumptions. The first is that in the long term, the sole legitimate political framework is the *ummah* or *ummat al-Islām*, which unites all Islam believers without discrimination on the basis of ethnic origin or language. The second is that the binding framework in all areas of life, including the political sphere, is Islam. The third is that harmful Western influences should be driven out of Muslim societies (Shavit, 2011, p. 22). It is therefore clear that the concept of the Islamic *ummah* challenges both the concepts of the liberal democratic state and those of the tribal frameworks.

The rules of the game in the field of religion are Islamic religious law (*shari'a*), based on the Qur'an and the Sunna—the Islamic oral law (Abu-Freih, 2014; Ilan, 2002). *Shari'a* is interwoven between religious ritual and daily life, while setting rigorous standards and highlighting the negative consequences for anyone not observing it. The five basic commandments binding on every Muslim are the oath, prayer, the fast of Ramadan, charity, and pilgrimage (hajj) (Lazarus-Yafeh, 1980). Furthermore, every Muslim is commanded to take action to settle conflicts between people and between groups.

Types of capital in the religion field include knowledge and higher education in religious studies and in other educational frameworks; this is evidenced by the education of the candidates representing the Islamic Movement in elections. Additional capital is belonging to a social framework based on joint religious activity. Another type is linguistic capital of power of expression that facilitates the use of religious terms, and a dress code, including a white gallabiyah (robe) and a beard.

Agents include religious figures—the imams at the head of the community of believers and those responsible for managing and leading the prayers and the mosques, the preachers responsible for weekly sermons in mosques, and the muezzin.

Permanent settlement severs the dependence on the tribal framework, thereby enabling the state to constitute a direct organizational substitute for the members of the group.

The State

According to Max Weber, a state is a political organization possessing the right and exclusive ability to use force toward a population with a distinct identity within a defined territory (Weber 1919/ 2015; Ophir, 2010). Ernest Gellner also declares that the modern state has a monopoly of force and uses it through separate authorities—the police and the courts (Gellner, 2006). Other definitions emphasize mechanisms for dividing authority and forces (Eisenstadt, 1978). Through its laws, the state sets binding rules for behavior by the population, and is obligated to care for the people's security, economic needs, education, welfare, health, and more. The nation-state serves as a source of affiliation and identity (Gellner, 2006).

States seek to move nomadic societies to permanent settlements for a variety of reasons, including a desire to control them and the land. Permanent settlement severs the dependence on the tribal framework, thereby enabling the state to constitute a direct organizational substitute for the members of the group (Khazanov, 1984; Khoury & Kostiner, 1990; Rabi, 2016; Salzman, 2004; Bocco, 2006; Kark & Frantzman, 2012). Israel differs from Arab countries that are home to Bedouins primarily in the contexts of culture, language, religion, and regime.

Before the State of Israel was founded in 1948, the number of Bedouins in the Negev was estimated at 65,000. Following the War of Independence, only 15 percent of the Bedouins living there remained, while the new borders that emerged separated tribes and families. The state recognized those who remained as a "friendly" population, and even allowed thousands of them to return to the Negev and obtain Israeli citizenship (Yahel & Kark, 2015). At the same time, in the early years following the establishment of the state, the Bedouins were perceived as a security risk, both because of their nomadic way of life and due to their proximity to the borders and their connections with Arab countries. With this background, and given Israel's desire to use the land for other purposes, among them development, immigrant absorption, Jewish settlement, and security needs, Bedouins living in the Negev gradually moved to the northeastern Negev area, encompassing 1.1 million dunams (275,000 acres). A military administration was imposed in this region, as well as on the other Arab citizens (Bäuml, 2007), imposing restrictions on movement, and implementing a licenses regime. The Bedouin economy underwent many changes, mainly because of a reduction in the high-quality agricultural areas and pastures that had been at their disposal in the western Negev (Meir, 2006).

Even after the military government was dismantled in 1966, the situation of the Bedouins remained difficult. The state established special mechanisms for dealing with the challenges posed by Bedouin society, particularly in the context of land rights and their permanent settlement. An Operational Administration was set up in 1979 to resettle the Bedouins removed from Tel Malhata in order to establish the IDF Nevatim airbase as part of the arrangements accompanying the peace treaty with Egypt (Yahel & Kark, 2016). A special educational authority was founded for Bedouins in the Negev. Furthermore, a Bedouin administration was founded in the Israel Land Administration in 1986, which was later replaced by the Authority for Development and Settlement of the Bedouins in the Negev (Cabinet Resolution no. 1999, dated July 15, 2007). A special enforcement mechanism was subsequently established in the Ministry of the Interior for coordinating enforcement of land laws in the Negev (Cabinet Resolution No. 3707, dated September 11, 2011). In the past two decades, various task forces on this subject were established, most prominently, the teams headed by Justice (ret.) Eliezer Goldberg, Ehud Prawer, and Ze'ev Binyamin Begin (Goldberg Commission, 2008; Yahel, 2019).

Although the Bedouins moved to permanent residences, the state failed in providing them with the same level of services provided to other population groups in the areas of personal security, education, employment, health, and welfare. This leaves a substantial space for the development of alternative systems (Rudnitzky, 2012).

The rules of the game in the state field include principles of the rule of law, freedom, and equality. There is a separation of powers, with constant preservation of balance. The law in Israel is based on legislation and judicial review (Barak, 2000). Every citizen in the state is equal under the law, regardless of gender, origin, or religion. Underlying the system is the recognition of the existence of basic freedoms, with a person entitled to make his/her own independent decisions. Every person is responsible only for his/her own deeds.

Legislation in Israel takes place in the Knesset, and its laws are public and universal (Fuller, 1969; Rubinstein & Medina, 2005). The laws are implemented through a state enforcement system, comprising mainly the police and the courts (Barak, 2000). At the same time, there is criticism of how the law is applied. The authority of the executive branch is derived from the law, and the citizens are free to conduct any action not forbidden by law.

The types of capital in the state field are diverse, including physical force and enforcement agencies capital, economic capital, cultural capital, capital of information, symbolic capital, and more. The state's control of these types of capital gives it great power in comparison with other fields (Bourdieu et al., 1994). The principal security systems in Israel include those responsible for handling external and internal threats, with preservation of the law and public order among them. Military service confers social connections, prestige, and potential for economic leadership. It also has symbolic value that can be converted into economic capital (Levy, 2014). Bedouins can serve in the army on a voluntary basis. The proportion of Bedouins recruited is very low—less than 3 percent of men of draft age (State Comptroller's Report, 2018). Furthermore, the state has much control over economic capital, knowledge capital, and cultural capital. Although the Arabic language has an official status in Israel, knowledge and command of Hebrew and the majority culture are very significant.

The leading agents in the state field are the policymakers and political leaders elected in the national and local arena. In the local aspect, most Bedouin communities are run by residents. In the national sphere, however, their participation is on a small scale. Bedouins have never been part of a government, and only a few of them serve in public institutions and government ministries, including in the Authority for Development and Settlement of the Bedouin in the Negev. Despite the existence of programs for encouraging their recruitment in the police, few Bedouins express interest in this (State Comptroller's Report, 2018).

Dynamics of the Fields: The Survey Findings (INSS and PORI, 2018)

According to the theory presented above, the activity of the tribal, Islamic, and state fields takes place in a way that leads the dominant agents in each field to strive to preserve their power in the field through ongoing competition. The INSS and PORI survey provided us with a specific status report on the state of these struggles. This status report, combined with other sources, will help in analyzing expected trends. This section presents information about how the survey was conducted and its limitations, followed by a description of the dynamic between the fields as reflected in four areas: higher education, polygamy, the call of the muezzin, and police stations.

The 2018 survey (unpublished) was initiated by INSS and carried out by PORI, engaging local Bedouins to conduct face-to-face personal interviews in Arabic. The survey was conducted over a wide area, and response to the survey was high: 300 Bedouins in the 18-70 age bracket, half of them women, responded to the survey. Two thirds of the interviewees (200) live in regular communities, and one third (100) live outside them.

The survey has several limitations. The first is that it addresses the existing tribal and hierarchical status diversity in Bedouin society only to a partial extent. The second is overrepresentation of the 25-30 age bracket (34 percent). The third is overrepresentation of those with higher education. In view of these limitations, we have chosen to include additional sources as a basis for our findings (reports in the press and on Arabic language websites, laws, and existing research literature).

According to the self-perception expressed by the respondents, Islam is the most dominant element in their identity: 96 percent rated Islam as an important element in their identity (71 percent of them regarded it as very important). Bedouin identity was rated as important by 84 percent (52 percent regarded it as very important), while Israeli identity had the lowest rating—64 percent (24 percent regarded it as very important).[2] Seventy percent of the interviewees responded that they felt that they were part of the State of Israel and Israeli society.

In addition, when asked further about the role of religion in their lives, 86 percent answered that this was of central (49 percent) or medium importance (37 percent). Twelve percent said that religion was of marginal importance, and less than 2 percent answered that religion played no role in their lives. At the same time 44 percent of the respondents said that the Bedouin society around them was becoming less religious, 32 percent that there was no change, and only 24 percent said that the society around them was becoming more religious.

Analysis of Four Issues according to the Field Theory

Higher Education, Equality, and Freedom of Choice: State and Religion vs. Tribalism

Both the state and Islam encourage institutionalized formal education. For example, in institutions of higher education, special organizations have been founded that operate as part of the Islamic movements, and aim to encourage young men and women to pursue higher education and acquire knowledge. Organizations such as al-Qalam hold higher education open houses and explanatory meetings for high school students, and also offer student scholarships.[3]

Formal education was formerly not a part of the tribal field, and the nomadic way of life did not suit it (Algoran, 2006). Knowledge and practical experience were transmitted orally and directly between generations, and they were the source for acquiring education and knowledge (Abu-Saad, 2001). In the late 1970s, formal education for girls, and to a large extent also for boys, was limited to elementary school (Meir & Barnea, 1987). In recent years, over 70 percent of young Bedouins in the Negev finished high school, compared with 87 percent of the Arab population and 95 percent of the general population (excluding ultra-Orthodox and Bedouins). Among 12th grade students, 47 percent of the Bedouins in the Negev are eligible for matriculation, compared with 60 percent in Arab education and 73 percent of the general population (excluding ultra-Orthodox and Bedouins). The proportion of women who finish high school among the Bedouins is higher than the corresponding proportion among Bedouin men (Knesset Research and Information Center, 2017).

According to the survey, 90 percent of the participants believe that education is very important for success in life. Studying in institutions of higher learning is not perceived as contradicting adherence to religion (Feldman, 2020). Education among the Bedouin population was encouraged through the development of special programs and budgets for the purpose. These programs and budgets were effective, mainly among Bedouin women. In this gradual process, the state succeeded in helping hundreds of women—who until a few decades ago were forced by the tribal leaders to discontinue their studies at the end of sixth grade—to complete high school and to continue on to higher education. There are currently more Bedouin women in higher education than Bedouin men; 20 percent of the Bedouin women completing high school enter higher education, compared with 8 percent of men (Knesset Research and Information Center, 2018).

A byproduct of the education of women is promotion of the state's values, in the form of personal freedom, gender equality, and empowerment of the Bedouin woman. This is especially prominent in the context of marriage, because educated women are given greater independence in their choice of spouse (Feldman, 2020). Academic studies with men and women studying together also lead to acquaintance between them outside of the tribal or hierarchical status context. Institutions of higher education constitute a kind of neutral ground for young Bedouins. As a result of higher education and studying away from home, the tribal field has begun to absorb norms that are encouraged by the state and religion. While the matchmaking process was previously an internal tribal affair, these boundaries have now been breached, and marriage by women according to personal choice, including mixed marriages, have become common—exactly as recommended and encouraged by both Islam and the state. This conclusion emerges from news on the local social media in advance of the wedding season.[4]

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Higher education also contributes to a change in the tribal hierarchy. While positioning within the tribal field was previously determined according to dynasty and origin, determination of social status has gradually shifted to the level of education. The tribal hierarchy has also been greatly affected by trends toward the acquisition of higher education by individuals within the tribal field. Most of the leadership now emerging in this field is educated leadership. These findings emerge from an analysis of the educational data of those elected in the Bedouin local authorities, which showed that over 65 percent of elected officials had higher education.[5] Confirmation of this can be found in the educational level of those elected to the local authorities and the Knesset.

Thus the tribal field, which opposed formal education in the early years following the establishment of the state, has gradually changed its attitude toward education, and is now adopting the view of the state field and the religion field about acquiring an education in general, and higher education in particular.

Polygamy: State vs. Tribalism and Religion

Tribalism encourages large numbers of descendants. Polygamy contributes to numerical capital, thereby strengthening the power of origin and the dynasty. The phenomenon of a man marrying more than one wife was common for many years in Bedouin society, especially in the context of sheikhs who took pride in their many wives and dozens of descendants.

According to Islam, the Qur'an allows a man to marry four wives, unless there is a reasonable suspicion that he will not treat them equally. In practice, the *qadis* in the *shari'a* courts recognize these marriages as valid (Abu-Rabia, R., 2011). The argument by more and more women that such marriages should not be allowed, because the men do not treat their wives equally, remains marginal. In practice, polygamy preserves the tribal rules, including male hegemony, while receiving backing from the rules of the religion field.

According to estimates obtained from the welfare authorities, nearly a third of Bedouin men have more than one wife (Knesset Research and Information Center, 2006; 2013). According to the findings of the 2018 survey, 36 percent of the respondents expressed support for this phenomenon, and stated that it was undesirable for a man to have only one wife.

In contrast to the reinforcement from these fields, Israeli law bans polygamy, and the penalty imposed on those violating the law is a five-year prison term.[6] The state has linked the phenomenon to oppression of women, child abuse, and perpetuation of backwardness (Albador, 2005; Al-Krenawi & Slonim-Nevo, 2005). Nevertheless, the Ministry of Justice has not enforced this ban on the Negev Bedouins, although it was enforced in other regions (Yahel, 2017). In 2017, then-Minister of Justice Ayelet Shaked instituted measures designed to enforce the ban against polygamy in the Negev.[7] Since this decision was taken, polygamous marriages have continued, although the State Attorney's Office has filed several dozen indictments, some of which culminated in convictions. The survey found that 55 percent of the respondents believed that this justified legal protest. Another finding that can be explained using Bourdieu's field theory is that 24 percent of the respondents believe that there will be a severe confrontation between the tribal field and the state field if the State of Israel enforces the ban on polygamy.

To summarize, the meeting between the tribal field and the religion field, which encourage polygamy, and the state field, which has formally banned polygamy for many years but has taken no steps to enforce it, has enabled the phenomenon to continue.

The Call of the Muezzin: State vs. Religion

Another finding from the survey involves a dispute about the muezzin. According to Muslim tradition, the first call to prayer was ordered by the Prophet Mohammed. In later periods, high mosque towers were constructed, designed, inter alia, to facilitate believers hearing the call of the muezzin for prayer at long distances. Prayer times change according to the hour of sunrise, and the muezzin reads verses from the Qur'an before the dawn prayer. Today, it is common for the call of the muezzin in the public space to be amplified with a powerful public address system and loudspeakers. This phenomenon began as part of modernization processes, and has become accepted religious practice in the Arab communities.

The nomadic tribal tradition did not include prayer in a mosque, which is a permanent building, and is therefore unsuited to a nomadic society's way of life. The first mosque in the Negev was built at the initiative of the Ottomans around the time that Beer Sheva was founded in 1900. The first mosque built in a Bedouin community was initiated by local families in Rahat. These were the first families to settle in the new permanent settlement, and they asked the Ministry of Religious Services for financial assistance in building the mosque.[8] Since then, dozens of mosques have been built in the Bedouin communities (Algoran, 2006).

The survey shows that 76 percent of the interviewees pray at a mosque on Friday (42 percent answered that they always or usually pray, 34 percent that they pray sometimes); 24 percent answered that they usually do not pray. Taking into account that women, who have no religious obligation to pray in a mosque, account for half of the participants in the survey, the responses reflect the significance of religious ritual.

In recent years, with the introduction of powerful loudspeaker technology, the issue of the power of the public address system, especially in the early morning, has aroused a major dispute among non-Muslim population groups, with demands of the state to exercise its authority.[9] These demands included, inter alia, attempts to pass legislation, which aroused extensive public debate.[10] While the state regarded limiting the volume of a public address system as part of enforcement of the laws against noise, opposition to the measures arose among the Muslims in Israel. The survey findings confirmed that the Bedouins also perceived the measures as unacceptable interference with their customs: 85 percent answered that they would protest enforcement of restrictions on the volume of the muezzin, and 59 percent answered that they would respond very vigorously.

The field theory is likely to explain the above clash as part of the dynamic between the religion field and the state field. The survey findings reflect the power of religion against the state. This finding, combined with the Bedouin protests against a restriction on the volume of the call of the muezzin, shows how the Bedouins in the Negev regard the religious practices that were adopted on a large scale by the tribal field in recent decades. The force of norms dating back 50 years is sometimes equal to that of norms going back hundreds of years.

To summarize, it is clear that as a result of the meeting between Bedouin society and the religion of Islam, Bedouin society has fully accepted the norm of the call of the muezzin. In recent years, the State of Israel has had to address the issue of the volume of the call. The conflict on this matter is not confined to Bedouin society; it extends to all of the Muslim communities. Although as of the time of this writing the state has not taken any enforcement actions, the last word in the matter may have not yet been spoken.

23 percent believed that if the police presence in communities increased, it is liable to cause a severe clash.

Police Stations: Tribalism vs. the State

The level of violence in the Negev Bedouin communities in general, and in schools in particular, is high (Abid et al., 2018). At the same time, most of the respondents in the survey (79 percent) said that they had no wish for a significant increase in the police presence in their community; 23 percent believed that if the police presence in communities increased, it is liable to cause a severe clash (between the state field and the tribal field). These findings can be explained by the perception that police stations are an expression of the state's presence and its rules in the area. The extent of acceptance of the existence of police forces in the area indicates the degree of public consent to the rules and tools of state enforcement. The low level of support for a police presence shows that the Bedouins do not regard the state enforcement system as a factor providing a solution to internal problems. Bedouin society has rules for arranging affairs between people, including rules for settling disputes according to tribal and religious principles, and prefers the rules of its tribal and religious system. Furthermore, the small scale of a police presence means that many interfaces between the police and the community are in the context of state enforcement against activity perceived in Bedouin society as legitimate. One example of such enforcement is the demolition of buildings (Yahel, 2019).[11]

According to the survey's findings, in case of a clash between the Bedouin tribal rules and those of the state, 47 percent held that the state laws are supreme. Twenty-nine percent responded that tribal Bedouin law should be preferred, while 24 percent responded that there is no contradiction between the two. To the question "Is it sometimes justified to break the law in order to make a living?" 55 percent answered no; the question did not distinguish between different laws.

It is clear that in cases in which the state promotes norms that do not clash with the tribal field or the religion field, cooperation by Bedouin society is possible.

Army service is another path connected to the state enforcement mechanisms. According to the survey, 29 percent believe that it is desirable for young Bedouins to enlist in the army. Seventy-one percent do not believe that Bedouins should enlist in the army, and 45 percent are highly opposed to enlistment. A different picture emerged for civilian service, with 45 percent responding that civilian service by young Bedouins is desirable; 55 percent expressed opposition, including 31 percent that were highly opposed.

To summarize, in the meeting between the state law enforcement system and the tribal and religious system for settling disputes, as of now, there is a clear preference for the tribal and religious system over the state system.

Conclusion

The current study presents a new dimension to understanding the dynamic between preservation and change in parts of Bedouin society. The trends we have cited influence the connections within Bedouin society and the connections to Israeli society in general. The study uses findings from a survey conducted in Bedouin society in the Negev as its starting point, and the findings are combined with the theoretical system proposed by Bourdieu and an array of sources and other studies.

An analysis of the three fields—tribalism, religion, and the state—and the dynamic between them made it possible to present a range of preservation and change processes underway in Bedouin society. Each of the selected fields offers an array of rules of the game, types of capital, and prominent agents. The relations between the fields are examined through the findings presented on four issues: education, polygamy, the call of the muezzin, and police stations in the communities. In addition, the study demonstrates that by using this theory, a variety of matters, both specific and general, can be explained effectively. Furthermore, the theory's ability to view the dynamic and the unseen flows of each field and conceptualize them with the help of a specific status report arising from the survey findings is demonstrated.

Combining the sources used in the current study shows that when the state attempts to employ direct tools of legislation and enforcement in order to revoke the accepted rules of the game and capital in the tribal field, it encounters strong opposition and serious difficulty. This difficulty intensifies when religion combines forces with the tribal field. Regarding polygamy, the tribal tradition is supported by religious rules, while the state has avoided dealing with the issue for many years, even in circumstances in which a precise interpretation of the religious regulations is in dispute. A similar picture emerges regarding the state's attempt to limit the volume of the call of the muezzin in mosques. Here the tribal and religion fields join forces against the state field, and the survey findings reveal broad opposition.

On the other hand, it is clear that in cases in which the state promotes norms that do not clash with the tribal field or the religion field, cooperation by Bedouin society is possible. In the case of higher education, for example, the survey findings show that the tribal field can match other fields. The religion field's support for acquiring higher education, and not just religious education, helps in forming a coalition in this matter.

The study also finds that important aspects of the way of life in Negev Bedouin society are still determined by tribal norms. At the same time, the force of religion has greatly increased in recent decades, and has become an especially significant field. Together with the rise of the religion field, the state's force has also increased, though to date, its influence is more modest than that of the other two fields. As the state becomes present in broader areas of life and acts in conjunction with the other fields, its ability to exert influence will grow.

Our conclusion is that the use of Bourdieu's theory helps to analyze and understand points of friction between the fields, and provides profound explanations of the processes underway within and in the context of Bedouin society. Similarly, the theory helps map the existing interfaces between the fields, and in finding ways in which all of the fields can act together. The study indicates the existence of agents of change that draw Bedouin society closer to or more distant from Israeli society, and emerge in an analysis of the forces operating between the fields. Since cohesion is an element in national resilience—as Israel also acknowledged when it declared the integration of Bedouin society to be its goal—it is important to generate knowledge infrastructure, while at the same time improving the provision of services and physical infrastructures.

In this context, we recommend the following measures:

a. To conduct extensive and thorough mapping of all of the fields operating in Bedouin society, including those that are less influential.
b. To locate the connecting points between the fields and the existing trends in them, and act to strengthen the trends supporting integration of the Bedouins in the country, such as in education in general and the education of women in particular.
c. To locate the sources of friction between the fields, and to utilize the theory to analyze the possible connections, including those linked to the dynamic existing within the fields and between the agents—by expanding public information activity by the police, for example.
d. To conduct periodic thorough surveys that can provide more extensive and accurate information about the trends mentioned in the study, and about additional trends.
e. To continue conducting studies about Bedouin society, which assess the contribution of supplementary theories, while locating additional processes in Bedouin society and thoroughly analyzing the various elements.

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Notes

1 For studies of religion and tribalism, see Layish (2005) and Natour (1991).

2 The respondents were asked to rate the magnitude of their connection (very unimportant, unimportant, important, very important) in comparison with the range of identities.

3 Al-Qalam Facebook page مؤسسة القلم الشبابي https://he-il.facebook.com/QalamYuothAcademy

4 An analysis of the publications and invitations for July weddings in the Negev showed that nearly a third of the weddings were outside the family and/or the tribe.

5 The data were gathered from reports by elected officials in the various local authorities in the Negev, websites of the local authorities, and the personal websites of the elected officials.

6 Section 176 of the Criminal Code -1977, *Book of Laws* 1977 No. 846, August 4, 1977, p. 226.

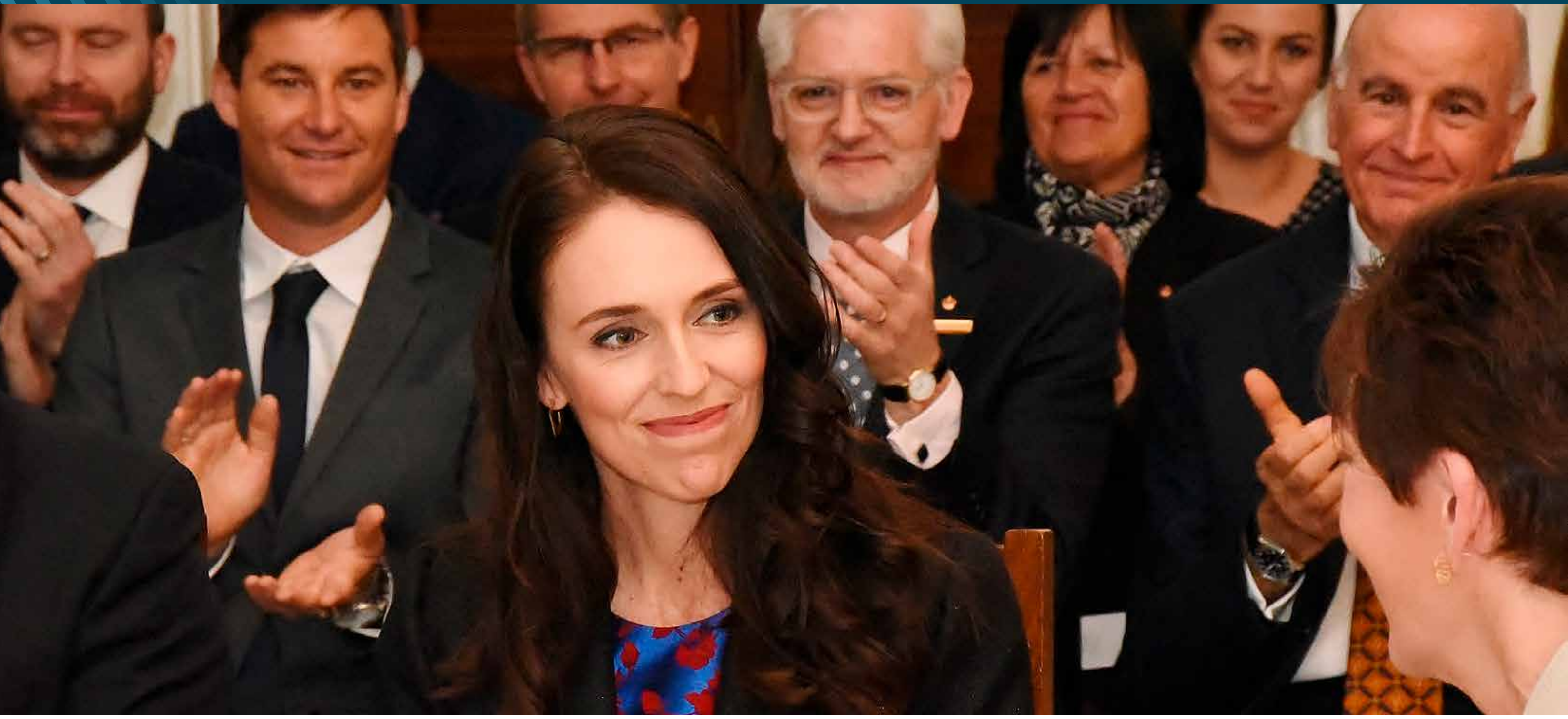
7 *Summary report—The Ministerial Committee for Dealing with the Negative Consequences of Polygamy*, July 2018.

8 Letter by Atwa Elhubra to the Minister of Religious Services, February 9, 1975. State Archives GL11/17094.

9 Abatement of Nuisances Law—1961, *Book of Laws* 5721, p. 58, and Prevention of Noise Regulations—1992, *Protocol File*, 5753 No. 5474, October 5, 1992, p. 8, Regulation 3(A).

10 A report by the Knesset Research and Information Center mentioned one case in which a court convicted a muezzin of violating the law and fined him, Knesset Research and Information Center (2011). "Use of Loudspeakers to Broadcast the Call of the Muezzin: A Comparative Review," p. 5; bills were brought to the Knesset Constitution, Law, and Justice Committee for discussion in June 2018. They included a bill for prevention of nuisances (amendment—forbidding the use of a public address system in houses of worship), 2015, in the framework of a preparation for its first reading, and a bill for prevention of nuisances (amendment—prevention of noise from a public address system in houses of worship), 2016.

11 For enforcement of construction laws in 2019, see a report by the Southern Administration for Coordinating the Enforcement of Land Laws, https://www.gov.il/he/departments/units/unit_land_law_enforcement_negev; for the struggle against house demolitions, see H. Noah and M. Marcus (Eds.). (2020). *About (in)equality and demolition of homes and buildings in Bedouin Arab communities in the Negev*, Negev Coexistence Forum for Civil Equality.


Jacinda Ardern before her inauguration as Prime Minister of New Zealand, October 26, 2017. Photo: Governor-General of New Zealand (CC BY 4.0)

New Zealand, COVID-19, and National Security: Lessons for Crisis Management

Carmit Padan

The COVID-19 pandemic is the most recent example of a natural threat, a category that includes earthquakes, tsunamis, fires, and floods. States must regularly grapple with natural threats, along with man-made threats such as terrorism and wars. Such threats challenge the traditional definition of the concept of national security, especially in terms of how to properly address them, but they have not yet earned their rightful central place in national security doctrines. Disasters on a similar or even larger scale than those already witnessed are expected to take place in the future as a product of the current era, an "age of disruptions." New Zealand's management of the COVID-19 challenge is considered a global success story. As a case study, it highlights five central principles that together enable a model for emergency and crisis management: a shared objective; professional support; connecting communication; a comprehensive plan; and flexibility. These management principles emphasize the societal element as a central component in the struggle against an unfamiliar threat, particularly in a "reality of disruptions" that is marked by extreme uncertainty.

Keywords: COVID-19; resilience; leadership; management; crisis; emergency; national security; New Zealand

Introduction

More than a year has passed since COVID-19 appeared in Wuhan, China in December 2019, and was declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization (March 11, 2021). By the end of December 2020 over 81 million people around the world had been infected by the virus, over 1.7 million people died, and over 5 million people recovered from the disease (Worldometer, n.d.). Numerous countries have already experienced second and third waves of the pandemic, and countries like the UK, Sweden, Spain, and Israel have reported cases of infection with new COVID-19 variants. In many countries, including Israel, COVID-19 created a multidimensional crisis—health, economic, societal, governance, and political—whose consequences will be felt for many years.

The significance and ramifications of the pandemic vary widely across countries as well as among communities, ethnic groups, age groups, and economic classes (Twigg, 2020). This disparity stems from each country's respective strengths and weaknesses, which are related to its basic characteristics, governance structure, the extent of its healthcare system, and its social and economic safety nets. It also reflects the respective social and cultural conventions in each country, the steps each country has taken to contain the disease, the lockdown policy implemented, the steps taken to treat those infected, and other measures to care for the population (Islam et al., 2020).

The COVID-19 crisis is a product of the environment in which we live, which is an unstable and unpredictable setting that does not evolve in linear fashion, in turn challenging efforts to foresee and plan (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007). As already noted in the professional literature two decades ago, contemporary conditions foster a reality in which crises and emergencies involve a wide range of issues—among them security, political, environmental, technological, and public health—resulting from both man-made and natural disruptions (Kersten, 2005; Paraskevas, 2006). A model for discerning and coping with a complex and unexpected reality that has also become popular for COVID-19 is a model developed in the United States military in the early 1990s to address the operating conditions that the army encountered when it arrived in Kosovo, Somalia, Afghanistan, and Iraq (Ben-Yosef, 2017). These conditions dictated a "reality"[1] that could not be defined in an unequivocal, unidimensional manner, instead representing volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA). Together they represent "the VUCA world" (Ben-Yosef, 2020), and as such, reflect an expected phenomenon that challenges state efforts and consequently finds them ill prepared. Some define this phenomenon as a "fundamental surprise,"[2] while others define it a "white swan."[3]

COVID-19 is not the only threat in the current era. It joins other global threats that nation-states have been forced to confront in recent decades, including terrorism, nuclear weapons, and global warming (Michlin-Shapir & Padan, 2019). These are global threats, cast by political sociologist Ulrich Beck as "risks," which depart from the "dangers" that characterized the 20th century—a conceptualization that led Beck to define the society of the 21st century as a "risk society." Risks are distinguished in their not being tangible threats (like one caused by a foreign army invading a given country); their occurrence can only be calculated using probabilistic tools, and they entail destructive consequences (Beck, 1992).

One can see COVID-19 as part of a wider category of threats that relate to the broader sense of national security. That is, national security no longer refers only to physical threats, but rather connotes the need to respond to a wide range of challenges in a variety of domains—e.g., economics, society, and the environment.

One can see COVID-19 as part of a wider category of threats that relate to the broader sense of national security. That is, national security no longer refers only to physical threats, but rather connotes the need to respond to a wide range of challenges in a variety of domains—e.g., economics, society, and the environment—such as global warming, water scarcity, food security, pandemics, and more (Peri, 2019). Consequently, COVID-19 is also an opportunity to examine the claim that security is not a given, objective, external, and essential "reality," but rather a formulated product representing a social construct (Baldwin, 1997). The need to expand the security concept stems from the growing recognition that in "late modernity" (starting in the 1980s), people's sense of security was undermined for a variety of reasons. Changes in all areas of life are more rapid and profound than in the past. The "reality" has become more "liquid," and the main task of social institutions—creating and maintaining the social order—has become more challenging than in the past (Peri, 2019).

Tomas Pueyo summarizes the differences between countries that succeeded in "flattening the curve" of the pandemic, and those that did not. He argues that the practices that differentiated the former from the latter lie in the "non-pharmaceutical" interventions (Pueyo, 2020), including intensive testing systems; flight restrictions; epidemiological investigations; and quarantine policies.

Leadership is another significant non-pharmaceutical element in crisis management (Fink, 1986; Klann, 2003; Mitroff, 2004), evidenced in the COVID-19 events in the crisis of leadership. Some have argued that the worst influence on how some countries coped with COVID is the vacuum in leadership (Tourish, 2020). Leadership is considered a significant factor that distinguished between countries that succeed and those that fail to cope with the pandemic (Wilson, 2020). Countries such as Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Taiwan are among the former, while Belgium, France, Spain, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Israel, at the time of this writing, were among the latter.

Among the countries that are considered the most effective and successful in the world in managing the struggle against COVID-19 is New Zealand. The purpose of this article is to examine the leadership qualities that have helped New Zealand to better contain the disruption stemming from the pandemic, to adapt to it faster, and to eradicate it in its territory. The article is divided into four parts: the first part includes background data on New Zealand and presents the approach that its government took in the struggle against COVID-19; the second part discusses the gender aspect behind how Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern managed the campaign; the third part analyzes the societal element to leadership in managing the fight against the pandemic—public trust—and designates it a central condition to enable success in the face of an unexpected and unfamiliar threat that requires changed public behavior; the fourth part, presenting the central argument of the article, describes five main principles for managing crises and emergencies that have guided the government of New Zealand in its struggle against the pandemic. The article shows that the most challenging course of action for New Zealand, as for other countries, was not in implementing classic practices of fighting infectious diseases, but rather in carrying out three main steps, societal in nature, required to transform public behavior: guiding the public toward lockdown, following the social restrictions guidelines, and imposing social isolation, in order to stop the chain of infection and prevent the spread of the virus. Changing the public's behavior requires partnership and compliance, and is achieved mainly by means of public trust in the leadership. The management principles discussed here succeeded in increasing public trust in the government of New Zealand, and hence effectively achieved the public's partnership and compliance.

1. New Zealand: General Background

New Zealand, established as a British colony in the 19th century, is divided into two main islands—northern and southern. The capital is Wellington, and the largest and most populated city is Auckland, with 1.3 million residents. The population of New Zealand is close to 5 million people, with a multi-ethnic composition: 67.5 percent are of European origin; 14.6 percent are of Maori origin; and the rest are Polynesians and Asians. The Prime Minister, who is also the leader of the social-democratic Labor Party, is Jacinda Ardern. According to pre-COVID economic data, the GNP is estimated at $198 billion (a little over $40,000 per capita); the inflation rate, 3 percent; the unemployment rate, 3.7 percent; the debt-to-GDP ratio, 0.8 percent of GDP.[4] New Zealand's economy is based mainly on trade and export of agricultural products (12 percent), fishing, meat, mechanization, and textiles. Tourism is a central industry, representing 20.4 percent of total exports and 14.4 percent of the workforce (New Zealand, n.d.). New Zealand's success in managing the struggle against COVID-19 is evident in its economic indices: GDP is estimated to grow by 5.7 percent (in real terms) in the coming fiscal year—April 2021 to March 2022 (after a decline of 4.3 percent in 2020-2021). In the 2020-2021 fiscal year, unemployment rose to 6.8 percent, compared to 4.1 percent in the previous fiscal year. However, in 2021-2022, unemployment is expected to decline to 5.9 percent.[5]

"Go Hard, Go Early": New Zealand's Approach to the Fight against COVID-19

When COVID-19 hit, the state systems were relatively prepared. New Zealand had a plan, written in 2017, for coping with an epidemic ("Influenza Pandemic Plan"), and changes and adjustments to the emergency systems were made following failures in preparatory measures for a pandemic tested in November 2019. New Zealand is well-versed in emergencies associated with earthquakes (there are some 14,000 earthquakes per year, most of them light, but some are destructive).[6] Thus, on January 24, 2020, two days after the World Health Organization announced that there is evidence indicating person to person infection of the coronavirus in Wuhan, the government of New Zealand established an advisory team for the Ministry of Health to manage the struggle against COVID-19. The Director-General of the Ministry of Health and the person who managed the campaign in close cooperation with Prime Minister Ardern is Dr. Ashley Bloomfield, an epidemiologist by training.

New Zealand is an island country with low population density, and most people, even in cities, live in single-family homes. Low density allows it to maintain close control over the country's borders, and the fact that it was exposed to COVID-19 relatively late[7] gave it the opportunity to learn from other countries on how to manage the challenge. Michael Baker, professor of public health at the University of Otago in New Zealand and a senior epidemiologist who is part of the New Zealand Ministry of Health's COVID-19 advisory team, said:

> I was greatly influenced by the work of the World Health Organization task force in China, which stated that it had succeeded in stopping the virus and was even close to eradicating it…I was also impressed by the experience of other countries, especially Taiwan, that had succeeded in preventing the virus from entering their territory…. When we achieved control over the virus the first time we thought there was no need for masks, but the experience of others showed differently, which convinced us to include them in the set of guidelines. (Primor, 2020)

Although New Zealand's success in its campaign against COVID-19 has been attributed to its being a small and rural island country, facts suggest otherwise. In most cases, COVID-19 was spread around the world by tourists who entered countries by sea and by air, and not by land (Marmorek & Eyzaguirre, 2020). Hence, the claim that low population density is what contributed to the success cannot be fully substantiated. New Zealand is among the countries in eastern Asia, such as Vietnam, South Korea, and Taiwan (and in contrast to Iceland) that have succeeded in flattening the curve and even eradicating the virus completely. Among OECD countries, New Zealand has the lowest mortality rate and lowest number of people who are COVID-19-positive (Figure 1).

New Zealand is among a group of countries, including Finland, Iceland, Germany, Taiwan, Norway, and Denmark, whose state leader is a woman. In all of them, there were fewer deaths from COVID-19, relatively speaking, and far fewer cases than in countries led by men.

The government of New Zealand acted quickly and adopted a cautious and strict, science-based approach, which was named the "elimination strategy." As early as March 25, the government declared a full country-wide lockdown for four weeks, with extensive restrictions, and another three weeks with looser restrictions.[8] The Ministry of Health operated on the assumption that there was a narrow window of opportunity to stop the spread of the virus, and therefore if it did not act quickly, early, and powerfully, the window would close and New Zealand would be forced to cope with serious health consequences and economic damage similar to other countries, such as Italy, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Consequently, the central components of the strategy for eliminating the virus included tight supervision of the borders, restriction of the entry of people who were infected with COVID-19 by placing them in quarantine for 14 days, and mandate to the authorities to monitor the population through tests and epidemiological investigations. Baker said: "The lockdown that we imposed was apparently the strictest in the world. It was based on the rigorous policy of Oxford University and proved to be very effective" (Primor, 2020). Up to the time of this writing, New Zealand imposed three lockdowns: the first, imposed on March 25, 2020, covered the entire country, and the second was imposed on Auckland on August 14 (based on the alert level system discussed below, with the country at level 2 and Auckland at level 4) and lasted three weeks. On February 17, 2021, New Zealand imposed a third lockdown on Auckland, after three unexplained cases of COVID-19 (a couple and their daughter) were discovered in the community. Auckland went to alert level 2 and the rest of New Zealand was declared alert level 1.

2. The Gender Aspect to Management of the Campaign

New Zealand is among a group of countries, including Finland, Iceland, Germany, Taiwan, Norway, and Denmark, whose state leader is a woman. In all of them, there were fewer deaths from COVID-19, relatively speaking, and

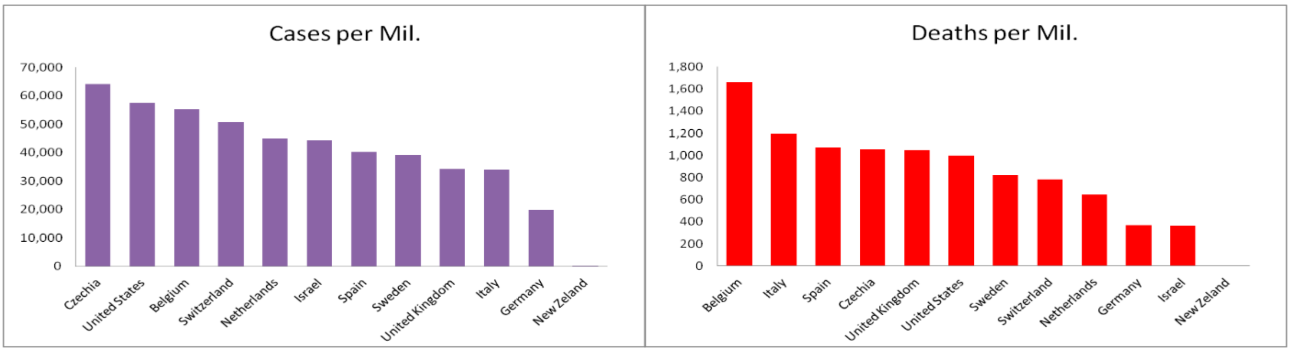


Figure 1. Comparison of mortality rates among OECD countries (as of December 29, 2020)

Source: World Health Organization, https://covid19.who.int/table far fewer cases than in countries led by men (Figures 2 and 3).[9] Female leaders' success with COVID-19 invited diverse explanations. Some argue that female leaders have the necessary qualities for managing crises and emergencies (Taub, 2020; Kristof, 2020), and some suggest that their success in managing the pandemic is less connected to their gender and more to the kind of countries in which women are elected to leadership positions: countries whose population are more educated, with higher gender equality.[10] It is also argued that the public institutions in such countries are more effective (Lewis, 2020).

Nevertheless, the success of female leaders in the COVID-19 crisis is impressive, considering the fact that women make up 11 percent of all world leaders.[11] A study published recently by the *Harvard Business Review* (Zenger & Folkman, 2020), which examined 60,000 leaders (22,603 women and 40,187 men), strengthens the notion that women are better leaders in times of crisis. Mortality figures, morbidity, trust

	Country	Mortality rate per million	Total COVID-19 deaths	Active COVID-19 cases	Total number of COVID-19 cases	Population
	Finland	**98**	546	8,591	**35,137**	5,544,980
	Iceland	**82**	28	143	**5,726**	342,335
	Taiwan	**0.3**	7	127	**795**	23,838,108
	Norway	**79**	429	9,498	**47,585**	5,442,127
	New Zealand	**5**	25	49	**2,151**	5,002,100
	Denmark	**208**	1,204	39,781	**155,826**	5,802,284

Figure 2. COVID-19 figures in countries led by women

Source: https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/#countries (as of December 29, 2020)

	Country	Mortality rate per million	Total COVID-19 deaths	Active COVID-19 cases	Total number of COVID-19 cases	Population
	Canada	**399**	15,121	74,113	**555,207**	37,905,077
	United States	**1,034**	343,182	7,741,717	**19,781,718**	331,960,370
	France	**966**	63,109	2,308,815	**2,562,646**	65,344,969
	Italy	**1,198**	72,370	575,221	**2,056,277**	60,417,726
	United Kingdom	**1,045**	71,109	N/A	**2,329,730**	68,062,047
	Spain	**1,072**	50,122	N/A	**1,894,072**	46,763,749
	Israel	**357**	3,286	4,392	**411,677**	9,197,590

Figure 3. COVID-19 figures in countries led by men

Source: https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/#countries (as of December 29, 2020) in the authorities, and additional parameters were found to be better in countries and authorities led by women.

One explanation for the success of women in managing emergencies and crises lies in the fact that in times of crisis, leaders need to serve as a "secure-base support" for those being led (Mayseless & Popper, 2019). Those who know how to provide a "secure base" are characterized by qualities such as containment, empathy, compassion, cooperation, transparency, and attentiveness. These qualities are especially important in times of crisis characterized by great uncertainty and confusion, as in the pandemic. The restrictions imposed on the public during COVID-19 created a sense of depression and stress and raised the need for a "mother figure," which is connected to the search for a "secure base" that provides, inter alia, consolation, compassion, containment, and empathy. These qualities are identified with the leadership of women more than men, and therefore some argue that they have been a key to the success in managing the pandemic-related exigencies (Taub, 2020). This stands in contrast with qualities such as centralization, decisiveness, and assertiveness, which are usually identified with male leadership and are found to be less suited to crisis situations (Lewis, 2020).

Looking at New Zealand as a case study, one can discern five central management principles that helped it contain the disruption and manage the fight against the spread of COVID-19 with greater skill and flexibility.

In the case of New Zealand, Ardern's ability to be attentive to the public and to express empathy has been an asset in her leadership style. This is known as the "politics of kindness," and Ardern made sure to integrate it well in her messaging to the public.[12] The world first met Ardern after the terrorist attack in Christchurch (March 2019). At that time she stood with the Muslim victims, expressed empathy with their pain, and declared that "New Zealand is their home. They are us." As will be demonstrated below, the drive to bring people together into "us" has been used by Ardern throughout the COVID crisis.

3. The Societal Element in Managing COVID-19: Public Trust

New Zealand's leadership ostensibly operated against the coronavirus by implementing classic practices used against viruses. Similar to other countries, it stopped tourism from abroad; purchased personal protective equipment for essential workers; carried out large-scale testing of the population; led effective epidemiological investigations; and adopted policies of lockdown and quarantine for those testing positive for COVID-19. However, the most challenging course of action for New Zealand, as for other countries, was in carrying out three additional steps: guiding the public in lockdowns; making sure that there is high compliance with health restrictions; and maintaining physical/social isolation in order to stop the chain of infection. The difference between the former five organizational steps and the latter three societal steps is related to the need to change the public's behavior, which stems from the nature of the contagion.

Changing public behavior requires partnership and compliance, which are influenced mainly by the level of public trust in the leadership. The government of New Zealand enhanced the public trust in it and thus succeeded in mobilizing public partnership and compliance. According to theories of social identity regarding leadership, if the public believes that its leaders are working to serve shared interests, then transformative collective action is facilitated (Reicher & Hopkins, 2005). This transformative collective action was considered an imperative to overcome the pandemic, and thus played a vital role in shaping actions to build public confidence in the leadership. Public opinion polls conducted in New Zealand in June and August 2020, after the first lockdown and in the peak months of the first wave of COVID-19, show that Ardern and her government received the public's trust from the early stage of the crisis (Figure 4). On October 18, when national elections were held in New Zealand, Ardern's Labor Party won a majority of 64 out of 120 seats in parliament. This was a major victory, and the first since 1996.

The New Zealand government's COVID-19 campaign was not perfect. There was much concern about protective equipment for essential services and medical staff, as well as many disagreements about the border restrictions, how the government supported businesses, workers, and the groups that are dependent on welfare. In a related context, the Minister of Health resigned on July 2, after having twice violated the health guidelines.

4. Universal Principles for Emergency and Crisis Management

The "all-hazards" approach to a mass disaster holds that preparedness for emergencies should be designed in such a manner that plans can provide a basic response to a wide variety of threats. According to this approach, the source of the disaster is less important than its consequences, and therefore there is no need to develop separate response plans to different threats (Gregory, 2015). The response commonly contains four components that characterize the "management cycle" (Khan et al., 2008): 1) preparedness before the event; 2) response to the event: primary, secondary, and tertiary; 3) recovery of infrastructure and people; 4) mitigation/prevention. The "all-hazards" approach gives priority to preparedness, since advance preparedness greatly helps mitigate the damage and contributes to increasing the systemic capacity to cope with the challenge (Collins, 2000 in Elran, 2021).

According to Elran (2021), a resilience doctrine[13] in reference to the theory of crisis management is based on the assumption that disasters happen and will continue to occur,

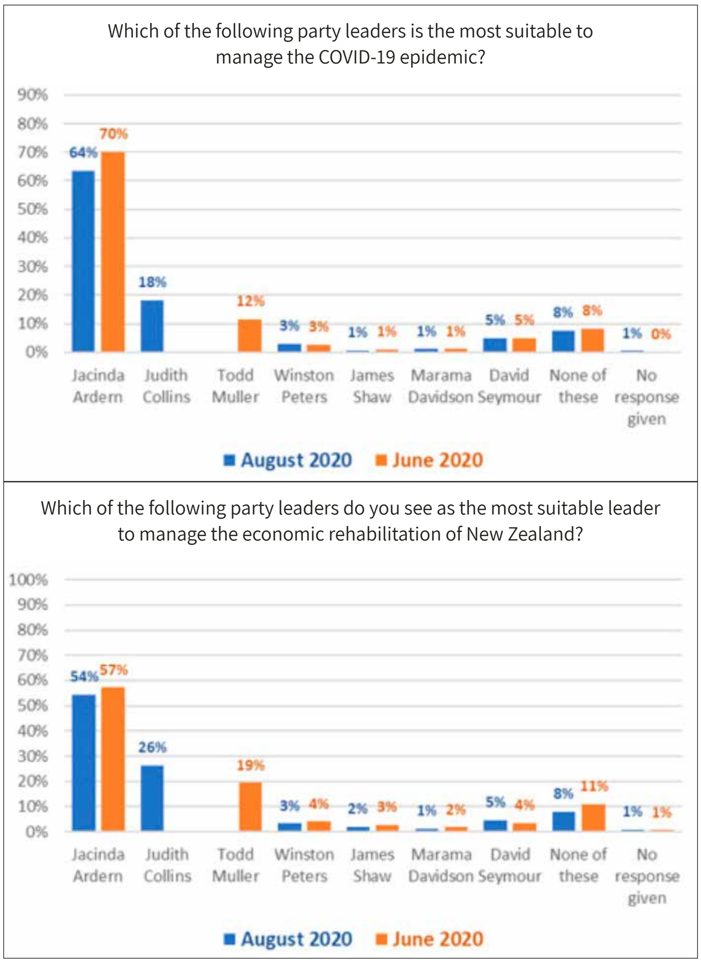


Figure 4. New Zealand public opinion, June and August 2020

Source: https://www.horizonpoll.co.nz/page/593/ardern-seen

despite prevention and mitigation efforts. Systems that adopt a resilience doctrine as part of their prior preparedness for mass disasters usually adopt one of three approaches: the broad approach, which calls for a preliminary holistic strengthening of the social, economic, and infrastructural components of the system; the functional approach, which focuses on large-scale prior investment in organizational, infrastructural, and social aspects of preparedness for successful coping with disruptions; and the narrow approach, which focuses on preparing the specific tools that enable the management of the system in times of crisis/emergency.

The COVID-19 crisis should be characterized as an atypical natural mass disaster (Elran, 2021). Countries that succeeded in their

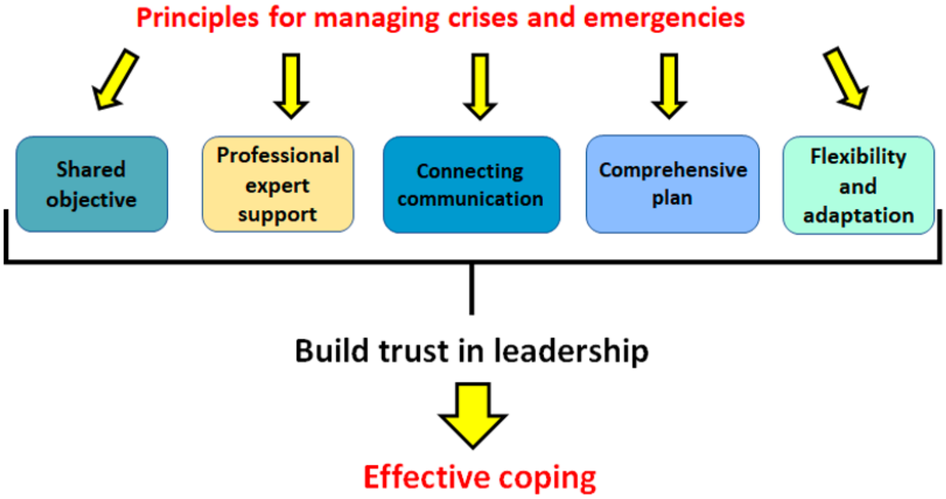


Figure 5. Principles for managing emergency and crisis situations: Building public trust in leadership
Source: (Padan, 2020)

coronavirus campaigns (such as Taiwan) are those that managed to contain the crisis. They commonly responded to the "disruption" in a flexible manner, and maintained functional continuity notwithstanding. These countries are defined as more resilient than others (Marmorek & Eyzaguirre, 2020). Looking at New Zealand as a case study, one can discern five central management principles that helped it contain the disruption and manage the fight against the spread of COVID-19 with greater skill and flexibility (Figure 5).

Defining a shared objective: A successful struggle such as the one waged against COVID-19 involves the ability of the leadership to focus on the need to increase the public's involvement in the collective challenges that emerge from the hazard (Wilson, 2020). To achieve this, it is necessary to define a shared objective (Grint, 2020). Ardern and her government managed to define a shared objective that was phrased simply: curbing the spread of COVID-19. The ensuing targets were formalized accordingly—saving lives and minimizing harm to livelihood.[14] When addressing the public, Ardern repeatedly used the terms: "we, us, all New Zealanders, a team of 5 million." With these semantics, Ardern approached her people as a unified group, with a shared fate, irrespective of gender, socioeconomic status, or ethnic group. Designating the "us" helped to foster national pride among citizens struggling together against the pandemic disrupting their lives, and at the same time contrasted "us" with "them," thus differentiating New Zealanders from the citizens of other countries. The appeal to the public to come together against the pandemic was intentional and consistent (New Zealand Government, n.d.) and proved to be effective for maintaining public support in the struggle against COVID.

While not every citizen can directly contribute to the struggle, as not every citizen can help secure the country's borders or treat COVID-19 patients in hospitals, there was a constant appeal to citizens to search for what they can do to stop the spread of the virus. By this appeal Ardern succeeded in mobilizing the public and deepening its commitment to the shared goal. Citizens saw themselves as part of a broad solution and considered the restrictions they needed to impose on themselves as part of their contribution to the campaign. Closely related to framing the struggle against COVID-19 as a joint venture, Ardern attributed the country's success to the public and not to herself or to the government alone. At the end of the first lockdown she asserted, "While the job is not done, there is no denying this is a milestone. Thank you, New Zealand" (BBC News, 2020). At the end of the second lockdown, she proclaimed: "We can let ourselves once again feel pride…that *we* managed to get to that position *together*" (Peñaloza, 2020, emphasis added).

The lesson learned from using this management principle is that defining a shared objective helps enlist the public in coping with the crisis as a unified group with a shared fate and enables its mobilization for the necessary steps to this end. Implementing this management principle in a time of crisis helps increase the public's trust in its leadership.

Professional expert support: The government campaign against COVID-19 was accompanied by an advisory team from the Ministry of Health that included 12 experts (New Zealand Ministry of Health, n.d.). The government's willingness to listen to the data and the scientific advice provided by the team augmented the decision making process and differentiated New Zealand from countries that tended to ignore professional advice, consequently failing to stop the spread of the coronavirus. The advantages of using expert recommendations are many: experts provide backing for leaders' claims that there is indeed a crisis at hand; they increase the public's sense that leaders are relying on objective criteria and consequently that it is not a matter of manipulation or conspiracy; and they sharpen the message that there is a real need for changing the public behavior. Studies indicate that arrogance, hubris, and a refusal to listen are critical factors leading to dysfunctionality of political leaders (Tourish, 2018).

The Prime Minister consulted with experts not only for guidance in the government's decision making process, but also to convey her messages to the public. In her public speeches during the first lockdown, at her side was the Chief Executive of the Ministry of Health, Dr. Bloomfield, and every medical question asked by journalists was answered by Dr. Bloomfield. As such, Ardern was the one to ensure that the public received the most accurate response, while using medical expertise to support the strategy that her government adopted and strengthen her message to the public (Kohlenbach, 2020). Ardern and Bloomfield's joint appearance defined Ardern's leadership style to be participatory and authentic in nature. As suggested (Northouse, 2016), leadership is not in the hands of one person or another but is best shared among a group or network of people who interact with each other. Furthermore, leadership expresses clarity regarding values and beliefs of leaders who identify with their position, while acting in accordance with "practice what you preach" (Morris, 2020; Shamir & Eilam, 2005).

The lesson here is clear: Listening to relevant experts is a vital asset for leaders in crisis management. Implementing this principle helps enhance public's trust in leadership.

Connecting communication: This management principle entails three components: knowledge and data; ongoing and frequent communication with the public; and clarity and simplicity. The knowledge and data component refers to provision of ongoing transparent, up-to-date information to the public in times of crisis that outlines the dynamic picture, what patterns of actions are being taken, and why specifically these measures have been selected. This is a necessary process that enables the public to try to meet the defined objective. Ardern laid out all of the information concerning COVID-19 for the public and did not hold back on detailing the hazards and warnings—from the scientific facts to the decisions that were taken. As early as March 16 (before announcing the first lockdown) Ardern warned the public about the economic impact of the pandemic, and stated that this would be more severe than the global economic crisis of 2008 (Roy & Graham-McLay, 2020). She also made clear that the government was doing everything it could to mitigate the economic hardships, and that the recovery would be slow. Three days later, in a Facebook broadcast, Ardern announced the economic civilian support package, which included subsidized salaries for workers, unemployment insurance, and government grants for businesses (Ardern, 2020).

On March 25, announcing the first lockdown, Ardern warned that if the public does not comply with the guidelines and the lockdown is not enforced quickly, tens of thousands of New Zealanders could die from the disease. She added that even after the lockdown began, the situation in the country would get much worse before it got better ("Prime Minister," 2020). In this way Ardern conveyed severe messages to the public, while asserting that the government realizes the difficult impact of the steps taken to eliminate the pandemic, and that it would do everything to ease the situation by providing economic aid. Such tough (but credible) messages prompted the public to take collective action and build its trust in the leadership (Wilson, 2020). Such an approach also helps mitigate the tension (and sometimes anxiety) among the public in dynamic and crisis situations (Heifetz, 1994). Findings from studies examining emergencies show that mitigating tension and anxiety, or managing public emotions, is a critical role of leadership in guiding people through crises (Padan, 2017; Mastracci et al., 2014). An example of conveying a tough message to the public while connecting it to the broader context appeared in Ardern's announcement on the first lockdown: "Everything you will all give up for the next few weeks, all of the lost contact with others, all of the isolation, and difficult time entertaining children – it will literally save lives. Thousands of lives."[15] Ardern conveyed empathy regarding the restrictions and sacrifices while at the same time indicating that there is a specific reason for all this ("saving lives"). She gave the public direction, meaning, and empathy, and thus helped mobilize it toward the shared effort. This approach corresponds with the motivating language theory, which, using a mix of words and intonation, enables conveying tough messages without causing panic (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2018).

That said, there is no need to overburden the public with overly complex explanations and technical data that can create an opposite reaction and increase anxiety, and in certain cases cause citizens to feel that the struggle against the pandemic is beyond their capability and they are not qualified to contribute to it. Furthermore, crisis management must always consider the cognitive element, which includes appropriate terminology to frame the issues at hand. Adapted conceptualization, especially in appeals that seek to inspire the public to cooperate, is an important part of building a systemic-organizational infrastructure for emergencies: it helps increase the public's vigilance and involvement and its mobilization toward the collective effort (Padan, 2020).

The second component of connecting communication is associated with frequent, ongoing contact with the public. The New Zealand Ministry of Health provided daily updates to the public on cases of infection; published personal stories about those who had died from the disease; published the locations and accessibility of testing centers; updated the public on the findings of new studies about COVID-19; published guidelines and restrictions for the public; updated the results of epidemiological investigations; and much more. The updates, guidelines, and restrictions for the public were conveyed on various platforms and were updated and highlighted continuously, thereby enhancing the public association with the leadership. There are many examples for this: in the first lockdown media updates were provided daily at 1:00 PM by the Prime Minister and the Chief Executive of the Ministry of Health; special websites were created with information on COVID-19 and on the guidelines for the public, including for children; and the Prime Minister addressed the nation in a speech from her office, the first time in 40 years that a prime minister addressed the public from this official venue. This of course was not a coincidence, as the leader's location granted the event a standing of national importance.

The government of New Zealand was also active on the social networks: live, informal updates were broadcast on Facebook. Ardern, who appeared in these broadcasts from her home, addressed families and children and expressed her feelings for them. She held interviews on Facebook with experts and professionals from diverse fields, such as with a psychologist who offered ideas for coping with stress (Ardern & Latta, 2020), or with a business mentor to explore how people can support their business (Ardern & Hamilton, 2020). This was a platform for the Prime Minister to help cultivate relevant knowledge for the public and help them cope with the crisis, while strengthening the sense that the leadership is working for the people's benefit. Ardern also allowed citizens to pose questions, including personal ones. Overall these broadcasts served to strengthen the public security against dysfunctional leadership (Tourish, 2020), and indeed bolstered the public's trust in the leadership. Appearing on the social network has another advantage: it helps mitigate the impact of viral fake news, which can increase public anxiety and cause it to develop apathy toward the pandemic, or alternatively, to ridicule the emergency situation.

The third component of connecting communication is clarity and simplicity: in all cases related to COVID-19 guidelines and restrictions, the government of New Zealand made sure to convey messages to the public that were accessible and comprehensible. This was the case concerning both messages on guidelines and restrictions, as well as messages associated with diverse issues of public interest, based on frequent mapping of public needs. Furthermore, the graphics the government used in the messaging campaign, on billboards, in official national events, on the internet, in local councils, in governmental institutions, and in business organizations, were all uniform and concise. This uniformity was expressed in the design, font size, and colors selected (e.g., bright yellow and not threatening red). Billboards contained universal and national symbols that all New Zealanders could identify with, such as the kiwi, the national bird. This was designed to appeal to the unifying national sentiment and to solicit national pride by using national symbols. The human figures shown on posters demonstrating social distancing were not identified ethnically or nationally. Here again the goal was to create broad citizen identification with the messages.

Several lessons can be learned from the principle of connecting communication: When it is managed and carried out by an integrative system, it can build the foundations for the entire public's understanding of the challenging situation, and consequently encourage civilian involvement, provide credible knowledge and information, and convey this transparently to the public so as to increase the compliance with government guidelines. Overall this approach builds trust that corresponds with the public's day-to-day needs and the challenges that are addressed as part of the leadership's agenda. All these together help enhance the public's trust in its political leadership, and consequently its commitment to the shared objective and the joint effort (Wilson, 2020).

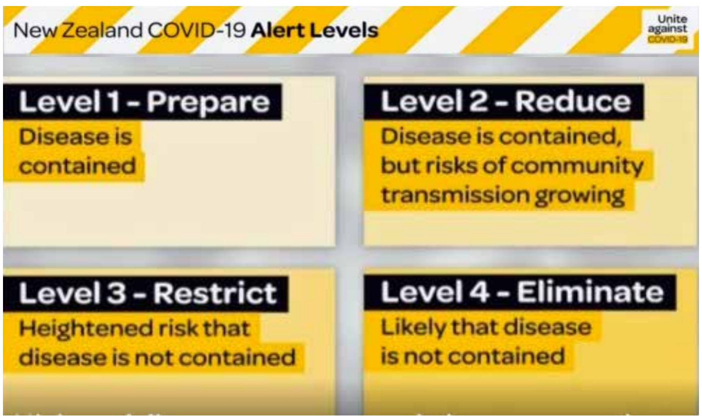


Figure 6: **New Zealand's alert system**
Source: New Zealand government website, https://covid19.govt.nz/alert-system/

Comprehensive plan: On March 21, the Prime Minister announced a four-level plan for the campaign against the spread of the pandemic[16] (Figure 6). This plan was designed to enable the government to integrate its activities to curb infection and was used as a management tool. Each stage in the plan, defined as an alert level, was defined with precision and detailed what the guidelines are and what measures were being taken, what each person is expected to do at home, and how the guidelines will be enforced in accordance with the level of morbidity in the country. The various levels presented to the public create a clear picture, and being well defined, made it easier for the public to cope with the challenges. The four levels are: 1) Prepare[17]: COVID-19 is contained inside New Zealand; 2) Reduce: COVID-19 is contained in New Zealand, but there is a risk of community transmission of the virus; 3) Restrict: there is a higher risk that COVID-19 is not contained inside New Zealand; 4) Eliminate: it is likely that COVID-19 is not contained inside New Zealand. Note that the names of the four levels encourage active engagement, so that all citizens become partners.

The publication of the plan helped order the leadership's decision making process. The plan enabled preparations and further planning for the government and for organizations and families. It enabled all public sectors and people to know what is permitted and what is prohibited, what their responsibilities are, including what are the boundaries in which they can operate. In this way, the plan helped stabilize the state system and created a degree of certainty within the uncertainty that prevailed among the public during the pandemic. The plan also provided transparency regarding the criteria guiding the decision making process; enabled individuals and communities to know what they need to do in order to save lives; and enabled the various organizations responsible for implementing the government's guidelines to carry out their tasks more precisely. Finally, the plan enabled a shared language with the public, leading to clearer communication with it.

The four-level plan, in addition to its being a framework for preparedness and action, serves as a tool for making sense of the event for the public, which is known as a central practice of leadership (Smircich & Morgan, 1982). This adds another important element beyond transparency and preparedness. The sense-making process enables easing the complexity that exists in the world into a situation that can be understood in words and that serves as a springboard for action (Weick, 2008). For example, the terms of the plan—such as "alert levels," or "bubble," meant to define those people that one can come into contact with—were adopted almost immediately and became part of the New Zealand lexicon. These semantics all helped ease the day-to-day complexity involved in changing behavior in the presence of the pandemic and make it more understandable for the public, and thus contribute to the shared mission.

The lesson is that applying an organized comprehensive plan and creating a shared language as a management tool for decision making facilitates planning and preparedness, enables a degree of certainty, and helps build the public trust in its leadership, as they all provide transparency about the leadership's decision making process.

Flexibility and adaptation: Listening to the people closely involved with the plan or process is critical for mapping failures or mishaps as early as possible. Another condition in this context is the need to demonstrate flexibility (toward the population, regulations, or practices) in order to be able to adjust or change them as needed. There are several examples where the government of New Zealand demonstrated flexibility and adaptation (which can be also defined as agility): the first is related to the notion of *differentiation*: the government rationally turned the public into a partner in the processes of introducing local solutions adapted to the local context, and thus achieved greater compliance with the guidelines. During the transition from level 2 to level 3 in the four-level plan, the government announced that social gatherings would be limited to 10 people—including funerals and ethnic community gatherings, such as those of the Maori people. Maori leaders, church leaders, and other community figures expressed their concern, as they believed that restricting gatherings might offend the community. Holding religious ceremonies helps support the community in times of emergency, and certainly in a situation of prolonged stress (Lahav, 2020); it enhances the sense among people are they are "not alone," which is a formative component of the community's social capital (Padan & Elran, 2018). The Maori appeal was positively accepted by the government, which consequently amended the guidelines on gatherings and allowed (even at the third level) religious gatherings in groups of up to 50 people, within health guidelines.[18]

Recruiting influential public leaders is another example of flexibility and adaptation. Before the publication of the four-level plan, Ardern carried out frequent consultations with business leaders, in order to receive their support for the plan as a whole and for the comprehensive national lockdown (Trevett, 2020). Also, the inclusion of business leaders in the decision making helped recruit this important sector's support for the process as partners, ensuring that the severe measures would prevent serious economic harm later on.

The "bubble" method is a third example. The government understood that coping with COVID-19 trickles down to the community level, and thus created the "bubble method" (Donnell, 2020), which defined a specific group of family members and friends with whom, and only with whom, it was permitted to meet during the lockdown. Since in New Zealand there are many indigenous families with many children, the bubbles were not limited by number of people included in them, but were fixed in a way that forbids breaking the framework of the bubble. The bubble method was found to be effective for controlling the spread of the virus, as it creates a closed circle of interactions, allowing for easy tracking of chains of transmission and beyond that enabled a balance between the need to reduce exposure to COVID-19 and the human need for social interaction.

The lesson learned is that flexibility increases civilian commitment to the shared objective and strengthens the public's sense that the leadership is working for the citizens, thereby reinforcing the public's trust. Flexible management mechanisms show the public that the government is committed to the shared purpose that it has proclaimed and places importance on the existence of ongoing dialogue with the public by open channels of listening. This principle also illustrates that solutions formulated in collaboration with civilians (business leaders, indigenous peoples, and more) have greater prospects of success.

A premise of this article is that a crucial element in the success of the struggle against an unexpected and unfamiliar threat, such as COVID-19, is changing the behavioral conduct of the public. This change can be attained if there is public trust in leadership.

Conclusion

Around the world, the COVID-19 pandemic has strengthened the public sense that we live in a "risk society" that is increasingly preoccupied with the future, safety, security, and risk. This is a result of socio-technological disasters (the Chernobyl disaster in 1986 or the Bhopal disaster in India in 1984) and socio-environmental threats (e.g., fires and floods). The public demands a voice in decisions concerning the expected potential risks and the way to cope with them. It seems that scientists and experts (similar to public health experts in the COVID-19 crisis) no longer have a monopoly on knowledge and truth. This article illustrates that the transition from dangers to risks (such as experienced in the COVID-19 crisis) challenges the state order not only because it punctures the traditional definition of national security in terms of the inherent threats, but also in the framework of how to achieve national security. The management principles detailed in this article emphasize the social component as a central factor in the struggle against an unfamiliar threat spreading in the "VUCA world"—a factor that has not received prominence in the field of national security discourse. For example, the principle of support by professional experts was one of Ardern's ways of coping with the component of ambiguity. Principles such as connecting communication with its three components and the comprehensive plan helped the government cope with the element of uncertainty and the complexity that characterizes the contemporary world.

Prof. Eyal Leshem, an expert on infectious diseases at Sheba Medical Center and an advisor to the World Health Organization, has referred to the question how certain countries (including New Zealand) "cleansed themselves" of COVID-19, while others (including Israel) have not succeeded in doing so by suggesting the following: "This is a social failure of all of us. We did not find the magnanimity and the trust in the authorities to obey the guidelines" ("Countries Cleansed," 2020). This statement is especially important because it does not address the medical or the health practice as "the missing link" in achieving the needed control of the pandemic, but rather points at the societal factor. A premise of this article is that a crucial element in the success of the struggle against an unexpected and unfamiliar threat, such as COVID-19, is changing the behavioral conduct of the public. This change can be attained if there is public trust in leadership. Exploring New Zealand as a case study helps shed light on this significant factor, as each of the five management principles discussed in this article increased the New Zealand public's trust in the leadership and hence raised its commitment to the shared goal and joint effort, consequently helping the government cope with the pandemic more effectively. These principles emphasize that the key to success in the struggle against an unfamiliar threat lies in the public's cooperation and relies on the ability of state authorities, as well as leadership, to earn this trust.

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Notes

1 The concept of "reality" that appears in the article is not something objective, but rather a product of social construction (Berger & Luckman, 1966).

2 "Fundamental surprise" is a concept developed by Zvi Lanir to describe a situation in which there is an unbridgeable gap between "reality" and our perception of it, which leads to events that undermine the foundations of the overall system ("Fundamental Surprise," n.d.).

3 "White swan" is a concept developed by Nassim Taleb in order to describe a phenomenon that all of us should have known was likely to occur in the global age ("Taleb Says," 2020).

4 For the sake of comparison, in Israel the rate is 1.5 percent of GDP.

5 For comparison: in March 2021 the Bank of Israel published the updated annual report for the year 2020. According to the report, Israel's GDP growth in 2020 has declined by 2.5 percent, while the unemployment rate for the year reached 15.7 percent of the workforce (including furlough), its highest level in 50 years.

6 For example, the earthquake in Christchurch on February 22, 2011, which took the lives of 181 people and injured around 2,000.

7 The COVID-19 outbreak outside of China began on January 22, 2020. On February 26, New Zealand reported the first case in its territory (brought by a citizen who had returned from Iran).

8 Most tourism in New Zealand is from China and Europe. Given the significant contribution of tourism to the economy, the spread of COVID-19 in New Zealand could have brought disaster. Therefore, a policy of flattening the curve was not enough for New Zealand, and it adopted a more aggressive policy of eliminating the virus.

9 Vietnam and Singapore, countries that have succeeded in flattening the curve, are led by men (Kwan et al., 2020).

10 According to the global gender index report published in 2020 by the World Economic Forum 2020 (World Forum Agenda, 2019), Iceland, Norway, and Finland are characterized by the highest degree of gender equality. At the same time, the COVID-19 mortality rate per capita in these countries is low (Kwan et al, 2020).

11 See UN Women, https://bit.ly/3qWLtWc

12 Ardern asked residents to be nice to one another and to offer help to neighbors during the Easter holiday. In one of her daily media appearances, she announced that the Easter bunny (which gives out presents to children on Easter) is an essential worker. In relating to this bunny, seemingly a marginal issue for a prime minister to address, Ardern conveyed a message of understanding and partnership with the challenges that the lockdown posed for families, including

parents' need to entertain their children during the lockdown. See https://bit.ly/39OGqSf

13 Resilience has many definitions. According to one, resilience is "the ability of an individual, community, or country to behave in an adaptive manner during a crisis or following a disruption, in order to return to a prior or improved level of function" (Padan & Gal, 2020).

14 "Minimize harm to lives…minimize harm to livelihoods" ("Prime Minister," 2020).

15 Jacinda Ardern's full lockdown speech, see: https://www.newsroom.co.nz/pm-jacinda-arderns-full-lockdown-speech

16 In an interview, Prof. Michael Baker, a senior epidemiologist who is part of the New Zealand Ministry of Health's COVID-19 advisory team, said that the country had adopted the four-stage program of Singapore and adapted it.

17 The semantics of the levels are gender-free and apply both to the singular and the plural. The language of the appeal is important and serves as another mechanism for enlisting the population.

18 It was very important to negotiate with the Maori people in New Zealand, as the COVID-19 crisis's economic impact on the indigenous population was unprecedented—the likelihood of their losing their employment and harming their ability to pay taxes and register to receive government grants was twice as high as that of the country's citizens of European ancestry. See: https://bit.ly/3fWOWSK

Caricature of Vladimir Putin. Photo: PIXABAY

How Civil Society Organizations Can Help Block Covert Foreign Intervention in Democratic Processes

David Siman-Tov and Amos Hervitz

Recent years have witnessed attempts by foreign entities to intervene in democratic systems and covertly influence election processes. These attempts are carried out using social media or internal actors that are part of the political discourse and promote intentional radicalization of the discourse. Many countries understand the severity of the phenomenon, and accordingly, address it through specific bodies and tools, including legislation, technology, security, intelligence agencies, and designated integrated teams. However, the state is limited in its ability to provide a complete response, and thus in many countries the challenge is taken up by civil society organizations. This article focuses on the role of civil society organizations and their interactions with government in coping with the threat of foreign influence on democratic processes. It presents the strategic problem and the governmental bodies that address it, and reviews the advantages of civil society organizations in face of the challenge. Following a look at selected case studies, it draws conclusions on the role of civil society organizations in tackling this threat.

Keywords: fake news, elections, democracy, civil society, foreign influence

Introduction

With the burgeoning strength of social media, recent years have seen an increase in the scope and intensity of covert foreign attempts to influence democratic processes in the West. In contrast to overt influence attempts between various countries in the form of open diplomatic processes, which are not discussed in this article, in covert measures, the identity of those undertaking them is unknown and the true aims of the activity are not declared. Consequently, they constitute a challenge to the democratic discourse, which relies on transparency and freedom of ideas.

The aims of covert foreign influence on a country include harming social cohesion, creating pressure on decision makers, undermining the decision making process, and increasing distrust of the institutions of government and democratic processes. In many countries in the West an understanding has developed that this challenge, which for example is reflected in coping with the dissemination of disinformation in social media, demands a response that protects Western democracies from foreign influence attempts, while maintaining freedom of expression and democratic values.

This article discusses covert external influence on the governmental system and on democratic process in general, although this is not entirely distinct from the influence of internal actors: sometimes, internal actors knowingly or unknowingly echo messages whose origin is external. This article does not relate to messages that originate inside the political system (including disinformation) as a strategic challenge; rather, it focuses on external influence attempts driven by a state, usually a great power.

Various kinds of responses to the challenge of foreign influence have emerged, generally based on state mechanisms and intended to protect democracy and the virtues of the democratic process, as well as social media corporations, which in recent years—following the criticism they have received—have started to resist foreign intervention in election campaigns. This article examines the role of non-state organizations in coping with the phenomenon, since in many cases they are free of the tensions and pressures that influence state bodies in coping with the threat.

The article begins by reviewing the existing literature. It then depicts civil society's attempts to tackle the phenomenon, and through several case studies presents a slightly different perspective on civil society's efforts in this regard. It concludes with an analysis of the case studies and a presentation of the main insights and implications found in these studies.

Covert Foreign Intervention in Democratic Processes as a Strategic Challenge

Foreign influence on democratic processes—some of it overt and some covert—is not a new issue. It was evident, for example, during the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union, when influence attempts were an essential part of the struggle between the sides. However, the current period, dominated by social media and the resulting possibilities in the digital realm, allows for intensifying influence measures that aim to undermine democratic states (Brun & Siman-Tov, 2019). Foreign intervention in the public discourse, influenced by relations and interests in the international arena, aims to influence foreign states; to weaken the social resilience of each state; and to instill messages in the public arena and thereby influence the political system. Reference to this phenomenon in the field of international relations is called "sharp power," which deals with state influence on the political system of other states via manipulation for the purpose of creating confusion and mistrust in the targeted state (Walker, 2018).

Foreign intervention in the public discourse is employed in several spheres, using a variety of means such as the spread of disinformation, manipulative framing, appeals to emotion, and more. It is expressed in the political-diplomatic environment, in the overt media realm, and in political discourse, as well as covertly. This article looks at covert intervention that takes place mainly in social media. Prevention of covert foreign intervention is necessary in order to protect the democratic process. For example, in an election campaign a false representation can be created of inauthentic players and/or messages that strive to turn groups against one another, or deepen mistrust in the democratic system, or artificially promote candidates and parties.

Election campaigns are a time of vulnerability and can be exploited because the political discourse then is especially polarizing and social sensitivity is at an especially high level.

Intervention in the democratic discourse and the creation of doubt are always possible, but there are times that are considered more sensitive, during which it is possible to exert influence more effectively and intensively. For example, election campaigns are a time of vulnerability and can be exploited because the political discourse then is especially polarizing and social sensitivity is at an especially high level.

A prominent example of covert foreign intervention in election campaigns is the Russian intervention in the US presidential elections in 2016. The Russian intervention was an influence operation that undermined American democracy, and aimed not only to divert votes from one candidate to another, but also to deepen the polarization in American society and influence the identity of the president by means of a disinformation campaign on social media. To this end, actual demonstrations of various minorities were organized, one against another (Abrams, 2019; Mckew, 2018).

In West European countries, the target of Russian influence operations is the entire population and not a specific group within the population, with the goal of undermining confidence in democratic institutions. Russian influence operations in Western Europe aim to intensify the variety of social divisions while exploiting liberal values and the diversity of opinions, which greatly expand the boundaries of public discourse and enable the removal of limitations that impede intervention and active participation. Russia's attempts to intervene in referendums—on the question of the UK's departure from the European Union (Brexit) and on the question of the Catalonian separation from Spain—illustrate this phenomenon (Legucka, 2020; Pew Research Center, 2018).

Unlike the intervention in the United States and Western Europe, in East European countries some of the Russian influence operations have been aimed at Russian-speaking groups. Here the goal is to deepen divisions between these groups and the government, with the aim of strengthening the interests of these groups as well as influencing the government or paralyzing it, as Russia attempted to do in Lithuania and Latvia (Helmus et al., 2018).

Some argue that it is not possible to separate between foreign influence and internal influence, due to the conscious or inadvertent involvement of internal elements in the process of foreign influence, and since the digital realm itself enables blurring the boundaries between states, and between "internal" and "external" domains (Kuperwasser & Siman-Tov, 2019). Foreign influences are also enabled thanks to internal actors that allow them to penetrate the "internal" domain. Consequently, internal influences are influenced by external influences, with internal political actors making use of messages that originate from external sources for the purpose of public influence. For example, internal actors made use of external messages that originated in the Russian intervention in the US presidential elections in 2016, for the purpose of internal influence. In this context, according to the Mueller report, which investigated the Russian intervention, the President of the United States welcomed the Russian intervention and used it for his political campaign. The report claimed that the investigation identified several connections between the Russian government and the Trump campaign, and that Trump's campaign echoed messages that originated from the Russian activity (Mueller, 2019).

State Strategy for Coping with Foreign Influence

In coping with influence operations, four elements should be identified: the attacker itself; the messages that it seeks to spread; the platforms it chooses for spreading its messages; and the society that is attacked. In addition, there are actors in the targeted country—such as media outlets or political players or social media entities—that collaborate (sometimes unknowingly) with the interfering actor, and echo external messages and ideas in the internal discourse. Therefore, coping with foreign influences can take place on the content level of the messages (attacking the content), on the level of the actor (damaging the actor), on the level of the platform (blocking the message), or on the level of the resilience of the population under attack. In addition, it is possible to cope on all levels at the same time and in an integrated manner (AEP, 2019). All of these will be expressed (in whole or in part) in any coping strategy that figures in the existing literature.

Hellman and Wagnsson (2017) identify four different approaches on how a country can cope (at the level of the government and its resources) with Russian disinformation:

a. Confronting—centered on spreading counter-narratives to the narratives instilled in the discourse.
b. Neutralizing—strengthening the national narrative, creating positive narratives mainly by the state, and creating a positive image in order to receive the public's support.
c. Blocking—defending by blocking the narrative of the interfering country. The activity of the defending country is defined as "selection" of the information spread by the enemy; that is, preventing the public's access to information spread by the enemy, like blocking channels or websites.
d. Ignoring—a lack of response; ignoring what appears to be a fake and manipulative story. This model is based on the belief that a strong democracy has enough means of coping with external manipulation of information.

In coping with foreign intervention, Western countries use several complementary and integrated methods for implementing the selected approach. First, the threat can be defined as a security threat, with action taken accordingly. For example, countries that place an emphasis on perceiving the foreign influence as threatening national security, such as the US, choose to employ their security and intelligence agencies against it (Scott, 2019). As part of the preparedness of government ministries, various entities in the country prepare for an election campaign in a coordinated and synergetic effort. For instance, prior to the 2019 elections in Israel a special elections team was created with the participation of state figures such as the National Cyber Directorate, the Israel Security Agency (Shin Bet), the IDF, the Police, and the State Attorney. In some countries, public representatives and even private companies participate in such teams.

Another possibility is in the legal sphere: the state can advance legislation, prosecute and punish those who have carried out influence operations, and create regulations and pressure for change on the part of social media corporations, such that they take action against influence operations. For example, a law was passed in France in 2018 that aims to prevent the distortion of information and foreign influence, with an emphasis on social media (French Government, n.d.). In Singapore, two laws were passed in 2019—one to protect against internet scams and the other against distortion of information—that prohibit communication that includes false information and misleading the public regarding facts (Singapore Legal Advice, 2020).

Another way of coping is in the field of education and outreach to the public, in order to increase awareness of the foreign influence threat and to improve digital literacy and critical consumption of the media—the central platform for the transmission of most disinformation. This approach refutes the content of the disinformation and presents it to the public as false. In addition, there are various initiatives that convey information backed by facts to the public, while refuting the false information disseminated in the public discourse, and raise public awareness of the threats of disinformation and influence (Recommendations of Inter-Organizational Think Tank, 2018). Public education and outreach can be based on the state's initiative or on the initiative of a civil society organization.

Listed so far are the components of the strategy and the possible approaches of the state in addressing the challenge. However, the state is limited to a certain extent in coping with this challenge, because its intervention in the contents of the political discourse or preventing access to the internet could constitute a violation of freedom of expression. Furthermore, when the state makes use of the security forces to expose and thwart influence operations, this may be perceived by parts of the public as violating freedom of expression and privacy. This may be due at times to monitoring the internal discourse and examining political actors, which deviates from the authority of these bodies (Siboni & Shuker, 2019).

Furthermore, a state's use of security and intelligence organizations and exposing influence operations could be considered measures that are exploited for political purposes (K.N.C., 2020). This point strengthens the public's concern that the state, through its intelligence organizations, will attempt to determine "what the truth is" and not enable democratic and pluralistic discourse (Baron & Crootof, 2017). A report by the British Intelligence & Security Committee published in July 2020 illustrates this, noting the British intelligence's lack of desire to deal with the issue of foreign influence: they claim maintaining the integrity of democratic processes in the state is not their first priority, and that other bodies are responsible for handling this challenge. The report also states that even when they were confronted with the issue, the intelligence agencies refrained from dealing with it and saw it as a "hot potato" (Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament, 2020).

Civil Society Organizations Coping with Covert Foreign Intervention in the West

Civil society organizations are defined as organizations or initiatives of civilian society that are engaged in protecting democratic processes, or according to the writings of Bret Schafer (2018), are civil society organizations that provide the necessary democratic response to disinformation. An article by the RAND Corporation maps out various internet tools used in the struggle against disinformation that originate from civil society organizations that develop non-profit tools with social value. The funding of these organizations is diverse and comes from non-profit associations, initiatives, non-governmental organizations, private educational institutions, and private donors (Kavanaugh et al., 2020).

This article's treatment of civil society organizations is somewhat different, because the definition of civil society or non-profit organizations does not apply to all of the organizations engaged in the issue of foreign, covert influence. Some are not non-profit organizations, and they also contribute—or could contribute—to coping with foreign influences. The broad definition that we use in this article includes private and business organizations and initiatives and civil society organizations that are relevant for coping with influence operations and disinformation. Accordingly, the organizations that are included in this definition focus on several functions of the response—identification, research, education, and outreach—and must meet two conditions: they must address foreign influence and disinformation; and their products must be accessible to the entire population. Education and outreach in this context focus on the dissemination of fake news and disinformation. The reason for including education and outreach stems from the need for tools to strengthen the population in order to cope with foreign and covert influences and with the dissemination of disinformation from external sources.

Civil society organizations employ technological tools for identifying malign activity on social media (inter alia, with trolls and bots), or for identifying disinformation and covert influence in traditional media, and also expose those spreading it. Examples are investigative journalism for finding foreign influences; fact-checking; technology companies such as Graphika or Bellingcat; and research institutes that develop interactive tools for finding narratives by foreign entities. Civil society organizations also engage in research in order to develop the existing knowledge on the issue, with reference to the theoretical or strategic aspect of foreign influence and disinformation and regarding the actors or entities carrying out such operations. These organizations include mainly research institutes and academic bodies.

Finally, there are the civil organizations or initiatives engaged in outreach and education that work with the public in order to strengthen its ability to cope with the threat. They encourage the development of critical thinking and digital literacy in relation to information sources and behavior on the internet and on social media, in order to educate the population to understand intentional acts of disseminating disinformation and to develop immunity for the purpose of effectively coping with the phenomenon. These organizations and initiatives offer educational activities for school students and computer games that allow the user familiarity with how disinformation is spread and with covert influence operations. In addition, there are media organizations and journalists who give lectures and workshops for understanding the threat.

Social media corporations and technology giants are not included among the civil society organizations examined in this article. On the one hand, they are part of the problem and make it easier for foreign and covert influence attempts in light of their problematic business model. On the other hand, the effective power in their hands, due to their complete ownership of various platforms and the extensive information that they possess, grants them the ability to cope with foreign influences. Consequently, these corporations are not included in the definition and the discussion here.

Civil society organizations have proven effective and creative in coming up with new ideas and developing tools and methods such as tools against disinformation in a social network or developing games related to this specific issue.

Civil society organizations have several advantages for coping with the phenomenon of covert foreign influence: first, they are free of claims of intervention in freedom of expression and violation of civil rights, which can be directed at the government. Second, civil society organizations can confront the dissemination of certain information without raising claims of censorship. Third, the distribution of their services is broad and succeeds in reaching audiences that other actors have not succeeded in reaching. In addition, civil society organizations can have flexibility and quick responsiveness compared to large corporations. Furthermore, civil society organizations have proven effective and creative in coming up with new ideas and developing tools and methods such as tools against disinformation in a social network or developing games related to this specific issue (Davis et al., 2020; Kavanaugh et al., 2020).

How Western Civil Society Organizations Cope with Covert Foreign Intervention

The case studies below help illustrate the contribution of civil society organizations in Finland, Denmark, France, and the United States in understanding and coping with foreign influence. Finland and Denmark are considered to have a high level of immunity to disinformation, despite their differing approaches, in contrast with France and the United States, which are considered to have a low level of immunity (Humprecht et al., 2020).

The case studies will be examined in several stages: identification of the foreign intervention; research of the phenomenon; and public education and outreach to reduce its influence on the public's conceptions. Emphasis is on tackling foreign intervention, even though there is an overlap between the phenomena of foreign influence and influences that originate in the political system. Some of the organizations cope with both of these components.

Confidence is reflected in cooperation with the government, so much so that the government chooses to consult with civil society organizations on legislative issues.

Finland

For several years Finland has coped with influence attempts by Russia, which strives to drive a wedge between Finland and the European Union and harm its relations with NATO. These include spreading messages related to issues important for the Finnish public, including immigration, religion, and minorities. These campaigns created the sense in Finland that an effective and efficient response to the influence attempts is necessary.

Some in Finland have challenged the hierarchical distinction that separates between the citizens and the government, and have proposed integrating civil society organizations in activities on behalf of the state. While Finland uses defense forces and cooperates with international organizations (NATO, for example) to identify external threats, the government has refrained from using legal tools to cope with foreign influence threats (Hague Center for Strategic Studies, 2017). Instead, the government places emphasis on shaping discourse with civil society organizations, with the purpose of jointly coping with the challenge (Bjola & Papadakis, 2020).

The Finnish approach reflects transparency with the public, enabling criticism while encouraging collaboration and strengthening the government's relations with civil society organizations (Hague Center for Strategic Studies, 2017). The government in Finland enjoys a high level of public confidence, which is also high in comparison with other countries in Europe (Finland Ministry of Finance, 2019). This confidence is reflected in cooperation with the government, so much so that the government chooses to consult with civil society organizations on legislative issues (Finland Corruption Report, 2020).

The activity of civil society organizations in Finland in coping with external influences is manifested in several ways. The media play a central role in identifying intervention: the hope is that the media are free of external influences. The implementation takes place with the help of investigative journalism that identifies external influences on the discourse in order to identify Russian disinformation, with an emphasis on checking statements by public figures. Furthermore, the country's media outlets work to make the media accessible to speakers of minority languages in the country, as they are a target for influence. For example, the media organization Yle, which is well-rooted in Finnish society, is a central player in this effort. In addition, there is a fact-checking project named Faktabaari, which is a journalistic project that checks facts with an emphasis on political topics, and makes information accessible to the public. Evidence of the Finnish media's effectiveness on this issue can be found in the cessation of activity by the Russian media organization Sputnik, after it failed to attract customers (Hague Center for Strategic Studies, 2017).

Once the foreign influence is identified, research institutes and academia play an important role in tackling the phenomenon. Research institutes analyze the Russian cognitive activities, and academic institutions help analyze the characteristics of the disinformation and foreign influences, with an emphasis on the psychological characteristics. Together they enable drawing insights and responses to the struggle. For example, the Aleksanteri Institute at the University of Helsinki has published several reports on influence tactics and ways of coping with them. In addition, the Finnish Institute of International Affairs (FIIA) has researched Russian influences directed at the country (Finland, n.d.).

The next dominant characteristic of Finland's effort is education, which is reflected in the country's decision to include digital literacy in the Finnish education system, based on the assumption that providing tools for critical thinking in children is a central long-term component in coping with foreign influences. Along with activity at the national level, civil society organizations constitute an important part of developing these capabilities, and they are even included in the national strategy engaged in a variety of activities and projects on behalf of various organizations (Finland, n.d.; National Audiovisual Institute, n.d.). For example, initiatives by civil society organizations in the field of digital literacy constitute a complementary framework to the school curriculum to improve this area. In this framework, journalists come to schools and teach about proper consumption of media (Finnish Society on Media Education, n.d.).

In conclusion, Finland promotes education and the integration of civil society organizations, with an emphasis on the media, and as a result has achieved recognition as a country and society that is considered immune, and is valued in the world in the field of curbing disinformation and foreign influences.

Denmark

Denmark sees Russian intervention as a significant threat to national security. Indeed, in recent years Russia has carried out influence attempts in Denmark as part of its attempt to undermine relations among the Western countries and within NATO. For example, Russian campaigns have sought to challenge the morality of Denmark's values in order to delegitimize the country, both internally and in the international arena (Denmark, n.d.).

The government in Denmark leads the struggle against foreign influence while relying on intelligence and security forces, and it sees civil society organizations as a supportive element. In this framework, the government uses legal measures that limit political advertisements, anchor the legal framework on the issue of freedom of expression, prohibit foreign influence activity, and prosecute those who engage in this activity (US Law Library of Congress, 2020).

In tandem, the government has designated an inter-ministerial task force that mediates between the intelligence forces and governmental organizations. The task force announced a systemic plan for coping with the threats of Russian disinformation, particularly at election time, with some of the measures taken in cooperation with various media organizations (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2017). These steps aim to create dialogue and cooperation with social media corporations and with the press, in order to raise awareness of the threat of foreign influence and assist in applying countermeasures. As in Finland, trust in government in Denmark is high in comparison to other countries (Finland Ministry of Finance, 2019). Therefore, it is possible that the government's cooperation with these and other civil society groups is based on the high level of trust that exists in the country, which is reflected in a policy that conveys credibility and transparency (Laursen et al., 2018).

Civil society organizations in Denmark are very active in identifying Russian disinformation. For example, a Danish research institute has developed an interactive tool for exposing Russian influence operations in social media. This tool is employed alongside the state's reliance on intelligence agencies. In addition, the media work to expose influence operations to the public. For example, a Danish media organization exposed a pro-Russian campaign that spread false reports as well as inserting pro-Russian narratives regarding battles that took place in the war in Syria and the use of chemical weapons (Denmark's Defence, 2018).

In Denmark, the state leads the struggle against threats of foreign intervention, but it also makes use of civil society organizations. Thus, organizations operate in their own right and sometimes assist the state's activities, with civil society organizations considered very active.

Following the identification of threats, research institutes study influence and disinformation methods in the world in order to understand possible courses of action, and publish various books, articles, and analyses on the issue by experts on Russia and the former Soviet Union. At the same time, the press often covers Russian influence operations in Denmark in particular and in Western countries in general. In addition, there are fact-checking initiatives that refute disinformation (Tjekdet, for example), as well as integration of fact checking such as the television program Detektor, which verifies facts and presents the complexity of the political discourse in Denmark. Moreover, a Danish newspaper created a website called Snopes.com that contains "true" facts and not "alternative" facts. Academia has also enlisted in the fight against disinformation, with a research institute at the University of Copenhagen carrying out studies on the issue of disinformation and influence as well as advising the Danish Ministry of Defence on the issue (Denmark, n.d.).

In the educational sphere, the government promotes digital literacy in the context of disinformation and influence. To this end, initiatives have been established that are directed toward the entire population, in order to increase awareness of the phenomenon, alongside the development of critical thinking. But in order to maximize the effectiveness of these initiatives, the government makes use of civil society groups (Denmark, n.d.). This collaboration in the field of digital literacy aims to strengthen the public's capability in the digital world, with an emphasis on search and navigation. These projects encourage critical thinking and understanding of how the media industry works (European Audiovisual Observatory, 2016).

In conclusion, Denmark presents a slightly different approach from that of Finland, in which the state leads the struggle against threats of foreign intervention, but it also makes use of civil society organizations. Thus, organizations operate in their own right and sometimes assist the state's activities, with civil society organizations considered very active. Consequently, even though the state makes use of intelligence agencies and legal measures, civil society organizations play an important role in addressing cognitive threats.

France

France also tackles foreign influence efforts from Russia. A prominent case that illustrates the importance of the challenge was the Russian intervention in the French presidential elections when an unsuccessful attempt was made to twist the 2017 presidential elections in favor of Marine Le Pen. The failure may stem from various factors, but there is a claim that among them is the large number of bodies that responded to the intervention, including civil society groups (Tackling Disinformation, 2019).

In order to identify foreign influence threats, the state relies on intelligence organizations, international collaboration, and legislation. In this framework, the government adopted legislation against "manipulation of information." The law called for establishing a central organization for media ethics that would regulate a work framework for cooperation among media outlets and journalists (French Government, n.d.).

However, in the interface between the national effort and civil society organizations it appears that there is little fruitful cooperation, due to the public's low level of confidence in government institutions (Statista, 2019). This apparently affects the level of cooperation between the government and civil society organizations. Regarding the 2017 election episode, a comprehensive approach was evident that included four levels: awareness, cooperation, transparency, and economic-political courage. These were expressed in the awareness of the threat, thanks to the cooperation with American intelligence; transparency toward the public and reporting that the computers of the Macron campaign were hacked; economic-political courage that included placing pressure for intervention by the social networks to remove content and users spreading disinformation; and cooperation between various governmental bodies and the media. Cooperation with the media occurred as part of the French media authority's demand that media outlets refrain from publishing leaks and disinformation, on the grounds that publishing them would constitute a criminal offense (Shwartz Altshuler, 2018). On the other hand, civil society groups are not an integral part of the response, and thus the French approach emphasizes the use of all governmental bodies, including security elements.

Civil society organizations in France provide a response to the threat of foreign influence after the challenge is identified. First, research institutes study Russia's activity in the cyber realm and expose Russian propaganda and influence operations. Second are academics with expertise on the topic of Russia and its influence on France, such as Cecile Vaissie from the University of Rennes, who published a book on the Russian network in France (Vaissie, 2016). Furthermore, media organizations like the newspaper *Le Monde* extensively cover relations between France and Russia and expose Russian influence operations to the public. The newspaper also established its own fact-checking system, called Decodex. Finally, activities by individuals expose foreign influence, as by a French journalist who exposed Russian disinformation regarding demonstrations against immigrants and against the European Union, and a book published about Putin's attempts to influence French politics, written by an academic expert on Russia (France, n.d.).

In educational institutions and academia in France there are initiatives that encourage critical thinking and digital literacy (France, n.d.). One example is an initiative called Between the Lines, which was established by journalists from Agence France Presse and enlists other media organizations in running workshops that strengthen critical thinking among university students and school teachers (Neset II, 2018).

Despite the steps taken by the state and civil society organizations in France to cope with disinformation attempts, a study by the London School of Economics claims that the level of French social resilience in coping with external influences is low, and it appears that the actions that France has carried out, whether at the state level or by civil society groups, are not sufficient (Humprecht et al., 2020).

Thus several vulnerabilities in the French approach are evident. Most of the French solutions are mainly top-down. The government relies on security elements and on legislative measures against disinformation, in which it attempts to enlist civil society organizations to take action. Meanwhile, cooperation between civil society organizations and the government is limited, and therefore in addressing the threat of influence, presumably the solutions implemented by civil society organizations are not done in full cooperation with the government (France Corruption Report, 2020).

The United States

The threat of foreign influence received significant international awareness following the Russian intervention in the US presidential elections in 2016, which was seen as a seminal event and even called a "strategic surprise," like events such as Pearl Harbor (Brun & Siman-Tov, 2019). In general, the United States is an attractive target for foreign influences, not just on the part of Russia but also from additional players such as China and Iran.

The United States is an attractive target for foreign influences, not just on the part of Russia but also from additional players such as China and Iran.

The American approach relies to a large extent on many intelligence and defense entities that lead the administration's efforts to identify and expose foreign attempts to influence the public discourse, along with cooperation with international bodies. The Global Engagement Center (GEC) created in the United States is responsible for directing the effort and coordinating the various bodies in coping with foreign influences, as well as funding the activity of civil society organizations on this issue (Polyakova, 2019). Furthermore, despite the First Amendment to the US Constitution, which offers a broad concept of freedom of expression, there is a legal framework for preventing foreign influences. An example of this is the FARA law, which requires foreign entities engaged in various issues (including politics) to be transparent regarding their source of funding and to register with the government as a foreign entity (US Department of Justice, n.d.). Another example is an initiative to regulate political advertisements on social media, which was brought up in the US Congress (Robinson et al., 2019).

However, there is considerable criticism of American actions vis-à-vis the threat. One central claim relates to the slow bureaucracy involved in the coping process, in light of the large number of different bodies that deal with the threat, including the DNI, the NSA, the FBI, and the DHS. Another claim is that the central body established (the GEC) does not have an effective mandate, as it is subordinate to the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy in the State Department. This is in contrast with the DHS, which deals with threats to the United States, but emphasizes the defense of the election infrastructure. Finally, the harshest criticism is that the United States does not have a defined long-term strategy for coping with the threat (United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, 2020).

Another problem facing the American government is the decline in public confidence. A Pew Research Center report (2019) states that only 20 percent of the public have confidence in the government (all of the time or most of the time), with the figure dropping at one point to 17 percent. This is an unprecedented low point in comparison to data collected for the years 1958-2019. Accordingly, it appears that the cooperation between the government and civil society organizations is not fruitful, despite the calls to learn from European countries and increase the cooperation with civil society groups (Claesson, 2019).

Civil society organizations are also active in the struggle against influence threats (USA, n.d.). There are many research institutes in the United States, whether in academic frameworks or independent, that deal with influence threats from Russia and other actors and the ways to address them, such as the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) and many others. Second, many periodicals provide a platform for articles on the issue by writers who are former defense personnel or academics. Third, there are research institutes such as the Atlantic Council that raise awareness about the issue of foreign influence. The Atlantic Council runs a lab for forensic research on the internet (DFRLab) for identifying disinformation and influence operations (Digital Forensic Research lab, n.d.). Another civil society organization that deals with influence threats is the German Marshall Fund of the United States, which operates a database that tracks narratives and issues that are promoted by Iran, China, and Russia (Hamilton 2.0 Dashboard, n.d.).

When it comes to fact-checkers in the media, there are many organizations and different initiatives that aim to strengthen media ethics and credibility, along with fact-checking. Examples can be found in Poynter, which is engaged in media studies and media research, and Bellingcat, which conducts internet research and open-source intelligence—both of which operate fact-checking services. In addition, papers and articles are also published on various influence threats in the traditional media (Poynter, n.d.; Bellingcat, n.d.).

On the education and outreach side, there are many civil society organizations and initiatives for encouraging critical thinking and digital literacy. These direct the public to be aware of manipulation that takes place on the internet and provide tools for coping with the threats that exist on the internet, including disinformation and influence attempts. An example of this is the University of Arizona initiative News Co/Lab, which strengthens critical thinking, digital literacy, and transparency. The initiative seeks collaboration with news organizations to increase transparency and involve the community in the process of creating the news (Legg et al., 2018).

In conclusion, the American approach, similar to the French approach, relies on the leadership of the state and defense organizations in coping with foreign influences. Therefore, the approach should be seen as top-down, with a low level of collaboration with civil society organizations. This is the case despite the many organizations and initiatives that have emerged from the public for the effort. In addition, according to a study by the London School of Economics (LSE), the United States' resilience to disinformation is ranked lowest among all the countries in the listing (Humprecht et al., 2020). Consequently, the US approach appears insufficiently effective in protecting its democracy from foreign intervention, especially when it involves a host of actors, while it itself is based on a politically polarized society.

Table 1 brings together the different approaches and methods in the four countries surveyed.

Analysis of Case Studies

In light of the analysis of the case studies, we propose structuring the way civil society organizations deal with foreign influence in three stages, and at each stage there is reference to the relevant civil society groups.

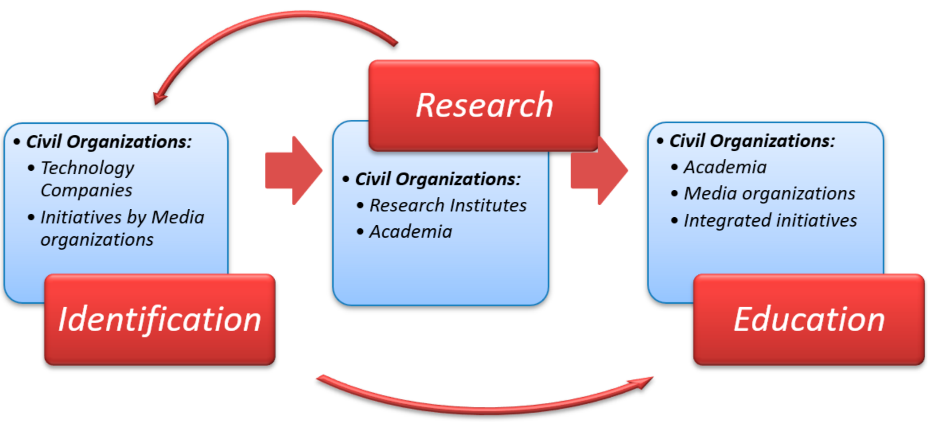

Figure 1. Civil society organizations coping with foreign influence

The first stage for identifying foreign influence includes initiatives of media organizations and technology companies. The goal is to identify activity that is not authentic in the digital realm that spreads disinformation originating from foreign entities or internal ones (which are beyond the scope of this article). This stage is based on technological capabilities, media organizations, and private initiatives on the various platforms where the public discourse occurs. Therefore, integrating all of the players in civil society, including independent or institutional initiatives as well as companies engaged in the issue is essential for finding foreign entities that are trying to influence the internal discourse covertly.

The second stage describes the research process required in order to study the phenomenon and formulate an effective coping strategy. To this end, the research institutes

Table 1. Comparative Perspective

	Finland	Denmark	France	United States
How the threat of foreign influence is perceived	Social and security threat	Security threat	Security threat	Security threat
Ways that the state copes with the threat	Use of intelligence and security elements; cooperation with international defense organizations (NATO)	Use of intelligence and security elements; creation of ad hoc bodies for coping with the threat; international collaboration; legal tools	Use of intelligence and security elements; international collaboration; legal tools	Use of intelligence and security elements; creation of ad hoc bodies for coping with the threat; international collaboration; minimal use of legal tools
Leading characteristics of how the state copes with the threat	Transparency, confidence, unity, criticism, education	Security, transparency, confidence, hierarchy, cooperation, education	Security, hierarchy, concentration of power and authority, ad hoc cooperation	Security, hierarchy, cumbersome bureaucracy
The entity leading the struggle against foreign influence	The state along with civil society groups	The state, with civil society organizations a complementary party	The state; marginal collaboration with civil society organizations	The state; marginal collaboration with civil society organizations
Civil society groups coping with the foreign influence	Media organizations, research institutes, fact checkers, organizations engaged in education	Media organizations, research institutes, fact checkers, organizations engaged in education	Media organizations, research institutes, fact checkers, organizations engaged in education	Media organizations, research institutes, fact checkers, organizations engaged in education
Level of confidence in government institutions	High	High	Low	Very low
Level of cooperation between the government and civil society groups	High: takes place with an emphasis on extensive cooperation in the fields of research, media, and education	Medium: independence alongside cooperation, with an emphasis on research, media, and education	Low: work separately, and sometimes there is ad hoc cooperation in research, media, and education	Low: work separately, and sometimes there is ad hoc cooperation in research, media, and education

and academic institutions with operational capabilities work to gather existing knowledge and to formulate a strategic understanding and conception for coping with the influence challenge. The research is presented in articles by relevant researchers and published in periodicals, which enriches the knowledge in the field. In this framework, it is necessary to examine new research directions in the field for the purpose of understanding the vulnerabilities of the targeted society and how to defend it, as well as the methods of operation of the foreign entities attempting to influence, from the strategic aspect to the tactical aspect. In addition, exposing the actors carrying out influence operations among the public contributes to the education stage and enriches existing knowledge.

In the third stage, emphasis is placed on public education and outreach, which means developing tools to identify and analyze manipulative external messages and cope with them. These translate into encouraging digital literacy and critical thinking, which are essential for coping with external cognitive threats. This stage places an emphasis on strengthening the population and developing immunity as much as possible, and employing countermeasures against those using fake news, disinformation, and manipulation. Education is necessary for school-age children and for adults in the appropriate form for each population group. A desired result of strengthening the population against such a threat is the population's ability on a large scale to identify fake news and disinformation.

The various stages of coping do not necessarily proceed in linear fashion, and a direct connection can be created from the identification stage to the education stage. In addition, there is a possibility of creating a network of connections among civil society groups at varying focus levels. This type of networking may be expressed in creating a joint network realm, sharing knowledge, and coordinating activities, rather than in hierarchical institutionalization that is not suitable to the nature of civil society organizations.

A central point relates to the decentralized approach that characterizes civil society organizations. Usually each organization operates in its field to achieve certain aims and advance the area that it is responsible for—identification, research, or education. Furthermore, collaboration in coping with the foreign influence threat need not be ad hoc and implemented only at sensitive times. Therefore, for the purpose of coping with the challenge, a continuous response is needed that operates not only during election time but on a regular basis, and includes deeper levels of cooperation and jointness.

A consolidated and coordinated response by civil society organizations in defending the democratic discourse is necessary and even more so, ongoing cooperation is required among all of the organizations engaged in identification, research, and education.

Consequently, a consolidated and coordinated response by civil society organizations in defending the democratic discourse is necessary and even more so, ongoing cooperation is required among all of the organizations engaged in identification, research, and education. Such cooperation would enable the creation of extensive, up-to-date knowledge that would be located in a database accessible to all of the organizations and the public. Such a database could streamline the activity of all the civil society organizations in coping with the threat and streamline the development of ways of thinking, conceptual changes, and tools for measuring the influence and addressing it, as it derives from integrating various entities with different expertise.

Furthermore, cooperation among the entities can improve the work of each area. For example, the work of those engaged in identification can be improved by the knowledge created in the field of research. The knowledge accumulated about the actors, the tactics, and even the preferred target audience for attack in carrying out foreign and covert influence operations increases the level of precision and the effectiveness of the entities engaged in identification in coping with the threat. Similarly, cooperation between identification entities and educational bodies enables improvement of the educational work. The information that the identification entities possess can be transmitted to an entire population through various means of education and outreach, thus improving the population's ability to cope with these operations, learn how to deal with an internet user who seems suspicious, and understand the content whose source may be foreign entities. Finally, the work of research bodies can contribute to the educational work regarding effective ways to strengthen the public and provide it with tools for coping with influence operations.

In various Western countries, civil society organizations fulfill a significant role in countering foreign influences on democratic processes, and it is, therefore, worth examining what role civil society organizations in Israel might play, starting with research bodies and extending to organizations engaged in education.

Conclusion

The state has many advantages, such as control of resources and intelligence capabilities, in coping with influence operations by a foreign state that aims to disrupt the democratic discourse in order to achieve strategic objectives. However, there are various kinds of constraints that make it difficult for the state to fully address this threat.

In contrast, civil society organizations have advantages—links with the population, familiarity with social divisions and the social structure, and familiarity with vulnerabilities that can be exploited by foreign actors. They include groups that could help at various stages of responding to this complex challenge, and from identification and research to education and prevention. But their potential is not exploited—at least in some countries, such as Israel—due to non-recognition of the threat, lack of confidence in the government, and increased preoccupation with internal challenges.

Enlisting civil society organizations in tackling foreign influence is a challenge that also depends on the nature of relations between the state and society. An inclusive and transparent political culture on the part of the state and a sense among civil society organizations that the political bodies in the state can counter external influence will increase the confidence and participation of the organizations in preventing foreign influence, as well as other national challenges.

Although this article does not discuss the transparency of the internal democratic discourse, there is a connection between external influences and the internal discourse that echoes them, sometimes unknowingly. Therefore, even if we focus on foreign influences, this does not provide a complete response, and therefore it is also necessary to turn the spotlight on the internal discourse. In such a case, civil society organizations have a significant advantage over state bodies, because they are free of the claims of governmental limitations on freedom of expression.

As demonstrated, in various Western countries, civil society organizations fulfill a significant role in countering foreign influences on democratic processes, and it is, therefore, worth examining what role civil society organizations in Israel might play, starting with research bodies and extending to organizations engaged in education. There are organizations in Israel that deal with defending the internal discourse against fake news and exploitation of social media, which mainly address the internal discourse. Some of these organizations can also deal with covert foreign influence, because as discussed above, there is a close and complementary connection between the internal threat and the external one.

The proposal stated above strongly recommends fostering connections among different civil society organizations that are active in the fields of identification, research, and education for a more effective strategy, as well as creating a database that contains various actors, narratives, and material for study, research, and defense. Once connections are created among civil society organizations, they could serve as a kind of civil network to defend democracy and to focus on external threats and internal threats, and the connection between them. This network can arise gradually, based on trust and a shared desire to fight foreign influences. Over time, collaboration will be more common, to the point of creating a network that brings together a wide variety of entities (fact checkers, journalists, research institutes, organizations from the field of cyber defense, associations engaged in education), while creating platforms for sharing relevant information as well as other integrated initiatives.

An effective response to the strategic threat of foreign influence on democratic processes requires integrating civil society organizations in liberal Western countries as a complementary effort to the activity of the state. Finland and Denmark are examples of states that do this successfully. The state has constraints in tackling foreign threats, while civil society organizations—which in many cases are themselves a target of foreign influence—can be an important part of the response.

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The F-35I stealth fighter jet demonstrated first strike capabilities in the campaign between wars. Photo: Dror Avi (CC BY-SA 4.0)

The Fly on the Elephant’s Back: The Campaign between Wars in Israel’s Security Doctrine

Eran Ortal

“If you want peace, prepare for war.”
Vegetius

Senior officials within the IDF and the Israeli security establishment see the campaign between wars as an alternative to preparation for war. In their view, resources should be channeled to the campaign between wars, at the expense of building a more powerful war fighting machine. This paper challenges this idea and argues that the IDF’s ability to achieve decisive victory is the foundation for the deterrence that allows freedom of operation in the campaign between wars. Evidence of this can be seen in the main theaters of conflict, Gaza and Lebanon, where Israel is concerned about the possibility of escalation to war, and its operations are far rarer and far more covert. The firepower aimed at the Israeli home front is the enemy’s primary means of deterrence. Building decisive military capabilities focused on neutralizing the enemy’s firepower will enable the campaign between wars to be deeper, wider, and less restrained.

Keywords: campaign between wars, security doctrine, decision, Syria, Lebanon

Introduction

A fly rides on the back of an elephant in the African wilderness. The beasts in the savanna make way, trampling the low vegetation with their flight. The fly, in awe of the spectacle, whispers in the elephant's ear, "Look at the all the dust we are kicking up."

The thousands of soldiers and officers, planners and combatants, and intelligence personnel and operations staff that stand behind the most prominent innovation in the IDF in recent years—the "campaign between wars" (*mabam,* as it is known in Hebrew)—are no mere "flies." Members of this special group have overcome difficulties, breached obstacles, displayed talent, creativity, and daring, and reaped significant achievement for Israel's security. But it is crucial that we understand the connection between the success of the campaign between wars, and the "elephant" on which it rides.

This article seeks to place the campaign between wars within the correct theoretical framework and the appropriate strategic context. My central claim is that not only is the campaign between wars not a replacement for the IDF's ability to achieve decisive victory in the battlefield; it is also completely dependent on that ability. Occasionally the argument is made that resources should be shifted from the buildup of the IDF's decisive capabilities to force design exclusively for the campaign between wars.[1] However, these arguments are wrong, and rely on an approach that the campaign between wars is an independent phenomenon that was added to the other components of the security doctrine. In fact, the ability to expand the campaign between wars and make it effective and more influential depends on the "elephant," far more than it is dependent on the acquisition of resources to strengthen the campaign between wars.

I will support this argument by discussing the various foundations of the traditional Israeli security doctrine. I argue that over the years these respective foundations were mutually enabling, complementary components, and this is the dialectic that is missing today in Israeli strategy. This lapse, rather than discussion of resources, is the main factor limiting the effectiveness of the campaign between wars.

The Dual Foundations of the Security Doctrine

We naturally hope to avoid war. This is not only a personal desire; it is the very heart of the traditional security doctrine of the State of Israel. Zionism was intended to create a home for the Jewish nation and enable the ingathering of the exiles. War is not part of these plans, and actually impedes them. Therefore, a security doctrine was formulated that strives for short and decisive wars, followed by long periods of quiet that will enable nation building and economic growth. On this basis, Israel's security doctrine posited two complementary foundations: fundamental security and routine security.

Fundamental security deals with questions of war. It addresses how Israel can survive in a hostile environment, in a reality of the few versus the many, and with a lack of strategic depth. Israel's answer was to strive for a short war in which the entire national potential is fully mobilized on the basis of a reserve force, in order to deal a decisive blow to Arab armies and secure victory. The operational mode of this approach was based on three components—a small, strong regular army to stop an enemy offensive; decisive resolution of the war by mobilizing the reservists; and intelligence warnings that would enable mobilization of the strike force as early as possible. The military had to transfer the war to enemy territory, remove the threat, and achieve victory over the primary enemy. If necessary, after decisive victory in the main theaters, the IDF effort would move to secondary and tertiary theaters.

The second foundation, routine security, aims at reducing security disturbances between wars. This foundation was necessary because even when the Arab armies were not threatening major wars, the young state still faced other challenges—infiltrations, terrorism, clashes between military forces, "border wars," and more. The approach toward routine security rested on the principle of exacting a heavy price from the enemy for any violation of calm along the borders, in order to deter and force it to restrain its conduct. The goal was to maintain routine security with minimal resources and without interrupting life in the emerging nation. Alongside the requisite regional defense, the offensive operational form of routine security was a series of raids into enemy territory, known as reprisal operations, which developed along varying levels of scope, depth, and force.

Despite the use of the term preemptive war, the Chief of Staff invoked the common perception of the campaign between wars as aimed at improving the opening conditions of the next war, rather than preventing it.

Two important aspects enabled reprisal operations to be a useful operational mode. First, the operations did not affect the home front or the economy. Reprisal operations did not require the mobilization of reserves, did not overburden the readiness of the army for war, and did not spill over into the home front. Second was the threat of escalation. Arab states knew that reprisal operations were merely the tip of the iceberg in terms of Israel's military power. If they were to choose to escalate, the IDF would mobilize, attack, and achieve victory.

Jordan, Egypt, Syria, and the PLO in Lebanon in the early 1980s all understood that reprisal operations were not just operations aimed at "exacting a price," but were also a clear message from Israel regarding its willingness to continue to escalate to all-out war, if necessary. The IDF strike force, which the Arab armies encountered as early as 1948-1949, had to be taken into consideration. During the Sinai Campaign, the IDF proved that it could defeat Egyptian forces in the Sinai Peninsula; in the Six Day War, Israel proved that it could vanquish three Arab armies and capture large swathes of territory. Even with the disastrous opening conditions of the Yom Kippur War, the IDF succeeded in transitioning from defense to offense and ended the war with the enemy's military force defeated and the IDF situated firmly in enemy territory. This tacit threat enabled the IDF, during its short history, to conduct hundreds of raids into enemy territory, without escalation to war.

These two foundations, fundamental security and routine security, are clearly not independent, but two complementary sides of one whole.

The Connection to the Campaign between Wars

The campaign between wars is a term given to efforts by Israel to block the Iranian penetration of the region and the military buildup of Israel's enemies with advanced weaponry. According to foreign reports, in this campaign Israel has made use of a diverse range of tools—covert, economic, and the crown jewels of the campaign, kinetic attacks in enemy territory. Attacking the enemy in a foreign country is a show of force by Israel that enables it to come from a position of strength when coordinating with international actors such as Russia and the United States, and to wield greater cognitive, economic, and other influence in the region. The campaign between wars includes a diverse range of types of power, but it cannot take place, certainly not by the IDF, without a kinetic element.

In his speech at the annual conference at the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) in January 2021, IDF Chief of Staff Aviv Kochavi referred to the campaign between wars as a "preemptive war" whose goal is to diminish the enemy's capabilities in preparation for the next war. In other words, despite the use of the term preemptive war, the Chief of Staff invoked the common perception of the campaign between wars as aimed at improving the opening conditions of the next war, rather than preventing it.

The strategic aims of the campaign between wars resemble the traditional concept of routine security. The strikes and operations by Israel in Syria over the past few years were aimed at preventing Hezbollah's force buildup with qualitative and precision weaponry, and preventing the entrenchment of terror infrastructures on the Golan Heights border. The guiding idea of the operations is clear—to halt the buildup of the threat from the Shiite axis from Lebanon and Syria. Indeed, contrary to the reprisal operations of the past, the campaign between wars is not characterized by a pattern of response to terrorist operations in Israeli territory, but operates according to a pattern of proactive operations against the enemy within the context presented above, and is guided by a strategy of prevention and precision interdiction. Reprisal operations, on the other hand, were designed to be painful; they constituted a strategy of coercion.[2] Most were directed against the Arab population in Gaza or the West Bank, from where terrorist operations were launched, or against bases of the Arab Legion or the Egyptian army as the responsible state address. Unlike the reprisal operations of the past, which were directed against the population and the host country, the campaign between wars is characterized by attacks on Hezbollah and Iranian targets.

These differences are significant, but they do not obviate the essential similarity—Israel acted offensively in enemy territory in systematic fashion to ensure its interests, either through prevention or coercion. The reprisal operations of the 1970s, primarily along the Lebanese border, were similar to today's campaign between wars. Raids and air strikes targeted the terrorist bases themselves, not the population or the army of the host nation, Lebanon. The reprisal operations even had a certain element of neutralizing military capabilities, especially strikes by the Israeli Air Force on training bases and weapons depots in Lebanon.

There are therefore both differences and similarities between the current campaign between wars and the IDF's historic reprisal operations. But the most significant similarity relates to the operational mode of the military offensives between wars. Both ground raids ("reprisal operations") and air strikes (which became more common from the 1980s onward) were based on the principle of routine security—a military operation whose strategic logic is limited damage to the enemy, rather than defeat of the enemy, and whose operational form is short and limited; an operation that can be repeated multiple times, without investing considerable resources, without mobilizing the reserves, and without risking a major escalation.

However, one significant strategic difference must be highlighted. The reprisal operations in Gaza in the 1950s were aimed against the primary enemy of the State of Israel—Egypt and its powerful army. The reprisal operations in the West Bank in the 1950s and 1960s were aimed against the Hashemite kingdom and the Arab Legion. This was not only a quality military force, it was also deployed in the heart of the land—in Jerusalem and along the borders in the plains and Sharon region. Reprisal operations against the Syrian army targeted a force that enjoyed complete topographical superiority over the Galilee panhandle and the Sea of Galilee. Despite the significant threat from these armies, the IDF repeatedly launched violent raids on the armies of the surrounding states in order to force them to stop terrorist operations against Israel from their territories.

The campaign between wars is indeed characterized by intense military operations, but it is focused primarily on the Syrian arena. Despite the best efforts of Iran and Hezbollah, a military infrastructure based on rockets and missiles, capable of creating a threat of significant scope and duration to the Israeli home front, has yet to be established in Syria. Indeed, one of Israel's declared strategic goals is to ensure that this situation persists. The intensive campaign between wars in Syria stands out against the background of the few raids and air strikes against Israel's principal enemies on their soil—Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in Gaza.

The main explanation for the absence of a more significant and violent campaign between wars in Lebanon and in Gaza is the existence of weapons aimed at Israel's civilian front, a restraining factor not seen during the days of reprisal operations.

Why has the campaign between wars focused almost exclusively on the Syrian arena, and not on other arenas that pose a greater threat to Israel?[3] The answer is obvious. Lebanon and Gaza are flooded with dangerous military capabilities, and Hamas and Hezbollah's ability to paralyze the Israeli home front in response to any Israeli strike is like a train that has already left the station. The campaign between wars strives to prevent this mistake from recurring in Syria and ensure that Iran and Hezbollah's capabilities in Syria, as far as they threaten Israel, remain limited in quality and scope. This was also the message relayed by the chief of staff in his speech at the INSS conference.

In other words, the fact that Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon possess significant quantities of short-range weapons is the most important explanation for Israeli restraint. Both Hezbollah and Hamas have violated Israeli sovereignty by digging tunnels into its territory. Hezbollah has built a large-scale offensive military force on Israel's border, with the declared aim of "capturing the Galilee." Hamas has developed its harassment tactics on the Gaza border into an art form—protesting and upsetting the calm, preventing Israeli residents of the border area from living a normal life, launching incendiary and explosive devices and balloons, and conducting sniper attacks. Israel's response tends to be measured, and certainly does not extend to proactive operations. The difference between preventive logic in the campaign between wars and coercion logic in reprisal operations is not the crux. Rather, the main explanation for the absence of a more significant and violent campaign between wars in Lebanon and in Gaza is the existence of weapons aimed at Israel's civilian front, a restraining factor not seen during the days of reprisal operations.

The absence in Syria of a significant array of high trajectory weapons that pose a tangible and credible threat to the Israeli civilian front is therefore the primary explanation for Israel's freedom of operation in that country. Over the years of the civil war in Syria, Israel possessed the unique ability to employ significant military force and tip the delicate balance in favor of one of the sides. Under the cover of this "elephant," Israel benefitted from significant freedom of operation, overt and covert, against its enemies. The Shiite axis in Syria still lacks the threat capabilities held by Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in Gaza. It is this gap in the capabilities of the enemy, and not just Israel's impressive tactical and intelligence creativity, that so far has defined the campaign between wars in Syria.

Reprisal Operations that Went Wrong

If we examine the IDF's major military operations since 1990—Operation Accountability (Lebanon, 1993); Operation Grapes of Wrath (Lebanon, 1996); the Second Lebanon War (2006); Operations Cast Lead (Gaza, 2008-2009); Pillar of Defense (Gaza, 2012); and Protective Edge (Gaza, 2014)—we see a confusing phenomenon. Short raids or fire-based strikes, aimed at exacting a price from the enemy and deterring it, ran into complications and ended up as campaigns that lasted days or even weeks. Even though these were relatively large campaigns (certainly the Second Lebanon War, Cast Lead, and Protective Edge) their aim was not to defeat the enemy and remove the threat to the home front, but in fact was far more circumscribed. Their goals were usually defined around the idea of "deterring the enemy" in order to "create a better security reality." The strategic logic of these campaigns was the logic of reprisal operations. However, the strategic investment required from Israel—mobilization of reserves, material cost, indirect cost to the economy, the duration of campaigns—was similar to that required in war. In fact, some of these campaigns were recognized as wars, albeit in retrospect (the Second Lebanon War and Protective Edge), which in fact suggests that the last IDF wars were basically "reprisal operations gone wrong."

What is it that makes "reprisal operations" become wars, dragging Israel into long campaigns with limited achievements? Here too there is one answer: high-trajectory weapons. The ability of the enemy to launch rockets into Israeli towns neutralizes the traditional idea of disengaging following the campaign. Operation Black Arrow in February 1955 lasted one night. It had a known beginning, middle, and end. While the raid's planners could not predict with certainty the results in terms of the cost to the enemy and to Israel's forces, it was clear that it was a night raid that would end on the morning of March 1. Sixty years later, the Gaza Strip can "veto" IDF reprisal operations ending on a date decided in advance. In both Cast Lead and Pillar of Defense, the IDF sought to end the campaign on several occasions, and even announced various suspensions of operations. Every such suspension was foiled by the launch of rockets to Israel's home front.

A Threat Not Removed

Why in that case does Israel refrain from launching a war to remove the missile threat and defeat the enemy? Again, a large part of the answer can be found in high trajectory weapons. The next war, as decision makers know, will take place in Haifa, Tel Aviv, and the entire home front, with grave consequences for both sides. The rest of the answer is the unwillingness of Israel to conquer enemy territories as it did in the past and rule over them. This is what distinguishes between the First Lebanon War and the operations that followed.

Hezbollah and later Hamas were quick to take advantage of this. They were essentially given strategic immunity to build sophisticated fire arrays in the territories they had seized. This firepower is hidden deep in the urban, labyrinthine environments controlled by the enemy. It is not possible (through current means) to uproot them without a long ground operation that entails capturing and clearing inhabited towns, and remaining in them for an extended period.[4] But the enemy, the Israeli public, and policymakers[5] are all aware of Israel's unwillingness to return to capturing and occupying hostile territory. The exception to this was Operation Defensive Shield in Judea and Samaria in 2002, where there was no presence of deterrent high trajectory weapons and no significant enemy territorial defenses.

Thus we see that not only is the operational mode of a reprisal operation harmed critically by the enemy's veto on disengagement following the raid; the strategic logic of threat escalation to all-out war is in fact rendered toothless. In the absence of military ability to remove the rocket threat at a cost that is acceptable to public opinion and the leadership in Israel and the world, Israel remains devoid of a credible threat. In fact, if our enemies have learned something from the pattern of operations staged by the IDF over the past 30 years and from the limited targets of these operations, it is the lack of a burning strategic desire by Israel to achieve victory.

The Fly and the Elephant

The campaign between wars is limited to territories where the enemy does not have significant capabilities that can hold the Israeli home front hostage. In Syria, there is a trend of entrenchment by Iran and Hezbollah, but this is still a far cry from enabling the enemy to launch a broad and effective military response. The digging of cross border tunnels into Israel between Operations Pillar of Defense and Protective Edge is testimony to this. Israel in those years upheld its commitments to the understandings reached after Pillar of Defense to refrain from offensive operations in the Gaza

Strip, despite repeated violations by the enemy and intelligence on the digging of tunnels. Hamas's persistence in a strategy of border disturbances and balloon terrorism over more than a year testifies to the organization's sense of immunity thanks to its rocket arsenal.

Therefore, what defines Israel's ability to execute effective routine security or the campaign between wars, not only in Syria but also in the main theaters, are two conditions. First, the ability to isolate the reprisal operation or coercion so as not to drag Israel to war—in other words, that routine security does not become unintended war. In order to achieve this there is a need to find a way to negate the enemy's "veto" in the form of rockets launched into Israel. The protection provided by systems such as Iron Dome is critical and successful, but it does not provide a response to this need. For the enemy, it is sufficient to cancel school in Israel or to paralyze the entry and exit points by generating multiple alarms at airports and seaports.

The second condition is a new operational idea that will enable the IDF to retain a credible, tangible, and effective threat to eliminate the danger to the Israeli home front and to defeat the enemy as a fighting force without having to pay the heavy price of clearing hundreds of heavily populated towns and villages and occupying territory for an extended period.

Without the clear military ability to deny the enemy the option of bombing the home front and without effective warfare to remove the threat and achieve decisive victory, the campaign between wars is no more than a fly without an elephant.

Recent decades have seen a heated debate between the school of thought that claims that it is no longer possible to achieve victory and the school that claims that the IDF must return to a strategy of defeating enemy forces and removing threats. The IDF's force employment approach to achieving victory over enemies on its borders focused precisely on this debate, and decided in favor of establishing a more modern and adaptable military capability, whose purpose is to return decisive operational victory to Israel's strategic practice. One concrete idea on how victory can be achieved over a terror army based on missiles and rockets appears in my article "To Turn on the Light and Put Out the Fire."

Without the threat of a decisive war, the State of Israel does not have an "elephant," and without an elephant, the campaign between wars does no more than mark time.

Conclusion

"It is possible that in the future there will be significant change with grave strategic implications: the Arabs are liable to have a growing arsenal, both quantitative and qualitative, of surface-to-surface missiles.... Israel's most pressing conventional military challenge in the field of national security ahead of the 21st century is therefore this development," wrote pioneering Israeli armored general Israel Tal.

Tal's prophecy has come true. It is high trajectory weaponry that has thrown Israel's security establishment off balance. The ability of missile launch systems to hold the daily routine and mental resilience of hundreds of thousands of Israeli citizens hostage, despite air defense systems and home front defense, has negated the logic of reprisal operations and undermined the foundation of "routine security." Israel's reluctance to once again capture large territories and fight in challenging urban arenas where the rockets are hidden, and to clear these areas of the enemy at costs that are expected to be high, is obvious to all. This reluctance has eliminated Israel's threat of launching a decisive war and its ability to remove the threat from the home front. The foundations of Israel's fundamental security have been undermined. Israel finds itself occasionally fighting long and expensive campaigns in order to achieve goals that are becoming more and more limited. We have adopted the worst of all worlds—the limited achievements of routine security operations with the high costs of fundamental security wars. This phenomenon is so clear that there is no doubt that Syria, at some point, will immunize itself with extensive rocket capabilities.

The campaign between wars is nothing but a new form, albeit original and full of vitality, of the foundation of our security doctrine—routine security. However, without the clear military ability to deny the enemy the option of bombing the Israeli home front and without effective warfare to remove the threat and achieve decisive victory over the enemy as a fighting force, the campaign between wars is no more than a fly without an elephant.

High trajectory weapons and Israel's reluctance to capture difficult territories have upset both fundamentals of Israel's defense doctrine. We need a new form of warfare, one that is offensive and denies the enemy its firepower and destroys it while limiting significantly its impact on the home front. What is required is an attack on the enemy's territory without the accompanying downside—fighting from house to house and clearing every community, street, alleyway, and building, until the last rocket is found. Such ideas about a new form of warfare exist on the discussion table. Only then will the IDF's impressive offensive organized around the campaign between wars be able to operate in the primary arenas, and not just in Syria.

If we desire a campaign between wars that will be less of a fly and more of a hornet, a campaign between wars that will operate effectively and daringly against enemies that have the ability and the willingness to attack Israel, then it will have to sit on another elephant, an elephant that casts a more noticeable shadow on our main enemies, an elephant that knows how to fight and to defeat terror armies built around their high trajectory fire capabilities against the Israeli home front.

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Notes

1 See, for example, Col. Shay Shabtai's "An Approach to the Campaign between Wars" (*Maarachot, 446*, 2012), which includes a series of "annexes" to the security doctrine (reprisals, preemptive wars, special operations, counterterrorism, deterrent operations, preemptive strikes, and more) and calls for a ninth annex—the campaign between wars. He later calls for investment and organization adapted to the campaign between wars ("a new organizational concept"), as if the campaign between wars is an independent component of the security doctrine.

2 Prevention and coercion: Prevention is an operation whose purpose is to prevent the enemy from being able to exercise its force against us. Reprisal is an action in response to an enemy operation, and is not directly in the context of an enemy operation. Both prevention and reprisal are key tools in the realization of the idea of "coercion," namely, the desire to change the behavior of an actor who opposed us by threatening to use force or by the use of measured force, without deteriorating into all-out conflict. The logic of coercion, in which prevention is inherent, is aimed at dealing with threats primarily during periods of non-war. For more on this topic, see Thomas Schelling's classic book *Arms and Influence;* and Robert Pape's *Bombing to Win: Air Power and Coercion in War.*

3 According to published unclassified material.

4 Yaakov Amidror, for example, recommends in his article "What For" (*Dado Center Journal, 31-32*, in Hebrew) that the purpose of the next war in Lebanon be to prevent future launch capability from that country through a long and exhaustive clearing operation, and thus make a campaign between wars possible following the end of the war.

5 The prominent exception to this phenomenon is Operation Defensive Shield in 2002. The proximity to Israeli population concentrations, the fact that there was no need to clear Judea and Samaria of hidden rockets but "only" to locate covert terror infrastructures and the enemy's initial military capabilities enabled Israel to take a different decision in this case. Above all, during Operation Defensive Shield the enemy did not have a rocket capability that threatened to paralyze the Israeli home front as long as the operation continued. Even then, it took two years of suicide bombings against the Israeli home front and some 1,000 Israeli dead in order for that decision to be taken.


Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak (seated, l) and PA Chairman Yasir Arafat (seated, r) at the signing ceremony in Sharm el-Sheikh, September 4, 1994. Photo: Moshe Milner / GPO

The Intelligence Factor in Negotiations, Absent Too Often

Gilead Sher, Yahel Arnon, and Yoel Guzansky

Negotiation management requires setting up a professional and permanent intelligence framework, which utilizes the capabilities of the intelligence community—in the context of this article, the Israeli intelligence community—in order to address specific information, needs, and tasks. Its mission: supporting decision makers with intelligence and assessments on a strategic level, and the negotiation team on a tactical one.

Keywords: negotiation, intelligence, Israel, leadership, decision making

Introduction

In its classical sense, the intelligence component in negotiations should provide decision makers with relevant information about the abilities and intentions of the various actors.[1] This resource not only identifies threats, but also positive trends and opportunities that might coincide with or mature during a negotiation process. Nevertheless, the involvement of intelligence resources in negotiations is a complex professional and governmental challenge that is far from self-evident.

Intelligence bodies face numerous challenges during a negotiation process. First, the challenge of gathering intelligence throughout what is necessarily a dynamic process is subject to influences and spoilers from both within and beyond. Therefore, the intelligence body must undertake intelligence gathering, prove operational capacities, and provide assessments based upon ongoing research and changing evaluations. Second, a relatively new challenge for intelligence bodies is the need to integrate flexibly and dynamically a myriad of disciplines and data, such as in-depth analyses of cultural, social, economic, and psychological trends. Finally, in an era of truth decay, cyber warfare, fake news, and manipulative data intrusion, intelligence bodies face additional difficulties in addressing their negotiation-related tasks.

This article addresses the operational framework of the intelligence bodies, their roles in the negotiation process, and their inherent potential to serve as a decision supporting framework. It analyzes intelligence capabilities in the context of negotiations and proposes a framework for managing the negotiation-oriented intelligence unit as an integral and inseparable part of the negotiation team, both in roles behind the scenes and as a participant in the talks.

Intelligence and the Negotiation Process

Intelligence is involved in all stages of negotiation, from the moment an intention to enter such a process is considered, detected, or indicated. Intelligence can identify a negotiation-entering option based on ongoing analysis and evaluation of the opponent's capabilities and the intentions, pressures, and factors affecting it, alongside international, regional, and internal developments. In turn, intelligence bodies can offer recommendations to leaders on the advancement or rejection of negotiations. If they decide to pursue the negotiation option, the intelligence gathering bodies must be "readied" to focus their efforts and establish an intelligence gathering plan that can be launched rapidly and run with a degree of flexibility, as well as be prepared to take part in the integrative collaboration with other relevant bodies.

Intelligence support in negotiations plays the largest role when negotiations have materialized. Negotiation processes are conducted at a shifting pace, often intertwined with domestic political constraints, violence, and terror at various intensities, compounded by numerous additional elements and variables. Intelligence is therefore required to maintain alertness, vigilance, and focus throughout the process, be it months, years, or decades. Cognitive tactics and psychological warfare are often employed to leverage advantages against the opponent's weaknesses so that desired outcomes may be achieved.

Whether or not the leader choses to use them, the intelligence bodies established for negotiations must be available and ready.

The intelligence activity continues when negotiations reach their final stages, since at this point the intelligence bodies must focus on how the other party is likely to comply with an agreement once it is attained. Intelligence guidance after finalizing the agreement is also necessary, and it is therefore recommended not to dismantle the negotiations administration—if such a body has indeed been established—after talks have ended, but rather to maintain its capabilities.

Intelligence guidance and input in negotiations is a critical and central tool, which lends the leaders and the persons in charge on their behalf during negotiations an advantage when they come to take decisions at both tactical and strategic levels. The limits and framework of the intelligence bodies must be clearly, systemically, and structurally defined in order to enable the leader to best handle negotiations. Whether or not the leader choses to use them, the intelligence bodies established for negotiations must be available and ready.

Dilemmas Surrounding the Use of Intelligence

The value of the intelligence community as a central and integral component in national and international decision making processes is

During peace processes, intelligence can make two main contributions. The first is the ability to prevent surprises and provide alerts on changes regarding the relationship between the parties. The second is the ability to provide exclusive information on the other side's positions and level of commitment to the process.

indisputable. It has been drawn on by the highest political ranks; however, the involvement of intelligence in a peace process is not self-evident. Despite the potential contribution that intelligence can make for decision makers, there are leaders who prefer to not involve intelligence in peace processes. For example, in 1970 United States President Richard M. Nixon chose not to update the intelligence bodies on his policy vis-à-vis China or his intentions to invade Cambodia, probably because he anticipated potential objections. And indeed, it is the privilege of every leader to use the intelligence resources as he deems fit. However, when a leader does decide to involve intelligence in the process, he gains access to an efficient tool that will both serve his need and the need of his constituency.

Israeli negotiator Michael Herzog claimed that while there is a need to collect information and intelligence on the negotiators' personal aspects and motivations, this kind of information can also damage the negotiations process and promote distrust between parties. For example, intelligence gathered on intimate information such as private conversations risks revealing a lack of trust between the parties, which in turn might be harmful when entering a peace negotiation process. This drawback is counterbalanced by the value of understanding the motivation of all negotiators, and in turn gaining greater insight into their goals.

Intelligence during Peace Negotiations

Intelligence allocates a great deal of data collection and research abilities to follow the other side and understand its movements, usually in preparation for war (Yadlin, 2004). The same resources can also be allocated for peace negotiations purposes. Intelligence bodies provide information on various levels—tactical, operational, and strategic regarding the respective parties involved in the process. All these efforts enable the leaders and the negotiating teams to best prepare for dialogue and maximize the potential outcomes from the process (Ravid-Kochavi, 2001).

During peace processes, intelligence can make two main contributions. The first is the ability to prevent surprises and provide alerts on changes regarding the relationship between the parties. The second is the ability to provide exclusive information on the other side's positions and level of commitment to the process. Here, intelligence bodies aspire to be more than just information providers, and they emphasize the value of their analytical abilities.

While providing tactical intelligence to the leader, the administration, and the negotiation team, the coordination between the various intelligence bodies may significantly enhance the quality of a range of activities. For example, during the 2000 Camp David summit the Israeli intelligence bodies constantly assessed the aspirations, intentions, and actions of the US mediators, in case the summit failed. In addition, they continually assessed the United States' attitude toward each side, in order to determine if there were signs of bias toward a particular party (Ravid-Kochavi 2001). The difficulties on a mediator and barriers that may arise as a result of intelligence gathering lie in a potential crisis of trust between the investigating party and the mediating one, as well as reservations on the mediator portraying himself as objective and neutral.

The Intelligence Purview

The information gathered by intelligence bodies focuses on the intentions, capabilities, constraints, and limitations of the other party or parties. Analyzing the opponent's balance of powers includes looking into internal rankings, power struggles, and the intensity of internal friction, differing interests, coalitions, oppositions, beliefs, and perceptions. This type of analysis requires an in-depth understanding of the internal dynamics of the opponent's team, mandates, coalitions, mindsets, and personalities, and a focus on the relationship between them and their leaders. The negotiation team itself may also contribute significant information for the production of these products, since it is exposed to the internal dynamics of the opponent's team; hence it has a main role in enriching the comprehensive intelligence picture, of which it too is a major consumer (Kimchi, 2007).

The use of intelligence extends beyond simply understanding the opponent. In fact, intelligence can be utilized to gather information on a wide range of issues, including but not limited to economic changes, the influence of religion, and the counterpart's civil society and its impact on the decision making process. It can also anticipate the reaction a peace process and resulting agreement will generate among the general public and on social media. Intelligence during negotiations cannot operate removed from the leader's considerations; implications of the policy for international and regional factors; implications for militarization; implications of the negotiations for civil society; and possible effects on the leadership level. A large part of these information sectors and data banks will not necessarily have been fostered or processed by the intelligence bodies during their routine work, and some of them lie out of their reach or expertise.

In addition to gathering information, intelligence sources are responsible for providing an assessment that includes, inter alia, a set of possible scenarios, cases, and responses. This evaluation addresses the opponent's negotiation capabilities and tools at its disposal; the way those with vested interests impact on conduct—both in the negotiation room and outside it; the systemic vision of the opponent, which includes red lines and flexible or rigid maneuvering areas; and strategies for achieving goals, as well as action tactics. This systemic vision also relates, to the extent possible, to the counterpart's assessments of its strengths, limitations, and weaknesses.

Part of the information required for this evaluation should be made transparent by the negotiations team. It has a live view of the conduct displayed by the other party or parties, which is critical feedback for the intelligence bodies, as it may allow them to narrow and focus their efforts. They will, in turn, transmit their insights to the negotiations team in a back and forth process (a "complete intelligence cycle"). This relationship requires sensitivity and professionalism in order to reduce the risk of exposing the negotiators' sources. Furthermore, one may assume the parties on the other side operate a parallel intelligence division that analyzes the conduct of their adversaries. Therefore, part of the intelligence input should be "fire-walling": addressing certain aspects on how to best guard and secure the planning information, tools, and tactics while carrying out negotiations.

In some circumstances, it is wiser for a side to expose its weaknesses and concede its inability to meet some of the other sides' requests. In such cases, intelligence bodies can verify the authenticity of the other side's lack of capabilities. While some might interpret vulnerability as a sign of weakness, displaying it in a negotiation process can build trust, which is crucial for successful negotiations. Of course, if the intelligence body finds the other party's claim to be false, it will severely damage the negotiations, and might even cause its demise.

Structural Dimensions

In order to meet the negotiation objectives, a small and highly trusted team is generally appointed under a confidant, who will lead the team and report back to the chief negotiator. In turn, the chief negotiator appoints his ad hoc team. In addition, the leader can also be assisted by a negotiation administration, staff, or headquarters, designed and adapted according to the circumstances and needs of the negotiation process.

Negotiation administration requires organizational, structural, and process flexibility. For political negotiations, depending on the objectives, the setup, the circumstances and the subject matters of the negotiations, certain expertise in language, history, political science, media, nuclear capabilities, psychology, economics, demography, academy, ecology, energy, religion, culture, law—and of course, political, military, and security components—as well as intelligence is pertinent. A person's capability to successfully adapt to new cultural settings is also essential in political and international negotiations, because it has special relevance to multicultural settings and global contexts.

An organizational framework that will build up capabilities and preserve knowledge, and whose activity can be adjusted based on needs and circumstances, is essential. Within this context, intelligence is one of the most indispensable components.

Lessons drawn from past experience reflect the difficulty of synchronizing the government, whose head defines the negotiation strategy, and the intelligence bodies in the security and defense establishment (but not only), who hold the relevant levers and implement the political strategy. Synchronization becomes more complex due to the sheer number of entities participating in the process, particularly when the negotiation process goes through rapid developments and is characterized by multiple perspectives. Among these difficulties is the need to decipher what data should be gathered by intelligence, in what manner, and by whom within the respective bodies.

Recommendations

As long as there is a commitment from the higher rank to integrate intelligence bodies in the negotiation process, these bodies must deepen collaborations and operate in conjunction with government ministries, actors in the private market (such as survey and polling institutions), think tanks, hi-tech, and cyber companies—some or all if necessary, depending on subject and context. In addition, in order to operate most efficiently, the intelligence function in negotiations must be constantly updated with developments on all matters of the process, both inside and outside the negotiations room. All fields of knowledge may assist the intelligence bodies in presenting how the leadership of the opposing party views the negotiations, while indicating how far or close the parties are to reaching negotiation terms of reference and defining negotiated topics.

It is essential to establish a permanent administration that serves as the leader's headquarters for the entire process, and to create (to the extent possible, since the leader will select whomever he deems fit) a professional and experienced negotiation team, and establish an intelligence body that will support the leader with intelligence and assessments on a strategic level, and the negotiation team on a tactical one.

Negotiating is a process that requires enormous attention from the leader and the broader state leadership as well as considerable national resources and many inputs, often over a long period of time and even beyond political tenures of a singular leader. An organizational framework that will build up capabilities and preserve knowledge, and whose activity can be adjusted based on needs and circumstances, is essential. Within this context, intelligence is one of the most indispensable components. This organization framework should be built prior to the initiation of the negotiation process in order to allow those chosen to convene and prepare on short notice for each assignment. The unit should preferably be headed by a leading knowledgeable intelligence officer, and it should have the ability to integrate all resources, utilize gathering and other tools, and define an authority vis-à-vis all community entities.

Since the unit defined as the "Intelligence Leader" is agreed upon only shortly before the beginning of negotiations, it is appropriate that the responsibility for maintaining readiness be placed in the hands of an entity flexible enough to adapt to various circumstances.

The negotiation administration, serving as the central organizational framework to manage a multi-dimensional negotiation effort, should act to form and gather the elements required for the intelligence input in negotiations; design the intelligence function in its framework based on needs and context; promote cooperation between intelligence bodies; and build a network for the intelligence function throughout the various circles of influence, ranging from occurrences at the negotiation table, and broader trends and developments outside. The likelihood of renewing and conducting political negotiations is constantly changing. This is precisely why planning, preparing, and building up capabilities are indispensable for setting up an administrative negotiation-supporting intelligence framework.

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Note

1 Knowledge and understanding of past negotiations, as well as interviews with senior and experienced ranks in negotiation processes, suggest that negotiations have often lacked deep learning and comprehension of the various capabilities of the intelligence community, as part of their correct, professional, and organizational structure. In turn, the non-utilization of these capabilities precludes a potential significant contribution that can support and improve negotiation processes, and inform their respective leaders and decision making processes. The authors held meetings and interviews with Efraim Halevy (former head of the Mossad and Israel's Ambassador to the European Union), Dr. Oded Eran (former Israeli Ambassador to Jordan and to the European Union, and former head of INSS), INSS Managing Director Brig. Gen. (res.) Udi Dekel (former head of the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations administration and the IDF Strategic Planning division), Brig. Gen. (ret.) Shlomo Brom (former head of the IDF Strategic Planning division), Israel Hasson (former Deputy Head of the Security Services), David Meidan (former senior Mossad official and head of the Gilad Shalit negotiations on behalf of the Prime Minister), Brig. Gen. (res.) Gadi Zohar (former head of the Civil Administration in the West Bank), and Col. (res.) Dr. Ephraim Lavie (head of Tami Steinmetz Center at Tel Aviv University), as well as a several individuals who asked to not be mentioned by name. We extend our gratitude and appreciation to all.

Islamic Republic of Iran Army soldiers and pilots marching on Islamic Republic of Iran Army Day, April 17, 2012. Photo: Hosein Velayati (CC BY 4.0)

Is Iran Really Turning from Islamic Theocracy to Military Autocracy?

Raz Zimmt

With the approach of the Iranian presidential elections, there is increased discussion in Iran and in the West surrounding the possible election of a "military president," who will come from the ranks of the Revolutionary Guards and channel his military skills to the severe domestic and external challenges facing the Islamic Republic. While the standing of the Revolutionary Guards has strengthened in recent decades, and they play a prominent role in politics and the economy, any discussion of the "militarization" of the Iranian state must, inter alia, distinguish between direct intervention in politics by the Revolutionary Guards and the integration of former commanders in politics. In any case, the chances of the Revolutionary Guards taking over the Iranian political system seem slim as long as the current Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei, holds the reins of power. Khamenei's death could accelerate the process of militarization of the Iranian state and perhaps even prepare the ground for an alternative model of governance, with far-reaching implications for Iran's domestic and foreign policy.

Keywords: Iran, politics, Revolutionary Guards, regime stability

The Possible Election of a "Military President" in Iran

With the approach of the Iranian presidential elections, currently scheduled for June 18, 2021, there is increased discussion surrounding the possible election of a "military president" (رئیس جمهوری نظامی). Over the past two years, calls in Iran that support the election of a president from among the armed forces, particularly from the ranks of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), have strengthened. This sentiment has assumed greater urgency given the conflict with the United States and President Donald Trump's maximum pressure strategy; the severe economic crisis that has plagued Iran following the reinstatement of the sanctions; and the COVID-19 pandemic. The expectation is that a president of this sort could take advantage of his military experience to lead the executive branch and address his country's problems with greater effectiveness. In April 2020, the reformist newspaper *Shargh* speculated that given the crises that Iran faces and the loss of public confidence in the political system, the two main political factions (the hardliners and the pragmatists) might nominate former generals as their candidates in the elections, because they could muster greater public confidence than ordinary politicians.

The possibility of the election of a military president has prompted a heated internal debate in Iran. Supporters of the idea point to the charm of those in uniform and argue that a military figure has an advantage in coping with the country's challenges, due to his command and organizational skills. Opponents, in contrast, argue that managing a country and society is different from commanding military units on the battlefield; historical experience demonstrates that command qualities are no guarantee of success in the political arena, and the Iranian public does not tend to vote for former senior military personnel.

In March 2018, former Majlis member Mohammad-Ali Pour-Mokhtar, who himself was a member of the Revolutionary Guards, said in an interview for the news site *Khabar Online* that "there is no doubt that a military president can save the country from its problems." The sentiment was echoed by the radical political activist Hossein Allah-Karam, who serves as the head of the coordinating council of the Islamic militant group Ansar-e Hezbollah. Allah-Karam said that "a strategic military man is more fitting for the presidential role," and that if Iran's citizens understand that Iran must fulfill "its regional obligation," there is no doubt that they will vote for a man like this. As a possible candidate for Iran's presidency, he mentioned the name of the commander of the Revolutionary Guards Quds Force, Qasem Soleimani, who was killed by the United States nearly two years later. On the eve of Iran's presidential elections in 2017, there were reports in the Iranian media of the hardliners' intention to have Soleimani run as their candidate in the elections, although in September 2016 Soleimani made a special announcement in which he denied any intention to run in the elections, and emphasized that he intends to remain a "soldier" in the service of the Supreme Leader, the regime, and the Iranian nation until the end of his life.

The calls for former military leaders to run in the elections aroused significant opposition. In April 2018, the Iranian news site *Fararu* pointed out the poor experience of former senior officers who competed in Iranian presidential elections in the past few decades. In 2001, Ali Shamkhani, former commander of the IRGC navy, who now serves as the secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, won only 2.6 percent of the votes in the presidential elections in which Mohammad Khatami won a second term. Four years later, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, who later became mayor of Tehran, earned about 14 percent of the vote in the elections won by Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Ghalibaf, a former senior officer in the IRGC and commander of the law enforcement forces, is now the Speaker of the Majlis. Former IRGC commander Mohsen Rezaee, who today serves as the secretary of the Expediency Discernment Council and who also submitted his candidacy in those elections, withdrew from them shortly before the end of the race. In the controversial 2009 elections, which led to riots against the backdrop of claims by the reformist opposition that the results were rigged in order to enable another victory by Ahmadinejad, Rezaee won only 1.73 percent of the votes. In the 2013 elections, won by Hassan Rouhani, Rezaee received 10.6 percent of the votes, while Ghalibaf, who ran again, received 16.5 percent of the votes.

The *Fararu* website published statements by prominent political activists from both principal camps warning against the election of a military president who could, they claimed, pave the way to dictatorship. The conservative political activist Nasser Imani claimed that placing the country's affairs in the hands of a dictator contradicts the principles of the Islamic Republic. The reformist activist Esmail Garami-Moghaddam argued that while Iran's citizens admire military figures and respect their central standing in ensuring the country's security, just as a president cannot be a good diplomat or economist, likewise military leaders cannot succeed as presidents. Reformist activist Abdollah Ramezanzadeh also expressed concern that the entry of military figures into the electoral system would lead to factionalism in the armed forces and would weaken them.

In early October 2020 the conservative daily *Jomhouri-e Eslami* published reservations about the idea of electing a military president. An editorial published by the newspaper's editor, Masih Mohajeri, argued that while the participation of retired military figures is not against the law, neither does it serve the national interest. Mohajeri claimed that "the military spirit" of former senior military personnel is not appropriate for civilian and political management. He noted that the fact that Iranian citizens have refrained from voting for candidates from a military background in the past proves that Iranian society is not willing to accept a military leader or someone with a military background as president. It is preferable, therefore, that military figures serve their country in other ways and not enter the political arena.

Despite the criticism of the possible election of a president with a military background, the public debate on this issue has continued and even intensified, after Hossein Dehghan, former Minister of Defense and advisor to Iran's leader on defense affairs, announced his intention to run in the upcoming elections. In the 1980s, Dehghan was the commander of the Revolutionary Guards in Lebanon and among the founders of Hezbollah. In 1990 he was appointed commander of the IRGC air force, and in 1992 he was appointed deputy chief of the IRGC General Staff. Dehghan's chances of winning in the elections seem quite slim, especially because he is not well-known enough and does not have exceptional public support. However, his military and political experience, his proximity to the Supreme Leader, and the fact that he is considered a centrist who enjoys support among both main political camps might help him.

Dehghan's candidacy reawakened the debate on the suitability of a former military figure for the position of president. In an interview for the *Hamshahri* newspaper, conservative politician Mohsen Rafighdoost, who was one of the founders of the Revolutionary Guards and served as the Minister of the Revolutionary Guards in the 1980s, expressed support for the election of a military figure as president. Rafighdoost argued that under the current difficult economic conditions, it is worth examining which of the candidates is preferable for the country's future, and if a military figure is elected, he can save the nation from the difficult situation.

The Militarization of the Islamic Republic: Exaggeration or Reality?

The recent developments in the Iranian political system have aroused much interest among researchers in the West, who have debated the increasing influence of the Revolutionary

Guards in Iranian politics and the process of militarization of the Iranian state. Following the election of Ghalibaf as Speaker of the Majlis after the parliamentary elections of February 2020, and against the backdrop of preparations for the Iranian presidential elections, researchers raised the possibility that political power in Iran is moving from "turban wearers" (clerics) to "boot wearers" (military leaders), and that the next stage in the IRGC takeover of the government might come with the election of a candidate identified with the Revolutionary Guards as president of the Republic. The possible candidacy of Dehghan has been presented as an expression of "the militarization of the Iranian presidency" and of the fact that the IRGC "is in pole position to take Iran's presidency just as it has taken its parliament."

Unquestionably, the standing of the Revolutionary Guards in Iran has strengthened in recent decades. Today the IRGC plays a significant role in the Iranian political system, as well as in the economy. Despite the political will of the leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, to prevent the armed forces from intervening in political life, IRGC political involvement has continued and even increased. Following the student riots that broke out in Tehran in July 1999, several dozen officers in the Revolutionary Guards signed a letter to then-President Mohammad Khatami, warning him that their patience had run out and demanded that he take immediate, forceful steps to suppress the demonstrations.

Since then, the Revolutionary Guards have continued to express support for the candidacy of hardline politicians who are faithful to the values of the Islamic Revolution. The appointment of Mohammad Ali-Jafari as commander of the Revolutionary Guards in 2007 signified an important stage in increasing IRGC involvement in politics. In a speech in September 2007, Jafari emphasized that the Revolutionary Guards are not a one-dimensional military organization, and that their mission is to safeguard the revolution and its achievements from domestic enemies. Later, Jafari described the Revolutionary Guards as an organization that is not "entirely military" but also "political and ideological."

During Rouhani's presidency, senior figures in the Revolutionary Guards echoed the criticism of the President's policy. Underlying this criticism were the President's efforts to reduce the influence of the Revolutionary Guards in politics and the economy, and his conciliatory foreign policy. In a speech at Imam Sadiq University in Tehran in December 2013, Jafari expressed his reservations about the increasing Western influence in the management of the country's affairs. In addition, he referred implicitly to Rouhani's statements regarding the need to distance the Revolutionary Guards from politics, and claimed that since the most significant threat to the Islamic Revolution is in the political arena, the IRGC, committed to defending the achievements of the revolution, cannot remain silent in face of this threat.

Later, Jafari described the Revolutionary Guards as an organization that is not "entirely military" but also "political and ideological."

Meanwhile, the IRGC has continued to expand its economic involvement, mainly by means of the organization's construction corporation, Khatam al-Anbiya. In late December 2016, then-Defense Minister Dehghan declared that dozens of central economic projects on the national level in the fields of oil, gas, transportation, dams, water distribution, and communications are currently carried out by this corporation. While the removal of the economic sanctions following the signing of the nuclear deal in the summer of 2015 provided an opportunity for the entry of foreign companies into the Iranian economy, which could have threatened Revolutionary Guards economic interests, their reinstatement following President Trump's withdrawal from the JCPOA largely thwarted

President Rouhani's intentions of reducing IRGC economic involvement.

The involvement of the Revolutionary Guards in managing the country's affairs was likewise recently reflected in the COVID-19 crisis. Similar to past emergency situations such as natural disasters, this crisis has also been characterized by the increasing involvement of the Revolutionary Guards in actions to contain the outbreak and provide aid for those affected, for example by disinfecting streets, setting up hospitals, carrying out COVID-19 tests, and supplying medical equipment, logistics, and manpower. The increasing involvement of the Revolutionary Guards, which is a function of the considerable resources at its disposal, is necessary for it not only in order to ensure the organization's economic interests, but also to maintain political strength in the internal balance of power in Iran, especially in competition with the President, to improve its public image, and to deepen its penetration of society, which serves security interests related to regime stability.

Researchers in the West saw the developments in Iran as proof of the increasingly significant role of the IRGC in Iranian politics.

Yet despite these developments, the interrelationship between the Revolutionary Guards and the Iranian state and political system is more complex, and demands an informed and sober examination.

First, the academic debate surrounding the possible militarization of the Iranian political system has continued for over a decade, especially since the election of Ahmadinejad as President in 2005. Even though Ahmadinejad was apparently not an official member of the IRGC, and served as a volunteer in the Basij militia during the Iran-Iraq War, he is considered one of the closest allies of the Revolutionary Guards. After his election in 2005, his political adversaries claimed that the IRGC and the Basij had played a central role in his election; Ahmadinejad himself rewarded the organization by appointing former IRGC figures as ministers. According to researchers Mehrzad Boroujerdi and Kourosh Rahimkhani in their book Postrevolutionary Iran: A Political Handbook, 18 out of 45 members of Ahmadinejad's first government and 19 out of 42 members of his second government were former members of the Revolutionary Guards—a record number of ministers who were former members of the organization since the revolution in 1979.

Ahmadinejad's controversial victory in the 2009 elections and the riots that broke out in their wake further strengthened the claims of a "military coup" by Ahmadinejad and the Revolutionary Guards. Researchers in the West saw the developments in Iran as proof of the increasingly significant role of the IRGC in Iranian politics. A few of them depicted the elections as a reflection of "a silent revolution" that "has moved Iran even further from its revolutionary theocratic and republican ideals, towards a militarised security state."

In June 2009, two researchers speculated that the elections would further strengthen the connections between Ahmadinejad and the Revolutionary Guards, and lead to the Iranian theocracy becoming an ideological military dictatorship. An article published in the *Washington Quarterly* in winter 2011 held that Iran had become a "praetorian" state, and that the 2009 elections were an expression of "a de facto coup by the emerging militant class and its preferred candidate, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, against the clerical oligarchy that came to power through the 1978-79 Iranian Revolution."

However, the disagreements that arose in April 2011 between Ahmadinejad and the Supreme Leader following Khamenei's refusal to accept the resignation of Intelligence Minister Heydar Moslehi quickly turned into a severe political crisis among the Iranian leadership, and Ahmadinejad finished his presidency politically battered and isolated, after two years of unprecedented power struggles among the top political echelons. In this confrontation, the Revolutionary Guards allied themselves clearly and unequivocally with the Supreme Leader and against the President, in an effort to protect not only the stability of the regime but also its interests.

Second, discussion of the militarization of Iranian politics requires distinguishing between attempts by senior commanders in active service in the armed forces to influence politics, for example by means of public support for hardline candidates in election campaigns as described above, and the integration of former officers within the political system, which mainly reflects changes in the make-up of the Iranian political elite.

Since the Revolution, and even more so following the conclusion of the Iran-Iraq War (1988) and the death of Khomeini (1989), the political elite has undergone changes that are reflected in part in the increasing presence in politics of former members of the armed forces, especially the IRGC, which is considered the central and leading military organization in Iran, clearly favored by the authorities over the regular army. This trend can be explained by the armed forces becoming a central means of social and political mobilization, as in other states in the Middle East. This process is occurring in parallel with an ongoing decline in the number of clerics represented in the political institutions elected by the public. For example, the number of clerics in the Majlis has declined from 164 in the first Majlis (1980-1984) and 153 in the second Majlis (1984-1988), to only 16 in the tenth Majlis (2016-2020) and 31 in the current Majlis.

Furthermore, former senior commanders who enter politics do not necessarily represent the particular interests of the armed forces and the Revolutionary Guards. The reformist daily newspaper *Shargh* recently claimed, correctly, that some of the potential candidates in the upcoming Iranian presidential elections cannot be referred to as military figures. According to the newspaper, the hardline camp is trying to emphasize the military past of its candidates, such as Mohsen Rezaee, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, Ali Shamkhani, or Hossein Dehghan, in an effort to enhance their problematic public image due to their being conservative politicians. While Ghalibaf served in command positions in the Revolutionary Guards and the internal security forces for a long time, he has also served as a politician for many years. Rezaee too retired from the Revolutionary Guards almost 30 years ago, and today he can be considered an economist more than a soldier. Dehghan likewise filled senior positions in the IRGC and the Ministry of Defense, but in recent years has served in positions that are not military, such as the head of the Martyrs Foundation, advisor to the Supreme Leader, and member of the Expediency Discernment Council.

A third point: the chances of a true militarization of the Iranian state are quite slim as long as Supreme Leader Khamenei continues to hold the reins of power. The Revolutionary Guards have indeed grown stronger under Khamenei, who needs them in order to ensure the stability of his regime, but the IRGC also needs him as a source of legitimacy. As Ali-Reza Eshraghi and Amir Hossein Mahdavi noted, the Revolutionary Guards can enjoy the best of both worlds, as an organization that maintains a distance from the business of government and intervenes only when it sees fit. They noted that if the IRGC were to manage the country's day-to-day affairs, they would have to implement adjustments and compromises that could undermine their revolutionary image. In addition, it can also be argued that Khamenei himself benefits from the duality that characterizes the Iranian system—on the one hand institutions that are elected by the public, chief among them the presidency, and on the other hand institutions that are not elected by the public, such as the Revolutionary Guards. This reality enables him to maneuver better among the various power centers, and consequently he does not have a genuine interest in allowing the IRGC to take over the elected power centers.

Toward the End of the Khamenei Era

The death of Khamenei could accelerate the militarization process of the Iranian state, and even prepare the ground for a transition to an alternative model of governance and to Iran's becoming a military autocracy. At this stage the Revolutionary Guards do not have an independent political standing, and they both need and are subordinate to the Supreme Leader, but this could change in the future. It is possible that in the first stage the Revolutionary Guards would try to strengthen their direct influence on the next leader and strive for a kind of dual government based on a religious leader with more limited powers and a "military" president from the ranks of the IRGC. Such a government could later develop into autocratic rule by a military leader. Iran already experienced a similar process when the founder of the Pahlavi dynasty, army officer Reza Khan, ruled starting in 1921 as Prime Minister under the last Qajar Shah (king), Ahmad Shah, until he brought about his overthrow and proclaimed himself Shah in 1925. Given the legitimacy crisis of the Islamic regime in Iran and the ongoing erosion of the clerics' standing, it is not clear if the Revolutionary Guards would need the Supreme Leader over time in order to receive religious legitimacy.

The death of Khamenei could accelerate the militarization process of the Iranian state, and even prepare the ground for a transition to an alternative model of governance and to Iran's becoming a military autocracy.

The IRGC takeover of the Iranian political system could have far-reaching implications for the state's domestic and foreign policy. Many former members of the IRGC, primarily those who participated in the Iran-Iraq War, who grew up in Iran and had almost no exposure to Western education and influence, are identified with the new hardline faction. They call for returning to the values of the Islamic Revolution, which in their view were sidelined during the presidencies of Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani (1989-1997) and Mohammad Khatami (1997-2005). With regard to foreign policy, they frequently adopt a hawkish, ultra-nationalist, and defiant approach toward the West, based on a worldview that holds that the West is in processes of decline, and that Iran must implement a forceful policy in striving for regional influence and even international power. This stance could influence Iran's policy on central foreign issues, including the nuclear program, Iranian aspirations in the region, and its approach toward the United States and its allies in the Arab world and toward Israel. However, former members of the IRGC and the Revolutionary Guards as a whole should not be seen as a monolithic bloc. Members of the Revolutionary Guards come from different and diverse political, social, and economic backgrounds; thus they also represent a range of political views.

At the end of the day, the future of Iranian politics depends on additional factors, including the relations between Iran and the West, social and demographic processes, and the economic situation. All of these influence the interrelationships between the Revolutionary Guards and the political system, and the nature of the Islamic Republic after the Khamenei era.

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Jordanian flags. Photo: Wikimedia Commons (CC BY 2.0)

Five Domestic and Regional Security Challenges for Jordan in 2021

Michael Sharnoff

Jordan, a close ally of the United States and Israel, has a particular set of security concerns, challenges, and threats. Since its founding as the Emirate of Transjordan in 1921, many predicted that a kingdom with artificial borders, a tiny population, and lack of natural resources was an unlikely viable state. However, Jordan's pragmatic policies and wise leadership, cordial ties with Arab states, and commitment to a peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has helped Jordan navigate many difficult challenges. The kingdom proved more resilient than its neighbors during the Arab Spring uprisings, but it is not immune from conflict. As 2021 continues to unfold, Jordan has five major security challenges, some new and some lingering from the Cold War of the 20th century.

Keywords: Jordan, West Bank, Jerusalem, ISIS, economy, United States, Israel

Since the Emirate of Transjordan was founded in 1921 and subsequently gained independence from the British in 1946, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has emerged as a central player in the Middle East. Jordan has close ties with the West and is a major non-NATO ally; it signed a peace treaty with Israel and enjoys cordial relations with the Palestinians and Arab states. Therefore, Jordan's unique geostrategic position has made it an indispensable actor in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Syrian civil war, and the global fight against ISIS and other violent extremist organizations.

The continuity of Hashemite custodianship connects the kingdom profoundly to Israelis and Palestinians and serves as a moderating role in regional stability. Accordingly, Jordanians expect to have a major say in any final status agreement between both parties.

Today, Jordan is one of the most stable Arab countries in the Middle East. The kingdom has not succumbed to the horrific brutality that plagued Syria or Yemen, or to the chaos and instability characteristic of Libya, Lebanon, and Iraq. However, while Jordan has proven more resilient than its neighbors, it is not immune from conflict. In 2021, Jordan must contend with several security challenges that affect domestic and regional politics and security.

Jerusalem

Jerusalem is a sacred cause for Jordan. The kingdom views Jerusalem as part of its responsibility to defend and protect Muslim and Christian holy places, especially the al-Aqsa Mosque, the third holiest site in Islam, and the Dome of the Rock, a shrine where Muslims believe the Prophet Muhammad ascended to heaven. Jordanians claim their influence in Jerusalem dates back to 1924 when Palestinian Arabs pledged allegiance to Sharif Hussein bin Ali of Mecca, leader of the Great Arab Revolt, to protect and preserve Islamic holy places in Jerusalem.

Historically, Hashemite custodianship of Jerusalem has helped stabilize the regime, legitimize Jordanian rule of Eastern Jerusalem and the West Bank, and endow the kingdom with religious authority to represent Arab and Islamic interests. This privileged right has been recognized by Jordanians and Palestinians, who view the Jordanian monarch as the Hashemite custodian of Islamic and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem. For its part, Israel acknowledges Jordan's special role in Jerusalem, an admission formally endorsed in the 1994 Peace Treaty, which "respects the present special role of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in Muslim Holy shrines in Jerusalem."

The continuity of Hashemite custodianship connects the kingdom profoundly to Israelis and Palestinians and serves as a moderating role in regional stability. Accordingly, Jordanians expect to have a major say in any final status agreement between both parties. Although Jordan supports a two-state solution and shared Jerusalem capital between Israelis and Palestinians, King Abdullah rejects any changes to Hashemite custodianship over its holy places, and repudiates efforts to replace or undermine Hashemite influence in the city.

The Abraham Accords between Israel, the UAE, Bahrain, Morocco, and Sudan have heightened Jordanian suspicions that Israel and the United States may offer Saudi Arabia a role in Jerusalem in exchange for recognition and normalized relations. Jordanian fears may be exaggerated, but they are not totally unfounded. In exchange for recognizing Israel, the UAE, Bahrain, Morocco, and Sudan have all gained major concessions from the United States. Undermining Jordan's position would deny the Hashemites a major pillar of their religious legitimacy and reduce their capacity to mediate between Israelis and Palestinians. Even rumors about a Saudi role in Jerusalem fuel anti-Israel and anti-American hostility inside the kingdom, and place unnecessary stress on the regime.

The West Bank

Jordan acknowledged and annexed the West Bank, also known as Judea and Samaria, as an integral part of the Hashemite Kingdom from 1950 until 1967. After Israel conquered the area during the Six Day War in 1967, Jordan continued to assert claims to sovereignty on the West Bank until King Hussein's disengagement decision in 1988. Jordanians hoped that its peace treaty with Israel would reinforce its detachment from the West Bank, dispel the notion that Jordan is Palestine, and prevent the possibility of Jordan becoming a substitute homeland for the Palestinian people.

However, after more than a quarter of a century since the signing of the Oslo Accords, the Palestinians have failed to establish an independent state in the West Bank. Some Jordanian Palestinians, who are the majority of Jordan's population, view Benjamin Netanyahu's pledge to annex the West Bank and President Trump's Peace to Prosperity Plan as an attempt to truncate plans for Palestinian statehood. Increasing frustration with the unsolved Palestinian issue on the West Bank could create serious and destabilizing friction between the Hashemites, Transjordanians, and Jordanian Palestinians.

Indeed, Jordanians perceive these proposals as part of a broader Israeli and American scheme to eventually annex the West Bank and prevent the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. Such a scenario, the Jordanians fear, could facilitate another Palestinian exodus and flight to the East Bank. The influx of additional refugees would create new economic, humanitarian, and political challenges for the kingdom, which is already coping with the influx of a massive Syrian refugee community. An increased number of Palestinians in Jordan would also exacerbate tensions between Transjordanian nationalists and the Jordanian Palestinian majority, who could pose new challenges to the regime by virtue of their numerical superiority to mobilize for greater democracy and insist on greater representation in the public sector.

To prevent attempts to transform Jordan into an alternative Palestinian homeland, some Palestinian-Jordanian politicians and intellectuals have called on a renewed Jordanian role in the West Bank. They argue that Jordan's national security interests would be better protected through rescinding the 1988 disengagement decision, reasserting sovereignty claims on the West Bank, and restoring the land under the Hashemite crown. These views do not reflect official Hashemite policy, and Jordan is unlikely to change its policies toward the West Bank. Yet as long as these Jordanian perceptions exist, they will challenge sensitive domestic issues on national identity and create additional pressure on Abdullah, and this could undermine the long-term stability of the Hashemite Kingdom.

Refugees

Syrian refugees comprise more than 10 percent of Jordan's population, with around 650,000 registered with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. Fifty percent of these refugees are children, and Syrian refugees are in constant need of funds for amenities and transportation. One survey claims that 4 percent of Syrian refugees under the age of five in Jordan suffer from malnutrition. The Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan is the second largest refugee camp in the world, and has become the kingdom's fourth largest "city." At the Zaatari camp, there is one toilet for every 50 Syrians.

With refugees comprising one-fifth of the population, Jordan has one of the world's largest refugee populations per capita and shoulders a disproportionate burden. In turn, the major humanitarian and economic challenges associated with aiding refugees place tremendous pressure on a country with already limited resources.

Providing clean water, proper nutrition, and sanitary conditions in the camps remains an ongoing concern. Providing quality education is another challenge, and it is not uncommon to have several dozen students in one refugee class. A lingering challenge for Jordan will be to assist the refugees properly, determine when it is safe for them to be returned to their country of origin, and prevent disgruntled and poverty-stricken refugees from embracing radical and extremist ideology.

Jordan receives international support, but it is insufficient to sustain a massive refugee population. As a small population lacking oil or natural gas, Jordan cannot continue to shelter hundreds of thousands of refugees indefinitely. To meet expectations of caring for these refugees over the next three years, Jordan has turned to the international community to provide $6.6 billion, although it is unclear if this appeal will be met.

The Economy

Most Jordanians would probably argue that improving the economy is a leading priority, particularly as the coronavirus pandemic has exacerbated longstanding economic challenges. The Jordanian economy traditionally relies on financial assistance from wealthier Arab states and the West, as well as tourism, which contributes up to 15 percent of GDP, employs 60,000 people, and is known as "the petrol of Jordan."

COVID-19 has also heightened other economic challenges inside the kingdom. According to the Jordanian Women Solidarity Institute (SIGI), also known as Tadamon, over 1 million Jordanians live on less than $100 a month. Women are more likely to be affected by poverty than men, and only 10 percent of women older than 15 are employed.

The picture is not all bleak, however. Jordan has a highly educated population with tech savvy youth hungry for innovation and new opportunities. Similar to Saudi Arabia's 2030 vision, Jordan 2025 is an ambitious initiative proposed to diversify its economy and create new job opportunities to meet the needs and demands of the 21st century. With a skilled youth population, there is great potential for the kingdom to capitalize on its human capital and contribute to the economy.

Countering ISIS and other Violent Extremist Organizations

Jordan is considered one of the safer and more stable countries in the Middle East, yet its location makes it vulnerable to violent extremism and subversion. An economy ravaged by the pandemic and a large, restless, refugee population also makes Jordan susceptible to radical ideology. In recent years, violent extremist organizations have conducted significant terrorist attacks against Jordan. In 2005, the Amman bombings claimed by Abu Musab Zarqawi's al-Qaeda in Iraq terrorist network killed 57 people, most of them Jordanians. For several days after the bombings, Jordanians took to the streets to participate in large demonstrations, shouting, "Burn in hell, al-Zarqawi."

The 2003 war in Iraq led to the Islamic State in Iraq, and the 2011 Syrian civil war helped create the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). According to various official estimates, some 3,000 Jordanians have fought under the banner of ISIS, making Jordan home to one of the highest number of ISIS fighters per capita in the world. As ISIS has decreased in size, Jordan will be responsible for how it manages those fighters returning from the battlefield. Will they be tried in court? Will they be jailed? Can they be rehabilitated? These are serious questions with long-term implications for regional stability.

While Jordanians have left the kingdom to join ISIS, the terrorist organization has also attacked Jordanians. ISIS savagely executed pilot Muath al-Kasasbeh, prompting a swift Jordanian response. After the 2016 attack in Karak, Jordanians banded together to drive ISIS out, and some even assisted Jordanian security services in doing so. Jordan's professional and efficient military intelligence services and security establishment have played a critical role in curbing violent extremist organizations. In addition, Jordanian demographics and politics may work to the state's advantage. Typically, ISIS looks to subvert and exploit heterogenous and weak states like Syria, Iraq, and Yemen. They have had a difficult time getting a foothold in more religiously homogenous and stable monarchies like Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Morocco.

Jordan has participated in international anti-ISIS coalitions and remains committed to share intelligence with allies and partners to defeat the extremist organization. While the military campaign has been successful, the ideological battle to deter participation in groups such as ISIS remains a long-term challenge. For its part, Jordan has initiated programs like the Amman Message (2004) to win the hearts and minds while emphasizing toleration, pluralism, and moderation. It also instituted a strategy to counter violent extremism in 2014 with mixed results. However, Jordan is by no means alone in this long-term battle. The Hedayah Center, headquartered in Abu Dhabi, is another significant initiative to counter violent extremism through dialogue, capability building, and research.

Recommendations

If the United States and Israel view Jordan as a strategic partner, they must recognize Jordan's security concerns. Washington and Jerusalem should explore new ways to enhance trust and strengthen security cooperation to achieve regional peace and stability. This will not be easy, and there are no guarantees that progress can come quickly. Indeed, the stances of King Abdullah's domestic constituencies influence Jordan's position on close security cooperation with Israel and the United States.

If the United States and Israel view Jordan as a strategic partner, they must recognize Jordan's security concerns. Washington and Jerusalem should explore new ways to enhance trust and strengthen security cooperation to achieve regional peace and stability.

What is clear, however, is that it will be difficult to strengthen relations and reestablish trust without deference to the kingdom's sovereignty and interests, and movement on the Palestinian question. The Biden administration may welcome a larger diplomatic role for Jordan in the Arab-Israeli dispute, which could reduce concerns inside the kingdom. Public reassurances by Benjamin Netanyahu of respecting Jordan's special role in Jerusalem may also help lower the heat. Jordanian suspicions will probably linger, but these gestures could help restore confidence and create new possibilities for regional security cooperation.

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Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (l) with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the G20 summit in Hangzhou, China, September 2016. Photo: flickr (CC BY-SA 2.0)

The Future Job Market in the Gulf States: The Challenge of Migrant Workers

Yoel Guzansky

"We need it, we need it, but I think in 2020 we can live without oil."
Mohammed bin Salman, April 2016

Shockwaves in the energy market and the COVID-19 pandemic have repositioned the issue of migrant workers higher on the Gulf agenda. The recent economic damage has forced the Gulf states, which have the world's highest concentration of foreign workers, to re-examine the employment model in the area. Some wish to turn the crisis into an opportunity—to shake the dust off the reforms needed in order to provide a solution, even partial, to the problem, or at least to limit its consequences. This article assesses the phenomenon of foreign workers in the Gulf, the challenges it poses to the countries involved, and the largely problematic options available as they try to localize their job markets.

Keywords: Gulf states, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, migrant workers, oil market, COVID-19

Background and Data

For at least half a century, migrant workers have been the backbone of the employment market in the Gulf countries. The six Arab Gulf states—Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, and Bahrain—have the world's largest concentration of temporary migrant workers, about 10 percent of migrant workers worldwide. The International Labor Organization (ILO) puts the number of migrant workers in the Gulf states (as well as Jordan and Lebanon) at about 35 million. In four of the six Arab Gulf States, the proportion of foreign workers even exceeds the proportion of citizens, and they comprise a majority of the population: 88 percent of people in the UAE, 75 percent in Qatar, 73 percent in Kuwait, and 51 percent in Bahrain are migrant workers (authorities tend to downplay the number of migrant workers, and there are also illegal foreign workers unknown to the authorities). Thus, out of a population of 9.5 million residents in the UAE, for example, about 8 million are foreign workers. The majority of foreign workers in the Gulf states meet the definition of low skilled workers, with most from Asia (particularly Southeast Asia), while the number of migrants from Africa, and Egypt in particular, is rising steadily. The Gulf states previously employed many Palestinians (about a million), primarily in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, but due to their support for Saddam Hussein in the Gulf War, about half a million were expelled, mainly to Jordan. The fate of many Yemenis working in Saudi Arabia was similar, and for the same reason. The official total of annual money transfers from the Gulf states is about $120 billion, and the main destination countries are India ($50 billion annually) and Egypt ($20 billion annually).

Demographic changes due to migration have accelerated considerably since the early 1970s, with the blossoming of the oil industry and greater demand for labor in the oil, industrial, and construction sectors. In 1972 the average price of a barrel of oil was about 3 dollars, while in 1982 it was 30 dollars. The so-called "oil decade" brought about a rise in the standard of living and growing demand for foreign workers in the industry, as well as in households. According to the World Bank, over 95 percent of the workforce employed in construction and manual labor in the Gulf consists of foreigners. Today, anyone with an average income in the Gulf states can employ a number of foreigners in the home. In fact, the mechanisms of normal daily existence in the Gulf depend on migrant workers. Some of them are already second and third generation in the Gulf, and some have even acquired property, but they are still officially defined as foreigners.

According to the World Bank, over 95 percent of the workforce employed in construction and manual labor in the Gulf consists of foreigners.

A striking feature of migration to the Gulf is that it is mostly temporary in nature, for employment purposes. Very few of the migrants acquire citizenship of the host countries, and most of them transfer their wages to the families left behind, in their country of origin, until they return. The legal basis of migrant policy in the Gulf rests on a complex set of laws known as the kafala system, whereby the migrant workers are in fact utterly dependent on the mercies of their local patron, a native of the country. They cannot move to another employer, they are forbidden to enter or leave the country without permission, and they are unable to open a bank account or have a telephone line without the patron's consent. Every foreign worker is thus completely dependent on a local guarantor who can charge him money, and the loss of the sponsor usually means expulsion.

Abuse of migrant workers is common in the Arab Gulf States, although not widely reported. In this strict legal framework, workers have very few rights, and the most common complaints in the Gulf relate to withheld wages, denial of medical treatment, confiscation of passports, and imprisonment and maltreatment. When such events reach the headlines, they often lead to diplomatic tensions between the host country and the worker's country of origin.

Nationalization of Labor

Since the 1980s the Gulf states have adopted "localization" plans that represent an attempt to replace the foreign workers with local workers. The fear of high unemployment rates is common to all regimes, but in the Gulf states there is also a concern that unemployment will lead to domestic unrest. The unemployment rate in Saudi Arabia is rising steadily: in 2016, when the 2030 Vision was published, the official figure was 11.6 percent, and since then it has not fallen below 12 percent. In the wake of the COVID-19 crisis, the official rate of unemployment among citizens has risen to 14.9 percent, while the rate among the total population rose to 9 percent (in the third quarter of 2020). Particularly troubling is the fact that over half the Saudi unemployed have a Bachelor's degree, mainly in the humanities, while the rate of unemployment in the 20-29 age group is 60.7 (in the third quarter of 2020). This is the same population segment that Crown Prince and de facto ruler Mohammed bin Salman sees as his main support base.

Notwithstanding the high rates of unemployment, the number of foreign workers in Saudi Arabia is the largest of all the Gulf states. According to data from the World Bank, about 10 million people or a third of the residents are migrant workers. In 2013 the kingdom began mass expulsions of foreign workers, who were mostly from Africa and employed primarily in manual labor, ostensibly because they did not have suitable permits. Since then, hundreds of thousands of foreign workers have reportedly been located, arrested, and expelled, and the numbers may be even larger. The drop in oil prices at the end of 2014 once again led the Gulf states, each according to its needs and character, to try and nationalize various sectors in the economy.

This was true above all for Saudi Arabia, which also imposed new restrictions on foreign workers, particularly taxes and fees (and concurrently, the prices of goods and services such as water, electricity, and fuel began to rise, as government subsidies were withdrawn in 2017). As a result, from January 2017 to September 2018 over a million foreign workers left the kingdom. For the Gulf states, the increasing cost of living, beyond the attempt to bring more citizens into the work cycle, also presented another way of artificially increasing non-oil income.

This is not the first time that efforts have been made to expel foreign workers in order to make room for local workers. Previous attempts, particularly in the period of falling oil prices, were only partially successful and only temporary. In Saudi Arabia, the process that was dubbed "Saudization" included the expulsion of foreign workers who did not have the skills to develop the economy, and since 2017, along with taxes and fees on foreign workers and their employers, included incentives to employ locals, mainly in the retail and services sectors.

However, in the short term Saudi workers did not rush to take the place of the foreigners. Many young Saudis complete university without suitable skills for the private sector, or their wage demands are higher than those of the foreigners. As a result, the public sector, which is traditionally seen as a prop for the regime, employs most Saudi citizens, while the private sector continues to employ mainly foreign workers (77 percent). Saudi Arabia has also begun to limit the number of trades in which foreigners can be employed, in the hope that locals will take the jobs. For example, foreign women are not allowed to sell clothes in women's clothing stores; these are jobs that are now reserved for Saudi women. Only Saudis can be employed as human resource managers in the private and public sectors, and the same applies to hotel receptionists, private security guards, clerks in car rental companies, and cellular telephone workers. It is even forbidden to employ foreign workers at stalls ("carts") in the large malls.

In spite of the attempt to encourage local employment, however, the kingdom's policy is not consistent, and long term planning is generally neglected in favor of immediate needs. For example, the royal house removed some of the fees imposed on foreign workers because of the damage to the Saudi economy caused by their departure, and it was even reported that the kingdom is considering suspending this measure, due particularly to the damage to the construction industry. In April 2020 the fees on the employment of foreigners were indeed temporarily frozen following the negative effect of COVID-19 on the Saudi economy. In February 2021 the kingdom also announced that foreign companies that moved their activity to Saudi Arabia (as part of the competition among Gulf states to attract foreign companies) would be exempt from the need to employ local workers.

Elsewhere in the Gulf, the Kuwaiti government announced what appears to be the most ambitious goal. In response to public pressure, it pledged to reduce the number of foreign workers from 70 to 30 percent and stop the employment of foreigners in the oil industry. It also began a process of replacing foreign workers in the public sector with locals and even set a target date. Qatar, Oman, and the UAE announced pay cuts for foreigners in the public sector, and in Oman, falling oil prices and the coronavirus crisis led the government to call on the private sector to stop employing foreigners, and even asked that they "leave permanently," hoping that locals would take their place ("Omanization").

Consequences of the Pandemic

Like the oil crisis of 2014, the COVID-19 crisis that began in early 2020 increased economic pressure on the oil economies in the Gulf, and once again the first to pay the price were the foreign workers. Although the decline in global economic activity preceded the pandemic, it was made worse by COVID-19 and led to further declines in oil prices. The Gulf states reached deep into their pockets and offered households and the private sector considerable aid, which did not reach the migrant workers.

In response to public pressure, Kuwait pledged to reduce the number of foreign workers from 70 to 30 percent and stop the employment of foreigners in the oil industry. It also began a process of replacing foreign workers in the public sector with locals.

Many of the foreign workers became unemployed as factories closed, construction stopped, and tourism and commerce shrank. As infection spread, the poor living conditions of many migrants, overcrowding, and the difficulty of getting medical treatment aggravated their situation, particularly those who were living in improvised work camps and detention facilities. The situation was so serious that the Saudi Minister of Health announced that 80 percent of all new infections were among foreign workers. In fact, some Gulf states took the opportunity to stop issuing work visas, and in some cases began to expel workers to their countries of origin. Over 300,000 foreigners left Saudi Arabia in the first half of 2020, and it is estimated that with the return of international flights, the total number leaving in 2020 will exceed 1.2 million, almost triple the number who left in 2019.

As the situation of the foreign workers deteriorated, so too did attitudes towards them. This negative attitude was found among many citizens, including cultural and media figures, who blamed the foreign workers for the spread of the virus and called for their expulsion in order to keep hospital beds for locals. Citizens in Oman compared work migrants to a cancer, and in Saudi Arabia there were many who directed their anger against the business sector and even the authorities.

The governments tried to exploit these negative feelings in order to implement the necessary changes and reduce reliance on a foreign work force, in order to improve the local job market. However, the steps they took were similar to the steps taken in the past, including:

a. B*arring entry and expelling foreigners*: the pandemic led countries to increase the pace of expelling foreign workers, particularly illegal, which drew criticism from international human rights groups. According to a leaked UN report, Saudi Arabia began sending some 200,000 migrants back to Ethiopia, some with COVID-19.

b. *Encouraging local workers*: in most Gulf states old plans for “localization” of employment were revived. So far these attempts have had partial success, although in Saudi Arabia, for example, it is possible to see young Saudis working in coffee shops, as couriers, and in hotels—jobs that were previously taken by foreigners. This trend will probably be accelerated by the effects of the pandemic.

c. *Encouraging higher birth rates among citizens*: encouraging fertility among the natives, in order to outnumber the foreign workers (the current fertility rate in the kingdom is 2.37 births per woman). There is some concern among the smaller Gulf states, where the citizens are a minority, about changes to the local social and cultural fabric (Arabic-Islamic-tribal), which in turn could also affect political stability (in the UAE the fertility rate is 1.49).

d. *Encouraging women to participate in the labor force*: the status of Saudi women in general has improved in recent years, including their right to a hold driver’s license and fly abroad without a male companion (for women over 21). These reforms in themselves give women greater mobility and have led to their greater participation in the labor force—from 19 percent in 2017 to 30 percent in the last quarter of 2020.

e. *Improving the quality of the local labor force*: many businesses, particularly in Saudi Arabia, have trouble finding skilled workers, either because few young people study technological subjects and engineering, or because the standard of those who have studied these subjects is generally lower than among the foreign workers.

If the current attempt to make sweeping changes in the labor market is to be more successful, it will require a sharp drop in the standard of living of many Gulf citizens, who have become used to a different reality. Not only that, it will require adjustments in education and training: about half of the Saudi population have only a high school education or less, even though the education budget in the kingdom is one of the highest in the world, and technology education suffers from serious shortages. Finally, reducing the employment of foreign workers will significantly damage the ability to realize the ambitious but essential economic reforms that are needed to develop economies that are no longer dependent on oil.

Test Cases: Egypt and India

In the Gulf states there is an overall preference for workers from East Asia, for several reasons. First, the cost of employing them is generally lower, they are more efficient, and unlike workers of Arab origin, they usually migrate unmarried. Second, the fact that they are not Muslims is an advantage, because they are not subject to the restrictions of religious law. In addition, in many cases they have no cultural or familial ties to the local population, and their political awareness is not like that of migrants from Arab countries.

Of the countries that export workers to the Gulf, India is home to the largest number, while among Arab countries, Egypt leads in the number of people seeking work abroad. These countries encourage their citizens to work in other countries, for a number of reasons, above all to relieve internal employment pressures and to bring in foreign currency in order to improve the local economy. It is estimated that in 2018 some 9 million Indians were employed in the Arab Gulf states in construction, trade, and services, and they sent about $40 billion back to India every year. As the Indians are the largest group of migrant workers in the Gulf, their work is essential for the proper function of the host states' economies. India is forced to consider carefully any political move that could put at risk the security of its citizens in the Gulf and the payments that help its economy. The Indian diaspora can to some extent be a lever for New Delhi to apply pressure to the Gulf states, but it is also a burden. For example, during the occupation of Kuwait, India had to evacuate over 100,000 of its citizens in an airlift from Iraq and Kuwait, and it is therefore very sensitive to political stability and good relations between the countries. Now, as a result of the pandemic, many Indian citizens left unemployed are being repatriated.

Even in normal times, attitudes to their citizens working abroad are a source of concern for India, and sometimes even a source of tension between the countries. The planned economic reforms in the Gulf states and efforts to rely as much as possible on local labor could intensify these tensions. The steps taken to "nationalize" their labor markets have already reduced their reliance on Indian workers, which would deprive New Delhi of possible leverage over them.[1]

About five million Egyptians worked in the Gulf just before the pandemic, sending essential capital back to their country, but at the height of the crisis the Gulf states closed their borders, and in some cases also began sending foreign workers home. This led to some diplomatic tension with Egypt, and even rioting among Egyptian workers in the Gulf. The crisis forced the Gulf states where a majority of residents are foreigners to repatriate them in a way that imposed an additional burden on the countries of origin, above all on Egypt, the Arab country with the largest number of workers in the Gulf, including teachers, engineers, and even judges. Following the outbreak of the pandemic and the closure of the education system, some Gulf states froze visas for non-resident Egyptian workers. Qatar, for example, barred entry of Egyptian workers (who arrive in Doha via Kuwait or Oman). In Kuwait alone, the authorities ordered 67,000 teachers, of whom 17,000 teachers were Egyptians, some with families, to return to their countries. In Kuwait, the pandemic led to a temporary crisis in relations with Egypt. The loss of remittances by Egyptian workers, estimated at about $20 billion annually, will have a drastic impact on Egypt, and the return of so many workers has already hiked unemployment rates and created pressures on health and housing.

The average rate of unemployment in Arab countries (excluding the Gulf) before the outbreak of COVID-19 was about 11 percent. In addition to the unemployed, many workers are employed in unsuitable conditions. These are significant figures that threaten the economies of many Arab countries that have become dependent on the Gulf states. A particularly sensitive point is youth unemployment, when one in five young Arabs is unemployed—almost twice the average global rate.

Conclusion

There is a delicate balance around the employment of foreigners in the Gulf, which if upset will damage both the Gulf states themselves and the expatriates' countries of origin. So far, the plans to nationalize the job market in the Gulf states have not achieved their goal and the Gulf economies are still dependent on foreigners in many occupations—despite the increasing size and quality of the local labor force and the volatility of the oil market. In the short and medium terms, the Gulf economies are expected to sustain losses due to the departure of migrant workers—apart from their ability to implement various reforms and infrastructure and tourism projects, they are also losing an important non-oil source of income, namely, the taxes and fees imposed on foreign workers and their families.

Two main factors led to the dependence of the Gulf oil economies on foreign workers: the huge profits from the sale of oil and gas thanks to their natural reserves, and the relatively small size of their populations, who are unskilled or not interested in mainly low-paid manual work. This inherent distortion creates a relatively small private sector with a marked preference for foreign workers who are prepared to work for lower wages.

Arab citizens of Israel might seek to work in the Gulf, both to advance normalization and to improve their economic and employment situation.

Although crises such as the pandemic led to growing nationalist feelings and xenophobia, in the foreseeable future the Gulf economies will remain just as dependent on foreign workers as in the last fifty years. Reducing the number of foreign workers in the Gulf states depends on the ability of their governments to persuade their citizens to engage in jobs that are often resisted, by improving wages and other conditions. It also depends on the ability to overcome the shortage of skilled workers, although they already incentivize the young to study engineering, medicine, and computer science. Nevertheless, a minimal number of Saudi students acquire a technical or engineering degree, and most still prefer religious studies or the humanities and social sciences.

As for the standard of living of foreign workers, there have been changes. Some countries, such as the UAE, which needs migrant workers to complete construction of Expo 2021, are aware of the situation and have begun to offer foreign workers various benefits, subject to restrictions, including the ability to change employers, and in certain cases to receive permanent residency. The UAE even went further, and for the first time announced in January 2021 that citizenship could be granted to foreigners with needed skills or investors and their families, as part of the effort to improve the UAE's economic performance. Qatar has also begun improving working conditions for migrants, in the face of criticism from human rights organizations and foreign governments about the treatment of foreign workers, many of whom are laboring to construct the enormous infrastructure required to host the 2022 World Cup. Over 6500 migrant workers from Nepal, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka were reportedly killed since Qatar was chosen to host the competition. (The actual number of migrant workers in Qatar who died is a lot higher, as these figures do not include deaths among workers from other countries.) In response to international criticism, Qatar announced new labor laws, giving workers the right to change employers and setting a minimum wage of 1,000 rials (about $250). This reform also includes severe penalties for employers who do not pay their workers or do not ensure they have suitable living conditions. Saudi Arabia, which has the harshest kafala system of all the Gulf states, also announced reforms that will allow migrant workers to change employers and leave the kingdom without the employer's permission. This move may also have been influenced by criticism in the United States of human rights in Saudi Arabia, particularly following the entry of Joe Biden into the White House, and the kingdom's desire for better relations with the US. Many details about the proposed changes are missing, but their implementation should certainly be monitored.

As for the local workforce, there is a gap between the reserve of local workers and their skills, and the (necessary) reforms announced by a number of Gulf states, which focus on the need to nationalize the work force. Many foreign workers have left in the past decade, due to employment uncertainty and deteriorating living conditions, or due to government demands to employ locals. The rate of exit accelerated following the economic crisis in the Gulf as a result of the steep decline in oil prices in early 2020, and the pandemic. For example, in Saudi Arabia alone, some 1.2 million foreign workers are believed to have left in 2020.

All the Gulf states have plans for professional training, and are introducing laws to encourage the employment of locals, including information campaigns for employers and trade unions.

But apart from the cultural difficulty that stops young Gulf Arabs from engaging in menial or physically demanding work, the problem has arisen largely due to the huge number of projects and the accelerated rate of development in these countries, compared to the available local workforce. The shortage of skilled workers is the main, though not the only cause of their structural dependence on foreign workers, in spite of their large investment in recent years in training institutions and programs, including hosting extensions of universities and lecturers from overseas.

Following the normalization accords signed between Israel and the UAE and Bahrain, Arab citizens of Israel might seek to work in the Gulf, both to advance normalization and to improve their economic and employment situation. Israel should prioritize this in its discussions with representatives of the UAE and Bahrain, although just as there is structural suspicion in the Gulf states of foreign workers from Arab countries, there may also be hesitation vis-à-vis Arabs from Israel. Both the political leadership of Arab society in Israel and voices heard from the community had reservations about the accords, and it is not clear whether they will want to migrate to the Gulf for work.

There is no certainty that the increased rate of departure of foreign workers from Gulf states will continue, and if so, that it will bring about the required change in the labor market, because it essentially conflicts with the reliance on welfare policy, generous subsidies, and grants that contribute to political stability in those countries. Maintaining political stability will continue to be the central interest of the regimes, notwithstanding the heavy burden on their budgets, because much of the funding is directed at the public sector and is linked to population growth. This has created the impossible situation of increased employment of foreign workers together with increasing rates of unemployment among the locals.

The preference for political stability means that most citizens benefit from subsidies for a range of services, and also obtain comfortable jobs in the public sector. The locals prefer to work in government ministries, where the work ethic is poor, salaries are fixed, and there are no particular professional requirements (thus creating hidden unemployment). Widespread employment of locals in the public sector is the main way of distributing the oil profits, and thus creates dual dependency: citizens rely on generous salaries, and the regime has to maintain their high standard of living.

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Note

1 The latest data, through of unclear reliability, indicate a drop of almost 50 percent in the number of Indians in the Gulf states. This could be attributed mainly to attempts by the states to nationalize their labor force, in part by limiting areas of possible employment and imposing taxes on foreign workers.

President Reuven (Ruvi) Rivlin visits the Coronavirus Command Center in Bnei Brak, November 15, 2020. Photo: Haim Zach / GPO

Are Municipalities Becoming the Most Significant Civil Authority?

Einat Elazari

The COVID-19 crisis demonstrated the significant and deepening role of municipalities and local governments in different policy areas. Beyond the exigencies of the pandemic, there has been a growing worldwide trend of decentralization over the past few decades, which has given local governments more power and authority. Elements characteristic of local governance, such as stability, flexibility, and the capacity to handle issues that are polarizing at the national level play a central role in this trend. Moreover, the use of technological platforms to communicate, collect, and analyze data on civilian needs stands to boost this trend further. As a result, municipalities make one of the most effective agents for policy implementation and crisis management, including global crises such as pandemics and climate change. Yet alongside the multiple advantages in this trend are significant costs and risks, such as growing divisions among different groups in the population, depending on their city's location, demographics, and socio-economic status/strength; the ability to protect privacy and personal data; and the potential of corruption due to this extended power.

Keywords: municipality, local authorities, local governance, decentralization, digitalization, COVID-19, social resilience

In many ways, COVID-19 was the ultimate test for cities around the world. More than half of the world's population (some 4 billion people) live in cities. With frequent density and populations that differ in their socio-economic status, cities had to respond rapidly to the pandemic, given the imminent risk to their citizens. Around the world, cities that already had adequate tools fared much better than their counterparts in handling the crisis.

During 2020, as the pandemic continued to spread, cities started to play a pivotal role in a growing number of policy areas related to the management of the crisis: setting up COVID testing areas in different parts of the city; presenting weekly and, at times, daily data about the current status of new cases; and significantly, taking decisions that involved closing and opening schools, stores, and other local activities, mostly when the guidelines from the government were overly vague. Perhaps one of the most prominent cases of granting increased power amid the crisis was when UK Prime Minister Johnson gave local authorities more powers to enforce local lockdowns.

The WHO, for example, identifies cities as ideal candidate to manage the COVID crisis: "City governments and local community organizations are key players in an effective response and are at the forefront of curtailing the epidemic in many countries." The WHO identifies two significant advantages for cities: they are the "closest level of government to the people," and they are "key actors in national preparedness and response plans."

To be sure, cities and local authorities have gained more power and control over their citizens in different fields and policy areas for some time. This paper argues that the singular characteristics of municipalities and local governments, together with their use of technology and digital tools, will further boost the governing scope of these authorities. They will gradually acquire control over a growing number of policy areas that affect their citizens' daily lives. The analysis will examine the advantages, risks, and reasons explaining why the municipal actor has such a pivotal role in the upcoming global challenges.

National governments see the benefits of granting more powers to municipalities and local authorities, and therefore, actively push for provision of more governing power to municipalities.

Growing Powers in Recent Decades

Municipalities and local authorities worldwide have clearly earned greater powers in the last 3-4 decades. In "Have We Legalized Corruption?: The Impacts of Expanding Municipal Authority without Safeguards in Toronto and Ontario," Stanley Makuch and Maathew Shuman claim that in the last two decades, following significant changes in Canadian municipal law, Canadian municipalities expanded their powers, in part a result of more power granted by provincial legislation and less intervention by the courts in their decisions. In Latin America, according to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, "municipal governments began to take on administrative, political, and tax functions from the 1980s onwards, in a decentralization process that was driven by the growing demand of services in the provinces and by the change in perception in relation to citizen participation."

In some cases, national governments (or states, in a federal system) see the benefits of granting more powers to municipalities and local authorities, and therefore, actively push for provision of more governing power to municipalities. However, in many places and cases, states object to the transfer of power to local authorities and prefer to retain a traditional centralized approach where most powers are in the hand of the state. An example is in the United States. In "Remaking Federalism: How States Can Realign and Rebuild a Stronger and Healthier Union," Neil Kleiman argue that in the past four decades in the United States, many states have deliberately prohibited local authorities from having authoritative power on a broad range of issues, such as enacting new taxes, improving local employment, undertaking certain urban renewal projects, and more.

But perhaps the most enthusiastic actors, other than the cities themselves, are international and regional organizations like the UN and the EU, which see this decentralization process as a key element in their international development goals. Over the past decade, initiatives such as the Strong Cities Network and EUCF (a European initiative to support municipalities) have vigorously promoted the provision of increased powers to cities, seeing them as a successful and efficient agent of policy execution in different policy areas.

A similar effort is underway in the vaccine effort: municipalities that collect accurate data and respond in a precise way to the changing reality will better position themselves to exit the crisis more quickly.

Stability, Flexibility, Openness

What is it that makes cities such suitable authorities to govern, especially where national governments fail? First and foremost is the stability factor. City administrations and their mayors tend to rule for a much more extended period than their counterparts in national government, and more frequently than on a national level, they are also re-elected. In the US, for example, a study of 19 major American cities showed a significant increase over time in mayors' years of service (six) and in the number of terms they ruled (from 1.5 to 1.8). In Germany, a mayor's term ranges between five and nine years, depending on the state. These lengthy periods provide enough time to execute wide-scale policies and make a meaningful change together with a solid, confident administration.

Other than longer tenure in office, cities have something no less significant for their impressive governing due to flexibility and adaptability. Cities can rapidly assimilate and adjust to new tools—most notably digital tools—that enable them to stay connected to their citizens' sentiments and needs. Social media pages, chat groups (like WhatsApp), digital surveys, newsletters, and other platforms help municipalities stay connected, respond rapidly, and navigate policy road maps to best meet their populations' needs. According to ZenCity, an Israel-based startup that helps cities transform residents' data into actionable insights, when it comes to crisis management (COVID-19, natural disasters, and others), the key is to communicate with citizens as fast as possible, get their feedback, and respond. There's no faster, more efficient way to do so than through digital channels that enable the collection of large amounts of data and their rapid analysis.

Another constructive attribute of municipalities is that they can more easily implement policies than a larger demographic unit in the face of deep social divisions. Issues like religion, liberalism, education, and public transportation preferences can be addressed more easily at the municipal/local level than at the governmental level due to its more homogeneous population. One of the best examples of this is the federal system, specifically the one in the United States, which grants power to states in a way that was designed to suit/match their rules to the set of values and beliefs of their citizens.

All of the above-mentioned qualities provide municipalities and local authorities an impressive response time for crises. As noted by the World Economic Forum, "Cities that are open, transparent, collaborative, and adopt comprehensive responses are better equipped to manage pandemics than those that are not" (weforum.org). Specifically, during the COVID-19 crisis, municipalities worldwide had to perform and react very quickly in the face of a rapidly changing reality. They collected data about the pandemic in the city, implemented campaigns requiring residents to wear masks and maintain social distancing, and more. A similar effort is underway in the vaccine effort: municipalities that collect accurate data and respond in a precise way to the changing reality (campaigns, vaccine hubs in local centers, and more) will better position themselves to exit the crisis more quickly.

Cities as the Agent of Change

Although ostensibly competitors and/or entities vying for overlapping areas of responsibility, it is often in the interest of the governments to grant local authorities more powers and means to deal with various crises. The European Commission, perhaps, says it best: "When addressing issues such as climate change, growing inequalities, migration, and urbanization, Local Authorities are at the forefront when responding to the challenges on the ground and providing viable solutions for their communities."

In other words, local authorities are one of the most efficient governing agents to respond to a crisis, provide solutions where the states fail to succeed, and mobilize their citizens for initiatives that might be helpful in an upcoming challenge: global climate change. While the word "global" might be confusing, a useful and effective change could and should start locally. The broad set of tools that municipalities have, from data collection to direct discussions with their citizens by digital tools, provides them with the ability to manage one of the most critical tasks the citizens of the world will have to face. "As the public institutions closest to citizens, local authorities are responsible for executing a mandate in line with their constituencies' needs...They are able to mobilise all local actors involved in development processes, while acting as catalysts for change" (European Commission).

Cities already recognize their importance as a player in combating global crises like climate change and pandemics. Some of the most inspiring and prominent manifestations of that recognition are the different inter-city global network initiatives, like the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy. Presumably, in the upcoming years, a growing number of such initiatives will take place.

Notable Risks and Prices

Undoubtedly, more power to the municipalities and local authorities often means addressing the citizens' needs better. For example, in certain places in Latin America, giving more powers to local governments increased transparency, accountability, and, most importantly, the ability to fight poverty.

At the same time, there are costs to this trend. Municipalities and local authorities within the same country sometimes differ significantly in their resources, and as such, their capabilities to serve their citizens. Their ability to take on a growing number of policy areas depends not only on their existing resources (budget), but also the level of good governance and the effectiveness of their existing mechanisms. Therefore, without a clear framework of distribution of these resources and capabilities among cities, socio-economic and other parameters of differences are expected to increase further and might even cause a growing divide between different populations and groups within a certain country.

Another potential risk is the transfer of power from the state to local authorities. While decentralization might be very useful and effective in citizens' lives, both in times of crises and their daily lives, this spillover of power might blur the role of the state in many areas where the state is still the responsible entity. Issues like enforcement, legislation, and even healthcare might be conveniently neglected by the state, especially in "strong" cities, and de-facto gradually erase the state's responsibility to its citizens in policy areas and roles where the state remains the responsible authority. Without a clear process of legislative framework by the state, that risk might grow as the cities and local authorities gain more powers.

An examination of the extended powers of local authorities highlights some potential areas of risk within the authorities themselves.

Research about the city of Toronto claims that extended powers granted to the municipality resulted in an increased level of institutionalized corruption, and the lack of precise procedural mechanisms and legislation that set a clear framework for this power indirectly contributed to a rise in corruption.

Another significant risk is the protection of data. The tools that cities use to communicate with their citizens, together with other sets of data such as municipal bills and use of public education systems, store an unprecedented amount of data about their citizens. The question is, to what extent can a municipality protect data from mal-usage (cyberattacks, corrupted access to data, and more), and can it harness the same power and budget that a government invests in data protection?

In conclusion, the growing power of municipalities and local authorities worldwide promises their citizens more effective service. The ability to respond rapidly, execute policies that are more difficult to address at the greater governmental level, and promote action on issues like climate change, poverty, and health crises makes this a positive and promising trend. However, failing to recognize and take adequate measures to define and set clear limits to that power incurs multiple risks that might prove harmful in the medium to long range.

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Time for an Orderly Process to Update Israel's National Security Strategy

Orna Mizrahi

Israeli National Security: A New Strategy for an Era of Change
by David (Chuck) Freilich
Modan, Maarachot Publishing, 2019
509 pages [in Hebrew; translated by Aryeh Idan]

The lack of a contemporary national security concept in Israel has long been criticized by figures in the security establishment, academia, and politics. Chuck Freilich's book *Israeli National Security: A New Strategy for an Era of Change* is an extraordinary enterprise in its scope, and is an important milestone toward realizing the vision of a regulated process to update the national security concept, which has not received an official seal since the days of David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first Prime Minister, and has since been something of an "Oral Law." Any engagement in Israel's national security concept is more relevant today than ever in the face of the internal challenges following the coronavirus pandemic; these challenges substantiate the claim that a socio-economic strategy must be part of any national security concept, which cannot be relegated to the security-political field alone. Freilich insists on the need to update the concept periodically. From my knowledge of the situation in Israel, a change in this direction will be achieved only if the political echelon is mobilized to help the National Security Staff lead the process in cooperation with all relevant elements (the security establishment, headed by the IDF, and government ministries), as stipulated in the National Security Council Law (2008).

Freilich's book is a comprehensive and wide-ranging work that presents the development of Israel's national security concept and its evolution over the years, with an emphasis on the period that began in the 1990s to the present day. During this period, there were profound changes in Israel's strategic environment, which demanded and still require the adjustment of Israel's security concept and response. The book is a must-read for anyone dealing with this subject, both in the establishment and in academia, and it serves as a good basis for understanding this complex issue and for monitoring its development.

This book differs from other books written so far on the subject, both in its historical survey of engagement in the national security concept and in its perspective, which encompasses all aspects related to national security: security, political, economic, and societal. As a former member of the security establishment and as former deputy chief of the National Security Council, Freilich also calls on his personal experience. He succeeds in meeting the goal he set for his book—to present a comprehensive examination of Israel's national security concept, to bridge the existing gap in the literature on the subject, and to contribute to the analysis and enrichment of Israeli thinking on national security issues (p. 27).

The book comprises four parts. The first part includes an introduction with an overview of the history of work on the national security concept, and presents in detail the classical security doctrine as formulated in the 1950s by Israel's first Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion; its evolution the first decades after the establishment of the state; and its serving as the basis of Israeli strategic thinking until the 1980s. This concept was built on three legs: deterrence; warning, and decision, along with a number of basic principles, led by emphasis on the quality of the army versus the quantity of enemies; adoption of a defensive strategy carried out in an offensive manner (transferring combat to enemy territory, preventive strikes, tough defense, short wars); alliances with world powers alongside strategic independence and self-reliance; striving for peace; nation building; and socio-economic development.

Israel has never been more secure or in a better position to outline its national future, so it can adopt a long-term approach based on strategic patience and a greater emphasis on diplomacy and defense.

In the second part, Freilich presents the changes in Israel's strategic environment in recent decades, detailing the change in military threats over the years: in the conventional realm (asymmetric threats, and especially the threat of missiles to the home front and terrorism); in the unconventional realm (Iran's nuclear effort); and in the cyber field. It also surveys the changes that have taken place in non-military threats at the political level (changes in the relations between the regional states and involvement of world powers; diplomatic warfare against Israel: boycott and delegitimization), and in the socio-economic sphere (the demographic threat; internal division; social resilience and its implications for the IDF and decision making processes).

The third part is devoted to Israel's strategic response and includes a detailed analysis of the military response, based on the classical security concept and its development over the years. It emphasizes the changes that have taken place in the actual response, while adapting and adopting new response components without anchoring this in an orderly doctrine: in the conventional realm (multi-layer missile defense system; the campaign between wars; fences in face of border threats); in the unconventional realm (nuclear ambiguity policy; thwarting and preventing proliferation; defensive measures); and in the face of challenges in the cyber realm. The response is analyzed in the field of foreign policy, with a detailed presentation of Israel's foreign relations and a special, in-depth chapter on relations and dilemmas vis-à-vis the United States.

The fourth and most important part is a summary of Freilich's conclusions and recommendations, which present his thesis regarding an updated national security concept that he formulated in his research and proposes as a basis for systematic, public, academic, and governmental debate. The formulated concept includes a set of principles intended to serve as guidelines for planning and making future decisions on national security issues, but it is not a prescription or a recipe for a detailed policy. He also explains that in issues with political sensitivity such as the future of the West Bank and demographic issues, it is his subjective position. The main message of the concept proposed in the book is: Israel has never been more secure or in a better position to outline its national future, so it can adopt a long-term approach based on strategic patience and a greater emphasis on diplomacy and defense (p. 367).

The main policy recommendations are:

a. *In the political sphere*, separation from the Palestinians is a top priority, as is the promotion of a new comprehensive foreign policy. Relations with the United States should be defined as a fundamental pillar of national security, and alongside adaptation to dependence on America, as the author's recommendation is to sign a defense pact with the United States, to strive for independence when possible (pp. 386-387).
b. *In the military field*, adopting an approach of "strategic patience" with a greater emphasis on restraint and defense. This is

in parallel with maintaining strong offensive capabilities and building a national defense system against mortars, rockets, and missiles. A thorough re-examination of the process to set the defense budget process is also proposed. Freilich recommends being certain that Iran never cross the nuclear threshold, and that the IDF develop offensive capabilities to ensure this. At the same time, the policy of ambiguity regarding Israel's nuclear capabilities must be preserved, but Israel must also prepare for an era in which the Begin Doctrine will no longer be practical (pp. 387-406).

c. *On the internal level*, required are prioritizing attention to the home front and allocating more resources to it; cultivating Israel's qualitative edge, social cohesion, and social resilience; and changing the electoral system (pp. 406-412).

In the security-political establishment in Israel, as well as in the academic literature, there are different approaches to a "national security concept": is it only a military strategy, a security-political strategy, or according to the broader approach, is it a concept that includes reference to all components of national security: security, political activity, and internal issues (social and economic). Freilich only mentions this debate, although it would be expected that he engage extensively in defining and clarifying the basic concepts associated with it. He explains that he has adopted the broader approach, with the book focusing mainly on foreign and security issues, but also including those dimensions of socio-economic policy that directly affect Israel's ability to achieve its goals in these areas (p. 28). Indeed, the book attempts to present a strategy that includes a reference to all components of national security, although its reference to socio-economic issues (which are not within the author's area of expertise) is limited, and there is a lack of an orderly methodology regarding issues that should be addressed in this framework.

The national security concept itself proposed in the book does not include revolutionary changes and for the most part conforms to current policy, as Freilich himself admits, but its importance stems from the very presentation of a complete and coherent concept. Given the difficulty of addressing all components of strategy in this limited framework, suffice it to mention a number of key issues that require deeper examination, in formulating a concept at the systemic level.

Israel's restraint toward Hezbollah after the Second Lebanon War (2006) led to the strengthening of the organization, which currently constitutes the main conventional threat to Israel.

Freilich's advocacy of "strategic patience" by the IDF in the face of current asymmetric threats, with an emphasis on restraint, determination, inclusion, defense, and diplomacy, is in my eyes problematic. It requires further thought, especially in light of the limited achievements of the "campaign between wars" strategy in recent years; after all Israel's restraint toward Hezbollah after the Second Lebanon War (2006) led to the strengthening of the organization, which currently constitutes the main conventional threat to Israel.

It is difficult not to agree with the great importance that Freilich attaches to the Palestinian issue and the imperative to resolve it. However, the political implications of any potential solution cannot be ignored (he adopts the principle of separation as a paramount interest), and therefore it is appropriate that the strategy on this issue be formulated by the political echelon and not by security-political elements.

In addition, Freilich's recommendation to seek a defense pact with the United States, which is contrary to the well-known position of the security establishment, is well reasoned, but in my opinion remains unconvincing.

Freilich is right in his claim that no single researcher can cover such a complex and rich subject as Israel's national security concept (p. 349). Reading the book only strengthened my sense that the time has come to promote systematic, orderly, and regular action to formulate a national security strategy, whose absence was apparent to me during my work at the National Security Council. This document should include strategy on all issues related to national security: military, political, societal, and economic. If there were those who disagreed with this approach, the coronavirus pandemic has proved that the challenges to national resilience are not just military-political, and a strategy is needed to address socio-economic issues as well.

The Israeli National Security Council tried to promote such action as a derivative of the implementation of the National Security Council Law (2008), which states that one of its functions was to examine the security strategy of the State of Israel and suggest updates. These attempts have encountered two main barriers, whose removal is possible if there is a significant and influential political element in a government that will be committed to this effort. Most often, and under the conditions that characterize the political regime in Israel, this is the Prime Minister. One hurdle is the reluctance and apprehension of the political echelon to engage in the issue and update the concept, and certainly not to approve such a document due to the weight of the commitment it demands of decision makers. The second is the relatively weak position of the National Security Council in Israel vis-à-vis the IDF and the security establishment as a whole, which is unwilling to recognize the National Security Council's authority to deal with this topic. For example, the IDF ignored and did not respond to a document from the National Security Council (from 2012), which included an update of the security concept and was sent to it for comment.

In an optimal situation, the formulation of a security concept should be conducted as periodic system-wide staff work, led by the National Security Council and with the assistance of all system elements: the IDF, other security agencies, and government ministries. This would happen alongside the National Security Council formulating the principles at the strategic level in dialogue with all the elements, and including three main components: a security strategy formulated by the IDF and approved by the Minister of Defense (similar to the IDF strategy document formulated under then-Chief of Staff Gadi Eisenkot in 2015); political strategy (under the responsibility of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs); and a strategy for socio-economic policy. After approval by the political echelon, these principles must be translated into the work plans of each of the government ministries and budgeted as required.

Lt. Col. (ret.) Orna Mizrahi joined INSS as a senior research fellow following many years of service in the security establishment. She has extensive knowledge of Israel's concept of national security and is deeply involved in security-political planning processes in Israel. Previous positions include service in the IDF Research Division and Planning Division and at the Prime Minister's National Security Headquarters, where her last position was Deputy Head of the National Security Council for Foreign Policy in 2015-2018.

The General Staff: Management and Decision Making

Gal Perl Finkel

The Israeli General Staff
by Meir Finkel
Modan, Maarachot Publishing 2020
504 pages [in Hebrew]

At the outset of World War II, "the results of the German General Staff's thinking and decision making on the battlefield outdid those of its French counterpart" (p. 11). This is what Chief of Staff Aviv Kochavi wrote in the preface to a new book about the IDF General Staff by Brig. Gen. (ret.) Dr. Meir Finkel. Kochavi here underscores the importance of the General Staff and its ability to influence a campaign, in the present and in the future. Thus, he continued, "The General Staff must be a body that specializes in management and decision making for the immediate, short, medium, and long term, and especially in time of war, which is its greatest test. It requires training, knowledge, skill, teamwork and a critical attitude, and curiosity and creativity" (p. 11).

In this book, the author, formerly commander of an armored brigade and head of the Dado Center for Interdisciplinary Military Studies, continues his previous book, *The Chief of Staff*, and the effort to analyze thoroughly and fundamentally the roles and challenges of the General Staff, which is the IDF's strategic command that includes headquarters, military districts, and other functions, and to try to explain how it learns, plans, and functions.

The book includes four chapters of test cases. Each chapter concludes with a summary and the author's recommendations, which are intended to help the IDF General Staff avoid the difficulties and errors presented in the chapter. In the fifth chapter the author presents his main insights and his recommendations for improving the work of the General Staff.

Methodology

The book presents a comparative analysis of the General Staff's performance with regard to four roles and challenges: the planning processes in the General Staff, including multi-year planning for force buildup, operational planning for wartime, and planning during wartime; various learning processes of the General Staff, including lessons learned from war, learning from foreign armies, and processes of change; patterns of organizing in the face of evolving challenges, including the establishment of new staff bodies and the direct management of the General Staff; and chiefs of staff coping with a General Staff that opposed the outlook and changes they sought to implement, and with differences of approach within the General Staff.

Although the study is not a historical documentary, it was based on material from the IDF's History Department and on biographies, media publications, and interviews the author conducted with senior officers who served in the General Staff over the years. Although each period was marked by different challenges and contexts, there are similar characteristics that can instruct about the recurring challenges, responsibilities, and roles of the General Staff. At the same time, and as the author insisted, it is difficult to examine the periods comparatively, since each period entails its particular challenges and strategic context.

The book's analysis is detailed and systematic and offers enlightening insights. For example, in the chapter describing operational planning

An operational plan is designed to enable development of the required knowledge, to form the basis for a common language and the "compass" for force buildup...The nature of operational plans change when moving from plan to command in light of context. Therefore, the Chief of Staff emphasized that the plan is a means. The planning process, force buildup of the operational capabilities, and the readiness of the forces—those are the important things.

(planning for war), which is the principal process that the General Staff executes in the field of force, the author outlines the main characteristics of the General Staff planning process, including the nature of the plan and its basic assumptions, the need for modular and flexible planning, and the creation of coordination and synchronization between the General Staff, the command, and the operational branch (p. 97). Despite this, the author notes the analysis of former chief of staff Gadi Eisenkot:

> An operational plan is designed to enable development of the required knowledge, to form the basis for a common language and the "compass" for force buildup...The nature of operational plans change when moving from plan to command in light of context. Therefore, the Chief of Staff emphasized that the plan is a means. The planning process, force buildup of the operational capabilities, and the readiness of the forces—those are the important things. (p. 103)

Indeed, throughout the chapter the emphasis is on the need for mental flexibility, planning, force buildup, and formulated responses that can be adapted to a changing reality.

A particularly fascinating chapter describes how the General Staff learns during combat, including through friction with the enemy (pp. 219-234). An example is the learning process that the General Staff conducted through the Central Command in the first year of the second intifada. The General Staff was faced with the dilemma of whether to continue defensive preparations or to transition to an offensive that included large-scale infiltration of forces into the heart of the refugee camps—a move that entailed possible achievements in the form of harming senior members of terrorist organizations and the destruction of weapons and ammunition, as well as considerable risk, since it included fighting in urban areas and in the heart of a civilian population.

The author quotes Maj. Gen. (ret.) Giora Eiland, then-head of the Planning Directorate:

> Those who led to the approval of the operations were the commanders of the infantry brigades. At that time, the IDF was blessed with four of the best brigade commanders it has ever had: Aviv Kochavi from the Paratroopers, Chico Tamir from Golani, Imad Fares from Givati, and Yair Golan from Nahal. The commanders, and especially Aviv and Chico, persuaded the commander of the Central Command, Itzik Eitan, and the chief of staff to approve the operations. The operational achievements of these raids were partial, but the fact that the operations were carried out with a minimum of casualties—among both the soldiers and the civilian population—gave the assurance that it would be possible, when necessary, to enter and take over West Bank cities. One or two months later, the time for this did come [as part of Operation Defensive Shield]. (p. 228)

Although this is a fascinating example, it might have been better to include in the book another test case that has not yet been thoroughly investigated, and to examine the learning process conducted by the General

Staff and the Southern Command in 2006-2008. The commander of the Gaza Division at the time, Brig. Gen. (ret.) Moshe "Chico" Tamir, a veteran of the Golani Brigade, initiated "constant friction" with the enemy through raids carried out by infantry and armored battalions, as well as elite units (interview with M. Tamir, March 22, 2020). These raids were necessary, according to then-Chief of Staff Gabi Ashkenazi, due to the need to "handle terrorist activity on the other side of the fence," including frequent firing of Qassams on the city of Sderot and other localities. "We did not have an 'Iron Dome,' we did not have a good answer, and we had to take action against this thing, in order to restore security" (interview with G. Ashkenazi, February 21, 2021).

According to Tamir, these operations were preceded by "very orderly and very didactic preparation," which built confidence in the ability of the forces to perform among the senior command levels that were required to approve them (interview with M. Tamir, March 22, 2020), among them Southern Command General Yoav Gallant, a veteran of Shayetet 13 (Lamm, 2008) and Chief of Staff Ashkenazi, who acknowledged their contribution since his days as a company commander in Golani "to the capabilities and self-confidence of the commanders" and their influence on the enemy (interview with G. Ashkenazi, February 21, 2021). Battalion commanders, including Yaron Finkelman from the Paratroopers (Harel, 2020) and David Zini from the Golani Brigade, then led raids across the fence in the Gaza Strip and struck terrorists in their territory (Pollak, 2015). These operations enabled the command, and through it the General Staff, to accumulate knowledge, analyze Hamas's strengths and weaknesses, and prepare accordingly for Operation Cast Lead.

Although the author notes in the book that the Southern Command and its then-commander Gallant carried "a great deal of weight in determining how the ground forces operate during the operation" (p. 273), he refrains from describing it in detail, as well as the process that preceded it—from the division to the command and to the General Staff. The successful result of the operation, Tamir stated, was "due to the combination of ground forces with air forces." They identified targets, he said, maneuvered with confidence, and hit enemy operatives (interview with M. Tamir, March 22, 2020).

Focusing on this level means a constant and systematic need for an up-to-date interpretation of reality, finding appropriate methodologies for developing a response to the new challenges, and establishing command and method mechanisms for IDF coordination and synchronization.

Insights

The central and first component of the General Staff's uniqueness, Finkel states, "is the strategic level that it oversees. Focusing on this level means a constant and systematic need for an up-to-date interpretation of reality, finding appropriate methodologies for developing a response to the new challenges, and establishing command and method mechanisms for IDF coordination and synchronization" (p. 461).

Moreover, the fact that the General Staff interfaces with the political echelon requires it to adopt its language as well as the language of the military—and the world and considerations of the political echelon are different from those of the military. "Building and maintaining a common language with the political echelon, especially if it changes, is a task that requires a variety of methods, such as discussions, visits, joint war simulations, and more" (p. 462).

The author made a good selection of test cases that describe the roles and challenges before the General Staff, noting that he was required to balance a range of tensions—chiefly the desire for maximum relevance versus the desire to produce cohesion between ranks and synchronization of efforts. For example, he notes the decision of Chief of Staff Dan Halutz during the Second Lebanon War to change the operational plan several times so as not to carry out an unsuitable plan. On the other hand, there is the attitude expressed by US General George Patton, considered one of the best generals in history, that "a good plan violently executed now is better than a perfect plan executed next week" (Hanson, 1999).

A decrease in the effectiveness of the IDF response could be catastrophic if war breaks out in the midst of updating the response.

An additional tension is force buildup, as it is necessary to both preserve and improve the military's competence for the challenges of the present on the one hand, and to implement modern means and try to shape the army for the challenges of the next decade on the other. An example, Finkel notes, can be seen in the short story "Superiority" by Arthur C. Clarke, in which "an attempt to develop advanced capability led to a temporary decline in effectiveness in comparison with the possibility of improving the old means, and to a defeat at the hands of an enemy that rapidly mass-produced less advanced capabilities" (p. 463).

The author points out that a decrease in the effectiveness of the IDF response could be catastrophic if war breaks out in the midst of updating the response. This applies to operational outlooks and operational plans that have not yet been implemented, and to weapons and advanced technological systems as well. Therefore, he writes, force buildup must be "based on flexibility, especially organizational-technological flexibility that includes components of balance, redundancy, versatility, and the ability to change" (p. 464).

In the field of operational planning and in view of the fact that strategic context is changing rapidly, the author recommends the formulation of modular plans. Thus, in a limited campaign, Operation Cast Lead, for example, a plan that was originally intended to defeat the enemy fully can be only partially realized, while maintaining its relevance.

Missing from the Book

While an important and enlightening study, the book lacks up-to-date reference to the work of the General Staff vis-à-vis the political echelon, not only in the first three decades after the establishment of the state but in recent years, given Israel's new threats and current challenges.

In the last two years, for example, much evidence has been published about the dialogue between the General Staff, headed by Chief of Staff Eisenkot, and the political echelon before Operation Northern Shield, until late in 2018, at Eisenkot's initiative and with the approval of the political echelon, the IDF took surprise action and destroyed the Hezbollah tunnels on the Lebanese border (Farhi, 2020).

There is also a lack of reference in the book to the career path of the members of the General Staff and to the question of whether they were trained as necessary to act not only as commanders at the tactical level but also as commanders at the strategic level. In the IDF, most of the position holders (beginning at the rank of colonel) acquire the knowledge for their positions by on the job training, and the experience gained has enormous weight. Officers such as former Deputy Chief of Staff Maj. Gen. (ret.) Yair Golan, who commanded a Paratroopers company and battalion in combat in Lebanon, and later a brigade and division, but also served in training positions and as head of the Operations section in the Operations Directorate; or Southern Command General Eliezer Toledano, who as an officer in the Paratroopers fought in the second intifada, commanded the elite Maglan unit in the 2006 war and raids in Gaza initiated by Brig. Gen. Tamir, and served as the Prime Minister's military secretary (and therefore a member of the General Staff)—these officers did indeed go through a complete and varied service track, during which they gained experience both at the tactical and strategic levels. When the IDF designates commanders as having the potential for senior command, it is fitting that this approach constitute a guide for planning their career path.

Conclusion

Meir Finkel's fascinating and comprehensive book is an important addition to an understanding of the role of the General Staff and its leader, its discourse with the political echelon, its responsibilities, the challenges it faces, processes, and role that have a tremendous impact on the entire country.

If in his previous book the author focused on the Chief of Staff, he has now made an in-depth analysis of the General Staff, which supports the Chief of Staff, learns, plans, and operates—in routine and in wartime—and of all of its various wings (planning, operational intelligence, logistics, and of course military districts).

In conclusion, it is worth recalling a statement by Gabi Ashkenazi while serving as deputy Chief of Staff, whereby the Chief of Staff is required to remember "the importance of the combatant echelon. They not only pay for our mistakes, they also correct them. Therefore, even today with all the budgetary difficulties, the lesson I've learned is—strengthen the combatant echelon!" (Channel 1, 2008).

Gal Perl Finkel is a researcher on military and strategic affairs at INSS. There is no family connection between him and the author of the book, Brig. Gen. (ret.) Dr. Meir Finkel.

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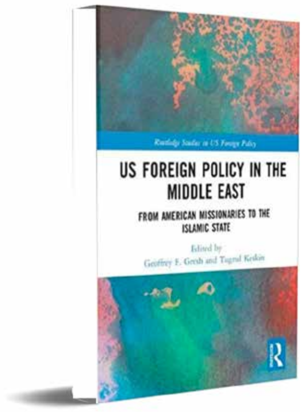

United States Policy in the Middle East: A History of Challenges, Responses, and Failures

Eytan Gilboa

US Foreign Policy in the Middle East: From American Missionaries to the Islamic State
edited by Geoffrey F. Gresh & Tugrul Keskin
Routledge, 2018
307 pages

This book is a collection of articles written by various scholars, mostly American and Turkish or people of Turkish descent, and based on papers presented at an international conference held at the University of Istanbul in the spring of 2016. This background is evident both in the choice of the contributors and in the problematic structure of the book, which is edited by Geoffrey Gresh, a lecturer in security studies at the National Defense University in Washington, and Tugrul Keskin, a researcher at the Center for Turkish Studies and the Center for Global Studies at the University of Shanghai. One of the book's strengths is its interdisciplinary approach. The chapter authors are experts in a range of fields, including United States foreign policy, Middle East studies, history, sociology, political science, and international relations.

The book opens with the correct assertion that most of the political debate on US policy in the Middle East lacks historical context, without which its policies in recent decades, and even today, cannot be understood. Correcting this lapse, the book aims to provide this context by reviewing the development of American policy in the region from the end of the 19th century to the beginning of the Trump administration, and it seeks to explain the in-depth processes that have shaped policy in the current century. The collection deals with different variables that affect or upset regional stability, including historical challenges, regional alliances, rapid political change, and domestic politics. In some chapters, policy is also presented from the perspectives of the countries in the region, including Iran, Turkey, and Arab countries, and this is a welcome innovation.

The volume comprises four sections and sixteen chapters. The sections are: historical, cultural, and economic interests; the challenges of the Cold War; the balance of regional alliances; and rapid political changes and the spread of instability in the region. There are several structural ways to edit a collection of articles. The editors have chosen a mixed approach that combines chapters that analyze United States policy toward countries and cross-country thematic chapters. But the internal division between countries and the topics and between the different sections is unbalanced. The first section, which offers historical, cultural, and economic background is very short and includes only two chapters. The middle two sections have three to four chapters, while the last section dealing with developments since the 9/11 terrorist attacks is the largest and includes seven chapters. The book includes very few thematic chapters.

The general approach is historical and chronological. Each chapter begins with a historical context and analyzes the development of American policy until the beginning of the Trump administration. Many chapters deal with US relations with major countries in the Middle East, focusing on the key issue or issues that characterize these relations, including

Turkey (Chapter 1, which provides historical background on culture and religion, and Chapter 4, on relations with the United States following World War II); Saudi Arabia (Chapter 2, on the involvement of American tobacco companies in the 1980s and 1990s); Iraq (Chapter 5, on relations with the Hashemite government, 1954-1958, and Chapter 10, on the war after 9/11); Israel (Chapter 6, on the roots of the alliance with the United States); Qatar (Chapter 8, on partnership with the United States after the 1991 Gulf War); Egypt (Chapter 11, on attitudes toward the Muslim Brotherhood, and Chapter 12, on the Arab Spring: cultivating or stopping regime changes); Syria (Chapter 13, on the failed policy toward the civil war); and Iran (Chapter 14, on the positions of the hardline Islamic conservatives).

Some of the chapters span countries, focusing on a common element, such as those dealing with US relations with two countries (Chapter 7, Iran and Turkey in the Cold War) or with several countries (Chapter 9, on the Obama Doctrine and the Gulf Cooperation Council, the strategic and economic partnership between Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Oman, and Qatar). A few chapters deal with issues such as the role of ideology and geography in relations with Turkey (Chapter 3); the information warfare against a non-state actor (ISIS, Chapter 15), and imperial planning or political economy (Chapter 16, which is an introduction to Trump administration policy).

There are gaps in the quality of research and writing. Gersh's introduction (pp. 1-9) presents clearly the goals of the book, its questions, its structure of sections and chapters, challenges, difficulties, and dilemmas. Although the last chapter written by Keskin (pp. 282-291) deals with broad questions such as who shapes US foreign policy and what is the impact of the political economy, it is not a substitute for a chapter summarizing the important insights raised in the book, and the absence of such a chapter is regrettable. Most chapters have new—albeit few—insights. Nonetheless, as a whole, the volume contributes to a better understanding of the development of American policy in the Middle East, especially in the current century. There is very little use of international relations theory. An exception is the chapter by Suleyman Elik (pp. 118-137) on US relations with Iran and Turkey from the Cold War to the present day, based on the theory of patron-client relationships and confrontation through a proxy.

It is actually the first section, which deals with cultural and economic aspects of American policy in the region, that is relatively weak. Indeed, as is argued, the first contact was civil rather than state, through missionaries, businesspeople, and private companies. The United States entered the region politically and diplomatically only at the end of World War II, mainly because of the outbreak of the Cold War and Britain's appeal to take on its regional obligations. The chapter on the activities of American tobacco companies in Saudi Arabia in the 1980s and 1990s (pp. 29-46) is interesting and unusual because the subject is largely untouched, but it is highly doubtful whether it adds to the understanding of the historical background of US policy. It would have been better, in addition to the two specific chapters, to write a broader and more general chapter on American civilian entry into the region.[1]

The most interesting and creative chapters are those that deal with subjects beyond the states themselves. Without geopolitics, ideology, and religion it is hard to understand the processes and events in the region. The chapter by Nickolas Spencer (pp. 49-66) offers this type of background regarding US policy toward Turkey. The chapter by Hamad Albloshi (pp. 244-261), which presents the attitudes of the Iranian hardliners against the United States, is excellent, and provides background for understanding the struggle between the moderates and the radical conservatives (see also Kazemzadeh, 2008). The struggle is reflected, for example, in the issue of negotiations with the United States and other powers over the 2015 nuclear deal (Rezaei, 2017). Kelly Gleason's chapter (pp. 262-281) on the failed struggle for the consciousness of the United States against ISIS is also an important addition. Russell Burgos' article (pp. 175-200) on the start of the war in Iraq in 2003 highlights the role of internal factors and especially the loss of bipartisanship; this in turn led the administration of President George W. Bush's decision to use force, which grew more entangled and is still not over. The book includes only one general map of the Middle East, and it would have been desirable to include additional maps wherever geopolitics and ideology played an important role in historical events.

Despite the erosion of democratic values in both the United States and Israel, the alliance will survive and be maintained in the future.

The chapter that may be of more interest to the Israeli reader is the one written by Jeremy Pressman (pp. 105-117) on US-Israel relations. The chapter focuses on the reasons that led to the alliance between the two countries and sustain it to this day. Pressman examines three such reasons: Israel as a strategic asset, the activity of lobbying groups, and shared interests and values. In fact, however, there are other reasons, such as a similar history of immigration, pioneering, frontier living, conquest of the wilderness, and supportive public opinion (Gilboa, 1987). The author reviews difficulties in all these reasons, a unique combination of factors that does not exist in the United States' relations with other allied countries, and which has created a "special relationship" with Israel. The United States is a superpower while Israel is a regional power, so there has not always been a perfect match between the strategic interests of the two countries. The chapter provides examples of adaptation such as American-sponsored cooperation between Israel and Jordan against Syria's military intervention in the war against the PLO uprising in September 1970. However, the chapter does not deal with the close cooperation against radical Islam and the particularly difficult dispute between Israel and the Obama administration over the nuclear deal reached with Iran in 2015, and these are blatant and regrettable absences. Pressman estimates that despite the erosion of democratic values in both the United States and Israel, the alliance will survive and be maintained in the future.

Recurring claims in the book's various chapters testify to an endemic difficulty in the United States to understand events in the region and the lack of good alternatives for dealing with difficult challenges such as authoritarian regimes, revolutions, war, and terrorism. At the same time, the prevailing lack of understanding on the other side, i.e., among the countries of the region, of the United States in general and of its foreign policy in particular, can be added to this. Since the beginning of the Obama administration, the United States has wanted to leave the region, or at least reduce its presence and activity in it, and this trend continued even during the Trump presidency. The main reasons for this were a combination of internal crises, such as the severe economic crisis of 2008, and the failed US military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq (Gordon, 2020). However, dramatic events such as the Arab Spring (Inbar, 2013), the ISIS takeover of large areas of Syria and Iraq, and Iran's plan to develop and acquire nuclear weapons have in practice prevented the possibility of moving away from the region.

There are few good books on United States policy in the Middle East, and despite its limitations, this book joins the list. Overall, the method of presenting historical development and placing events in complex contexts works, but the parts dealing with contemporary situations are less convincing and lack historical perspective. There is neither a state nor a superpower that does not make mistakes in foreign policy. The question is whether policymakers draw lessons from failures and succeed in preventing them in the future. One of the significant conclusions in the book is the United States' lack of ability to learn from its past failures in regard to its foreign policy in the Middle East (see also Mandelbaum, 2016). The book raises the objective difficulty in any attempt to use the recent past to analyze the present and the near future. The Middle East is a region that undergoes rapid, significant processes, which researchers sometimes find difficult to grasp and decipher. The normalization agreements that Israel signed in 2020 with the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Sudan, and Morocco are a paradigm shift of sorts that affects processes across the region and changes perceptions and insights of strategic, ideological, and religious processes. So is Iran's accelerated pursuit of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles. A possible updated edition of the book will need to include these events and their impact on all occurrences in the area.

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Note

1 The book that best provides a broad historical background on the interest and involvement of the United States in the Middle East since its inception was written by Michael Oren (2019).

Call for Papers for *Strategic Assessment*

The editorial board of the INSS journal *Strategic Assessment* invites authors to submit articles to be published in the journal's updated format. Proposals for special themed issues are also welcome.

Strategic Assessment, a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary peer-reviewed journal on national security, cyber, and intelligence, was launched in 1998 and is published quarterly in Hebrew and English by the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) at Tel Aviv University. *Strategic Assessment* serves as a platform for original research on a spectrum of issues relating to the discipline of national security, cyber, and intelligence. The purpose of the journal is to spark and enhance an informed, constructive debate of fundamental questions in national security studies, using an approach that integrates a theoretical dimension with policy-oriented research. Articles on topics relating to Israel, the Middle East, the international arena, and global trends are published with the goal of enriching and challenging the national security knowledge base.

The current era has seen many changes in fundamental conventions relating to national security and how it is perceived at various levels. As national security research evolves, it seeks to adjust to new paradigms and to innovations in the facets involved, be they technological, political, cultural, military, or socio-economic. Moreover, the challenge of fully grasping reality has become even more acute with the regular emergence of competing narratives, and this is precisely why factual and data-based research studies are essential to revised and relevant assessments.

The editorial board encourages researchers to submit articles that have not been previously published that propose an original and innovative thesis on national security with a broad disciplinary approach rooted in international relations, political science, history, economics, law, communications, geography and environmental studies, Israel studies, Middle East and Islamic studies, sociology and anthropology, strategy and security studies, technology, cyber, conflict resolution, or additional disciplines.

In the spirit of the times, *Strategic Assessment* is shifting its center of gravity to an online presence and availability. While INSS will continue to prepare issues on a quarterly basis, articles approved for publication, following the review and editing process, will be published in an online version on the journal's website in the format of "published first online," and subsequently included in the particular quarterly issues.

Strategic Assessment publishes articles in five categories:

Research Forum – academic articles of a theoretical and research nature on a wide range of topics related to national security, of up to 7000 words in Hebrew or 9000 words in English (with APA-style documentation). Articles should be researched-based and include a theoretical perspective, and address a range of subjects related to national security. All articles are submitted for double blind peer review. Submissions must include an abstract of 100-120 words; keywords (no more than ten); and a short author biography.

Policy Analysis – articles of 1500-2000 in Hebrew words and up to 2500 words in English that analyze policies in national security contexts. These articles will be without footnotes and bibliography and use hyperlinks to refer to sources, as necessary. Recommended reading and additional source material can be included. Submissions must include an abstract of 100-120 words; keywords (no more than ten); and a short author biography.

Professional Forum – panel discussions on a particular topic, or in-depth interview, of 2000-3000 words (up to 3500 words in English) including source material (APA-style). Submissions must include a short author biography.

Academic Survey – a survey of 1800-2500 words (up to 3000 words in English) including references and recommended reading (APA-style) of the latest professional literature on a specific topic relating to national security. Submissions must include a short author biography.

Book Reviews – book reviews of 800-1300 words (up to 1500 words in English) including source material (APA-style) on a wide range of books relating to national security. Submissions must include a short author biography.

Articles should be submitted electronically to editors-sa@inss.org.il and indicate the category of the attached article. You may also use this e-mail address for questions or additional information about the journal.

Kobi Michael and Carmit Valensi
Editors, *Strategic Assessment*

המכון למחקרי ביטחון לאומי
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