ISRAEL AND THE POLITICS OF FEAR

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"The thing I fear most is fear"

– Michel de Montaigne

Introduction

The observer of nowadays Middle Eastern contemporary politics is put in obvious distress when trying to nail down the main causes for the intricate situation which seems quite inescapable and for which the United Nations' Security Council deemed itself incapable to find a solution.

The very history of the region incorporates hugely diverse influences, from the sense of togetherness and community reinforced by the reverence to Mecca, taking into account the rule of the Ottoman Empire, to the colonial heritages left behind by the United Kingdom and France altogether[1].

All these influences created a social background hugely diverse, but with a common denominator: fear. Instability has been constant in the region; and ever since 1948, the year when the state of Israel was created, the dynamics of the region, already complex, changed irreversibly in ways not fully understood not even half a century later.

From another point of view, a political scientist might find that fear is a subject generally left aside in analysis, ever since Niccolo Machiavelli and Thomas Hobbes were writing their Magna opera. Probably the most purpose-oriented and crisp in their observations about human nature, the two political thinkers actually pointed out to the contribution of fear as a solid political decision-making factor, with the means available to them in the XVI – XVII centuries. Let us remember the rationale used by Hobbes: by choosing a rational solution, namely the contract between them and the sovereign, individuals get out of the natural state, and – for trading their natural rights – individuals receive safety and protection. So one can easily see the underlying note – that individuals are actually driven by fear and consciously seek for the protection provided by a sovereign while being wilful to renounce to their natural rights.

Concepts have long evolved since Thomas Hobbes wrote the "Leviathan", as did the establishment. But people and human nature are not so easily changeable, especially when

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[1] Mehran KAMRAVA, *"The Modern Middle East. A Political History Since the First World War"*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2005, pp. 9 - 34

one is to take into consideration the basic need of protection that individuals have to fulfil. Moreover, since the advent of technology, of mass communication, issues like accountability have become prevalent in political science debates; as society has evolved, our concerns have evolved. But has human nature done it, too? By all accounts, this is not the case. If one is to take a look at modern nations, the threats they are facing, and their reactions, one can see all kinds of fear pervading.

Another thorny issue for our subject is the very definition of "fear", and how does one feel it, what is its trigger. If we are to stand by the dictionary definitions, we can think of either

> *"A very unpleasant or disturbing feeling caused by the presence or imminence of danger; a state or condition marked by this feeling"* or even *„extreme reverence or awe, as toward a deity[2]"*

Nonetheless, not the dictionary definition is important. What truly matters are the implications, connotations and references that people attribute to fear, and this is one of the main aims of this paper: defining what is fear and what is not for Jews in Israel.

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[2] The Free Dictionary, American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition. Copyright © 2011 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. Published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company, http://www.thefreedictionary.com/fear

Chapter I
Argument, Relevance Criteria, Approach

The theme upon which is based this working paper is, as it emerges from the title of this paper, Israel and the Politics of Fear - namely what role did fear play into shaping and contributing to the contemporary Israeli establishment, and how did it develop. Is the role played by the geopolitical context of Israel inextricably linked to fear? And what kind of fear is this?

The theme might appear as having a strong psychological component, since it is mostly dealing with determining how fear, a hardly quantifiable variable, has determined political actions and reactions of a certain state. Nonetheless, political science has to deal extensively with human behaviours, since political and electoral behaviours are strongly intertwined with notions of psychology, anthropology or sociology.

This theme plays an important role into nowadays interpretation of Israeli domestic and international political strategies, since the realm of political science has been trying for half of century already to get to a proper deciphering solution regarding the Palestinian conflict, the wars waged with the country's neighbours or the development of Dimona nuclear power plant, a project kept rather secret than public – these being only a handful of issues that might offer us clues in developing the arguments needed in developing the theory that fear is an underrated factor in the complex process of Israeli development, as well as in its current affairs.

In fact, when Israel became a tangible judicial reality, what drove the first Jews in Ein Harod, Masada or Degania? What exactly was the primal factor that actually made possible the existence of kibbutzim? There must be something beyond resilience, beyond perseverance – a primal factor that drove people beyond wars and the rather-recently established rules of

international politics. Something that emanated from conflicts within and between societies and had consequences for societies: fear[3].

The phenomenon of fear is much more widespread at society level than one would think. It is the underlying cause of an American's fear of terrorism (caused by the 9/11 attacks); the driving factor behind the Western coalescence against the rise of the Communism. Or think about the fear a woman has of an abusive husband – it may seem a personal fear, but it actually is not: is leads to social and political inequalities deeply entrenched in the collective memory of a society[4].

At the end of the day, fear is a concept mainly pertaining to the field of psychology; but its implications are far broader that that, since human feelings actually influence so much more than private life – they can shape public policies, governments, electoral confrontations. Fear can and has influenced history.

While many scholars give credit to fear as a political catalyst, not many can pinpoint to the feared object or phenomenon or context much political significance. Fear by itself, and especially political fear is to be seen as a great opportunity for building new establishments or reframing older ones, but the objects of fear are devoid of any significance[5]. Moreover, fear generates a reaction of unity – people gather together to face threats, and in front of threats is where they usually affirm their beliefs and vow for them. But it is not because of shared affiliations; it is because the common and equal threat they are all facing[6].

Starting from the prerequisite that fear presupposes a set of already acquired moral norms, and given the fact that philosophical developments since Descartes onwards put together ideas such as morality, order, self (which further more led to the affirmation of their counter opposites, such as a sense of nothingness, of meaninglessness), one can definitely say that fear has several stages of development, from deep and personal anxiety to external, political fear. So, in order to sustain this development, the conflicts generating the threats are to be magnified up to a status of primal, originary confrontation lying at the very basis of

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[3] Corey ROBIN, „*Fear. The History of A Political Idea*", Oxford University Press, Oxford & New York, 2004, p. 2
[4] Idem, p. 3
[5] Idem, p. 6
[6] Ibidem

society, lying in the subconsciusness of every society member. Coalescing people in order to stand together against a common threat[7].

If one is to pay a closer look to the contemporary Jewish history, there is hardly a single moment when their actions cannot be interpreted as reacting to a threat. This does not mean that the actions and their consequences are to be completely absolved of any culpability, moral or otherwise. It is just a closer look, from a different angle regarding motives, motivations, honesty. It might offer a new view over the highly complex dynamics in the region. How applicable and implementable might be such a new view – this is to be debated, since fear is known for not leading to rational, but rather rationalizable outcomes.

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In order to study all these complex problems, this thesis will be based primarily on secondary sources on Israeli politics and history, the concept of fear in politics and psychology and any other subject connected to these issues, detailed in footnotes and the bibliography section, as well as rationalizations and comparisons with other resembling cases in world history. Every affirmation is to be argued and, whenever possible, supported by corresponding references. This thesis is not aiming to exhaustively cover the entire topic, as the space limit does not allow for this, but it can be considered a starting point on future research on this topic.

Another prerequisite on which this thesis is based is the fact that political fear does not arise from deeply apolitical fields of morality. Political fear is to be subjected to political analysis and debated using sound arguments, since it arises from events of political nature, even though the events might be or might be not political by themselves (think of the wife and abusive husband example aforementioned), since it is to no one's benefit that fear be interpreted in a mystical, irrational way, especially when its consequences are long term and influence not only persons, but on huge communities interrelated to each other in inextricable ways[8].

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[7] Corey ROBIN, *op. Cit.*, pp. 12 – 13
[8] Idem, pp. 23 – 25

From a philosophical point of view, fear was identified from the dawn of political philosophy, starting with Thucydides and Machiavelli, who put it at the origin of political action[9]; nonetheless, Thomas Hobbes was the first to claim that it was the very core of political motivation, writing that "the original of great and lasting societies consisted not in mutual good will men had toward each other, but in the mutual fear they had of each other."[10]

This argument is useful in the dispute over what is good and what is evil – central to Thomas Hobbes' conceptions and political dilemmas, and a constant preoccupation in nowadays' modern political setting. Contemporary establishments are to function for the sake of their citizens' welfare, which are at the very centre of the setting. Therefore, they must be able to protect themselves in order to pursue either good or bad, and fear is what makes up for the preservation of one's own life[11]. As a consequence, fear is central to political life, irrespective of how advanced the polity might be.

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[9] Corey ROBIN, *op. Cit.*, pp. 31 – 32
[10] Jan H. BLITS, "*Hobbesian Fear*", Political Theory, Vol. 17, No. 3 (Aug., 1989), pp. 417-431
[11] Corey ROBIN, *op. Cit.*, pp. 35 – 37

Chapter II

Intelligence, and Military Developments

Political decision-making is influenced by a huge number a variables, but one mostly underrated is fear. Fear, which can be considered an automatic emotion, triggered in reaction to threats by any kind, can be put in relation to the individual, but also to the collective identity, memory and past of a nation. By means of putting fear in contrast to hope, another underrated concept in political science, and by trying to establish a connection between the two and the Israeli intelligence system – one of the most developed and efficient ones in the world – the aim of this chapter will be reached, namely to find out whether fear can be accounted as a factor in intelligence systems, despite an obvious contradiction between automatically driven feelings and rationalized defence and attack.

In this trial, one has to take into account a variety of factors – from the turbulent history of the Middle East, heavily influenced by the multitude of cultural inferences in the area, to the political history of Israel, and the way the Israeli state developed its intelligence units, and employed them in order to achieve its aims.

Of course, one might observe that this theme has a strong psychological component, since we are to take into account concepts like fear and hope, and their behavioural outcomes. Nonetheless, political science needs to approach such issues more extensively, since behavioural concepts are to heavily influence political outcomes. This can be seen especially in Israel, a state born out of sheer nothingness and brought to full functionality in social and warfare aspects in almost no time.

Section I

Defining the Concepts

In order to reach a valid scientific outcome, I will try to approach Israel first and foremost not as a state, but as an organization. Of course, a state can be conceived as an organization, but this is not a sufficient condition; it also needs social cohesion which would later lead to the formation of a community, although imagined, as Benedict Anderson would put it.

Chester Barnard actively distinguished between two kinds of systems: conflict systems, in which individuals' objectives are not consistent with each other; and cooperative systems, in which individuals coalesce in fulfilling one common aim, target or objective[12]. Failure is an often met end of all kinds of organizations, but those that do manage to survive in a successful way make us think about the adaptive processes that take place when building it[13]. When talking about political systems, political leaders tend to have a very important symbolical function. It is symbolical because they cannot actually control each and every activity of the organization, but also because political symbols hold a huge communication power, by being a means of recognition, transmitting easily their usually multiple meanings to the people, serving identification purposes, constituting a most basic layer of common things for people to unite for. In the case of Israel, such political symbolism closely intertwines with the religious one, since the historic legacy of this people has come into contradiction with the Zionist political construct. Jewish nationalism and Judaist history had a reconciliation to do,

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[12] Barbara LEVITT, James G. MARCH, "*Chester I. Barnard and the Intelligence of Learning*" in Oliver E. WILLIAMSON, (ed.) "*Organisation Theory. From Chester Barnard to the Present and Beyond*", Oxford University Press, New York & Oxford, 1995, pp. 11 – 12

[13] W. Richard SCOTT, "*Symbols and Organizations: From Barnard to the Institutionalists*", in Oliver E. WILLIAMSON, (ed.) "*Organisation Theory. From Chester Barnard to the Present and Beyond*", Oxford University Press, New York & Oxford, 1995, pp. 38 – 55

and the fact that many rabbis refused to immigrate to the newly found Holy Land is a powerful argument to it[14].

A second endeavour in order to reach the aim of this paper is defining fear in the context of prolonged conflict that has been taking place ever since the British Partition of Palestine. More often than not, fear is put in contradiction with hope. This a quite interesting comparative approach, since hope is considered to be based primarily on thinking and cognitive ability, as it requires mental building of projections in the future, and requires creativity, flexibility and a continuous search of new ideas[15]. In contrast to hope, fear is rather an automatically triggered emotion, more often than not grounded in a perceived and memorized past. It is processed rather unconsciously and presupposes a freezing of beliefs, conservatism and sometimes pre-emptive aggression[16]. It is also widely accepted by the psychology scientific community that fear can also be triggered also by stimuli that are non-threatening in their nature, or by means of the acquired information on certain objects, situations, people, events etc., information indicating the aforementioned circumstances are generally threatening. Memory is also to play a huge role, as it does not contribute to a diminishing of the fear sentiment over time, but rather contributing with its accentuation with the passage of time. It is true that memory does not consist an exact, high-fidelity copy of real-life circumstances, but rather a biased reconstruction of information[17].

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[14] Shlomo SAND, "*The Invention of the Land of Israel. From Holy Land to Homeland*", Verso Books, London & New York, 2014, pp. 177 – 181

[15] Daniel BAR-TAL, "*Why Does Fear Override Hope in Societies Engulfed by Intractable Conflict, as It Does in the Israeli Society?*", Political Psychology, Vol. 22, No. 3, 2001, pp. 601 - 627

[16] Ibidem.

[17] Ibidem

Section II

A Brief History and Description of Israeli Intelligence

The hard-documented history of Israeli Intelligence begins once with the formation of the state in 1948, when David Ben Gurion, the first Israeli Prime Minister, asserted that Israel would need one of the best prepared, strongest and most efficient intelligence services in the world. To the obvious question, why would such a young and small state like Israel need such an ambitious intelligence system, the answer taking into account the aforementioned concepts like fear and hope would be an actually easy one: Israeli leaders perceived quite early the problematic and threatening context in which they had the task to develop a functional state. Israel had already some disadvantages when compared to its neighbours – small population to defend borders, scarce natural resources. By means of a very effective intelligence system, Israel managed to get a strong foothold on the East Mediterranean, and avoided fatal attacks of its neighbours. One unique feature of the Israeli intelligence system is that it bears responsibility not only for the Jews citizens of Israel, but also for the Jews around the world. This makes up for the fact that the Jewish community abroad is willing to collaborate, in order to also compensate of the lack of ability to maintain a strong presence throughout the world, as big powers like Russia, China or the United States of America do. As other methods to compensate, one can also note the fact that Israeli operations and officers are more flexible than not, and – whenever possible – collaborate with other intelligence systems and military services[18].

The bases of Israeli intelligence systems were put before the establishment of the Israeli state. The militant group Haganah had as main objectives fighting against the British appointed government and defending the Jewish population from the Arab one, since the 1920s – the years of formation – is known for being rather turbulent, with Arabs majoritarian in Palestine. Another major breakthrough in Israeli intelligence development was the

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[18] David HAMILTON, "*In-Depth Report: Israeli Intelligence*", wikileaks-press.org, January 2015, available online at http://wikileaks-press.org/in-depth-report-israeli-intelligence/, consulted on 25.04.2015

formation of Israel Defence Forces (IDF), which serves as an elite military body also providing military intelligence services. Officially formed in 1948, it was based on the former resources of Haganah. The IDF is formed of multiple branches, the most important one being the Intelligence Corps, organization which is responsible for warfare information and warnings, especially anti-Israel operations. It was established as such after the Yom Kippur war[19].

A second organization operating within the IDF but independent from it is called "Aman", and its responsibility is the intelligence analysis for the entire Israeli intelligence community. For collecting intelligence information, Aman uses a number of IDF organizations, Intelligence Corps being one of it. Another one is the General Staff Deep Reconnaissance Unit (GSRDU), also known as Sayeret Matkal, an unit recognized for its counter-terrorism operations. It is also in this organization that the contact with foreign intelligence agencies and services is made, by means of the Foreign Relations Department[20].

Another hugely important unit is Unit 8200, founded in 1952, which is the core organization for interceptions of all kind, from signal intelligence, via the SIGNET base, to email, phone calls and other means of transmitting information. Its interception abilities stretch from the Middle East to Asia, via Europe and Africa, and it is also the agency which leads the online recruiting efforts of the IDF[21].

Unit 9900 focuses on research in geography and space, namely analysis of imagery caught via satellites and other kinds of image capturing devices in order to obtain most of information possibly available. Its soldiers are known to be diagnosed with autism, a disease which is turned into strength via their extraordinary abilities of imagery analysis[22].

Probably the most known IDF unit is the Mossad. Very controversial, it is rather a small unit, but one which has quite a lot of power. Established in 1949, it is similar to United States of America's CIA. Its attributions are a big source of controversy, since it focuses on gathering intelligence information beyond the borders of Israel, while developing and

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[19] David HAMILTON, op.cit
[20] Ibidem
[21] Ibidem
[22] Ibidem

maintaining special relations with other diplomatic counterparts. It also has to produce strategic, political and operational intelligence, and this also means that it is the main responsible for the planification and deployment of special operations beyond Israeli borders[23].

Other important components of the Israeli Defence System are the Liaison Bureau, responsible for operations aiming at bringing Jews from abroad to Israel, and the Lankam, an agency devised solely for intelligence in the nuclear field. Initially a secret one, not subordinated to the IDF, and formed in 1957, it acquired confidential technology or other scientific information while keeping Israel's Dimona safe from an informational point of view. Its activity was ended in 1986, but its mission was undertaken by other agencies. The IDF also provided with an organism called Shin Bet, focusing on militant groups and foreign intelligence units active on the territories of Israel and Palestine, while also having a department responsible with non-Arab threats[24].

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[23] David HAMILTON, op.cit

[24] Ibidem

Section III

Israeli Weaponry and Other Military Developments

Another important topic to tackle when discussing about intelligence is military development. Of course, intelligence is not reduced to weaponry, but development in the two areas is closely related, and, more often than not, weaponry can be a decisive factor in achieving imposed targets.

Israel has put a strong accent on its military development ever since 1948. The military equipment Israel produces and benefits from is widely ranged, varying from small guns to heavy machine artillery. Israel Defense Forces have been provided with weaponry by France up until the Six Day War; since French Weapons Embargo, the United States of America has been the main weaponry provider of Israel. Throughout the XXth century, one can notice the gradual development of military resources of the IDF: if during the 1948 war the weaponry was non-standardized, and inconsistent, mainly due to the international context (the British Mandate and the Arab Embargo), in the 1950s and 1960s one can notice an increased reliability on American resources and a much more uniform and consistent resource basis. Nowadays, Israel relies either on American weaponry which is often modified by the IDF, or on locally manufactured weapons which are often considered to be very performant and modern, since they are developed with a strong focus towards cutting edge technologies, including fields like electronics or aerospace.

In terms of locally developed and manufactured armament, Israel benefits from a huge array of types of weaponry, including small arms, like the Jericho and Uzi pistols, or Galil and Tavor assault rifles; anti-tank rockets and missiles, like the MATADOR or Nimrod rockets, Python and Derby air-to-air missiles, Popeye air-to-surface missile or the Jericho medium-range ballistic missile. A number of aircrafts have been also developed, including the Arava cargo aircraft, Sea Scan surveillance aircraft, or Nesher, Lavi or Namer fighter aircrafts. Tanks have also been developed, some of those worth mentioning here are the Merkava, Sho't and Sabra. Important artillery assets are to be mentioned too, like Soltam howitzers and mortars, a series of rocket artillery launchers. The most important

developments in terms of safety and technological progress are the unmanned aerial and surface vehicles, especially because they helped in reducing casualties. In terms of cutting edge technologies, one can mention the targeting and guidance optic devices, control or targeting radars and air defense systems like Machbet, Iron Dome or David's Sling.

When observing such a huge array of weaponry that was developed by Israel, one cannot ignore the essential question of "Why?", why would such a small country need such fierce weaponry. To this question, the answers are multiple. The first of them would be the regional context, a very violent one right from the onset of Israel as a nation-state in 1948, with all neighbours planning on and eventually attacking the newly founded state, seen as an intruder in the Arab territory. A second Israel-related factor might be the fact that the country was heavily underpopulated at the time of its inception, and the borders desperately needed good defense, given the aforementioned nasty neighbours. Here is where the international factor stepped in, in the sense that in its first years, Israel was backed up military wise by France, the United States, and Germany, being able to use military equipment imported from Europe and the US.

Especially when talking about internal factors, one must pay attention to fear. The whole context points out to be a threatening one, therefore the pre-emptive reactions and offensive defense – a good term to coin the Israeli strategy throughout its history. Now, of course that military developments are systemic responsive to threat rather than spontaneous, individual reactions, but they most certainly are supported by the electors.

Another very thorny issue is the nuclear developments of Israel. A lot of research and development resources were focused on Dimona, the nuclear plant which was initially disguised as a textile factory. This textile-nuclear plant in the middle of the Negev Desert was seen as a highly classified objective, and newly declassified US documents show us how quickly the United States was actually able to find out the real purpose of the secretive plant, in spite of a highly agitated international context. First and foremost, the United States were involved in a disputed presidential race, which at the time saw Dwight D. Eisenhower still in office. A second factor was constituted by the international crises of Cuba and Laos, which kept the US intelligence efforts quite busy. Nonetheless, they quickly realized that Israel was

building not a textile factory, but a nuclear plant in the middle of the desert, with French aid[25]. Immediately after taking power in 1955, David Ben-Gurion initiated a research effort in order to determine where and how a nuclear capability could be built on Israeli territory. Shimon Peres was in charge with the actual efforts, and he did quite a remarkable job: in no less than three years, it became a tangible cutting edge technological progress, based on a surprisingly simple strategy: Israel needed not inventing a second time the wheel, namely an atomic bomb, but using available resources from its allies in order to build it. The actual story of how was the plant discovered as such remains fragmentary, as many documents belonging to US intelligence agencies are still classified. Nonetheless, with the help of late declassifications, one can easily see that once the United States started using their own intelligence resources, including British intelligence, they easily saw through the French Israeli web. Despite all the evidences and the huge proliferation risk they saw, when discussing the issue with Israeli officials, the US part tried to mask their irritation. David Ben-Gurion's statement in the Knesset given on December 22 1960 was the only one ever given on the Dimona subject, and pledged for the peaceful purpose of the reactor, given that the Negev area desperately needed electricity and social and workplace development. In later reports of the US intelligence, on the topic of why could not Dimona and its purpose be discovered earlier, as they had enough information, the conclusion was that if the US "atomic intelligence community had properly interpreted" the available information, the project would have been discovered at least a year earlier[26].

In judging such a thorny issue for Israeli history, Cold War developments and international relations between huge actors like France, the United States of America and Israel, one must take into account the whole context, namely the fact that, post-Hiroshima and Nagasaki disasters, absolutely no one was to assume the risk of a state developing its own nuclear capabilities. Yet, Israel was somehow able to navigate through a hostile time and

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[25] Avner COHEN & William BURR, *"How Israel Hid Its Secret Nuclear Weapons Program. An exclusive look inside newly declassified documents shows how Israel blocked U.S. efforts to uncover its secret nuclear reactor",* Politico.com, 2015, available online at http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2015/04/israel-nuclear-weapons-117014.html#ixzz3ZGF2JS4t, consulted online on 25.04.2015
[26] Ibidem

context, go further in developing its nuclear project. The secret was so well kept, that even the families of the engineers working in Dimona had no idea about what was actually going on at the textile factory, as Ari Shavit's interviewee recognizes in "My Promised Land" book's dedicated chapter on the Dimona project[27][28].

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[27] Ari SHAVIT, „*My Promised Land. The Tripumph and Tragedy of Israel*", SCRIBE, Sage Publications, Australia & United Kingdom, 2014, pp. 175 - 200

[28] Ari Shavit is an Israeli journalist and writer. We works for the left-center Haaretz newspaper as a correspondent and published in 2013 the New York Times Best Seller book "*My Promised Land: The Triumph and Tragedy of Israel*"

Section IV

Military as socializing factor

The way in which Israel as a social construct was formed needs further attention, since it face a huge challenge: that of creating a national identity for people literally coming from all corners of the world, speaking different languages, having different habits – people not belonging to the same imagined community[29].

One of the easiest, multi-purpose strategies involved was introducing mandatory military service for all Israeli citizens, be they male or female. This policy started to be implemented in 1949, when the Israel Defense Forces were given the authority to enlist any citizen of at least 18 years of age. Men have to serve of three years, while women have two years of military service. In order to properly assign newcomers into the army, the IDF is to determine a medical and psychological profile for each soldier, according to which he or she will be assigned to various army departments. The lowest mark, or profile one can get is Profile 21, and Israelis who get it are usually having mental or physical disabilities rendering them unable to perform in military service. However, these individuals can still volunteer for the army, in lower positions. Profile 24 is used to classify citizens temporarily unfit for military service; citizens classified like this are usually re-evaluated within one year in order to determine whether they are fit for military service or will receive a Profile 21 classification. The highest mark one can get is 97.

Despite the fact that military service is mandatory, an important percentage of individuals are actually exempted from performing their duties in the army. A number of reasons is responsible for that, among them being cited religious studies (Yeshiva students), although members of religious Zionism serve within a separate system entitled Hesder, a system providing Talmudic studies as well as usual military duties. But the most visible and debated reasons for not fulfilling one's military duties are political reasons: the treatment of Palestinians, often times perceived as unfair. One of the most visible endeavours in this sense

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[29] Benedict ANDERSON, "*Imagined Communities*", Verso Books, London, 2006, pp. 48 – 50

was the open letter sent by 43 veterans of the 8200 Unit to Israel's Prime Minister Bejnamin Netanyahu and IDF Chief of General Staff Benny Grantz[30], in which they complained that

> *"Israel made no distinction between Palestinians who are and are not involved in violence"*, collected information "*harms innocent people*" and that "*intelligence is used for political persecution*".[31]

Nonetheless, the IDF policies regarding enlistment are very clear. Arab citizens of Israel are not conscripted, and only a few minority choses to volunteer; Bedouins, in opposition, enlist as volunteers. Druze and Circassian men are mandatorily enlisted. Yeshiva students can delay their military service for as long as they study, and women stating that maintain a religious life style are exempt from military service. Those who claim political beliefs contradictory to performing a military service are required to appear in front of a committee which evaluates their claims, and only a few of them are exempted on this basis, all the others being required to perform their military service irrespective of their beliefs. Immigrants who get to Israel at the age of recruitment also have to perform their duties, but they usually get various concessions. A special case regards athletes: those who perform in Olympic sports might get an "Outstanding athlete" status and, as a consequence, be given a shorter and more convenient service, so as to be able to continue to represent Israel in international sports events. A resembling status can be given also to artists and musicians, who can benefit in their military service from special programs designed so as to allow them to continue their chosen career after the end of their duties.

In terms of socialization, this kind of approach produced very interesting results, proving itself to be very effective. A process resembling the one that happens when people enter new organizations, irrespective of their typology, usually known as organizational

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[30] Adiv STERMAN, "*Reservists from top intel unit refuse to 'operate against Palestinians'*", Times of Israel, 2014, available online at http://www.timesofisrael.com/reservists-from-top-intel-unit-refuse-to-operate-against-palestinians/, consulted online on 24.04.2015

[31] Jodi RUDOREN, "*Veterans of Elite Israeli Unit Refuse Reserve Duty*, Citing Treatment of Palestinians", The New Yorker, 2014, available online at http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/13/world/middleeast/elite-israeli-officers-decry-treatment-of-palestinians.html?_r=0, consulted on 24.04.2015

socialization happened, in the sense that individuals focused on learning the beliefs, attitudes, orientations, behaviours, and skills necessary to properly fulfil their role within an organization[32]. Although not enough studied, the effects that organizational socialization has in a military environment have been already mentioned by cadets joining various military services around the world, making specific references to the socialization and adaptation period they have to undertake when joining aforementioned services. Nonetheless, the existing research showed that the results of adaptation efforts put in by the soldiers are highly influenced by their own cultural, educational, sociologic, political and economic background – fact which can be said irrespective of the typology of organization discussed.

Therefore, in the particular case of Israel, one could say the hugely diverse background of newly recruited soldiers, back in 1948 – 1950, could have been an impediment. Yet, the common ground finally to be called home by them, correlated with the sense of threat coming from Israel's neighbours somehow contributed to the creation of a new national sentiment, to the creation of a new community, that of Israel. Did fear have an important role into this? To all accounts, the answer would be yes. One could even go further and assess the systemic answer that Israel gave to its threats, the system being the whole defense and army institutions and the way in which they were developed. Generally, all modern states react through a mix of defense and offence to threats, mostly including and using intelligence before using the power of fire, and it is exactly the case for Israel, too, except of the fact that most of the times it was a pre-emptive endeavour rather than a responsive one.

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[32] John VAN MAANEN & Edgar H. SCHEIN, "*Toward of Theory of Organizational Socialization*", Research in Organizational Behavior, vol. 1, 1979, pp. 209-264, available online at https://dspace.mit.edu/bitstream/handle/1721.1/1934/SWP-0960-03581864.pdf?sequence=1, consulted on 20.04.2015

Chapter III

War and the Politics of Anger

When talking about fear, one must also think about its outcomes, both in psychological and in political aspects. And one of the most important outcomes of fear is considered to be anger, or wrath.

From a psychological point of view, wrath is an intense emotional response, which usually appears as a reaction to the sense of boundaries threatened. It can consist of both physical and psychological reactions. It also distorts processes of decision-making, but generally it is more ritualised, in the sense that at a man-to-man level, more often than not anger is metabolised to a non-violent outcome. Nonetheless, in politics, it usually consists a key motivating factor, on all levels, from internal party politics to authoritarian leaders trying to impose a stricter regime out of fear they will lose control[33]. To put it in other words, it can be used and it is usually used in order to transform physical compulsions in a better political order[34].

Advent of modern media brought amid its continuous flow of information an enormous degree of violence. The way in which news are reported might determine the average viewer to reach the conclusion that violence does not happen near his or her home – but in remote parts of the world, where it actually is part of the status quo. The Middle East, and Israel especially, definitely confirm this perception: it is a turbulent region, grounded by a multitude of conflicts since the bygone era of multinational empires and the British Mandate. In this interpretation note, one can talk about righteous anger – is anger equitable given the area's troubled context and past? And is it still equitable in the present?

If we are to judge from a past-tense point of view, in the case of Israeli, anger might be righteous. Let us not forget that more than eighty percent of them are Ashkenazi, namely originating from Germany and Northern France. Ergo, they have a direct and real recollection of the Holocaust, and they tend to react in consequence. But if we are to judge nowadays

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[33] Peter CALVERT, „*Autocracy, Anger, and the Politics of Salvation*", Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions, Summer 2000, vol. 1, no.1, p. 1

[34] Ibidem

Israel's righteousness, things are much more debatable – and this is one of the main reasons for which the international community reacted so promptly when it came to Benjamin Netanyahu settlement policy, to name just a single issue. Being angry is a result of fear, and being angry means being out of control; uncontrollness means irrationality – it is a conclusion most of psychologists, journalists, and historians have reached. Yet, what might be a fair and square opinion is that stating that anger cannot be righteous, be it generated by fear or not; authorities need to respond to violent threats with timely and proportionate violence[35].

In this argumentation line, one can also think about residual anger. More often than not, anger is not the result of feeling directly threatened, but can be facilitated by other stimuli. If we are to take into account the frustration – aggression theory[36], anger is a natural response; but many seek the adrenaline rush that comes together with threat, and the context of extreme sports proves us with the perfect example. Besides this example, there are many societal situations for anger to be created, and expressed, and anger tends to be extremely corrosive for societal structures, especially because governmental actions tend to focus on deterring and regulating disputes, rather than on pure governmental actions.

However, real anger is rather rare, usually this type of behaviour is ritualised, as it was mentioned before. Here it comes into this huge puzzle that is Israel society the issue of mandatory military service, as this can be seen as a form of ritualising aggression as well as one of counteracting fear by means of providing knowledge of defence. Of course, ritualising aggression via military service might seem a contradiction in terms, but we can see the military service as a passage ritual for Israeli youngsters, who have to serve compulsorily since they are eighteen for three years if they are males, and two if they are women. One can consider it the cornerstone to full maturity, to adulthood. Because of the fact that this ritual is purely violent in its nature (after all, soldiers are trained to use weapons and all other means in order to defend their state, which is not at all a pacifist endeavour), one can get to the conclusion that residual anger is sewered in a violent way.

Yet one must not forget that politics uses more often than not alternatives to pure aggression: negotiating, sublimating, or accommodating one's opponent, are methods

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[35] Peter CALVERT, op.cit., p. 11

[36] Michael KENT, *Anger*, The Oxford Dictionary of Sports Science & Medicine, Oxford University Press

employed simply because they are cheaper to employ, as the costs of aggression are usually very high, from both economic and human points of view.

War is considered to be the ultimate form of aggression, and the ultimate form of expressing it. Despite the fact that usually the lack of war is called „peace", when thinking about the Middle East, one would pinpoint to the fact that the continuous state of aggression present in the area, besides the declared wars, is to furthermore empower a state of continuous fear and encroachment.

This continuous aggressiveness, which is also legitimised by the statu quo of the area itself, leads us to the concept of legitimate anger. As it is the case for sports too, much of the imagery and symbolism of politics is drawn from war[37]. Thorstein Veblen, a renowned economist and sociologist, went further in defining the state's primary purpose, and stipulated that the states has a dual origin, as it is the product of both politics and war, ergo the result of a continuous struggle between military and civilian establishments[38]. In the particular case of Israel, wars have actually strengthened the polity. The most obvious example would be the 1948 war, recollected in Israeli history as the Independence War. On May 14, 1948, a proclamation was approved at the Tel Aviv Museum, via which a Jewish state was established in Eretz Israel – the State of Israel, without any mention of the borders except for the naming of Eretz Israel. The same day, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Iraq intervened on the territory formerly protected by the British Mandate. Fast forward to December 1948, when Israel already controlled big chunks of territory, with the exceptions of Gaza Strip (back then under Egyptian control), and the West Bank (controlled by Jordan). The war came to an end once the 1949 Armistice Agreements were signed by Israel and each of its Arab neighbours. This war was the origin of the refugees' issue, since Zionist paramilitary movements attacked Palestinian communities before the cease of the British Mandate[39]; after the establishment of the state of Israel, Palestinians caught on the territory of Israel were unable to return home, and Jewish communities on Arab territories came under huge attacks, physical and political.

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[37] Peter CALVERT, op.cit., p. 5
[38] Idem, pp. 5 – 6
[39] Benny MORRIS, „*The Historiography of Deir Yassin*", Journal of Israeli History: Politics, Society, Culture, vol. 24, issue 1, 2005, pp. 79 – 107

Another major violent outset of Israeli history is constituted by the Suez Crisis: in 1956, Egypt closed the Straits of Tiran, blockaded the Gulf of Aqaba, and nationalised the Suez Canal Company, prohibiting Israeli shipping or trading while using the aforementioned geographical points. Israel responded to this blockade by invading the Sinai Peninsula, and this was the first time when Israel captured the Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula, using French and British support. The crisis ended once the United Nations got involved, imposing a ceasefire and withdrawal from occupied territories[40]. But the conflict did not end here, as Israel needed the waters of Jordan river in order to fuel the construction and realization of the mass settlement in the Negev desert. Growing conflict between Israel and Syria emerged from here, as the Arabs tried to divert the project.

The Six Day War (1967) start was closely related to the United Nations Emergency Force, a structure envisaged to supervise demilitarization of 1956 occupied areas. Nonetheless, this project had little chances of fulfilling its purpose, since the UNEF was never permitted entrance to Israel. Egypt mobilized military units in Sinai and crossed the UN lines, after having expelled the UNEF supervisors, and launched an attack over Israel. Israel destroyed the Egyptian air forces, then proceeded to attack Jordanian, Syrian and Iraqi air forces as well. At the end of the Six Day War, Israel gained a large mass of territories: the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and East Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights. This war was a crucial one for the evolvement of regional relations and geopolitics in the Middle East, as these territorial gains still fuel the anger of the Arab neighbours.

The Arab leaders were not willing to recognise the state of Israel, nor to negotiate for peace with it. Gamal Abdel Nasser tried to determine Israel to surrender the Sinai Peninsula, but the trial ended once he died in 1970.

Nonetheless, three years later, in 1973, Syria and Egypt devised an attack over Israel during Yom Kippur, a national holiday in Israel, and a day of utmost importance to all Jewishness. This attack also set the grounds for enforcing an oil embargo on many highly industrialised nations, such as the United States of America, Japan, and the Western European democracies. This embargo was used as a political tool in order to obtain support for the

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[40] 1956: Egypt seizes Suez Canal, BBC.com, available online at
http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/july/26/newsid_2701000/2701603.stm, consulted on 20.05.2015

Arab cause, and it also led the United States and the Soviet Union to confront indirectly. A ceasefire was eventually secured, but only because the threat of Soviet Union using its nuclear weapon was too big. Paradoxically enough, the U.S. had already found out by the time of Dimona, Israel's nuclear project.

The Camp David Accords remain up to this day the most important peace proceeding that took place in the Middle East, at the initiative of U.S. President Jimmy Carter. The Accords were signed by the Egyptian president Anwar El Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin in 1978, and led to the peace treaty between Israel and Egypt, signed in 1979. Nonetheless, the framework devised in order to deal with the Palestinian territories was envisaged without taking into account Palestinian points of view or participation, and was rejected by the United Nations.

When discussing about the Arab – Israeli conflict, one must definitely take into account the Intifadas, named after an Arabic term which means „flood" or „flooding", but whose figurative sense is that of „rebellion", „uprising". The First Palestinian Intifada started in December 1987, when an IDF vehicle was involved in a road accident near the Gaza Strip, killing four Palestinians[41]. The wave that was started was to be crucial for the political developments of the area: five years later, when the First Intifada was to end, a huge number of casualties was to be reported, the Palestinian Authority was to be created and recognized internationally, which had huge effects not only on Israel's manner to negotiate regionally and internationally the issue, but also on its international perception, and furthermore it was the starting moment of Palestinians' perception and demonstration of their separate and definite national identity[42]. On an international relations level, the First Intifada directly resulted in the Madrid Conference of 1991, and the Oslo Accords.

The Second Intifada, also known as the Al-Aqsa Intifada, after the name of the mosque where it all started, was commenced with the visit of Ariel Sharon's September 2000 visit to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, a gesture which was perceived as highly provocative by the Palestinians. Palestinian protesters throwing stones at policemen on site were dispersed

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[41] Michael OMER-MAN, „*The Accident that Sparked an Intifada*", Jerusalem Post, 2011, available online at http://www.jpost.com/Features/In-Thespotlight/The-accident-that-sparked-an-Intifada, consulted on 20.05.2015
[42] Roger HEACOCK, Jamal NASSAR, „*Intifada: Palestine at the Crossroads*", Praeger, New York, 1990, pp. 1 – 3

by the Israeli armed forces using tear gas and rubber bullets, as a commission of the United Nations found out[43]. Among observers of and participants to the conflict, opinions regarding the actual cause of the event vary, as some point to Sharon's visit as provocative, while others claim that Yasser Arafat pre-planned the Intifada after his return from Camp David Summit in 2000[44]. Bill Clinton pointed out that one of the main causes of the Second Intifada would actually be the failure of negotiations that took place at Camp David during the 2000 summit. What is sure, though, is that this event triggered a spiral of Palestinian bomb suicide attacks, targeted killings and air attacks of the Israeli forces, violences that lasted until in 2005, when Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon met in Sharm el-Sheik Summit in order to agree on a cease of violence and to reaffirm their commitment to peace in the area[45].

The Second Intifada had huge consequences not only from a casualties point of view; it also affected the Israeli − Arab dynamics, by means of Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, and the construction of the barrier of West Bank. Another huge development after the Second Intifada was the majority that Hamas obtained in the Palestinian Legislative Council in the 2006 elections. Now, we have to definitely take a look at this organization's profile, as it was deemed a terrorist organization by both the European Union and the United States of America, and its election as a Palestine governing formation is to make impossible international funding, as international law restricts financing of terrorist organizations. In spite of all peace hopes and actual developments, Hamas approached a very controversial strategy, and increased the number of suicide bomb attacks and other kind of armed attacks, in a try to destabilise Israel as a legitimate political establishment.

But here is where a moral and ethical problem occurs: Hamas is not targeting military forces, it is targeting also Israeli civilians. Jewish or not, they are the citizens of one of the most military-powerful states in the world, and we are talking about a state much inclined to respond to attacks, and to defend its own citizens. Matters of multiculturalism and

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[43] George J. MITCHELL et al., "*Report of The Sharm el-Sheikh Fact-Finding Committee*", UNISPAL, 2001, p. 4, available online at http://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/6E61D52EAACB860285256D2800734E9A, consulted on 20.05.2015

[44] Stewart AIN, „*PA: Intifada Was Planned*", The Jewish Week, 2000, available online at https://web.archive.org/web/20050310043812/http://jewishweek.org/news/newscontent.php3?artid=3846, consulted on 20.05.2015

[45] Full Text of Ariel Sharon declaration, BBC.com, available online at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/4247233.stm, consulted on 20.05.2015

identity, in a country already deeply divided as Israel, tend not to be important[46]. This is the perfect recipe for ever spiralling violences, without any useful leverage that could be used successfully in order to stop the attack-reattack pattern. Where Israel showed real efforts toward contributing to a permanent ceasefire, Hamas showed its firepower[47]. And, in terms of making progress and forming perceptions, this does not help at all. One of the most interesting questions one could ask, with a multitude of possible answers, would be, how would the Middle East have looked nowadays if Hamas had not won the elections in 2006? A bit of factual history we might never get to know.

Nonetheless, the two Intifadas can be seen as an attempt – really poor, but still an attempt – to dialogue. Since the prerequisite for dialogue is recognition – this is why the historical handshake between Rabin and Arafat was so powerful, in both positive and negative ways. After all, the region has to deal with two completely different narratives, narratives which are impossible to become one[48]. Indeed, because of the differences between them, but on a more deep level, because they actually have no reason, no motivation to do so. It would be an exercise of mutual acceptance, tolerance, respect – just a bunch of words when one's life is under threat.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

Taking into account all the years of endless violence that Israel was a part of, sometimes being the attacker but more often being the attacked one, it is not difficult to see why the concept of tolerance has so different meanings in different parts of the world. Most times, discourses about peace use tolerance as a basic prerequisite for lack of conflicts. But in Western culture, tolerance is constructed on a prosperous, Protestant-ethic social background. Obviously, this is not the case for the Middle East, a region where a still-struggling-but-

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[46] Hanna BIRAN, "*Fear of the Other*", The Palestine – Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture, vol. 1, no. 4, 1994, pp. 1 – 5

[47] Jeffrey GOLDBERG, „*What Exactly Is Hamas Trying to Prove*?", The Atlantic.com, 2014, available online at http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2014/07/what-exactly-is-hamas-trying-to-prove/374342/, consulted on 20.05.2015

[48] Zali GUREVITCH, "The Dialectics of a Handshake", The Palestine – Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture, Vol.1 No.4, 1994, pp. 1 – 4

functional-nonetheless democracy like Israel has to survive among Arab neighbours, some of them using Sharia'a as a basic functioning law of the state. Historians may find the current state of affairs in the area especially odd, since cases of Arab – Jewish successful cohabitation are met in history, and here the main reference goes to the Iberian Peninsula before 1492 Granada conquering, where Arab and Jews lived in peace, contributing to a blooming Andalusian culture[49].

But understanding the context also means to acknowledge the fact that understanding Israel in a context of threat is to be correlated with the fact that the perception of existential threat still looms, as Holocaust is an event still present in the living memory of this nation[50]; what is more, is still present in the living memory of European countries that contributed to it, and Germany has always paid a tribute to the fateful years of Nazi Germany[51].

So, coming back to the issue of anger and its legitimacy, is Israeli anger legitimate? This question can have both „yes" and „no" as very well argued answers; let us pay a closer look to each of them.

First and foremost, supporters of Israel might point out that yes, their anger is perfectly legitimate. Jews have had a horror XXth century, during which they have been the victims of probably one of the most terrible tragedies in world history. The feeling of needy retribution that Europe felt after the end of the Second World War, corroborated with the end of the British Mandate in a region with its own particularities and specificities, political, cultural, social singularities, led to a 1948 Israel in an area for which Jews felt a historical right, but the present did not belong to them. This is one of the reasons for which Israel had to face a war right from its very beginning as a nation – a very challenging thing to do, whatever state might be involved. In continuation of this legitimate anger, Israel needed to create one of the most efficient series of armed forces, using technology from its international allies, and finally getting to create cutting edge weaponry.

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[49] Maria Rosa MENOCAL, "*Culture in the Time of Tolerance*", The Palestine – Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture, Vol. 8, No 4, 2001 and Vol. 9 No. 1, 2002, pp. 1 – 5
[50] Barry RUBIN, „*Israel: An Introduction*", Yale University Press, 2012, Yale, pp. 8 – 10
[51] Jeffrey K. OLICK, Daniel LEVY, "*Collective Memory and Cultural Constraint: Holocaust Myth and Rationality in German Politics*", American Sociological Review, Vol. 62, No. 6, Dec. 1997, pp. 921-936

But there is also the other side of the spectrum, where anger is actually illegitimate. Why would such a country need a fighting machine like the Merkava? Why would Israel need Dimona? Yes, they were born out of anger and fear, but they only contributed to the spiralling effect of continuous violence, and in the long run did not help the peace process, did not nurture mutual trust between Israel and its neighbours. Yes, the whole context was built on adversity, but occasions for peace were numerous, and each and every single one was missed, either by one side or the other.

As most observers point out, a peace solution for the Middle East, or at least a solution for Israel and the neighbouring occasional violence outbreaks, is virtually impossible. Most of the times, Western observers use concepts like „democracy" and „tolerance" in areas where they have totally different meanings than those considered common. Middle East uses its conflict as fuel in all kinds of contexts, from international negotiation leverage, to argumenting weaponry mass producing, to involving also oil as a leverage for certain odd international positions on hot topics – for example, Israel does not acknowledge the existence of the Armenian genocide, as paradoxically as it may seem, because it would halter the very good relations Israel nurtured with Azerbaijan, oil and weapons being the main trade objects between the two countries, in an international context where the Armenian diaspora managed to get huge international exposure for its cause.

In a way, this is once again committing the original sin – one of the reasons for which the Holocaust is so widely known, acknowledged, memorialised is exactly the lobbying that especially the American Jews have made throughout the history in order to obtain retribution (well-needed, of course).

To the question of legitimate or not Israeli anger, each has to find its own answer, as both perspectives are equally valid, in a context where binary logic, although often times used in order to give verdicts, usually leads its users to mistakes which prove themselves to be crucial.

Chapter IV
The What, the Why, the How

Although the aim of this paper lies in analysing a smaller time span implied when talking about the state of Israel, it is worth taking a closer look at the whole Jewish history, in order to allow oneself to realize that Jews always had reasons to fear. The episode of the Holocaust, which was one of the most painful events recorded (in spite of the argument some critics may bring, that of the industrialization and commercialization of the Holocaust) is now regarded as one of the time stones of the XXth century. Before that, almost half of century of slow but gradually built rage against them was put on scene, starting from the scandal caused by the Dreyfus Affair, which started in 1894, as Hannah Arendt recalls in her appraised book, "The Origins of Totalitarianism"[52].

The first question to be put in this context is, do Jews feel fear? Have they acquired common politics of memory allowing them to stand together to face the threat? If we are to consult several interviews conducted by journalists with Holocausts survivors would tell us that yes, indeed, Jews tended to acquire the feeling of fear – the primordial fear that they altogether might disappear. Elie Wiesel's "Night", a gruelling account about his and his father's experience in Buchenwald and Auschwitz concentration camps, stands as a record for the de-humanising experience that Jews, Roma and people with disabilities concentrated there have lived[53]. In a more recent work, renowned Israeli journalist Ari Shavit published a highly controversial book entitled "My Promised Land"[54], giving an account of his personal perception of the development of XXth century Israel, powered up with interviews and personal accounts of his elders. He also touches upon some sensible subjects such as the development of the Dimona nuclear plant, and the issues of the Arab – Israeli wars, as well as the ways in which the Israeli society has changed in order to accommodate all Jews from around the world finally fleeing home. One of the most interesting points this book makes is that people had to adapt to their new lives while trying to make the best they could of their

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[52] Hannah ARENDT, „*The Origins of Totalitarianism*", Harcourt, Inc., San Diego, CA, 1973
[53] Elie WIESEL, „*Night*", Penguin Books Ltd., New York, 2008
[54] Ari SHAVIT, „*My Promised Land. The Tripumph and Tragedy of Israel*", SCRIBE, Sage Publications, Australia & United Kingdom, 2014, pp. 327 – 419

experience – that is, following their instinct of survival, as some would say. How did they do that? By the way they taught the Holocaust to their descendants. And this is a very interesting phenomenon, not only because it allows the softening of the collective memory on the gruesome genocide, but also because it allows the next generations not to forget it, but in a much less acute sense. It also gives a self-awareness sense to the political class and, moreover, it acts like a lever in international politics – it did it successfully right from the start of creating the state of Israel[55].

When talking about the state of Israel, probably the thorniest issue is that of creating it and the displacement of Palestinians that took place on the Palestinian territory. It is deeply ironical how the Israelis committed the original sin by ousting the Arabs from the territories neighbouring the newly built kibbutzim – and this particularly caused the Arabs to try and seek revenge, which came immediately, under the form of the 1948 war. It was a disaster in terms of refugees: approximately seven hundred thousands of Palestinian Arabs were displaced, while some eight hundred thousand Jews were displaced from Arab countries surrounding Israel during or after the war. The war ended with an Israeli victory and with a strategic failure of the Arab League, which was envisaged as a means of promoting unity and common policies among the Arab states, but it was also used as a counterattack to the fresh Israeli state.

From this episode on, the situation in the region further complicates. Israel met its first political drawback with the Suez Crisis, which put Gamal Abdel Nasser, the Egyptian president at the time, in to the upper hand position, and on a huge wave of popularity, which he tried to capitalize for a Pan-Arabic project.

The Six Day War was another epitome of the tensions continuously growing between Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Iraq and Lebanon. It also was an expression of the military advancements that Israel had made in a very short time span since its creation as a state. The continuous territorial gains were to put even more pressure on Israel's neighbours, as some

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[55] Norman G. FLINKENSTEIN, „*The Holocaust Industry. Reflections of the Exploitation of Jewish Suffering*", Verso Books, Second Edition, London & New York, 2003

300.000 Palestinians refuged themselves in Jordan. The Yom Kippur war furthermore confirmed that West Bank and the Gaza Strip finally came under Israeli administration.

Nonetheless, Yom Kippur was a key point in the regional development, as it was the moment when both Israelis and the Arab states realized that a military build-up in the area was not at all sustainable; especially since Israel had no guarantees it could further dominate its neighbours from a military point of view. This war paved the way to the 1978 Camp David Accords, which enhanced the return of Sinai to Egypt and constituted the first peaceful recognition of Israel by an Arab state. The peace accords even brought to the Egyptian president Anwar El Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin a shared Nobel peace prize. But the reaction that led to the killing of the Egyptian president, beyond the shock wave it spread, was a very powerful signal sent to the entire Arab world, that of unacceptance of acceptance. Moreover, it was the moment when Egypt's position of Arab-world leading country was forever changed; and it also was the moment when the Palestinian issue became the prevalent theme of the Israeli – Arab relations.

While the Israeli military was focusing on gaining new territories and defending the already acquired ones, the research and development resources of Israel were focused, among other projects, on building the nuclear plant of Dimona. For most of its history, it was a clandestine project, as it continues to remain largely unacknowledged by the Israeli authorities, since the context upon which it was started was not necessarily the most suited one: after the Second World War disasters of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Western powers were not really keen on letting the young state of Israel to develop such capabilities, let alone by itself. Yet they went ahead with this very controverted project, keeping it as a secret even for the families of the engineers working on the site, as Ari Shavit's interviewee recognizes in "My Promised Land" book's dedicated chapter[56].

Actually, Dimona was part of a bigger strategy of development, focused mainly on technology. Another area that needed urgent improvements was agriculture, as the territory on which Israel was situated did not benefit of ideal conditions for growing the supplies that people needed. This development strategy was the engine that propelled Israel as one of the

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[56] Ari SHAVIT, „*My Promised Land. The Tripumph and Tragedy of Israel*", SCRIBE, Sage Publications, Australia & United Kingdom, 2014, pp. 175 – 200

world's leading economies, and which made possible to overcome the multiple shocks cause by the continuous wave of Jews coming home. Israel had one of the biggest population increases, and it faced very specific challenges because of this situation, as proper housing became very sparse. This was amplified by the fact that the families coming to Israel mainly from the United States of America were used to another status and lifestyle and, ultimately, bigger living spaces. But, despite knowing the conditions they would have to bear when going home, what prevailed was the fact that they now had a place of their own, governed and secured by themselves. It is an argument of utmost importance when considering how the state of Israel came to life – and how exactly did it. The psychological component of this process is hugely important. And it is important not only because it implied the sense of property, but because it also implied the sense of security which mid-XXth century surely did not offer.

Now, that we learned that the whole context in which the latter half of the XXth century unfolded, it is essentially important to ask the question of "why". Why fear? Although the answer may seem obvious – fear comes as a response to a threat -, there are some nuances to be added. What kind of fear are we talking about? How did it modify across the decades?

It has a strong link with Zionism, and how did this national and nationalistic movement emerged throughout the centuries, for it has a longer history than the one of Israel. The main three concepts which have been standing at the basis of Zionism are "the negation of exile", "return to the land of Israel" and "return to history"[57]. They represent the core narrative of Zionism, and they are to make the connection between an immemorial time, and the resettlement into Palestine. But the presupposition stands: the Jews have constituted a territorial nation since time immemorial, which brings about another thing, namely that the ideology was envisaged in order to recapture their ancient land. Territoriality becomes central to the issue and gives a huge clue related to the fear of being ousted from their home.

Of course, Zionism suffered many changes throughout the ages, and its creators, among whom we can find Herbert Bentwich, would most probably not agree with the ousting of the Palestinians from the territories they lived on – mostly because in those immemorial

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[57] Gabriel PITERBERG, „*The Returns of Zionism. Myths, Politics and Scholarship in Israel*" Verso Books, London & New York, 2008, pp. 93-126

times, one could not speak of block of territories owned by one or another, but of neighbouring tribes.

Therefore, the sense of territory would be one of the answers to the question of "what". But what about mere survival? One might argue that the first half of the XXth century acted like a test for Jews in the Eastern Europe – and what made them stood together was the ability of remaining united in front of a threat. This – and the correlation with nowadays' manner in which Israel behaves as an actor in international politics – is exactly what validates the hypothesis of this paper, namely that fear is the main catalyst of reactions for Israel.

Jumping to more recent developments in Israel, the way in which Ariel Sharon or Benjamin Netanyahu have chosen to govern and to treat the issue of Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip and West Bank is – safely to say so – the least rational, wise and constructive way of building what was destroyed half a century ago. The latest opinion currents are not judging, though, the broader context, that of the entirety of the Jewish history (or at least its most significant episodes) in order to try to understand exactly the why and the how. Does this make it less abominable? Of course not. But this is not a topic for which to use the binary logic of "good" and "evil", of "black" and "white", for the methods by which ethics operates are highly unadapted to the complexity of this issue, where every part has taken its toll in terms of guilt and fear.

And this is exactly where the how comes in as the last puzzle piece. As generations have changed and the memory of the Holocaust has faded away, people started to harshly criticize the policies that Israel enacted since 2003 (despite the fact that, in the high political circles, pretty much anyone expressing dissent towards Israel policies gets anti-Semitic label)[58]. Israel has benefitted, along its brief but rich history, from one of the most effective knowledge-importing machines known to our culture, mainly because of the way in which Jewish personalities were spread around the world in positions that allowed them to acquire high amounts of knowledge. But having knowledge is not enough; one must know how to use it. And Israelis have proved themselves experts in this field. Proofs: the military developments

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[58] Tanya REINHART, „*The Road Map to Nowhere. Israel/Palestine Since 2003*", Verso Books, London & New York, 2006, p. 1

allowing them to get the upper hand in the military conflicts Israel was involved in, the agricultural development that allowed them to sustain life in the deserted region they settled in; the diplomatic efforts they have successfully making in order to get themselves affirmed and recognized as what they want themselves to be.

The way in which the international establishment treated the issue speaks a lot more than one could about the political lobby that Israel has made for itself. Ever since the Camp David Accords and its outcome, more and more voices have raised in accusing the way in which Israeli diplomats have proved their resilience in achieving their purposes, as the scandals that they had even with the White House might prove. Moreover, since Bejamin Netanyahu became the Prime Minister of Israel, the relation with the United States has become more and more tense - but even in these conditions, the Israeli diplomats have been able to pull international support from the Obama administration.

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People are not always able to identify the triggers of their fear. They might fear death, spiders, losing their job or taking the lift to the 10th floor. But when being threat, people tend to internalize in a different manner their fear. You might not get to want near you your relatives if you see a spider; but you might want to be near them if someone bombs your neighbourhood, or the metro station near where you live. Last week, about three million Parisians marched in a peaceful demonstration against the Charlie Hebdo terrorist attacks and the extremist reactions against French Muslims have increased. Fear leads to fear. Fear leads to actions and reactions beyond rational. Only by getting into the fear and trying to understand it will one overcome it.

Conclusions

Fear, as one of the most rational irrational reactions of a human being, has been at the core of political life since immemorial times. Only with Thomas Hobbes and Machiavelli, classic political thinkers, we have started to understand what its real amplitude is and what important consequences it might have on every level of societal life: from the members' personal and private lives to influencing the most important decision- and policy-making processes.

In concluding the chapter regarding the military power and developments of Israel, one should take into account the basic concepts used, fear and hope, as well as the organization theory mentioned in the first Section. Firstly, Israel developed a very intricate system of defense forces, under the general umbrella of Israel Defense Forces. In understanding as well as possible the regional and domestic dynamics, one should take into account both internal factors, such as the scarcity of the population and, as a consequence, the lack of military personnel able to defend the heavily attacked borders of Israel, or the regional context, in which the Arab world perceived Israel as a huge threat to their territorial integrity and as an illegitimate state, and reacted violently by means of attacks and ultimately the 1948 war, called by Israelis the "Independence War". By means of revising the Israeli state history and taking into account the highly tense relationship they have with Palestinian Arabs, as well as the settlements issue, one can easily notice that regional issues tend to be internalized and become rather domestic ones.

In terms of intelligence, the case of the nuclear plant in Dimona is probably one of the most revealing ones in terms of Israeli attitudes regarding their military and technological development. Being able to use all the resources they could acquire, internal and external, and by means of a non-combat strategy applied by both Israelis and the United States, this possibly huge issue was diverted and deemed minor, despite the fact the it hugely influenced the (non-)proliferation policies in the Middle East, setting Iran and possibly other countries on their way to producing their own nuclear capabilities. It increasingly became an issue in the last two Prime Minister mandates of Benjamin Netanyahu in the context of negotiations between US and Iran in order to determine the latter to give up its acknowledged nuclear capabilities. Therefore, one can easily understand the way in which the situation escalated,

making the Middle East one of the most nuclear conflict prone areas in the world. The way in which all countries involved worldwide in non-proliferation policies used their intelligence capabilities shows the huge role of behind-the-back strategies of non-combat in such situations.

Another factor to take into consideration when talking about fear is the mandatory military service that all Israeli citizens of 18 years of age have to fulfil is to lead us to the conclusion that fear can be transformed into a internally-driven sense of courage and hope, because only by having the human resources needed to defense a state can practice defense and offence properly.

In this sense, the military developments as such also are a huge argument in favour of the hypothesis that all military and intelligence capabilities developed by Israel since its creation are a response to threat, ergo they have a strong psychological component of fear. Israel has been a huge military developer, and as a record all weaponry made or modified in Israel stands a proof. The Merkava tanks or the Uzi guns, to name only two of the technological developments, can easily stand as an argument. After all, why would such a small country like Israel need such weapons, other than for fear?

Fear can easily override hope, but in the case of Israel, the systemic approach to defense the state has taken is not helping that much in creating a new mind-set for its citizens, be it blameable or not.

Israel makes no exception to this, as all the aforementioned arguments have underlined. What makes it very hard to interpret is the very history of the Jewish people, which is pervaded of gruelling periods. Somehow, something had made this people stand united against whatever threat was thrown at them, irrespective of the part of the world they lived in. The state of Israel is the very proof to this – the challenge of building a functional state out of sheer nothingness, on a territory not providing much resources (but still, it existed!), while bringing together Jews from all around the world, speaking different languages and having different customs was a very heavy task for which many, many factors have contributed. One of them – an underrated one – is fear: the fear of losing everything, from identity to relatives, to religion, to belongings, to the right to pertain.

This paper has aimed at trying to underline the subtle trace of fear, which is many times blended in courage, during the history of the state of Israel. This paper has no aim to be objective – one finds oneself in the impossibility of being objective in such a situation, since there is no clear black and white, good and evil, and many nuances might by overridden at a close analysis. This paper also did not propose to completely solve the questions posed – it is a mere outline of the subjects that should be closely studied in order to reach a conclusion, however close to truth that might be. The estimation is that only 15 – 20% of the subject has been covered here.

The Middle East is a very complex region, with a complex problematic composed of several layers – but many analysts fall into the trap of analysing only the purely rational, quantifiable variables that come into discussion, and this is the reason for which no one actually grasps the situation in its entirety. In order to have a proper solution, one should firstly identify the correct problem – and not taking into consideration the psyche, the soul, the irrational, the unknown depth of one's mind might lead to whole different narrative, let alone identify the correct solution.

It is probably too much to search for a definitive solution in order to solve the conflicts of Israel, and even if we found it, it would probably be impossible to apply, or – if applied – might have consequences far worse than the contemporary situation. But answers – we can definitely search for answers to what, how and why.

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