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CULTURAL CROSSROADS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

THE HISTORICAL, CULTURAL AND POLITICAL LEGACY OF INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE AND CONFLICT FROM THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST TO THE PRESENT DAY

Editors
Vladimir Sazonov
Holger Mölder
Peeter Espak

Contents

Introduction

Holger Mölder, Vladimir Sazonov

The region of the Middle East has been called the cradle of mankind where the first human civilizations were born (Ancient Mesopotamia, Anatolia, Egypt, the Levant). It became home to numerous cultures, religions and ethnicities with long experience of living together in a multicultural environment. At the same time, we are currently living in the midst of turmoil with crises full of enmity and rivalry the roots of which extend back to Ancient times. Historical, cultural, religious, social and political legacies often play a central role in obstructing intercultural dialogue in the Middle East. A comprehensive and multifaceted approach is therefore immediately required to solve the numerous problems in the region. The initial idea for the publication "Cultural Crossroads in the Middle East – The Historical, Cultural and Political Legacy of Intercultural Dialogue and Conflict from the Ancient Near East to the Present Day" came in April 2016 and some chapters are based on presentations given at the Baltic Alliance for Asian Studies (BAAS) conference in Tartu, with several scholars from various European and Middle Eastern countries also agreeing to contribute to this volume. This is an intermittent and interdisciplinary publication that focuses on multiple topics related to the Middle East and the areas of study included in this particular volume encompass ancient history, the religion and mythology of the Ancient Near Eastern regions (Sumer, Akkad, Iran, etc.), Arabic and Islamic studies, Persian, Turkish and Arab literature, among others, as well as modern Middle Eastern issues related to politics, security, society and the economy. Its authors hail from the Baltic Sea countries of Estonia, Latvia and Poland, and from the farther-flung lands of Israel and Azerbaijan.

This interdisciplinary volume begins with an introductory chapter by **Holger Mölder and Vladimir Sazonov** which analyzes the perspective of intercultural dialogue in the region throughout history. The Sumerian civilization has been widely accepted as the earliest in human history, dated between 4500/4000 and 2000/1900 B.C., and in his chapter

Peeter Espak examines the origins of the Sumerian myths, concluding that mythological motives, textual parallels and ideological aspects all indicate that the myths of Enki and the World Order, Enki's Journey to Nippur, and Enki and Inanna most probably belong to the period of the Isin Dynasty which reigned from 1953 B.C. **Krzyztof Ulanowski** focuses on the role of divination in the Mesopotamian civilization which was in many ways a natural and common phenomenon in the Ancient world. The mutual interreligious influence of the god Mithra in Zoroastrianism and of Mihryazd in the Manichaean religion is analyzed by **Jaan Lahe**, followed by his chapter in collaboration with **Vladimir Sazonov** (*this article is published in* German) in which they link the role of god (Mithra) with the important treaty *between the Hittite king Šuppiluliuma I (1380–1340 BC) and the Mitanni king Šatiwaza from 14th century B.C.* In the next chapter **Amar Annus** provides an overview of the academic heritage of well-known Estonian-American Orientalist and Syriologist Arthur Vööbus (1909–1988). **Lidia Leontjeva** introduces us to the early Persian manuscripts held in the University of Tartu Library, most of which were donated in the 19th century. **Aynura Mahmudova** studies the texts of Turkish-Azerbaijani poet and thinker Fuzuli (1483–1556) and his literary school. The Lebanese American (Maronite) writer Ameen Rihani (1876–1940) was also an early theorist of Arab nationalism and in the next chapter **Ingrida Kleinhofa** analyzes his literary heritage along with Western and Arab influences on his works.

There exist approximately three million Alawites in Syria and one million in Turkey. The Alawite identity has received a lot of attention in the recent Syrian civil war, which started in 2011, due to their support of President Assad against Sunni-led opposition. Alawites identify themselves as a separate ethnoreligious group which is distinctive from mainstream Islam while remaining related to its Shia branch. In his chapter **Üllar Peterson** focuses on Alawite positions on Islam. Next, **Tanja Dibou** examines how the Alawite youth in modern Syria distinguish themselves from other young Muslims during the ongoing civil war in Syria. **Kobi Michael** and **Yoel Guzansky** in their chapter examine the phenomenon of the failed state in the Middle East and its impact upon Arab statehood. Saudi Arabia is another regional power which characterizes emerging rivalry in the Middle East and its power relies on vast oil resources. **Yossi Mann** therefore focuses on Saudi Arabia's

fluctuating impact on the world oil market in his contribution. The appearance of the State of Israel on the Middle Eastern political landscape covers a significant part of the recent history of Middle Eastern conflicts. **Itamar Rickover** takes a look at Israeli strategic culture based on three indicators: symbols and images; militarism; and a system of norms, traditions and procedures that regulate the rules of conduct between the military and political echelons. **Limor Nobel-Konig** in her chapter analyzes the success and failure of terrorist organizations that recently became part of the Middle Eastern image by emphasizing five key strategic components: recruiting activists/supporters; creating provocation; eliminating opponents; instilling fear; and media activity. Finally, **Holger Mölder** ends by studying the influence of new types of actors such as the Islamic State on the contemporary security environment.

The Roots of Israeli Strategic Culture[1]

Itamar Rickover

Abstract This article offers to discuss the culturalist approach in security studies and to focus on strategic culture. The aim is to examine the roots of Israeli strategic culture and characterize it. "Strategic culture" can be defined as an integrated system of values, symbols and practices (norms, procedures and traditions) that shape political-security behavior over a prolonged period of time. The examination of the characterization of a country's strategic culture is carried out by comparing changes between current strategic culture and early strategic culture. In order to define strategic culture several factors are thoroughly tested: the role of war in the eyes of society; how that society sees its relationship with the enemy; the perception of the effectiveness of using force; and practices (norms, procedures and traditions) which accumulate over the years and regulate the relationship between the various elites. Three indicators are considered as reflecting a strategic culture: (1) Symbols and images (2) Militarism (3) A system of norms, traditions and procedures that regulate the rules of conduct between the military and political echelons. A synergy of all factors taken together creates the "strategic culture of a state" which is greater than the sum of its parts. In this article I will describe how Israel's strategic culture has developed and how Israeli strategic culture gradually developed into an activist-offensive strategic culture.

Keywords strategic culture, culturalist approach in security studies, symbols and images, militarism, norms, traditions, procedures, military and political echelons, Israel

Introduction

There is a consensus that security has been a fundamental element of society from the independence of the State of Israel until today. However, according to the values of the Yishuv (the Jewish community or settlement in Palestine during the 19th century and until the formation of the state of Israel in 1948), guard duty was regarded not just as an insignificant assignment but was also perceived as an evasion from manual labor. In security studies there are two main approaches that explain the creation of operational strategy: the "Materialistic Approach" and the "Cultural Approach". Friedrich Hegel, a German philosopher who supported the Materialistic Approach, believed that thoughts originate from the tangible world, are understood according to a determinate logic, and provide the world with structure and form.[2]

In contrast to the Materialistic Approach, the Cultural Approach is inter-subjective, non-materialistic and non-rational. The latter focuses on ideas, identities and values as the pillars of the material world.[3] In strategy and security studies the Cultural Approach can be examined through four main approaches: organizational culture, political culture, global culture, and strategic culture.

This article proposes to explore the Cultural Approach while focusing on the strategic culture technique as the method of examination. According to Iain Johnston the currently acceptable definition of the term "strategic culture" is an integrative system of values, symbols, images, and practices that to a large extent determine the long-lasting grand strategic preferences of political-security behavior.[4] The influence of the elements of the strategic culture is not measured in days but rather over a long period of time and is usually the result of several events. Strategic culture is of great significance as society embraces its values and, after internalization, as these values become an integral part of the state's procedures in security events. A society that has internalized the values of strategic culture may respond to various events in a manner that can be assessed and predicted.

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[2]   Hegel 2010.
[3]   Copeland 2000: 187–212; Wendt 1992: 391–425.
[4]   Johnston 1995: 33–64.

In cases where the values of the strategic culture are internalized within the state, it is quite easy to assess the state's response to different events.[5] The cultural aspect is of great importance, especially in a modern state, wherein there is a need for the existence of an army that emerges from the people. Strategic culture affects social structure and paves the way for the formation of operational strategy, especially when related to a new country.

This article aims to emphasize the importance and contribution of the term "strategic culture" in security studies. This field has become increasingly more important in academic research around the world in recent years. The strategic culture of several countries such as the European countries, the European Union and NATO, and Asian countries like Russia, India, China and Japan in particular, is a topic that has been extensively explored.[6] Studies dealing in depth with Israeli strategic culture, in general, and its impact on a step-by-step decision-making process, in particular, are lacking. This article attempts, if only in some small way, to shed light on this topic.

The purpose of this article is twofold: firstly it is intended to examine the formation of Israeli strategic culture. The second purpose is to examine the impact of Strategic Culture on the formulation of a defensive or offensive strategy. To accomplish these two purposes I will describe and illustrate several related events. In particular, I will refer only to key elements and not to the whole scenario as my purpose here is to describe how these key elements have helped to characterize and establish Israeli strategic culture.

This article includes several chapters. In the Theoretical Chapter I will conduct a short literature review, define the term "strategic culture", and then describe how to analyze the Strategic Culture of a country. The Analysis Chapter will begin with an historical summary of a Pre-state. In that discussion I will combine "theory" and "practice" and illustrate how all the elements of the Strategic Culture have formed into one Israeli Strategic Culture. The last chapter will be reserved for a summary and conclusions. The theoretical and empirical literature used herein includes diverse sources such as books, articles, research papers and reports of commissioned inquiries.

Literature dealing with a definition of the term "Strategic Culture"

Research in the field of the Strategic Culture of countries is relatively new. Literature discussing this topic can be divided into three main categories: (1) literature dealing with the theoretical definition of the term "Strategic Culture"; (2) literature dealing with the question of whether a Cultural approach, in general, and Strategic Culture, in particular, can replace a Materialistic approach in political science; and (3) literature that analyzes the strategic culture of countries and its influence on the decision-making process. This article will focus mainly on the third category.

The first generation of researchers appeared in the late 1970s. Jack Snyder was the first researcher to use the term "Strategic Culture" and he defined it as "a set of visions, emotional responses and behavioral patterns of decision-makers that have developed over the years, and are shared with each other in the context of forming the nuclear strategy of a country."[7] In spite of innovation in the development of the concept, this definition has several disadvantages such as being cumbersome and having many variables that can each be independent. Moreover, Snyder has not addressed some essential issues in the definition such as what the starting point of a Strategic Culture is and whether and how Strategic Culture changes over time.[8]

In the mid-1980s Strategic Culture was perceived as an element of superiority in strategic decision-making; this perception established the idea that a state can legitimately use violence against its enemies. Klein[9] argues that Strategic Culture is a product of historical experience. Since there is a great difference between a Strategic Culture and behavior in practice, actual behavior is a reflection of how much interest a state has in making a strategic decision. The second generation of researchers

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5   Galin 1996: 209–211.
6   Paul and Geoffrey 2001: 587–603; Paul and Geoffrey 2005: 801–820; Dellios 1997; Rynning 2003: 479–496; Glenn at al. 2004.

7   Snyder 1977: 8–9.
8   Johnston 1995.
9   Klein 1991: 3–23.

faces the major problem of defining the relationship between Strategic Culture and the actual action in practice.[10]

The third generation of researchers appeared in the 1990s. This generation of scholars maintained diversity in the definition of culture as an independent variable and paid less attention to strategic decisions as a dependent variable such as we see in military culture, political culture and organizational culture. However, these researchers' definitions are not significantly different from those of other cultural models such as organizational culture, political, etc., and according to their unclear definition it seems that the term "Strategic Culture" is not unique.

Controversy among theoretical approaches

Many researchers believe that the dominant paradigm is materialistic.[11] In the foundation of the materialistic approach there is an assumption that the independent material world directly influences reality. The materialistic approach emphasizes materialistic abilities and underestimates the influence and importance of cultural factors. The cultural approach emphasizes and considers ideas, identities and values as shapers of the material world.

This extensive literature discusses the question of whether the cultural approach, in general, and strategic culture, in particular, can replace materialistic explanations and provide methodological tools for formulating an operational strategy. Similarly, there is a debate between neo-realism and strategic culture (supported by John Glenn, Darryl Howlett and Stuart Poore) and between the realistic approach and cultural approach (supported by John S. Duffield, Theo Farrell, Richard Price and Michael C. Desch).

Literature that analyzes the strategic culture of countries

Literature in this field can be divided into subcategories: literature discussing research methodologies for understanding the impact of Strategic Culture on the decision-making process and the formulation of a

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country's operational strategy[12]; and literature analyzing the strategic culture of various countries and the influence of Strategic Culture on the use of weapons of mass destruction.[13] The Strategic Culture of countries such as the European countries, the European Union and NATO, and Asian countries like Russia, India, China and Japan[14] in particular is a field that is investigated extensively.

In recent years several studies have been carried out on Israeli strategic culture, for example, studies related to state security and the process and changes in Israeli strategic culture.[15] Adamsky's[16] excellent book examines the impact of Israeli Strategic Culture on the RMA[17] in Israel, the US and Russia, and discusses the impact of Strategic Culture on changes in the formation of an operational strategy. However, like the rest of the researchers, Adamsky does not discuss the formation of Israeli Strategic Culture. This article seeks to shed light on this topic.

What Is Strategic Culture?

Iain Johnston[18] defined "Strategic Culture" as an integrated system of values, symbols, images and practices that largely shape political-security behavior over a prolonged period of time. These factors can be expressed in different and diverse forms such as songs, images, cults, rituals, etc. The purpose of these factors is to include a wide variety of participants in an event, thereby changing an entire society's awareness of that event. This is achieved by adding layers of excitement, charm, transcendence and inspiration to the event in question. Moreover, Johnston adds that in order to examine a country's strategic culture it is necessary to examine whether there have been changes over the years; this is done by examining the starting point at which the strategic culture began and comparing the point in time examined to that starting point.

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[12]   Johnson 2006; Farrell 2002: 49–72; Johnston 1995.
[13]   Kartchner 2006: 149–166; Payne 2005: 235–151.
[14]   such as: Glenn *et al.* 2004; Rynning 2003; Cornish & Edwards 2001, 2005; Dellios 1997; Johnston 1995.
[15]   Giles 2002.
[16]   Adamsky 2010.
[17]   Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) is a military-theoretical hypothesis connected to technological and organizational recommendations for changing Militaries.
[18]   Johnston 1995.

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[10]   Johnston, 1995.
[11]   King *et al.* 1994; Desch 1998: 141–171; Huntington and Weiner 1987; Hintze 1984: 178–22.

In order to characterize a country's strategic culture Johnston proposes taking several factors into account:

1. The role of war in the eyes of society (whether war is conceived as an acceptable thing or as deviation from the norm).
2. How society sees its relationship with the enemy (zero-sum game vs. willingness to compromise).
3. The perception of the effectiveness of using force (whether it is possible to use force in order to gain control over the results of a crisis and to eliminate threats, or whether military force should be used to overcome the crisis).
4. Practices (norms, procedures and traditions) which accumulate over the years and regulate the relationship between the various elites.

Indicators for characterizing the strategic culture of a country

The nature of a country's strategic culture can be described according to the following illustration:

A militant strategic culture	◀──────▶	A compromising strategic culture
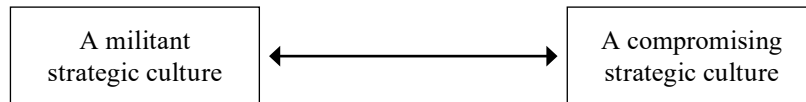
Three indicators can be considered as reflecting a strategic culture: (1) Symbols and images (2) Militarism (3) A system of norms, traditions and procedures that regulate the rules of conduct between the echelons.[19] By examining these three indicators in the period under review we can define the position of the state within each of the four factors and characterize the strategic culture of the examined country. A synergy of all of the factors together creates the "strategic culture of a state" which is greater than the sum of its parts.

Symbols and images

Symbols and images according to which the society views the security field, in general, and the army, in particular, are an important component

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[19]   Johnston 1995; Johnson 2006.

in the formulation of a country's strategic culture. A myth consists of a true story to which legends, messages and symbols have been added, making the story meaningful. The messages and symbols that a myth conveys to society are more important than the facts of the true story for there is greater interest in emotional and public needs than in the usual flow of events as they occurred in reality. The forms of expression of a myth are many and varied and can appear in songs, images, legends, gestures and rituals. Visual representation features in monuments, posters, caricatures, sculptures and paintings.

In order to evoke the spirit of a certain period we must take the myths that accompanied the main events seriously and not recount them as tales or fabrications.[20] Decision-makers use myths as a means of perpetuating their interests by conveying them to society, thereby legitimizing themselves in the eyes of the public. Myths can shape individual and group choices and direct their behaviour.[21]

Militarism

This article is one of a large group of studies[22] dealing with militarism. However, this article refers to militarism merely as one of the components of strategic culture. Michael Mann[23] defines militarism as a set of viewpoints and patterns of social activity in which wars and preparations for them are perceived as desirable and normal social activity. Harkabi Yehoshafat[24] describes militarism as a framework of values and customs that emphasize the values of discipline and patriotism in which the state is above the citizen and public welfare is more important than the freedom of any individual in that state. Baruch Kimmerling[25] believes that civil militarism exists when there is an institutional and cultural infiltration into the collective mindset. The development and consolidation of military-security doctrine is a means of institutionalizing civilian militarism, especially considering the overt and covert social significance

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[20]   Shapira 2002: 143–148.
[21]   Loerch 1992.
[22]   Levy 2007; Ben-Eliezer 1998; Maoz 2003; Mann 1987.
[23]   Mann 1987.
[24]   Harkabi 1990.
[25]   Kimmerling 2001: 208–229.

that is given to military service or the way in which an entire society can be directed towards constant preparation for war.

Uri Ben-Eliezer[26] added that when the assumption that national problems must be solved in military ways is established and disseminated we can then discuss cultural militarism. When this assumption is translated into political decision-making it can be referred to as "militaristic politics" in which the military echelon sees itself as a partner in the process of formulating a political strategy, and not simply confining itself to handling military matters.

Norms, Traditions and Procedures

The last element in formulating the strategic culture of a state is that of the practical component. This relates to norms, traditions and procedures that have evolved over the years into a pattern that regulates interaction between the different elites.[27] Literature on the subject[28] relates to the reality that security decisions are more difficult to handle for non-military personnel compared to military personnel as the latter has access to a body of military assessment and planning in terms of knowledge, economic and human resources, experience, prestige, status, trust, and more. Avi Kober[29] adds that the practical axis establishes the structure of the relationship and affinity between the political and the military echelons and that, at base, the army takes supremacy over the political echelon even when political directives contradict its opinion. In addition, norms and organizational traditions have a significant impact on the operational behavior of the armed forces, and hence on the formation of the strategic culture and the choice of operational strategy.[30]

Historical background

Several legitimate and illegitimate security organizations emerged in Israel at the beginning of the 20th century, such as "Ha-Magen" (the

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26 Ben-Eliezer 1998.
27 Lissak & Horowitz 1989: 98–151.
28 Such as Perry 1984: 142–155; Maoz, 2006.
29 Kober 1996.
30 Adamsky 2012.

Shield) and "Bar Giora". "Bar Giora"[31] was established in September 1907 as a secret military organization with the goal of transferring the protection of the Jewish settlements into Jewish hands. Its founders considered it not only as a guard organization but also as a starting point for a conceptual change for Palestine's Jews.[32] In 1909 the "Ha-Shomer" organization ("Guild of Watchmen") was founded as a legitimate and visible arm of "Bar Giora". "Ha-Shomer" members considered themselves to be an origin group of the future Jewish army, however at its peak the organization counted no more than 100 members.

In 1920 the "Ha-shomer" organization merged with "Haganah". The unification of the majority of the security organizations under one roof served as a catalyst that led to the development of "Haganah" as the main military force of the Jewish settlements in Palestine.[33] "Haganah" was established to restrain the Arab rebellion and protect an oil pipeline that passed between Iraq and Haifa. The organization reported to a national headquarters and served as a basis for the formation of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) upon the establishment of the State of Israel. In May 1941 "Haganah" established "Palmach"[34] as a regular, illegal military force mainly for carrying out strategic missions and functioning as its main operational arm.[35]

After the UN resolution of 29 November 1947 relating to the partition of Palestine into two states, the War of Independence began. This war can be divided into three stages. The first stage was the civil war which started one day after the UN resolution. This stage is characterized mainly by repeated attacks on the Jewish settlements and main roads by Arab gangs. The Jewish community adopted a defensive approach for four months, and then in April 1948 changed its strategy to offense with a counterattack, temporarily opening the road to Jerusalem

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31 Named after Simeon Bar Giora, Jewish military leader in the war against Rome, (66–70 C.E).
32 Palestine was Israel's name under the British Mandate.
33 Lev 1985.
34 "Palmach" – an acronym for "Pelugot Hamahatz" meaning striking force. Palmach was a broad spectrum left-wing nationalist organization associated with socialist parties. Its members trained and lived in kibbutzim. The political tendencies of its leaders such as Yigal Allon and Yitzhak Sadeh were towards Mapam, a left-wing party in opposition to David Ben-Gurion and the Mapai ruling party.
35 Ben-Yehuda 2009.

and as a result defeating the Arabs in Tiberius, Jaffa and Haifa. The second stage, and the most risky to the Jewish settlement, began with The Declaration of Independence in May 1948. At this stage, the Arab armies began to invade the newly established state.

Figure 1. The formation of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF)
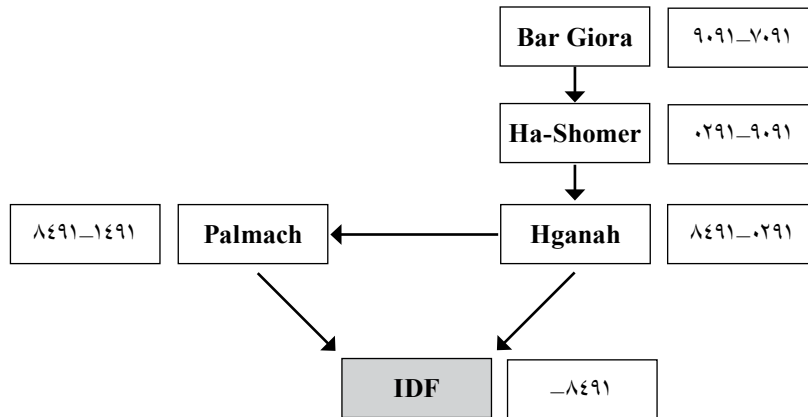
The establishment of the IDF several weeks after the Declaration of Independence was a long and complex process. As an inexperienced army, the IDF had to acquire its expertise in combat.[36] After the first truce declared in June 1948 the third stage of the war began. This stage was the longest and included several cycles of warfare and truce. In this third stage the IDF seized the central region from the Arab gangs, defeated the Arab armies in the north, and defeated the Egyptian army in the south. The IDF also invaded the Sinai Peninsula.[37]

Discussion

This chapter will examine the three indicators of Israeli strategic culture (symbols and images, militarism, norms procedures and organizational

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[36]   Ostfeld 1994: 70–74; Oren 2005.
[37]   Cohen 2002.

traditions) and the impact of the strategic culture on the transition from a defensive approach to an offensive one. As will be elaborated later in this chapter, the strategic culture was initially defensive and became an offensive strategic culture over a number of years. The influence of the indicators of the strategic culture is not measured in days but rather over a longer period of time and is usually not the result of one event but is based on several events.[38] Therefore, this process will be explained as a gradual process that over the years led to a change in the approach of the Jewish Settlement to the use of force.

Symbols and images

The security ethos is discussed at length in the books of Moshe Lissak and Dan Horowitz, Uri Ben-Eliezer, Anita Shapira[39] and many others. I do not claim in this article to describe all the events that led to the construction of the Jewish warrior ethos and the transition from the defensive to the offensive approach. My goal is to describe how myth formation, which constitutes one of the components of a strategic culture, has helped to form an offensive militant strategic culture. In order to do so I will describe and illustrate numerous events that helped the Jewish community to build and establish the ethos of the new Jewish warrior. I will begin by describing the construction of the character of the new Jewish warrior, then I will present the difference between two generations, i.e., the sons and the parents, and finally I will discuss the contribution of the myth "few *vs.* many".

The character of the new warrior

During the Ottoman period the Turks were determined not to allow the Jews' hold on the lands of Israel to expand, forbidding the display of symbols related to Jewish nationalism. In view of the Balfour Declaration and British occupation of Palestine 1917–1920, Zionism became a movement that was recognized by the great nations and as such also gained recognition in international law. The transition to life under the

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[38]   Unless it is a formative event such as the surrender of Japan and Germany in World War II, an event that led to a radical and immediate change in the strategic culture.
[39]   Lissak & Horowitz 1989; Ben-Eliezer 1998; Shapira 2002.

British regime transformed the Jewish Yishuv overnight into a population with legal rights and a recognized political status with national rights granted under the British Mandate.[40]

Symbols and images ranging from the settlement to the first years of the state are characterized by a transformation in the conception of the Jewish warrior. Members of the security organizations were widely criticized by farmers and were considered to be evading hard manual labor. Most of the Jewish community emphasized agriculture and the cultivation of the wilderness in the Land of Israel as a primary national mission. "Labor occupations" took precedence over "security occupations" and members of the "Ha-Shomer" organization had to contend with this approach. This change in the perception of the "Ha-Shomer" organization by the Jewish Yishuv from being an esoteric organization into a significant organization in the life of the Jews in the Land of Israel following the "Balfour Declaration" was reflected in the attitude towards warriors who were killed defending the land. In order to renew and encourage these motifs and improve their reputation Jewish warriors used Jewish heroes as a link to the new Jewish warrior. For example, the book "Yizkor" (in commemoration of) was written in 1911 in memory of a number of fighters and workers killed by Arab gangs. This book was the first attempt to glorify those who had fallen in battle[41] with the Arabs (as opposed to the deaths of farmers). In memory of three guards who fell in Galilee there was written: "The sons of the Maccabees, descendants of Bar Giora and Bar Kokhba, come to inherit the place of the fallen heroes who fell in war to gain their freedom."[42] The need the Zionist movement had for national saints and heroes, symbols of heroism and the development of myths was consistent with their desire to impart to the new Jew the image of a continuation of the rebellious, heroic and powerful ancient Jew, as the antithesis of the image of the Diaspora Jew.[43]

The Great Revolt (66–73 CE) and the Bar Kokhba revolt (132–135 CE) were emphasized as sources of national pride and their heroes were

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[40]   Ben-Eliezer 1998.
[41]   Although the fallen were not killed in an heroic battle but were hit by fire from the ambush, there was an attempt to attribute their fall to an act of heroism.
[42]   A declaration of mourning, published by Poalei Zion, about the deaths of three young men in the spring of 1909. Quoted in: Jonathan, Frenkel. (1988), "The Book of Remembrance", 1911 – Commentary on National Myths during the Second Aliyah, Contemporary Jewry: 4.
[43]   Shapira 1997: 155–175.

presented as models for the brave and heroic Jew.[44] For this reason, the Jewish secret military organization "Bar Giora"[45] was named after a Jewish hero from the time of the Great Revolt of the Jews in the Land of Israel in the Roman Empire. Most members of the Jewish community objected to this perspective and even rejected the image of the new Jewish warrior.

One of the tools used to encourage love of the "homeland" and cause a transformation of the warrior's image was the Bible. Young members of the Jewish community traveled throughout Israel with the Bible as a geographical guide, identifying the historical sites of the Jewish people that were mentioned there. They had a strong sense of the need to return to the days of the heroism of the ancient Jews in which the Jews fought bravely against various invaders. In order to achieve this they were assisted by well-known biblical heroes, and even religious holidays took on a different interpretation from what we know from religious tradition in order to elevate the glory of the Jewish warrior once more and compare him to the familiar heroes of the past. For example, Lag Ba'Omer has become an heroic holiday that symbolized the heroism of Bar Kokhba in the revolt against the Roman Empire[46], instead of a religious holiday whose importance according to Jewish tradition is the end of the laws of mourning for the death of Rabbi Akiva's scholar. Similarly, Hanukkah, characterized by religious tradition as the holiday in which the central motif is the miracle wherein one oil tin was used to light eight candles, became a holiday in which the Maccabean wars were highlighted as a symbol of glorious heroism.

The Jewish community gradually changed its perception of the Jewish warrior, and the blood of the guard became equivalent to the sweat of the worker. The Jewish settlements began to feel a real sense of ownership of the land and the Jewish warrior became a cultural and social model and part of reality during the Arab Revolt. The difference between the image of the parents' generation (the early Zionists) and the

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[44]   Shapira 1988: 26–27.
[45]   Shimon Bar Giora was one of the leaders of the revolt, winning many victories against the Roman conqueror until his defeat.
[46]   New customs were introduced – Archery, bonfires were lit and hymns were written to commemorate the heroism of Bar Kokhba.

image of the sons' generation (descendants of the early Zionists) also made an important contribution to the image of the new Jewish warrior.

The generation of the parents and the generation of the sons

The generation of the sons saw themselves as a strong and significant factor in the region, which allowed them to free themselves from the defensive ethos of their parents and form an offensive alternative.[47] In the 1930s and 1940s the difference between the two generations with respect to the Land of Israel became more pronounced. The generation of the parents was raised on the writings of the Jewish philosophers Tchernichovsky and Berdichevsky who characterized the Land of Israel as a place where one must cling to and seek the strength of the soul. The generation of the parents rarely traveled the country's paths and the heroic sites of Jewish heritage never became sites of pilgrimage (such as Masada, Modi'in, etc.). In comparison, the generation of the sons regarded the Land of Israel as their inheritance as they had been born and raised there, and they had no doubt that this was their country. They saw the Land of Israel as a tangible property and identified themselves with the country's landscapes; their childhood experiences were an inseparable part of the Land. While the generation of the parents expressed the wish and hope that the land would be theirs, in the generation of the sons there was a sense of real ownership of the land of Israel. As a result of this approach, the emerging national ethos did not regard the Jews as a weak but as a significant factor in the struggle for control of the Land of Israel.[48]

It might appear that the situation described above could lead to the conclusion that the generation of the sons would become a leading force in the decision-making process and that their influence on the political echelon would be vast. However, despite the rise in status of the military echelon, their views have not yet been reflected politically (compared to their status and influence during the Sinai War, Six-Day War, and Yom Kippur War) since the political leadership felt that the military echelon could not yet plan its own large-scale military maneuvers.

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[47]   Shapira 1988.
[48]   Shapira 1988.

From defensive myth to offensive myth

A national ethos is characterized by how it is gradually formed. In comparison, national myths are built subsequent to an event that serves as a factual basis for an evolving legend that is being developed around it.[49] In order to strengthen the ethos of the Jewish warrior, Ha-Haganah members emphasized security events that occurred between Arabs and Jews in the Land of Israel.

This can be illustrated by the heroic myth attributed to Tel-Hai defenders led by Yosef Trumpeldor. During the Tel-Hai event scant details of the incident, as they occurred in reality, were published.[50] The emphasis in publications on that topic was on the deaths of workers who had fallen in defense of Tel-Hai. In the book Yizkor and in an article in memory of the fallen published by Berl Katznelson (one of the senior Zionist leaders) there was written: "... fell on the Homeland Guard ...". The term "homeland" was not commonly used by the people, yet after the Tel-Hai event this term was used frequently. The uniqueness of the Tel-Hai events was that the Jews preferred the terminology "falling in battle" rather than using "retreat" or "surrender". It was in this series of events that the myth of defensive heroism was conceived.[51]

This defensive trend did not last long and was replaced with an offensive one by creating myths from other events. The daily routine of the Arab attacks forced Haganah to switch from a strategy of static defense to one of dynamic defense, and finally to an offensive approach. The most prominent event highlighting this tactical transition was the myth formed around events during the establishment of the settlement Hanita. Hanita, located in Western Galilee, was exceptional compared to other settlements built prior to the establishment of the State of Israel because it was built in the heart of an Arab region. The defense of Hanita demanded a large number of volunteers from among those who helped to establish it. They were joined by infantry troops who came to defend the place from an expected attack by the Arabs which indeed took place. One day after the Arab attack the command for a counterattack was

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[49]   Shapira 1988.
[50]   Even though the event itself was a failure. No reinforcements arrived in time and Tel Hai and Kfar Giladi were abandoned following the incident.
[51]   Shapira 2002: 143–148.

issued for the first time. In the narrative of the establishment of Hanita the role of the infantry was given prominence; in contrast to other places for which the process of settlement was emphasized, this time it was the fighting force that was given significant attention. This was the first time that the role and function of the "Jewish warrior" changed into those of offensive fighter and initiator. His character began to form as a national Zionist mission whose importance was no lesser than the image of the Jewish worker.[52] After the events of Hanita there was a recognition that the establishment of the State of Israel should be planned not only by diplomacy but also by the use of offensive military forces. This event is an important marker in the process of turning the components of Israeli strategic culture from defensive to offensive.

Few against many

The War of Independence is commonly known and conceived by the public as a war of the few against the many. Ben-Gurion wrote in his diary "World history does not contain as many examples of war in which there were few against many as young Israel does."[53] This emphasis on Israel's quantitative inferiority vis-à-vis the Arab states during the War of Independence became a national ethos that justified the claim that the Jewish community was in real danger of physical extermination. The leaders of the State of Israel have repeatedly emphasized this motif over many years when referring to the War of Independence. In his speeches Ben-Gurion compared the period of the War of Independence and the IDF's victory in this war with motifs from biblical heroes such as David's victory over Goliath, Yehoshua Ben-Nun's victory over the 31 kings, and the Maccabean wars.[54]

Although the phenomenon of few against many does not always have much basis in the reality of the battles of the War of Independence,[55] *the feeling of the few* was dominant among the people of the Jewish community in Palestine. The feeling of the few was against the rule of the British Mandate, against Arabs in Palestine, and especially against the

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52   Shapira 2002: ٠٥٣–٠٤٣.
53   Ben-Gurion 195: 351
54   Kaddish & Kedar 1996: 87–89.
55   Amitzur 2005.

five invading Arab armies (Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon). The source of this sense of minority can be explained by Arab opposition to any compromise between Jews and Arabs over the division of the state, the depressed situation of the European Jewish community after the Holocaust, the numerical difference in army size between Jews and Arabs in the Middle East, and the multiple Arab threats to destroy the new Israeli state even before it had been established.

Militarism

Another component of the characterization of a country's strategic culture is the level and type of militarism in the society. The premise of this study is the existence of civilian militarism in Israel, which varies from one period to another. The present study sees militarism as just another component of strategic culture. Militarism and its characteristics were based on the system of images and symbols described above which enables a connection between culture, worldview on the security field, and the formation of a security doctrine. According to Baruch Kimmerling,[56] the militarism that developed in the Jewish community was "civilian militarism".

Uri Ben-Eliezer, Baruch Kimmerling and many others[57] believe that the new state was interested in connecting society to the army and turning the army into a school for the nation which places power at the center of the new Jewish identity. Accordingly, the leadership advanced a broad concept of security that encompassed almost all areas of society. This approach reached its peak mainly after the establishment of the state (reference to this period is not found in this article), but its origin began with an argument about the way the Zionist movement operated at the beginning of the Yishuv. In this chapter I will divide the influence of militarism on the nature of strategic culture into two different periods which are distinct in nature. The first period runs from the establishment of Bar Giora until World War II; the influence of militarism here led to the development of a defensive approach. The second period runs from the end of World War II until the end of the War of Independence; in this period there was a transition towards an offensive approach.

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56   Kimmerling 2001: 208–229.
57   Harkabi 1990; Kimmerling 2001: 208–229; Rapoport 1962: 71–101; Ben-Eliezer 1998.

The defensive approach: from the establishment of Bar Giora until World War II

In order to characterize the level of militarism prior to the establishment of the State of Israel one must first examine the origins of this militarism. The debate over the Zionist movement's course of action began at the beginning of the Yishuv period. Volunteering to settle and work the land was one of the issues that split members of the Zionist movement. Supporters of the volunteers were called "activists" and opponents were called "conservatives". Most of the activists belonged to the workers' movement, and this activity found expression mainly in the willingness to settle and cultivate the land. At the center of the first controversy was the question of whether Jews could protect Jewish settlements. The first Zionist settlers were assisted by Bedouin guards in order to protect their lives and property and they remained at the mercy of the Arab guard who often exploited the situation by extorting them and steadily raising their fees. Bar Giora and Ha-Somer suggested that such guard duty should be transferred to Jewish hands, a suggestion that was frequently rejected by the farmers. The farmers' fear was that the Bedouin guard would exact revenge on them for losing their jobs. Moreover, on a social-religious level, they objected to the nature of Hashomer members who were not religious. Gradually Ha-Somer began to gain momentum and changed the security concept of the Jewish community. As well as passive guarding they also initiated security activities such as small-scale pursuits, using limited means of retaliation, and deterrent activities.[58]

The identification of the younger generation with militarism as a legitimate way of solving problems increased towards the end of the First World War. During this period there was a strong desire and willingness among the younger generation to enlist into the British army to assist in the conquest of Israel. Allenby, commander of the British forces, chose however not to include Jewish volunteers in the battles and his decision caused great disappointment among them. A messianic sense was replaced by the sad reality that there was a new conqueror (this time a British one) and it was better for the Jews to defend themselves by establishing a militia under the control of the Jews.[59] This defensive

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[58]   Lev 1985.
[59]   Shapira 2002: 135–141.

ethos fit well with the decline in the militarism of the Yishuv in view of their disappointment in not being included in the conquest of the land.

After the Yishuv settlers accepted the reality that they had to defend themselves the collective identity of the youth in the Land of Israel was formulated and shaped throughout the 1930s and 1940s. This was characterized on two different levels: indigenous mentality and militant activism. They were exposed to a generation of struggle: the struggle against the British, the struggle against the Arabs, and the struggle against the Jewish image in the Diaspora period. The establishment of purely Jewish military units led the younger generation to feel that it was possible and even desirable to solve the Arab-Jewish-British conflict through organized violence. The military concept of Haganah has a direct connection with the gradual rise in the image of the warrior and the transition to the understanding that there will also be a need to fight for the Land of Israel. Initially, the military concept was based on the static defense principle that there was a need to defend against Arab gang attacks on Jewish settlements, transport routes, and workers in the fields – a perception that gave a clear advantage to the attackers. This approach began to change with the outbreak of the Great Revolt of 1936–1939 when the Arab riots turned into planned and organized incidents against the Jewish Yishuv; in the light of these riots, the opinion emerged that the method of action needed to be changed.

Uri Ben-Eliezer[60] and Stuart Cohen[61] argue that this idea started to coalesce in 1936 among a group of the Zionist elite who served in Haganah, demanding that the Yishuv leaders adopt an aggressive/offensive approach and cease acting defensively. The Yishuv leadership feared losing its status and proposed a compromise whereby members of the younger generation would be subject to its senior leadership, and in return the leaders would spread the idea that the "Arab problem" could and should be resolved in a military and aggressive way. The military solution gradually became synonymous with the values and ideology of the Jewish community.[62] During these years a new worldview with respect to the attitude towards Arabs and the use of force began to emerge,

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[60]   Ben-Eliezer 1998.
[61]   Cohen 2001: 4–5.
[62]   For further details on the demand and response of the Yishuv leadership, see: Barzilai 1996; Shapira, 2002: 135–141; Kimmerling 2001: 208–229.

an understanding which was a decisive factor in the formation of an offensive ethos, the ethos of the warrior.[63]

The offensive approach: The end of World War II until the end of the War of Independence

At the end of World War II the main question was whether to continue to struggle against the regulations of the White Paper[64] or whether to suspend activity until the end of the war. The moderates believed that the policy of the White Paper was a temporary necessity and that it was necessary to wait until the end of the war. In contrast, the activists saw the White Paper as a result of the British assessment that Jews had no choice but to accept an anti-Zionist policy. The right way to change British policy was, in their opinion, demonstrating strength and a willingness to fight against the British. The days of the resistance movement (a union of several Jewish militias) symbolized a turning point in the nature of action against the British Mandate. In November 1945 the first military operation took place, an operation with a clear political nature: the explosion of railways in 153 different locations throughout Israel. This operation would lead to a series of additional actions against the British that would put an end to the debate between moderates and activists, in which the latter had the upper hand.[65]

One of the practical implications[66] of this need to solve the Arab problem (i.e., to solve the repeated attacks of Arabs against Jews) by military means, and not only by political ones, was "Plan D". "Plan D" was a military operation with the aim of taking over territories, conquering Arab villages and towns, and creating territorial contiguity between Jewish settlements. This plan was not only designed as an operational plan, but also as a command to forces in the field. "Plan D" turned the offensive strategy of the Jewish Yishuv into a normatively acceptable strategy in the eyes of the same. The political echelon was the main group promoting the idea of expanding borders, as can be seen from

the meeting held one week before the declaration of the establishment of the state on 7/5/1948. At this meeting, the political echelon decided not to include state borders in the Declaration of Independence since they believed that these borders would not be determined by diplomatic agreements but rather by force.[67]

It should be noted that the heads of state had other alternatives to prevent the Arab invasion, such as the US proposal to postpone the declaration of statehood for several months in order to prevent the Arab armies' planned invasion. At the historic meeting held on May 12 1948 the question was whether to declare the establishment of the Jewish state immediately after the British Mandate terminated or to accept the US proposal for a three-month truce. Ben-Gurion preferred a military solution to a political one and summarized this meeting by saying "it is time we stop believing in witchcraft. Witchcraft is a belief in words; one who does not believe in magic and words understands that it will be a matter of deciding by force ..."[68] The members of the provisional government preferred the military path until a decision on the establishment of the state was not brought to a vote at all.[69]

Ben-Gurion was more moderate than the military echelon when it came to expanding the country's borders. It is useful to note here that Ben-Gurion referred to war as a destructive phenomenon and because of that he feared militarism which, in his opinion, constituted a danger to the public at large and to the emerging Israeli democracy.[70] Because he feared the negative effects of militarism, Ben-Gurion demanded civilian control over the army and the subordination of the army to the authority of the political echelon; he did not allow the military leadership to dictate political and military moves. However, at the same time Ben-Gurion understood that preparations for war had to be made in order to avoid annihilation.

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[63] Shapira 2002: 135–141; Ben-Eliezer 1998.
[64] The White Paper is a term for the British government's report on decisions relating to Jewish settlement in Palestine and the restriction on Jewish immigration into Palestine during the British Mandate (1920–1948). The report had a white cover, hence its name.
[65] Ben-Eliezer 1998.
[66] The Israeli Information Center 1973.

[67] Pail 1990: 40–49.
[68] State Archives 1948: 70.
[69] Pail and Azriel 1991: 180.
[70] Ostfeld 1994 :70–74.

Norms, traditions and procedures

There was a practical side that contributed to the formation of a strategic culture which turned from defensive to offensive but, as with the phenomenon of militarism, this was also not the main factor. The main reason for this change was that the political echelons had gained a lot of experience, whereas in comparison the military echelon had no experience either in the political or in the military spheres. In this chapter I will mainly refer to the period of 1946–1949 in which Ben-Gurion was appointed as head of the Defense Ministry and the War of Independence, and refer less to the first years of the Yishuv. At the beginning of the Yishuv there were procedures, norms and traditions in the security organizations that had a certain effect on the formation of a defensive strategic culture, but their influence was not significant. This is because these military organizations were relatively new and traditions and organizational norms were not yet sufficiently coherent to the point of being able to significantly influence defensive strategic culture (i.e., during the period of the Yishuv the other variables/factors that affected strategic culture like symbols, images and militarism were more dominant in this period).

During the period of the Yishuv, the norms, procedures and traditions of Haganah were the ones that dictated the interaction between the military and political echelons. Just before the establishment of the state of Israel Ben-Gurion tried and succeeded in establishing *his* way in the security field. In order to do so he appointed people who were loyal to him personally as the heads of the military echelon, instead of Haganah veterans. He therefore aspired to establish a regular army, like armies in the Western World, and not a militia like Haganah. Ben-Gurion preferred that senior commanders be commanders who had previously served in regular armies so that they could quickly establish a disciplined and trained army themselves. It was no longer to be a defensive army as was the case with Haganah, but an offensive army that would push fighting beyond the borders of the country. In order to realize this vision there was a need to change the existing chain of command, an action which would lead to changes in organizational tradition. [71]Ben-Gurion saw the existence of a single source of inspiration as a national

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[71] Pail & Azriel 1991; Ostfeld 1994.

mission that was required to realize the objective of the new state. This new state was a place where immigrants and settlers from different cultures would be united under one single governmental apparatus. Ben-Gurion was interested in shaping the army in his own image and now there was the golden opportunity to do so since the new army (the IDF) was devoid of tradition, having allegedly been created from nothing.[72]

The nature of the future army – a new army or an old-new army?

Controversy over the nature of the new army began at the time when the IDF was established. The question was whether to allow the norms, procedures and traditions of Haganah to remain in the IDF or alternatively to establish an army with a new organizational tradition and new interactions between ranks. In Haganah loyalty was first to the party and according to Haganah's wishes, so a gradual change was required to transition to a regular army. However Ben-Gurion believed that such a transition should be quick and immediate.[73]

Ben-Gurion opposed the relationship between Haganah and the National Headquarters. He therefore tested the status of the National Headquarters and was interested in dismissing its leader Israel Galili. There were several reasons for Ben-Gurion's desire to dismiss Galili from the position of head of the National Headquarters. First, Ben-Gurion regarded Galili as a representative of a rival party (MAPAM – the United Workers Party) whose political and strategic views did not match his own. Galili was also a competitor with considerable political influence over society and the Zionist movement. The second reason, more closely related to this discussion on norms, procedures and organizational traditions, was differences of opinion regarding the character of the new Israeli army. Galili was the most senior leader to emerge from Haganah who wanted the IDF to rely on Haganah's legacy concerning the nature of the organization, its fighting spirit, combat doctrine, human relations and its popular character, etc. The main reason for this controversy stemmed from the difficulties Haganah had, as an organization wanting to preserve its organizational traditions, in adapting to such changes. It was resistant to the transition to the framework of a state which,

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[72] Shapira 2002: 58–65.
[73] Ostfeld 1994: 78.

according to Ben-Gurion, was committed to the principle of statehood. Galili's view is suitably illustrated in his speech to the Mapam Council on July 2, 1948: "We need not a blind army, but an army that continues the traditions and values of Haganah ... an army whose loyalty does not contradict the party's affiliation and does not make robots of soldiers ..."[74]

After the declaration of the establishment of the state of Israel there began to take shape a recognition of the need to appoint permanent front commanders to serve as an intermediate level of command between the General Staff and the brigades. In June 1948 Deputy Chief of Staff Zvi Ayalon and Head of Operations Branch Yigael Yadin submitted their proposal for the construction of four fronts. Ben-Gurion was interested in conducting a round of appointments both in the new fronts and in the General Staff divisions. In his opinion the front commanders should be professional officers who had graduated from the British army; he therefore opposed the recommended list. Yadin and Ayalon criticized Ben-Gurion's expected series of appointments. This round of appointments led to the resignations of several important military personnel. At a cabinet meeting held on July 2nd Prime Minister Ben-Gurion announced the resignations of four members of the General Staff. The government decided to establish a committee including five ministers to investigate the matter. The purpose of this committee, was to be able to make recommendations quickly. The committee's conclusions justified the presence of the military personnel, rejecting Ben-Gurion's positions. The committee members then sought to establish a new forum of security decision-makers, thereby creating new working patterns between the government and the military echelon. Ben-Gurion, who opposed this idea, oversaw the establishment of this new forum but excluded it from any security decision-making processes. The convening of this forum was usually without any substantive content or meaning.[75]

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[74]   Zerubavel and Megged 1955: 74–76.
[75]   Pail & Azriel 1991: 190–194; Ostfeld 1994: 600–624.

A regular army or a militia – the dismantling of the Palmach[76] headquarters

The Palmach[77] ("strike forces") was the elite fighting force of Haganah which refused to accept the authority of Ben-Gurion and was an organization that claimed to serve as a source of inspiration for the youth and the emerging new army.[78] Ben-Gurion referred to the Palmach with mixed feelings of appreciation and suspicion. His appreciation was for its contribution to the Haʿapala[79] project and to the successful battles of the War of Independence, however Ben-Gurion was suspicious of this heritage which seemed to be an old-fashioned and unsuitable legacy for a regular state army. The Palmach legacy included an informal relationship and equality between soldiers and commanders.

Perhaps Ben-Gurion's fear was that a special intra-organizational relationship and the organizational culture of the Palmach would affect relations between the two echelons. Ben-Gurion firmly opposed these principles since, in his opinion, any army should be a professional, formalistic, hierarchical establishment through professional development rather than being the product of the organic growth of society and circumstance.[80] Zehava Ostfeld[81] adds that the patterns of transition from the underground, in which the Palmach operated during the period of the Yishuv, did not conform to the requirements of a regular state military organization. One year after the discussion on dismantling the Palmach headquarters its brigades were also dismantled to the point where they had no traces left in the new IDF army.

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[76]   The Palmach was a broad spectrum left-wing nationalist organization associated with socialist parties. Its members trained and lived in kibbutzim. The political tendencies of its leaders such as Yigal Allon and Yitzhak Sadeh were towards Mapam, a left-wing party in opposition to David Ben-Gurion and the Mapai ruling party.
[77]   Ben-Eliezer 1998: 54–57.
[78]   Shapira 2002; Ostfeld 1994: 624.
[79]   Haʿapala – illegal immigration by Jews to Mandatory Palestine in violation of the British White Paper.
[80]   Another factor to be noted is his view of the Palmach as the tool of a rival party since the Palmach was identified with the kibbutz and its senior commanders were members of the parent parties.
[81]   Ostfeld 1994: 720.

Summary and conclusions

Bar Giora and Hashomer changed the concept of security as perceived by the Jewish community. In addition to passive guarding, security organizations initiated targeted security activities such as small-scale pursuits and also used retaliatory measures against attackers. Through their actions these organizations expressed the new path of the Jewish warrior in the Land of Israel. The military perception of security organizations has a direct connection to the gradual increase in the importance and prestige of the warrior, and to the understanding that not only by working the land and utilizing a political arrangement can a state be established; there is also a need to fight. This transition from a defensive to an offensive approach was accompanied by psychological changes as this was the first time that the Jews had not settled for passive protection of their settlements but rather initiated actions in the Arab territories. The nature of this activity created a feeling of real ownership among the people of the Yishuv on the land, and the Jewish warrior became a cultural and social model.

The theoretical chapter presented four characteristics that allow us to determine what the strategic culture of a certain country is: (1) the role of war in the eyes of society; (2) how society sees its relationship with the enemy; (3) the perception of the effectiveness of employing force; (4) practices (norms, procedures and traditions) that accumulate over the years and regulate the relationship between the various elites.

To characterize the origin of the Strategic Culture in Israel, three indicators were examined: (1) Symbols and images (2) Militarism (3) A system of norms, traditions and procedures that regulate the rules of conduct between the military and political echelons. A synergy of all these factors together creates the "strategic culture of a state" which is greater than the sum of its parts.

In order to examine the first two characteristics a system of symbols and images of the Jews in the Land of Israel was described in this article from the time of the Yishuv until the War of Independence. The cultivation of symbols of heroism and myths began with the establishment of the Bar Giora organization. Most of their security activity was based on a defensive approach, but in some cases for which the latter approach could not achieve its objective the organization resorted to targeted reprisals. These actions laid the foundations for broader operational activities

that would come to characterize Haganah and the IDF in the future. With the establishment of the "Bar Giora" organization the area of security became significant and the Jewish community began to change its perception towards the Jewish warrior.

The generation of the sons saw themselves as a strong and significant factor in the region, a conception which allowed them to be freed from the defensive ethos of their parents and assisted them in finding an offensive alternative in the formation of the army. Emphasis on Israel's inferiority vis-à-vis the Arab states during the War of Independence became a national ethos justifying the claim that the state should nurture its army, also serving as an important factor in creating a militant ethos.

Another component of the characterization of a country's strategic culture is the level and type of militarism of its society. The issue of militarism addresses the second and third characteristics. The premise of this article is that civilian militarism exists in Israel, and that its extent changes over various periods of time. The present article views militarism only as part of a broader strategic culture; since the level and nature of militarism is based on a system of images and symbols, militarism enables a connection between culture and worldview in the security field. The roots of militarism began with the establishment of the Bar Giora organization and its conception was enhanced through the consolidation of the concept of Haganah within the Israeli military. In the beginning strategy was based on the static defense principle, but as the threat intensified strategy was changed to one of active defense and finally to an offensive approach. The generation of the sons, a generation that had grown up in Israel, developed an aggressive ethos in which the life of the warrior constituted a formative and character-shaping experience, also developing an approach whereby the Arab-Jewish-British conflict could be resolved by activating military units. One practical implication was "Plan D" which turned this offensive approach into a normative strategy.

Finally, a practical element (a system of norms, traditions and organizational procedures) also contributed to the formation of an aggressive strategic culture. The influence of this factor mainly saw its expression in the 1940s because the military system was developed then, gaining experience, forming new norms and organizational traditions. Building an organizational tradition was the final stage in formulating an activist-offensive Israeli strategic culture.

In conclusion, the purpose of this article was to examine the process of formulating and characterizing Israeli strategic culture. Israeli strategic culture gradually developed into an activist-offensive strategic culture. This process started at the beginning of the Jewish Yishuv with a conceptual change regarding the image of the new Jewish warrior. After the establishment of a system of images and symbols in the security field and the formulation of the "new Jewish warrior" myth the Jewish community became militaristic, characterized by "civil militarism". Towards the establishment of the State of Israel there began the establishment of norms and organizational traditions in the field of security, leading to the final formulation of Israeli strategic culture as offensive.

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