War over Peace

ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF ISRAEL'S MILITARISTIC NATIONALISM

Uri Ben-Eliezer

Translated by Shaul Vardi

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS

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What I saw above all was a failure to understand the psychological essence of the problem. The question of peace will not be resolved on the basis of interest, nor that of logic. First and foremost, this is a question of will. This is the question of whether a psychological infrastructure has been created that promotes peace or, at least, whether factors in the psychological background that block the path to peace have been removed.

MOSHE SHARETT,
Israel's second prime minister, from his lecture "War and Peace," October 1957. Published in the Ma'arach Party journal *Ot* in September 1966.

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War over Peace looks at how people miss the chance for peace and prefer war instead. I dedicate the book to my children, Noa, Shir, and Mika, in the hope that they will be able to see in their lives the longed-for peace in the Middle East. I also dedicate it to my partner and lover Adriana, who has been filling my life for decades with contentment, happiness, and love.

Introduction

As I write these words, toward the end of 2018, the conflict between Israel and its neighbors is once again escalating. As Erich Maria Remarque indicated in his novel written in 1929 chronicling the horrors of the First World War, the enemy may change, and operating methods certainly do so, but essentially there is "nothing new on the Western Front."[1] This is true of Israel, too.

In the north, Israeli fighter jets launched almost nightly attacks on Iranian targets and Hizbullah weapons stashes in Syria, often hundreds of miles from the Israeli border. "Israel will not allow Tehran to turn Syria into a front-line base for operations against us," Avigdor Lieberman, the defense minister, warned. Regarding the threat of an Iranian retaliation, he remarked, "If missiles rain down on us, they will flood down on Iran."[2] Lieberman was not the first Israeli leader to warn the enemy not to provoke Israel. Readers of this book will encounter similar warnings addressed, for example, to Hizbullah by the prime minister, Ehud Olmert, at the beginning of the Second Lebanon War in 2006, a war from which Israel cannot easily be considered to have emerged victorious. In 1982, Ariel Sharon similarly warned the Palestinian Fatah movement, which was based in Lebanon at the time, not to attack Israel. Did these threats prove effective? Did they solve any specific problem? At times, Israel's weakness is conspicuous precisely because of its threats. For example, the downing of the Russian plane in Syria on 17 September 2018 as a result of Israel's military activity, and the deaths of fifteen Russian soldiers aboard the plane, has forced Israel to accept Russian dictates regarding its freedom of action in Syria.

The idea that Israel can dictate its will to the Syrians, the Lebanese, the Iranians, and perhaps even the Russians is, of course, problematic. In this sense, the policy of the prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, and Lieberman

is reminiscent of the attempt by David Ben-Gurion and Moshe Dayan in the mid-1950s to topple Gamal Nasser's regime by war and to create a new order in the Middle East. As we know, Israel was forced to withdraw from Sinai immediately after conquering it. Or perhaps the plan by Netanyahu and Lieberman may be compared to the one formulated in the 1980s by Sharon, who as defense minister sent the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) to occupy not only southern Lebanon but also its capital, Beirut. As history has recorded, the peace treaty Israel forced Lebanon to sign at the time was not worth the paper on which it was written. In hindsight, Ben-Gurion, Dayan, and Sharon failed completely in realizing their objectives. Have these historical precedents changed Israelis' worldview regarding their nation's invincible might and the feasibility of resolving the country's national difficulties through force?

Closer to home, members of the IDF's elite units spend every night searching for "wanted persons" and "terrorists" in the cities and villages of the West Bank, which Israel has occupied by since 1967. More than three hundred public officials, legal experts, academics, artists, and other figures from around the world recently published a letter expressing their opposition to Israel's plan to forcibly move thousands of Palestinian residents of communities that make their living from agriculture and shepherding in the West Bank. A forcible transfer such as this, they warned, constitutes a war crime.[3]

One focal point of the dispute was a Bedouin village called Khan al-Ahmar, which lies about six miles east of Jerusalem. With the approval of the Israeli Supreme Court, the government sought to evacuate the village inhabitants and to Judaize the place. The implementation of this plan was delayed because of international pressure. However, in November 2018, after Netanyahu was attacked by far-right parties for being "too moderate" and his government seemed likely to fall, he quickly declared that the village would "very soon" be evacuated. It became clear that any Israeli prime minister will find it difficult to resist the demand to show unswerving "national resilience and pride."[4]

To the south, throughout 2018, Hamas encouraged the residents of the Gaza Strip to demonstrate by the fence dividing Palestine and Israel and to attempt to break through the border. Young Palestinians responded to the call, in part owing to their desperation given the humanitarian crisis in the area, the protracted siege, soaring unemployment rates, food shortages, and the sense that they have been held for years in a vast open-air prison. The demonstrators ignored Israel's warnings not to approach the border. Tens of thousands of people participated in the protests, some of whom threw stones and Molotov cocktails. Others attempted to sabotage the border fence and

cross into Israel. Under the leadership of Hamas, such protests were intended not only to declare opposition to the occupation but also to challenge the legitimacy of Israel's existence. The protests were held under the slogan "The Great March of Return," referring of course to the return of Palestinian refugees—or their children and grandchildren—to the towns and villages where they lived until 1948, inside what is now the State of Israel. Did anyone on the Gazan side of the border truly imagine that even if they were able to cross the fence, this would enable them to return to their ancestral homes in what was once Palestine? Were their actions not based less on logic and more on a desire to manifest national sentiments? Indeed, as this book emphasizes, "history matters," for both sides, and history is certainly relevant to a people's way of life and death and to its fears and hatreds.

On 14 May 2018—Nakba Day—62 Palestinians were killed and 1,350 injured by Israeli snipers along the fence, while Palestinians launched burning kites across the border, setting fire to fields and woodland inside Israel. These primitive kite bombs must seem strange and absurd to observers who still adhere to the concept of conventional wars fought between mass armies and states, with decisive battles waged by tanks or fighter jets. But this is war in a form that I discuss in the final chapters of this book—a phenomenon that has come to be known as "new war."

New wars cause great damage and numerous casualties. In May 2018 alone, the total number of Palestinian fatalities in the Gaza Strip was 116, and around 13,000 Palestinians were injured, including over 1,000 children. The killing of Palestinian demonstrators was condemned around the world in statements that included terms such as *massacre* and *bloodbath*. Were these killings rational? Did they solve any specific problem? At exactly the same time as the bloodshed in the south, Israel's leaders celebrated the relocation of the United States embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, in a ceremony attended by the daughter of President Donald Trump. In Tel Aviv, meanwhile, 100,000 jubilant Israelis gathered in Rabin Square—often the scene of political demonstrations—to celebrate the success of an Israeli singer in the Eurovision Song Contest.[5] It is doubtful whether a Hollywood director would have dared to present such a surreal scene.

As expected, and as has happened so many times in the past, the war escalated in the days that followed. When an IDF intelligence squad entered Gaza on 11 November 2018, Palestinians discovered it and attacked, killing a senior officer. The squad then killed several members of Hamas as it fled the area, and in retaliation the organization fired about four hundred missiles at

the southern portion of Israel. Only one person died in this siege, and the Israeli response was so fierce that Hamas called for a cease-fire. The question that remains is: How long will the cease-fire last this time?

As is typical in all wars, the Israelis accept no blame for the violence. Israel even accuses Hamas of sacrificing its own young people. This is an interesting argument, though far from new. As I discuss in this book, the claim that Arabs are responsible for their own deaths has been raised throughout Israel's history. As for the deaths of the youngsters in Gaza, Israel seized readily on Hamas's claim that most of those killed were members of the organization, which, from Israel's perspective, categorizes the victims as terrorists. Israel employs a unique definition of the term "terrorism." Its current prime minister has even written books on the subject. From the Israeli standpoint, terrorism is not a means but a goal. This enables the Israelis to focus exclusively on the horror of the action itself while ignoring the fact that such actions, reprehensible though they be, are based on an objective. This objective may be the Palestinians' desire to live in dignity, to free themselves from occupation, and to realize their national aspirations. For many of them, these aspirations include the partition of the land into two states—a solution many Israelis once accepted, but which, as I will discuss, most are no longer willing to countenance.

When Netanyahu agreed to a cease-fire with Hamas, Lieberman resigned as defense minister, claiming that Israel was too soft on Hamas. Once again the impression was that the political debate in Israel these days is between the so-called right and the extreme right. Indeed, even the claim that Hamas is responsible for the deaths of Palestinian protestors is not confined to the Israeli right wing alone. Yitzhak Herzog, leader of the opposition Labor Party, adopted the same line of argument while supporting the actions of the IDF soldiers along the border.[6] This illustrates another phenomenon that appears as a leitmotif throughout this book: the tendency of both the coalition and the opposition to accept and legitimate the IDF's use of force and to agree with the belligerent policy of almost any Israeli government. How did this unusual phenomenon of "rallying round the flag" emerge, and what insights can it offer?

It is not surprising that as the violence in the south continued, another opposition leader, Eitan Cabel, from the same "leftist" Labor Party, offered his solution to the problem. "It's time to sober up," he declared, effectively inviting his fellow members of the opposition to accept the occupation, at least in part. Cabel urged his friends to abandon illusions about peace agreements signed on the lawns of the White House, since the leadership on the

Palestinian side is not interested in peace. Accordingly, he advocated the annexation of the main Israeli settlement blocs in the occupied West Bank and the imposition of Israeli law on these areas.[7] Does Cabel's position represent a departure from the traditional approach of the Israeli Labor Party in both declarative and practical terms—or is it merely the current version of the traditional "us versus them" ethno-national approach? This is one of the questions I attempt to answer in this book. The answer forms part of my exploration of a phenomenon defined as "militaristic nationalism" in Israel, in which I expose the conditions that led to its emergence, the way it was granted hegemonic status, and its influence on Israel's countless wars and conflicts.

ONE

Militaristic Nationalism and War

Zionism was the product of an era when the concept of the nation gained precedence. Across Europe, masses of people who often shared common ethnic characteristics began to see the nation as a focus of belonging and identification. This sentiment fueled a desire for liberation from tyrannical rule or foreign occupation and for independence, in order to allow citizens to become the masters of their own fate. According to the objective criteria sometimes used to examine the phenomenon of nationalism, the Jews were not universally recognized as a nation. After all, they were dispersed in geographical terms and did not own any distinct territory. They did not share a common language, religion no longer served as a common denominator for the many who had become atheists, and their culture varied from place to place. Even in terms of physiognomy—and contrary to familiar stereotypes—they were more similar to their non-Jewish neighbors than to Jews from other parts of the world. Accordingly, it is hardly surprising that the Zionist demand to be recognized as a nation was not readily accepted and encountered fierce opposition, including among the Jews themselves.

The Zionists attempted to overcome these obstacles. They embarked on a program of immigration to Palestine, referring to the country by its ancient name, the Land of Israel (Eretz Israel), and interpreted this immigration as a return to their ancestral homeland following an exile of almost two thousand years. In this old/new place, they refashioned themselves from the outset as a community defined by its distinctness from the local Arab population. They built a new society and saw nationalism as a criterion for identification that took precedence over any religious or class-based distinctions. They also developed what Ernst Renan had already proposed in the late nineteenth century as a vital component of nationalism: national identity. As part of this

project, they transformed the largely fossilized Hebrew of the Bible into a modern spoken language and created a new and original Hebrew culture. They began to secure legal ownership of areas in Palestine through acquisition and settlement and established a political system to manage their own affairs. In addition, during and after the First World War, the Zionist movement attempted to secure international and legal approval for its ambitions in Palestine, achieving considerable success in this respect with the Balfour Declaration. This achievement instilled hope in Zionists that they would ultimately be successful in realizing their nationalist aspirations and establishing their own state.[1]

Zionism was dominated by modern elements, and in this respect its emergence on the stage of history toward the end of the nineteenth century is consistent with the claims of scholars such as John Breuilly (1993) and Eric Hobsbawm (2006) regarding the general phenomenon of nationalism. It is doubtful whether the Zionist movement could have emerged had not many Jews separated from their traditional communities and "come out of the ghetto," to use the phrase coined by the historian and sociologist Yacob Katz (1973), thereby embarking on a significant process of secularization.[2] Like other national movements, Zionism could not have developed without the Enlightenment, which preceded it, and which raised awareness of humans' ability to control their destiny—rather than, in the Jewish context, waiting for the Messiah to bring redemption, as the rabbis advised. Universalist ideals of individual liberty and national sovereignty, inspired by the French Revolution, naturally also influenced these processes. Indeed, as David Vital (1975) and S. N. Eisenstadt (2002: 163–65) noted, the Zionists did not confine themselves to national liberation but also sought to achieve a social revolution. In the early stage, this desire was manifested mainly in the aspiration to normalize the occupational structure of the Jews and to "make them a productive people." Certainly, the Zionists were modern in their aspiration for a state—that is, a political and bureaucratic system of domination capable of representing the nation and of solving its various problems.

However, the phenomenon of Zionism cannot be explained solely by reference to modernity. Some scholars of nationalism reject the idea that a nation, however modern it may be, can be divorced from its ancient past. These scholars, known as "ethno-symbolists," argue that, with isolated exceptions, the potency of the nationalist phenomenon lies in its sources, tradition, and long-standing emotional and irrational components. These in turn have their origins in the emergence of ethnic groups during the early Middle Ages

and, in some instances, even in ancient times. These periods were already marked by the emergence of distinct cultural affinities, myths of origin and a shared lineage, and often a common religion, as well as traditions and ceremonies, a distinct language, and a sense of solidarity and collective identity. In some cases, the blend also included a sense that the ethnic group was superior and chosen.

Ethno-symbolists categorically reject the claim by certain modernists that a nation is no more than an invented political community, created ex nihilo as a substitute for debilitated religion and disempowered monarchies, and intended as a new means for serving the need for domination and control. This approach regards nationalism as a "false consciousness" exploited by cunning rulers in order to secure legitimacy for their rule and to recruit the naive public to their goals. Anthony Smith (2010: 61–62), one of the leading ethno-symbolic scholars, suggested that this interpretation by the modernists fails to recognize the emotional depth of loyalty to the nation, maintained over centuries, on the basis of history and tradition and manifested in tangible terms in the present.

We will see how this disagreement concerning the origins of nationalism is connected with the understanding of wars. For the present we may note that, as a generalization, the ethno-symbolic approach emphasized the cultural dimension of nationalism, while the modernist approach tended to focus on the political dimension of the phenomenon—despite the fact that both approaches claimed to address both of these dimensions. The cultural dimension of Zionism was particularly prominent during the formative years of the movement. The Jewish people had a distinct history; and toward the end of the nineteenth century, Zionist thinkers, writers, and historians, as well as the political leaders of the movement, interpreted this history in a specific manner and, to a certain extent, even invented it—the term used by Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983)—in way that served their national goals. However, it is doubtful whether this process of invention could have been successful or feasible had it not been based on a historical and cultural foundation.[3] Those Jews who chose Zionism certainly did so not only for rational or instrumentalist reasons but also under the influence of a romanticist approach, which highlighted both the unique characteristics of each nation as created over centuries or millennia and the bond between humans and the territory they perceive as their homeland. By way of example, we need only recall that since before the Christian era, Jews have read the Passover Haggada every year. This text tells the story of the exodus of an entire people

from slavery to freedom and their return from Egypt to their homeland. And twice a year, Jews end their prayers with the declaration "Next year in Jerusalem."

Naturally, the establishment of a Zionist national movement was also justified by reference to the conditions facing the Jews in Europe. Zionism was perceived as a solution for the existential problems faced by a people who for centuries, wherever they settled, had been subject to discrimination, persecution, harassment, and profound poverty. The emancipation Jews had enjoyed more recently in some areas may have made them equal before the law, but this did not spare them from anti-Semitism in their daily lives. It comes as no surprise that Dr. Yehuda Leib Pinsker, one of the leading Zionist thinkers of the nineteenth century, wrote that emancipation would not solve the "Jewish problem." The Jews, he argued, were in need of "auto-emancipation"—that is to say, a collective solution. They had to take their fate into their own hands, rather than expecting others to solve the problems for them.[4]

Pinsker wrote his essay "Auto-Emancipation" following a wave of anti-Semitic pogroms in 1882.[5] Were it not for these pogroms and many like them that scarred the lives of Jews across eastern Europe, in particular, it is questionable whether the ideas presented by Theodor Herzl in his book *The Jewish State,* published in 1896, would have received such an enthusiastic reception (Eylon, 2006: 106). This enthusiasm led to the establishment of a pan-European Zionist movement that soon became a global organization. As Herzl wrote in 1897, after managing to hold the First Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland, the movement's goal was astonishing clear: "At Basel I founded the Jewish state." He added, "If I were to say this out loud today I would be met with universal laughter. But in five years perhaps, certainly in fifty, the whole world will know it" (Herzl, 1997: 482).

Despite the gravitational pull of the new movement, most of the Jews at the time did not see Zionism as offering a solution to their problems. Some had assimilated in their countries of residence. Others emigrated to the United States during the period when this country was receptive to immigration (some 1.3 million European Jews arrived in the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries). Many remained faithful to their religious beliefs and continued to trust in God's providence. Others still formed the "Bund," a socialist nationalist movement that was vastly stronger and larger than the Zionist movement, and which rejected the idea that the solution to "the problem" lay in emigration to Palestine or in the revival of the language of the Bible. Nevertheless, the national conclusion that the

Land of Israel was the Jewish homeland and constituted the most appropriate and just territorial solution for the Jewish problem became increasingly widespread.

Paradoxically, this conviction spread dramatically following the untimely death of the movement's founder. Herzl recognized that the Jewish longing for Zion was rooted in Jews' history. However, he despaired of realizing his objective of securing international support for the idea of a Jewish state in the ancestral land. Accordingly, he decided in 1903 to present the movement with a proposal to establish a Jewish state in Uganda, as a response to the material and existential crisis facing the Jews of eastern Europe.[6] Perhaps his perception of nationality as a modern and civic phenomenon led him to downplay the importance of ancient history in securing the movement's goal. However, his "Uganda Plan" horrified many members of the movement. The opponents agreed with the comment made by the renowned author and thinker Asher Ginsberg, better known by his Hebrew nom de plume, Ahad Ha'am, that while Herzl's proposal might provide a state for the Jews, this would not be a Jewish state. Like many of his intellectual contemporaries, Ahad Ha'am attached great importance to the cultural and folkish dimension of nationalism, refusing to reduce Zionism to a mere political instrument for solving material or physical distress (Goldstein, 1992). This was a fascinating and principled debate between two opposing perceptions of nationalism, and one that even threatened to divide the movement. The Uganda Plan was eventually rejected by the Seventh Zionist Congress at the beginning of August 1905. Even at this early stage, it was already becoming apparent that, while Zionism embodied a nationalism that had emerged under the conditions of modernity, its stronger foundation was ethnicity and a belief in a common ancient past, combined with particularistic cultural principles, rather than the universal principles that were perceived as the legacy of the French Revolution (Shimoni, 1995; Ben-Israel, 2004: 99–150).

During the same period (from 1904), young Jews from Russia began to put the ethno-nationalist ideal into practice by emigrating to what they saw as their homeland: a stretch of desert under the rule of the Ottoman Empire. These immigrants formed what became known as the Second Aliyah, and they provide the starting point for this book. Their arrival in Palestine symbolized the emergence of practical Zionism, and accordingly it also marked the beginning of the conflict between the Zionists and the Arabs, or Palestinians. After all, contrary to the assertion in the late nineteenth century by Israel Zangwill, the well-known English-Jewish writer, that Israel is

"a land without a people for a people without a land," Palestinians had lived in the country for many centuries, regarded it as their homeland, and were also gradually developing a collective consciousness of their essence as a nation.[7] As a result, from the time of the Second Aliyah down to the present day, the country has faced perpetual conflict and numerous wars.

In this book, I consider the nature of this "century of conflict and war" from a perspective that focuses on the way Zionists and Israelis saw and see the conflict. My main argument is that their particular perspective can be seen as one of the reasons (among others) that have brought war to the region and prevented a resolution of the conflict.

It is already possible to identify different periods in the study of the Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Arab conflict. In the 1980s and 1990s, a critical approach developed among Israeli researchers and, in particular, among those who came to be known as the "New Historians" (Shlaim, 2004) or "radical sociologists" (Ram, 1995, 2018). Until this period, Israeli scholars had tended to adopt a basic assumption of the existence of two separate societies.[8] Naturally, the reality of separation that was created in 1948, and which continued through 1967, facilitated the adoption of this dual approach. It also permitted researchers to ignore the fact that throughout the British Mandate period (and earlier, of course), Jews and Palestinians maintained relations on varying levels. The change that occurred in the 1980s in the study of the Israeli-Arab conflict was due in part to criticism of this dual approach.

This criticism was manifested, for example, in the work of Juval Portugali (1993), who argued that even in the past, and certainly following the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip by Israel in 1967, it was impossible to understand both societies in isolation, since they maintained implicate relations, whereby each society mirrored and influenced the other. For example, just as Palestinian national identity emerged as a response to the spread of Zionism, so the Israeli labor market was influenced by the cheap Arab labor of the hundred thousand Palestinians workers who entered Israel every day from the West Bank and Gaza Strip in the early 1980s. The implicate-relations perspective appeared in some works written by Israeli scholars (e.g., Bernstein, 2000; Grinberg, 2003), and even more so among American Middle-Eastern scholars. Zachary Lockman (1996), for example, employed the basic assumption of relational history in his study of Israeli and Arab railroad laborers who worked together in Haifa during the Mandate period. This formed part of Lockman's broader study of the working class in Palestine and the mutual influences between Jews and Arabs in this class. Another

example is Mark LeVine (2005), who argued that it is impossible to understand the "modern" project of the construction of Tel Aviv as a Jewish city without understanding Jaffa, and vice versa.

Exploring Israeli and Palestinian society as a single reality can indeed be productive, and certainly so in fields where there were some relationships, such as in the labor market, working-class cooperation, neighborly relations in mixed towns, or even in the context of a joint struggle for peace. However, this perspective cannot, of course, negate separate research into either one of these societies, or even into a single aspect of one society. Every researcher is free to choose his or her field of study and to set its boundaries, provided the precise framework of the research is clearly presented to the reader. In this regard, I do not claim to provide in this book a comprehensive explanation for the conflict between Israel, the Arab countries, and the Palestinians. The book does not deal thoroughly with the occupation, which has already passed its first half century, nor does it offer a comprehensive and complete picture of Israel's wars. My essential objective is to explore, first, the way the Zionist Jews in Palestine, and later the Israelis, viewed their relations with the surrounding peoples; second, the way they translated such a view into practicalities; and third, the impact it has had on issues of peace and war.

Given this focus, it is clear that our subject here is Israeli society, and accordingly the book is based on sources relevant to that society.[9] As for the aspect of implicate relations, even Lockman (1996: 9–10) himself wrote that by trying to focus not on one or the other of the two communities in Palestine but rather on their mutually formative interactions, the very real specifics of their histories may be obscured. To this I add that such a concern certainly exists if the historical specificity is institutionalized and becomes an ideology that affects the long-term relations between the sides, a possibility that, as I claim in this book, has indeed occurred.

As happens on occasion, these two distinct theoretical approaches reflected contradictory political convictions. The dual approach implied the argument that the Zionists came to settle Palestine alongside the Arabs without any intention of harming them, as evidenced by their establishment of a separate society, whereas the basic assumption of the relational perspective was that the Zionists were colonialists who came to build one society at the expense of the other. In this book I do not attempt to lead the reader back to the politics that underlie the basic assumptions behind the dual society perspective. However, the book addresses the relational perspective by presenting a conundrum: If the relations are so implicate, why does this not lead the

two sides to influence each other in a way that leads to peace? And given that peace has not come—what are the reasons for this?

The argument that emerges in this book is that the past century has been dominated by a Zionist, and later on an Israeli, perception with a relatively fixed and uniform character concerning the conflict. This perception, which I term an ideology, is only marginally influenced by its Arab or Palestinian surroundings and did not include any consideration for their needs or wishes (a reality that, of course, merely reflects a special type of implicate relations). I then proceed to argue that this perception, and the way it was translated into practicalities, is one of the causes that prevent peace and lead to war.

As for colonialism, the idea that the Zionist project is actually one involving a colonialist settler society was manifested, for example, in the work of Gershon Shafir (1989). Shafir examined types of colonialism and identified Israel with "pure settlement colonies" of a particular type, based on the displacement of the "natives" from the labor market with no intention of annihilating them. Many other studies have depicted Israel as a colonialist society (see, for example, Rodinson, 1973; Nahla and Yuval-Davis, 1995; Pappe, 1995; Yiftachel, 1998; Shenhav, 2012; Mitchel, 2000; Yacobi and Shadar, 2014; Zureik, 2016). Some of these works argued that, as in other colonial examples, economic motivation and the quest for profit were also key factors in the Israeli-Zionist project and in its attitude toward the Palestinians. Arguments about the colonialist approach have sometimes touched on questions such as whether Zionism was colonialist in its intentions or solely in its outcomes (colonialism versus colonization). Another question was when it acquired this character—at the beginning of the project in the early twentieth century, or only after the occupation of the territories in 1967, with the confiscation of land and the exploitation of cheap Arab labor that followed (Ram, 1993).

As will become clear, I do not conclude, on the basis of my research findings, that the Zionists came to Palestine with the goal of living alongside the Arabs. They came to inherit what they saw as their homeland. Their awareness that they would have to fight the Arabs in order to achieve this was apparent at an earlier stage than many observers tend to suggest. However, had the roots of the conflict really lain in economic exploitation, as some exponents of the colonialist approach argue, we would surely expect that the conflict would have been resolved in a rational manner by now, through material compensation or some other compromise offering benefits to both sides. I argue that, while economics is important to understanding the conflict, it cannot be explained in a solely materialistic, deterministic manner.

Alongside "material interests," to use Max Weber's (1968) terminology, "ideal interests" must also be examined—and, as I explain in this book, these factors are long-standing. The colonialists of French Algeria and Rhodesia left because it was no longer "worth their while" to stay, given the opposition of the authentic indigenous residents of the country to their presence. The Zionists, however, show no sign of intending to abandon what they consider their land. Neither do they show any real willingness to compromise with the Palestinians. In the following, I try to answer several questions: Why does the conflict have such a violent form? Why does it periodically descend into war between the sides? Why does it persist to this day? The reason is partly based on the Zionist-Israelis' ideology, which was obviously translated into practicalities of domination and subordination.

I essentially present two components of the Israeli ideology—ethnic nationalism and militarism—that have accompanied the Israeli-Zionist project from its inception. I also discuss the impact of these components on the wars in which Israel has been involved and, in some cases, wars it initiated. First, it is necessary to briefly discuss the theoretical importance of these two concepts with regard to war.

THE CAUSES OF WAR

War has formed part of human existence since the earliest times; some would doubtless claim that it is evidence of the inherent cruelty of "human nature."[10] Yet it is also a social project whose character and causes vary from one period to another, and accordingly it cannot be fully explained by such claims. Since the Enlightenment, there has been a tendency to explain war—which is universally abhorred as a cruel and murderous project—in rational terms. This approach portrays war as the product of a balanced decision, comparing the benefit that it will bring against the price of refraining from war (Howard, 1983: 22). Karl von Clausewitz (1993), who was considered the greatest military historian of the nineteenth century, saw war as "the continuation of politics by other means"—an action to be taken as the last resort when all other means have failed. Clausewitz regarded the state's leadership as rational, peace loving, and driven by the universal raison d'état, which is based on unity, proper governance, and an objective examination of the needs of society. To what extent is it true that states operate on such a logical basis; that the leadership is guided by wisdom, moderation, and caution; and that these are really the reasons why

wars are fought or avoided? The American historian Barbara Tuchman (1986), for example, who discussed the example of the Vietnam War, showed that these reasons were not always the driving force behind the decisions of leaders. Is it not possible that the state's "logic" sometimes reflects the private and utilitarian interests of certain individuals, at the expense of the interests of others and, sometimes, even at the expense of the interests of the majority?

Many researchers tend to regard the emergence of the modern state as a watershed in terms of the causes and even the character of war. Their approach is epitomized in the comment by the late American sociologist Charles Tilly (1985) that "war made the state and the state made war." This connection between the state and war was noted much earlier by German thinkers such as Heinrich von Treitschke, Otto Heinz, and Carl Schmitt, who saw politics as an arena of constant struggle in which the strong contender wins and is entitled to impose his will through the framework of the state, even by means of organized violence, coercion, and war. This was seen as particularly legitimate when the purpose was to advance goals serving the state and contributing to its greatness (Malesevic, 2010: 28–33). The state has indeed become the central political structure of the modern age, and war is its faithful companion. It is hardly surprising that, as Michael Mann (1993) showed, states during the formative period devoted most of their budget to the bottomless pit labeled "war expenses." No earlier political structure managed, whether directly or indirectly, to mobilize most of the population for war, as was achieved for the first time by the French state, whose leaders conceived of the notion of a compulsory army (the famous *levée en masse*), raised in response to the Prussian invasion of 1792. This mechanism was later replicated across Europe (Hayes, 1931).

As for the question of why humans agreed to fight in wars, the literature that seeks to explain wars from a rational standpoint, focusing on the state, suggests three key factors. First, soldiers were mobilized by coercion and had no choice in the matter. Second, soldiers received civil rights in return for their service. The more demanding and expensive the war, the more the state was obliged to offer additional rights, and even political representation, so that the soldier often became a civilian-soldier (Janowitz, 1978: 178–79). Third, states and their rulers used various manipulative means to recruit popular support for war, including the invention of the national factor and nationalist sentiment. These served to conceal their own narrow interests and to lead people to believe that they were fighting for the general good (Giddens, 1985; Tilly, 1994).

However, all these explanations are inadequate. If war was imposed on citizens, how can we explain the enthusiasm that seized those who were called to the flag? Similarly, the motivation to fight cannot be explained by reference to contractual relations or to rights that were realized only after the war—recruits had no way of knowing whether they would survive the war.[11] It is also difficult to accept the suggestion that leaders have such strong manipulative powers, and that recruits have such limited intelligence that they will accept the fiction of the "nation," and even be willing to die for it, without understanding that war is actually the product of the narrow interests of rulers. According to this approach, the emotional appeal is the justification for decisions made by the rational mind. By contrast, I present the opposite possibility: that the rational appeal is often a justification for wars made by the emotional mind.

Before I examine this hypothesis, note that the tendency to explain wars in rational terms, with the state at the center of the explanation, is still prevalent. This approach is evident in the so-called neorealist school, which continues to enjoy hegemony in the discipline of international relations. In its attempt to explain wars in their international context, this school emphasizes that the anarchic character of the international system not only has transformed states into an isolated and suspicious type of organization but also drives their quest for security or benefit in a hostile and unstable environment. To this end, states will do anything, including going to war, in order to protect their interests (Powell, 1994; Levy and Thompson, 2010: 28–54).

However, this approach, too, cannot offer a full explanation for wars, since the response of national leaders to reality is inevitably subjective. In some instances, leaders are aware that their nation is ready for war, capable of winning, and may even gain material or other benefits, yet nevertheless they refrain from launching war. Conversely, even when the anticipated price of war appears to be unreasonably high and victory is doubtful, some leaders still prefer to embark on war, even if they know they will not win.

How, then, can we define situations that increase or reduce the likelihood of war? For many years, the realist and neorealist approaches in international relations were challenged by the liberal approach. While the neorealist approach adhered to the Hobbesian assumption that only a balance of power based on deterrence can prevent the possibility of war and the anticipation of the benefit war will bring, liberal scholars tended to see the utilitarian consideration as offering an opening for reducing the threat of war—for example, by replacing war with trade and economic exchanges benefiting all sides

(Lamy, 2008: 124–41). However, even the casual observer will agree that the idea that economics supersedes and prevents war is not always seen in practice. The liberals also relied on the belief that if regimes become democratic, they will be less inclined to engage in war, certainly with each other, in accordance with the thesis of "pax democratica" (Russett, 1993). This theory, too, has not always proved correct. After all, in the past, it was capitalist, democratic, and liberal nations that did not hesitate to initiate colonial and imperialist wars against weaker nations on other continents, despite the fact that the latter did not pose any threat to them. Liberals also highlight the importance of international law and treaties as a buttress against violence, aggression, and war. Yet again, their argument appears to be based on a flimsy foundation. The problem is not that international laws are not exhaustive, but that their enforcement against states is very rarely possible. Lastly, the assumption that civil society will be able to block the tendency of states and their controlling elites to descend toward war—a belief that liberals have adhered to since the "eternal peace" of Immanuel Kant—has also failed to prove itself in many instances (MacMillan, 1998).

Both the neorealist and the liberal approaches take as their basic premise the idea that people, even in their organized settings, act rationally.[12] The problem with these theories is that they ignore the human tendency to organize around collective identities, such as ethnic, religious, or national groups, that stimulate emotions and influence actions, in a way that regards any compromise or bargaining as undesirable or even impossible.[13]

If the utilitarian explanations for war and peace were broadly valid, it would be reasonable to assume that we would live in a world with fewer wars and with less devastation and loss of lives. After all, it is far from certain that wars are worthwhile. In many cases, war may be a type of project in which all those involved lose out, to a lesser or greater degree. In the future, perhaps, philosophers may wonder how people could even have attempted to explain the most destructive and violent phenomenon of human relations in terms of rationalism and benefit.[14]

Accordingly, it is hardly surprising that not all scholars accept the utilitarian explanation for war. A prominent example is the British military historian John Keegan (1994), who argues that war is not the continuation of politics, nor even the continuation of economics, but rather the continuation of culture. Keegan was particularly critical of Clausewitz's unquestioning assumption that war is a purposeful act intended to realize goals that cannot be secured by peaceful means. He saw this as an excuse, rather than an

explanation, for war, and claimed that Clausewitz had wrapped war in a shroud of rationality in order to conceal its horrors. If war is indeed a manifestation of culture, we must then clarify what it is about a particular culture that invites war.

An example of the importance attached to culture can be found in works reflecting the so-called social constructivist approach adopted in this book. The social constructivists problematize social facts and explore how agents employ ideas, values, and ideologies to shape these facts. They also maintain that the rational approaches failed to address the source of the emergence of interests motivating the decision makers. For example, in international relations, they argued, this source was based not on the existence of a specific and essentially anarchic global system, as the neorealists claimed, but rather on a subjective interpretation of reality. As Alexander Wendt (1992) explained, "Anarchy is what states make of it." The constructivists in international relations also negated the objective character of the state's security needs (or so-called national security), which in their eyes is subject to social definition and institutionalized interpretation (Katzenstein, 1996). Some of these scholars referred to the "security culture" that provides the conceptual framework for the selection of strategic behavior. This culture was discussed by, for example, Jutta Weldes (1999) with regard to the missile crisis between the United States and Cuba in the 1960s, and by Michael Barnet (1999) with regard to the Oslo Accords between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization. Naturally, those who place cultural assumptions at the center of the discussion, or those who explain wars in their social context (Levy, 1998; Black, 1998) do not dismiss the importance of the considerations applied by leaders in the decision-making process. Neither do they necessarily reject the importance of differing interests as motivations for action. However, they argue that the interpretation of reality and the discretion that leads to war are determined and delineated primarily by these cultural assumptions, and that these assumptions force agents to strategize within cultural rules or cultural assumptions.[15]

In this book I explore the connection between culture and war through a case study of Israel. I examine the manner in which the subjective interpretations of reality, which I refer to as "ideology," are translated into a "facticity" that intensifies conflict and leads to war or at least increases the probability of war. Ideology is a particular way of presenting reality that embodies ideals and interests; it is connected to the structure of power and exerts a significant influence over reality. It is important to note that ideology is not synonymous with politics. Were the two concepts identical, we would find ourselves back

with the utilitarian perception of wars. Politics is the arena in which power relations affirm or challenge the existing order. Ideology addresses the manner in which these relations and this order are perceived and presented in value-based terms as positive or negative, and the way in which such evaluations shape reality.[16] In order to explain Israeli reality, which is dominated by multiple conflicts and wars, this book must meet a double challenge. First, it must show that the path that establishes the conflict and leads to war is not free of cultural assumptions. Second, it must explain how these assumptions are essentially ideologies that are translated into influential practicalities.

The approach I use is sometimes called path dependence. This is an approach that was born in the economy but which is also used by political scientists and historical sociologists. It undermines the well-known assumption that decision-making processes are undertaken with the rational judgment of leaders who objectively weigh reality and make decisions based on the given circumstances, in order to maximize profits. The approach of path dependence exposes the possibility that decisions are made on the basis of precedents and perceptions from the past, even if this past is no longer relevant and conditions have changed since then. Indeed, this book shows how decisions about going to war, and the fear of peace, are bounded by history and culture. Accordingly, there is a deterministic chain of events based on the ideology that supports military solutions when they come to fulfill the "will of the nation."[17]

In fact, I present two key ideologies of particular relevance for our subject: ethno-nationalism and militarism. What is it about each of these ideologies that exacerbates conflict, causes war, or increases the likelihood of war, while at the same time providing justification for it?

ETHNO-NATIONALISM

It is difficult to discuss nationalism without thinking of Hans Kohn, who gained a reputation as a scholar in this field immediately after completing his doctoral thesis in law in 1923. Some two years later, Kohn emigrated to Palestine out of Zionist motives, though he soon became critical of the manner in which the Zionist idea was being implemented. As we will see, Kohn's critique constituted a response to the modes of action adopted by the Zionists during this period. For now, we will concentrate on one of the most important distinctions Kohn offered, drawing on the thought of the German

historian Friedrich Meinecke, between two types of nationalist phenomena. The first, "Western" or "liberal" nationalism, has also been termed "civil" or "nation-state" *(Staatsnation)* nationalism. The second is "Eastern," "ethnic," or "cultural" nationalism *(Kulturnation).* The former type of nationalism is based on the values of enlightenment and the individual and collective liberty granted to individuals by virtue of their affiliation to the nation. According to this approach, affiliation with the nation is perceived as a voluntary matter, and national unity is based primarily on agreement among all the members of the nation regarding the principles that organize them within the framework of the state, by reference to their basic values, including liberty, equal opportunities, and recognition of the value of life. This nationalism was the product of two great revolutions—the French and the American—and Kohn noted that it was manifested in varying forms in England, France, the United States, the Netherlands, and Switzerland, among other countries.

The latter form of nationalism, Kohn argued, emerged east of the Rhine, in central and eastern Europe. Because of the particular circumstances prevailing in this region, nationalism here emphasized atavistic, tribal, and particularistic components and, thereby, became insular, exclusive, and hostile. This form of nationalism was based on the claim of a shared origin in terms of blood and ancestors, and on an ethnic communal affiliation rooted in an ancient culture distinguished by language, customs, and past traditions reflecting "the authentic spirit of the nation" (Kohn, 1961: 29–31, 45–46).

"Ethno-nationalism" often describes the allegedly unique character of the nation in binary terms, emphasizing the difference between "us," the members of the nation, and "them"—members of other national groups (Alter, 1994: 9–31). The focus on unique nationalism has often been accompanied by a motif of chosenness and superiority over other groups, as Anthony Smith (2010) and John Hutchinson (2017: 50–85) have shown in admirable depth. The concept of sanctity is central to the nationalist perception, so that even territory itself is regarded as sacred and indivisible. It is not a piece of land whose importance can be gauged according to objective factors, such as its productivity, the presence of natural resources, or strategic importance. Instead, it is literally the home-land, owned exclusively by the nation by virtue of history and, in some cases, by virtue of divine decree.[18] It is no coincidence that the Zionists spoke not of "migration" to the land they saw as their country, but rather of "aliyah"—literally *ascent.* This biblical term was used to refer to pilgrimages by Jews to the temple of ancient times. Similarly, the purchase of land from Arabs in Palestine was termed "the redemption of land."

In Western, or civil, nationalism, the state is based on universal principles and, accordingly, grants expression and rights to all its citizens. The concepts of state and nation effectively tessellate, as reflected in the concept of citizenship. In Eastern, or ethnic, nationalism, by contrast, the state manifests in varying ways the particularistic "will of the nation," to which all those who belong to the "right" ethnic group are subject. This privilege is, of course, denied to "others."

Kohn's typology has been adopted in varying forms, becoming an important distinction in the study of nationalism (Ignatieff, 1993). However, it has also been the subject of various criticisms, some of which focus on its claim to distinguish between types of nationalism on a geographical basis.[19] Critics have also suggested that Western, or civil, nationalism barely exists (e.g., Yack, 1999); conversely, the characteristics of the exclusive nationalism that Kohn placed in the East, including excessive patriotism, cruelty toward the other, xenophobia and racism, and feelings of superiority, can all also be found in the West.[20]

Many of the criticisms are justified. Nevertheless, the distinction between the two types of nationalism continues to serve as a cornerstone in the study of nationalism. Smith (2006: 174) rightly pointed out that ethnic and civil components are intertwined in the history of every nation. The prominence of one or the other of these components varies from one period to another, and states may move between the criteria of ethnic particularism, on the one hand, and civil universalism, on the other. Smith's claim is also consistent with the argument that these two criteria sometimes exist simultaneously within a given society, in some cases in a state of confrontation (e.g., Smooha, 2000; Kuzio, 2002; Muro and Quiroga, 2005). Both types of nationalism might better be regarded as "ideal types," to use Max Weber's phrase: models that do not exist in their pure form, but which can provide a useful yardstick for gauging reality. Moreover, since there is no society in which both criteria cannot be found together, we may examine the influence each has on the other at a given period in time or over the course of time. Such an examination may yield interesting conclusions regarding the connection between nationalism, war, and peace, as the Israeli example will demonstrate.

Even a cursory examination of the position of the two main schools in the study of nationalism—modernism and ethno-symbolism—regarding the connection between nationalism and war shows that neither school has explored this issue in depth.[21] This is a surprising finding for at least two reasons. First, in our conflicted world, ethnic and ethno-national conflicts

are both commonplace and virulent. Half of the nations of the world have experienced such conflicts since the end of the Second World War, and the number of those killed as a result is almost twenty million. This figure does not include the results of acts of genocide committed after wars by ethnic, racial, or religious groups (Gurr, 2000; Muller, 2008). Second, the theory of modernization, which dominated Western thought during the first half of the twentieth century, anticipated a decline in primordial elements such as religion, ethnicity, and ethno-nationalism and in their relevance for politics. It was assumed that these elements would be overshadowed by rational and secular thought, advancing the general good and even leading to the disappearance of wars (Apter, 1965). After all, what could be more rational than to pursue compromise and peace? This, however, did not happen. Critics of modernization began by arguing that modernity often manifests itself as a destructive force, as Zygmont Bauman (1989) has shown with regard to the Holocaust. Moreover, the rational and peace-loving pretensions of modernity have themselves often concealed ethnic, religious, traditional, and primordial components. While these components have sometimes lain dormant, they have also erupted—as, for example, between the two World Wars and following the end of the Cold War—in ancient hatreds, desires for revenge, and uncontrolled collective sentiments, creating fertile ground for war.[22]

The theory of modernization was also dominant for many years in the Israeli academic research writing about this state. Scholars such as Eisenstadt (1967), Perlmutter (1969), and Horowitz and Lissak (1978) depicted Israel as a country that was freeing itself from traditionalism, ethnicity, and religiosity, thereby evolving into a modern, Western, secular, liberal, pluralist, and democratic state, embodying everything that was absent in its surroundings.[23] These scholars were so consumed by their own theoretical and normative assumptions that they not only believed that the reasons for conflict and war could lie exclusively with the "others"—that is, with Israel's Arab neighbors—but also barely even stopped to examine the question. They thereby created what may be termed "the sociology of no-war," which tended to ignore the conflict and certainly not see it in the context of the Israeli society at large (Ben-Eliezer, 2017).

Returning to our discussion of the two main approaches to the study of nationalism: even when these scholars have examined the connection between the nonrational elements embedded within nationalism and wars, their explanations are far from convincing. The modernists reduce these elements to a form of elite manipulation that mobilizes the masses to support

wars that serve, not the needs of the people, but solely those of the leaders themselves (Hobsbawm, 2006: 115; Gagnon, 1994; Oberschall, 2000). However, this explanation is limited and cannot account for the powerful emotions prevalent among people from all levels of society that accompany nationalist wars (Smith, 2010: 60).

As for the ethno-symbolists, as presented, for example, by Smith (1981, 2003; 2010: 36–39), Mosse (1990), and Marvin and Ingle (1999), their claim is that war itself, and in many cases its accompanying rituals (such as memorial ceremonies for the fallen or military parades), fills a social function. It serves as a means for turning the members of the nation into a united and moral community. The nation thus effectively constitutes a type of secular religion, and the secular rituals associated with war, or even war itself, contribute to the continuity and reinforcement of this religion (Hutchinson, 2007, 2017; Hvithamar, Warburg, and Jacobsen, 2009). The problematic nature of the ethno-symbolic analysis lies in its assumption that "social needs," such as the need for unity, are objective and are not reduced to subjective interpretations and to politics around these interpretations. Second, while war may ultimately contribute to national strength and unity, this is not its cause. We must not forget, as well, that the ethno-symbolic analysis paints war in positive colors, ignoring the fact that it is the most violent and destructive phenomenon of human relations. The British historian Elie Kedourie (1993) accurately identified not only the force of nationalism but also its cruel and destructive character—not least in the Middle East. Walker Connor (1994: 28–66) was also right to point out that wars are just as responsible for nation destroying as for nation building. Andreas Wimmer (2006, 2013) sharply criticized the integrative approach of ethno-symbolist scholars, who misinterpreted exclusion as unification and ignored the potential for nationalism to cause death and destruction and to provide an ideological basis for one nation's control over another. While nationalism may include an element of human solidarity, through the definition of "us," this is accompanied by the denial of belonging and participation to "others."[24]

The potential of ethno-nationalism to lead to conflict and war is due to the cultural and political nature of the phenomenon and should not be reduced either to an instrumentalist and political analysis, on the one hand, or to a functionalist and cultural one, on the other.

As an aside, we should note that Kohn did not argue that ethno-nationalism per se causes conflict or war between nations. There are indeed examples, such as Scotland, French Canada, and even Catalonia, of ethnic groups that

are not involved in a violent conflict with the populations that surround them, despite a strong tendency to emphasize their cultural difference from their neighbors. However, when the national aspirations of different communities, which are of course associated with ownership and domination of a given territory, negate each other, a "zero-sum game" perspective may follow, according to which one party's gain is always at the expense of the other. As a result, nationalism may evolve from a purely self-liberating enterprise into a hegemonic one through conflicts and wars. In such situations, ideas of national exclusivity and superiority (a "chosen people"), and the perception of the nation's full, historical, and "natural" right to its territory, can easily serve to justify conflicts and wars. These concepts encourage the attribution of supremacy to one group over others and maximize the exploitation of the benefits and profits that such a situation can yield.[25]

MILITARISM

Militarism is a multifaceted concept: it has no agreed-upon definition, and it is not always easy to disconnect it from specific historical examples and from its normative dimension. Though the term often has been associated most closely with Prussia, and later on with Nazi Germany, it was already in use in the nineteenth century. Indeed, the first use of the term can be found in an anti-Bonapartist slogan used by Republicans and socialists under the French Second Republic (Gillis, 1989; Trauschweizer, 2012).

The term "militarism" refers to a wide range of manifestations: aggressive foreign policy based on threatened and actual use of military force; a tendency for the military to intervene in civilian and political life and to influence social and political developments, in some cases through military coups or the establishment of a military regime; the mobilization of society and of economic resources for military goals; the formation of a large military, armed far beyond defensive or objective needs; a constant arms race; and a dominant ideology that lauds the military, military heroes, and past victories. A militaristic society encourages citizens to join the military and transforms military life and values into a model for society as a whole, including an emphasis on uniforms, military emblems, the carrying of weapons, the adoption of a hierarchical and authoritarian structure, and demands for obedience and discipline replicated from military life to the everyday civil sphere. Militarism can foster not only values such as courage and resourcefulness but

also force, coercion, the sanctification of death, and justification of killing (Berghahn, 1981; Willems, 1986; Mann, 1988; Stavrianakis and Selby, 2013). It is only reasonable to recognize that the diverse range of characteristics and behaviors attributed to this phenomenon (with some observers claiming that militarism simultaneously combines many of these) does not necessarily suggest a conceptual lacuna but, rather, highlights the different prisms through which militarism has been examined.

For many years, discussion of militarism was based on two central and competing traditions—liberalism and Marxism. The weakness of the liberal approach lies in its narrow scope, which examines reality on the basis of a single key criterion: decision-making in society, and the question concerning the extent to which the military can be excluded from this political process. This approach ignores the social, political, and cultural structure that is essential to understanding the full significance and impact of militarism. The second tradition, Marxism, drew a connection between forces of production and forces of destruction in society. In this sense, militarism is a tool for economic exploitation. The debate between liberals and Marxists did a disservice to the concept of militarism, since both sides were preoccupied with questions relating to the character of the society that was engaged in war—democratic and liberal in the former case, and socialist and egalitarian in the latter. The importance of the concept, however, lies primarily in its ability to explain war. We define militarism as the tendency of a society to solve political problems by military means and to legitimize and normalize this approach. The word *tendency* refers to an action that is repeated until it becomes unremarkable and almost a force of habit. The term "legitimize" highlights the manner in which the military solution is perceived as positive and moral and as reflecting the proper and desirable course of action. In this sense, as the German historian Alfred Vagts ([1937] 1959: 15) taught us, the "militaristic way" is not merely the opposite of pacifism—that is to say, the total rejection of organized violence or war—but is also a type of deviation or distancing from the "military way." According to this definition, not every military action, or even every war, necessarily reflects the presence of militarism. Thus a scholar interested in proving the presence of militarism will be required to show that in a given society a tendency is developing to solve political problems by military means, and that this tendency, which is related to the structure of power and to underlying interests, is perceived as legitimate and part of common sense.

In fin-de-siècle Europe, militarism became the twin of ethno-nationalism, revolving around the idea that the nation can realize itself only through war

(e.g., Clark, 2006; Chrastil, 2010). This phenomenon was so conspicuous that we may now propose a "correction" to Charles Tilly's formula, noting that, not only do wars make states and states make war, but also wars make nations and nations make wars. They certainly do so when ethno-nationalism and militaristic ideology coincide.[26]

Some scholars, such as Hobsbawm (2006: 125–54), have argued that nationalism underwent a sharp transition from the political left to the right at the end of the nineteenth century. It is certainly true that the right wing warmly embraced integral nationalism. Berghahn (2006: 16) suggested that one of the reasons for this was the connection that developed between nationalism and Darwin's theory of evolution, which was interpreted as implying that human life is essentially a struggle for the survival of the fittest. Nationalism transformed this theory into a framework for examining the relations between nations and, later, into a perception of racial superiority. Socialist parties across Europe did not adopt this position, but it would be rash to imply that this meant that, at the beginning of the twentieth century, they embraced the universal principle of enlightenment or argued that all humans are completely equal regardless of their national or ethnic identity. In fact, "nationalism overruled Marx"; and after the war, parties around Europe combined particularistic nationalism with socialism, so much so that it became the dominant strand, displacing any democratic and universalist brand of socialism (Sternhell, 1995).

This development is important for our purposes, since Israel's "founding fathers" from the Second and Third Aliyahs were socialists who, after arriving in the country, established labor movements and a socialist trade union. They spoke constantly of equality and international solidarity, but, as Sternhell (1995) wrote, they also favored particularism over universalism and ethno-nationalism over humanism.

In this book I argue that Israeli nationalism—in which, for most of its existence, the ethno-nationalist component has prevailed over the civil component—has become, together with militaristic ideology, a significant factor in the reconstruction of the protracted conflict between Israel and its neighbors, in a way that, over a period of almost one hundred years, led many times to war.[27]

Although in this book I identify militaristic nationalism as an ideology that creates difficulty for the Israelis in their attempts to make peace with the Palestinians and Israel's other neighbors, it is important to emphasize that I do not imply that the responsibility for the conflict between two nations rests with one of them alone. On the level of principle, I do not believe that

questions of blame are relevant in terms of a sociological understanding of this type of national conflict. More importantly, however, this book focuses on a single cause—albeit an important one—of a conflict that certainly has many others as well.

The chapters of the book present the emergence of militaristic nationalism in pre-state Israel; its institutionalization and transformation into a dominant ideology; its long-term influence on the conflict and wars; the changes that have occurred over the years in Israel's national identity that created both the possibility of peace and the failure of the chance for peace; and the emergence of a prominent religious component in Israeli ethno-nationalism and the consequences of these processes. Taken as a whole, the chapters show that militaristic nationalism, to which the religious component was later added, can be seen not only as one of the causes of Israel's wars but also as a phenomenon that prevented the possibility of peace when the chance for a change emerged.

Chapter 2 addresses the beginnings of the phenomenon I refer to as militaristic nationalism in the early twentieth century among Israel's founding fathers. The chapter shows how this approach, which had its opponents, gradually became the ideology of pre-state Israel in the 1940s, carried by the native-born generation. Chapter 3 examines the manner in which the State of Israel emerged in 1948 and became a dominant nation-state thanks to military victories and territorial conquests—a process that included the mass exodus of Palestinians, who became refugees and were not permitted to return. Chapter 4 explains how the fact that Israeli society became a nation-in-arms enabled Israel to wage conventional wars of choice, the first of which was the Sinai War of 1956. As chapter 5 discusses, this was followed by another war of choice: the Six-Day War of 1967. Before these wars, some members of the political leadership presented antiwar positions, but they were unable to overcome the supremacy of the ideology of militaristic nationalism. Chapter 6 discusses the price paid for the 1967 military victory and the occupation of territories, most of which were defined as Israel's ancestral land, manifested in the War of Attrition (1969–1970) and the most traumatic of Israel's wars, the Yom Kippur War of 1973. Chapter 7 examines the most extreme manifestations of Israeli militaristic nationalism, as seen in the Lebanon War (1982), when Israel conquered almost half of Lebanon, including its capital, Beirut, as part of an ambitious and ultimately unsuccessful plan to reshape the Middle East. Following this war, and owing to additional structural factors, a decline was seen in the centrality of the nation-in-arms model during the 1980s as Israel became a neoliberal society. During this

period, society was divided regarding the fate of the Occupied Territories and questions of war and peace. Chapter 8 discusses the manner in which this division within Israel's collective identity led to internal strife in Israel, in the face of the Palestinian uprising against the occupation (the 1987–1993 First Intifada) and the Oslo Accords that followed. On the one hand, regarding internal strife, the "promise of Oslo" was supported by various forces within Israeli society that belonged to what we refer to as "civil society." On the other, the option of peace based on two states between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean was thwarted by elements in Israeli society we term "religious-militaristic society." In these years, it seemed that the concept of liberal and civic nationalism had gained precedence in Israel. However, following the failure of Oslo, symbolized most potently by the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin and by the Hamas terrorist attacks, Israel was dragged into what we term "new" wars reflecting the return of ethnic and militaristic nationalism to the foreground. Chapter 9 considers this resurgence against the background of the Al-Aqsa Intifada, which erupted in September 2000. It also discusses events and developments during this period that are important for our discussion, particularly Israel's "disengagement" from the Gaza Strip and the construction of the Separation Barrier. Chapter 10 brings our discussion up to date with the series of recent wars—the Second Lebanon War, and in particular the numerous IDF operations in the Gaza Strip. These wars are the product of ethnic and militaristic ideology, with the addition of a fundamentalist religious aspect, while the voice of civil society has almost completely disappeared.

Thus the chapters of the book are intended to highlight the basic claim that while war certainly has many reasons, militaristic nationalism in Israel serves as a type of cultural foundation extending over many decades that brings bellicose solutions to reality.

TWO

The Birth of Militaristic Nationalism in Pre-state Israel

The term "Second Aliyah" refers to the wave of Jewish immigration to Palestine out of Zionist motives during the period 1904–1914. Some of those who arrived during this period, such as David Ben-Gurion, later became Israel's founding fathers. They arrived equipped not only with an ethno-national ideology but also with the revolutionary socialist ideals prevalent among large sections of Russian society at the time (Alroi, 2014; Neuman, 2009). Those among them who had a labor orientation gravitated to two political parties: Poalei Zion (Workers of Zion), which was established in Russia, and a new party founded in Palestine in October 1905 under the name Hapoel Hatzair (the Young Worker). The newcomers certainly believed in the importance of the labor movement, but their approach was primarily nationalist. They would soon adopt the slogan "From class to nation" (Ben-Gurion, 1933).

The newcomers faced difficulties finding employment after they arrived in the country. The Jewish farmers, who had immigrated to Palestine around the turn of the century and established agricultural settlements, employed Arab laborers as farmhands and guards. The Zionist laborers resented this, and slogans such as "The conquest of labor" and "Conquer the guard" (from the Arabs) reflected their ethno-national orientation. One of the leaders of Hapoel Hatzair declared, "A nation that hands over its most basic labor of production to others will never be revived. One cannot build a homeland through the labor of others. . . . An essential condition for Zionist fulfillment is that all the labor vocations in the country must be conquered by Jews" (Shapira, 1967: 13–14). From the outset, socialist Zionists adopted a "zero-sum game" view of reality. As the spiritual leader of Hapoel Hatzair, A. D. Gordon, declared, "Are the Arabs the 'masters of the land?' . . . We will find that the Arabs have only a historical right to the land, just like us—except

that our historical right is undoubtedly the greater" (Gordon, 1953: 244–45).

Guarding was also perceived in national terms, and the Labor Zionists criticized Jewish farmers for employing Arab guards. As a member of Hapoel Hatzair explained, "In almost all the [agricultural] settlements, Gentiles guard our property. . . . [W]e place our souls, . . . our plots of land, our homes, and our livestock at the mercy of the gunfire of strangers who mock us for this weakness. . . . And how much humiliation and desecration of God's name there is in this—humiliation of our value, in our own eyes and our neighbors'. . . . And so the Hebrew child learns from the earliest age . . . to comfort himself that Israel has a protector—the Arab guard."[1] The twin phrases "Hebrew labor" and "Hebrew guard" gradually acquired a mythical and almost magical power, as a national need developed into a type of civil religion. The founding conference of Poalei Zion on 4 October 1906 also placed nationalist concerns above the class struggle. This was illustrated, for example, in the decision to add the concept of "national struggle" to the first paragraph of the Communist manifesto, which of course discusses the class struggle (Teveth, 1985: 23).

Labor leaders continued to insist that it was possible to combine nationalist and particularistic fulfillment and universal socialist values. Some historians were impressed by this combination (e.g., Shapira, 1992). Others, however, argued that socialist ideology merely served as a cloak for the aspiration to take control of the Jewish community in Palestine (Shapiro, 1976). The individual was perceived not as an autonomous being but as someone who must put himself or herself in the service of the nation, and society was regarded not as a pluralistic arena but as a source of national unity (Sternhell, 1995).

Shafir (1989) highlights the economic and utilitarian dimension of the slogan "Hebrew labor," which was used to prevent economic competition between Jews and Arabs by creating a segregated labor market. The economic factor was certainly important, but I suggest that the direction of influence between culture and economics may have been the opposite of that implied. In other words, insular ethno-nationalism may have created an economic strategy that suited its orientation and purposes. The Zionists were well aware that the Jews constituted less than 10 percent of the population of the country. Accordingly, they sought to realize their national goal not only through a struggle in the labor market but also by two additional means: immigration and settlement. These means were intended to change the demographic balance in Palestine and to establish a Jewish presence in all

parts of what the Zionists regarded as their historic homeland. In order to take control of territory, they established the Land of Israel Office, whose function was to buy land from Arabs and transfer it to Jewish control for the establishment of Jewish settlements (Ruppin, 1968; Shilo, 1988). The office was headed by Dr. Arthur Ruppin, a Prussian-born Zionist leader, economist, and sociologist who adopted the techniques of domestic colonialism developed by the Prussian regime in order to create a German majority in several Polish territories in the east (Shafir, 1989: 152–53; Weiss, 2008).

Not all the Zionists agreed that it was right to realize the movement's goals through insular and segregationist ethno-nationalism. As early as September 1907, an educator by the name of Yitzhak Epstein published an article titled "The Invisible Question." "We have forgotten," he said, "that there is another people in our beloved Land that has clung to it for centuries and never intended to leave it." Epstein presented "one question that is equal to all the others: the question of our attitude toward the Arabs." The solution, he continued, "depends on the realization of our national hope." Epstein presciently anticipated that the denial of land and employment to Arabs would lead them to revolt. "We must not wake a sleeping lion," he warned, urging the Jews to avoid narrow-minded nationalism, form an alliance with the Arabs, and become familiar with their language, literature, and customs.[2]

Epstein's article sparked a stormy debate. The Zionist movement had no interest in discussing the sensitive issue he had broached, but his article left them with no choice. Again, the zero-sum-game approach was much in evidence, as in the following response from a Labor Zionist leader: "One of the following: if the Land of Israel belongs in national terms to those Arabs[,] . . . then we have no place in it and should tell ourselves openly: we have lost our ancestral Land. If it belongs to us, to the Jewish people, then the national interests of our people come before anything else for us. There is no room for compromise here."[3] Epstein was not the only person to identify the "problem." The well-known thinker and publicist Ahad Ha'am also raised doubts about the success of practical Zionism, fearing that it would provoke an intractable conflict with the Arabs. He argued that the Zionists should confine themselves to establishing a cultural center in Palestine.[4]

The Labor Zionists rejected Ahad Ha'am's position. In order to soften the intensity of the problem, they spoke of class solidarity between Arab and Hebrew laborers and promised that the Zionist project intended not to harm the Arabs but to help them. The "Arab question" would accompany Zionist discourse from this point forward. Intellectuals and historians would

sometimes justify the Zionist project by emphasizing that the members of the movement did not believe they were arriving in an empty land, and that they certainly did not seek to usurp the Arabs (Gorny, 1985; Ettinger, 1996). It is unquestionably true that the Zionists did not ignore the Arabs: how could 70,000 Jews have ignored 750,000 Arabs? However, Labor Zionists did not believe that the Palestinians had national aspirations that had to be acknowledged. Moreover, the Zionists never believed that Arab opposition to their movement should deter them from their efforts to accomplish their national aspirations. Once they had formed this position, the path to the establishment of an armed Jewish force was short.

HASHOMER AND THE JEWISH LEGION

The first substantial Jewish military organization formed in the Yishuv (the pre-state Zionist-Jewish community) was Hashomer (the Guard). The organization's immediate goal was to replace Arab guards with Jews, but its underlying objective was far more ambitious. Hashomer promoted the image of the New Jew: strong, healthy of body and mind, and muscular—the diametric opposite of the weak, dependent Jew of exile. Moreover, its members were the first Zionists to develop the theory of conquering the land by force. The organization's founding meeting discussed the need to liberate the people and the homeland and to establish a Jewish state. The meeting was held under the slogan "In blood and fire Judah fell, in blood and fire Judah will rise." The poem from which these words were taken also includes the words: "We have arisen and returned invigorated youths . . . [t]o redeem our oppressed land! We demand our heritage with a mighty hand!"[5]

Hashomer presented the first model for an idea that would become prevalent in the 1940s: the warrior-farmer. The members of the group had no doubt which of the two words in the phrase was the more important. During its brief period of activity, Hashomer acquired a mythological status. One illustration of this is the fact that the first Zionist youth movement, established in 1913, chose to call itself Hashomer Hatzair (the Young Guard). The founders of the youth movement explained, "Our intention is to educate Hebrew youth with firm muscles, strong will, healthy and normal thought. . . . Hashomer has proven . . . in life and in death that Hebrew youth and Hebrew heroism are alive and well."[6]

The members of Hashomer mimicked aspects of Arab lifestyle and encouraged the myth that they promoted good neighborly relations between Arabs and Jews. Others, however, argue that the members of Hashomer actively sought to clash with Arabs, even when this brought them into conflict with the Jewish inhabitants of the agricultural settlements. In some cases, Jewish farmers demanded "Hashomer" members leave the settlements following such incidents, though they refused to do so. The evidence suggests that even when disagreements between Jews and Arabs had a purely local character, such as quarrels over the grazing of animals, water sources, or theft, Hashomer was quick to add a national dimension to these quarrels and insist on "national honor" rather than conflict management and problem solving (Roi, 1982; Alroi, 2009, 2014; Hildesheimer, 2008). During a visit to Palestine in 1911, the writer and literary critic David Frishman had no doubts about the character of Hashomer: "Rather than guarding themselves, they provoke others. Their main concern is that others should know that the people that lives here is tough and rash, so that they will always be afraid." He warned that the day was coming when their Arab neighbors "will finally awake and unite, and suddenly recognize that they have strength and might; and then they will take their revenge."[7]

The members of Hapoel Hatzair were more moderate than Poalei Zion. Some of them accused the activists of Hashomer of "militarism." This term, which appeared for the first time in the Yishuv, was perceived as referring to external and ostentatious characteristics and to the unnecessary display of military force. The leadership of Poalei Zion would later disband Hashomer—not because of its attitude toward the Arabs, but because the organization's leaders were unwilling to bow to party discipline. Nevertheless, the story of Hashomer illustrates the emergence of a new approach whose adherents did not seek to live in Palestine alongside the Arabs but to dominate them through armed might. In this sense, Hashomer represented an early manifestation of Israeli militaristic nationalism.

Meanwhile, the situation in the Middle East was changing. The revolution of the Young Turks in 1908 inspired the rise of Arab nationalism throughout the Ottoman Empire, and the exclusivist approach of the Second Aliyah encouraged the first signs of Palestinian nationalism. The subsequent outbreak of the First World War also had a direct impact on Palestine, which was still under Ottoman rule. The Zionist movement decided that it should actively support Britain in the war in order to advance its goal of conquering Palestine by force.

One of the key exponents of this position was Ze'ev Jabotinsky, a Jew from Odessa who gained fame as a writer, playwright, poet, and journalist. Jabotinsky had studied in Italy in his youth, where he developed a complex and contradictory philosophy that combined both liberal and nationalist elements (Nedava, 1980: 18). Like many other Jews of his generation, Jabotinsky was profoundly influenced by the Kishinev pogrom of 1903, in which forty-nine Jews were murdered, and began to identify with the Zionist movement. After Turkey joined Germany's side in the war, on 30 October 1914, Jabotinsky realized that the Middle East was about to change. He declared that the time had come for military Zionism and sought to establish Jewish military units under the command of the British army (Nedava, 1980: 34–35). Jabotinsky contacted a group of over a thousand Jews who were living in a camp near Alexandria, Egypt, after they had been expelled from Palestine by the Turks. Among them was Yosef Trumpeldor, who had become the first Jew to reach the rank of officer in the Russian military without converting to Christianity. Trumpeldor had received numerous medals during the Russo-Japanese War, lost his arm in the Battle of Port Arthur, and was captured by the Japanese. After his discharge from the military, he became a Zionist and emigrated to Palestine in 1912, but was later forced to leave because of the First World War. While in Egypt he met Jabotinsky, and the two men decided to form Jewish battalions that would participate in the "liberation of the Land" alongside the British forces.

After protracted negotiations, the British agreed to establish a "mule corps" to support the military as an ancillary force. Colonel John Peterson, a non-Jewish officer, was appointed commander of the corps, while Trumpeldor served as his deputy. After two weeks' training, the Jewish soldiers reached the front line at Gallipoli in Turkey. During the months of fierce fighting, very few returned to Alexandria healthy and unscathed, but the Jewish brigade won widespread admiration in British military circles. This was the first military unit in two thousand years that was composed entirely of Jewish soldiers, and it used Hebrew as its working language. Soon after, this precedent enabled the formation of Jewish combat brigades (Eilam, 1973).

The first one, the Thirty-Eighth Brigade Royal Fusiliers, was formed on 27 July 1917, in part thanks to the involvement of Chaim Weizmann, a Zionist leader based in London. The soldiers in the brigade were sent to Egypt for four months' training before participating in the conquest of Palestine. Two additional brigades were later established, one of which was composed of American Jewish volunteers who had responded to the call for

a volunteer movement inspired by Ben-Gurion and Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, two Zionist leaders who had been expelled from Palestine and had reached the United States. The two leaders were already well-known public figures, and their recruitment to the military as privates had a strong impact. There was no doubt about the significance of the draft; as Ben-Zvi later explained, "For generations, it had been accepted that the Jews were not capable of organizing an army, and this had become a kind of joke. The Jewish Brigade put an end to the joke. . . . The brigades were created . . . to defend the honor of the Jewish people, conquer the right to the Land of Israel, and secure redemption through military force."[8]

As the British began to advance through Palestine, reaching Tel Aviv, Jaffa, and then Jerusalem, many young Jews who lived in Palestine sought to join the victorious army. Two young graduates of the first Hebrew-language high school in Tel Aviv, Eliahu Golomb and Dov Hoz, were among the eager recruits. The two young men had seen a friend murdered by Arabs while they were working in Galilee, and the traumatic event led them to believe that, alongside farming and settlement, the Yishuv must be capable of defending itself. They were examples of what Mannheim (1952) termed a "sociological generation." Different generations experience similar phenomena but react in different ways according to the different circumstances of each generation. The youngsters became known as "activists," a term that was used to refer to those who rejected the moderate approach advocated by the leadership of the Yishuv, the generation of their parents (Gorny, 1973: 20–21). When they heard that the Jewish battalions had arrived in Egypt, they wrote to Jabotinsky and asked to join the force in order to "redeem the Land through its military conquest" (*Jewish Battalions,* 1968: 41).

The Jewish battalions marked the beginning of the cooperation between Great Britain and the Zionist movement—a process that reached its peak with the Balfour Declaration of 2 November 1917. The declaration, released by the British War Cabinet, referred only to a "national home" for the Jews in Palestine, and this on the proviso that "nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine." Nevertheless, from the Zionist standpoint the declaration constituted a valuable diplomatic achievement. Jewish ethno-nationalism, and particularly the motif of a return to the ancestral homeland, appealed to many people in Britain who were philo-Semites and had been raised on the biblical stories. In August 1919, the foreign secretary, Lord Balfour, wrote, "Zionism, be it right or wrong, good or bad, is rooted in age-long traditions,

in present needs, in future hopes, of far profounder import than the desires and prejudices of the 700,000 Arabs who now inhabit that ancient land" (Friesel, 1977: 31). Weizmann was wise enough to utilize this potential to recruit support for the Zionist cause.

The importance of the Balfour Declaration was reinforced in 1918, when the US president, Woodrow Wilson, issued a fourteen-point declaration supporting the right to self-determination of nations on the basis of the interests of the relevant populations. Later on, the declaration was further confirmed, first at the 1920 San Remo Conference and then, in 1922, by the League of Nations, which turned it into an international document.[9]

Unsurprisingly, the Palestinians, who were not even mentioned in the declaration, and the Arabs of the surrounding countries were quick to express their opposition to it and to the Zionist settlement plans. They realized that the Zionist goal was to take the country and establish a nation-state, and that the term "national home" was merely intended to placate them (Kimmerling and Migdal, 1999: 73–75; Kabha, 2010: 10–13). The British promised the Arabs that the declaration did not imply any intention to establish a Jewish state or Jewish government, but this did not dispel their fears.

The formation of the Jewish battalions raised for the first time questions about the identity and future of the Yishuv. Members of Hapoel Hatzair expressed their concern that the brigades would encourage militarism and overshadow agricultural labor, which they considered a more important national priority (Shapira, 1967: 180). However, most of the youth in the Yishuv preferred Jabotinsky's argument that the phenomenon of the brigades was a positive one and would lead to the conquest of the Land. In the opening speech at the Conference of Volunteers, held on 15–16 January 1918, the speakers reflected this mood. Golomb declared, "We thought that we would be able to reach a situation of a working majority that would grant us all our missing rights without blood and fire[,] . . . but . . . the Arabs will not effectively relinquish the land in which they constitute a majority" (Malkin, 2007: 177–78). Rachel Yannait, a young woman born in Russia who abandoned her Diaspora name, Golda Lishinsky, in favor of the name of a king and high priest from the Hasmonean period, Alexander Yannai, contributed to the ecstatic atmosphere of the conference: "The primitive truth is that the right to a country is acquired first of all by blood. This truth imposes its rule over us at this historical moment" (Gorny, 1973: 19). Clearly, this was no longer the Zionism of Herzl, who sought a practical solution to the distress facing the Jews and presented a model of a civil state with equal rights for all

citizens. The new form of Zionism, overtly ethno-national, sought its justification in historical sources—including a return to the Bible and the rejection of Jewish life in the Diaspora—and adopted a belief in using power, even force if necessary, as a means to solve the "Zionist problem."[10]

At the end of the war, a question arose regarding whether the Jewish battalions should be dismantled or left intact. The debate on this issue referred again to the "problem of militarism," and some within the Labor Zionist camp spoke out against a "militaristic psychosis" as embodied in Hashomer's slogan "By blood and fire" (Shapira, 1967: 223–25; Gordon, 1953: 403). In the end, the British decided to dissolve the brigades—a severe blow for the supporters of the militaristic approach. After the war, Golomb and Hoz continued to advocate the liberation of the country by military force (Malkin, 2007: 219). When the daily *Haaretz* reported that Weizmann felt that the need for a brigade had passed, and that a Jewish militia under the authority of the British Mandate would be sufficient, Hoz sent him a strongly worded letter on behalf of the members of his brigade, accusing him of adopting an excessively moderate position (Malkin, 2007: 297).

Does the story of the Jewish battalions imply that the Labor Zionists did not wish to determine the fate of Palestine by force? Is the lesson of their dissolution that the Land of Israel would be conquered not by "blood and fire" but through the tilling of its soil? Some Israeli historians, such as Anita Shapira (1992), have adopted this view. I suggest that they have taken the easy road. It is true that the ultimate goal was not realized at this point in history: the Land of Israel was not conquered by the military force of the brigades, and a Jewish state was not established by force. However, it would be wrong to suggest that this led to the abandonment of this approach. The British decision to dismantle the brigades not only led to the conclusion that military force was vital in order to achieve the Zionist ambitions, but it also reinforced awareness that the movement could not afford to be dependent on the whims of others (the British). If the episode of the Jewish battalions had indeed led to the conclusion that the path of military might should be abandoned, we would expect that Golomb and Hoz would have become marginal figures in Zionist history. The opposite is the case. The two men were persuaded to join forces with the Labor Zionists after they realized that this movement would enable them to advance their vision of the military conquest of the country. Most importantly, perhaps, the Labor Zionists would follow this path without bombastic declarations and slogans, through steady, thorough, and practical action. Golomb and Hoz went on to become key

figures in the Labor Party and in the Histadrut—the powerful labor union that included all the Jewish workers in Palestine. As for their military inclination, this was expressed in the establishment in 1920 of a military organization called the Haganah (Defense) under the auspices of the party and the workers organization.

If we define *militarism* as the external trappings of uniforms or ranks, or as the humiliation by superiors of their subordinates, then the Labor Zionist movement was free of such features. The idea that a military way of life was inherently positive and should be replicated, in some form or other, in civilian life—as Jabotinsky advocated—was not generally accepted in this circle. Nevertheless, the Labor Zionists had also long since learned the lesson that the Zionist aspirations would ultimately be realized by means of force directed against the Arabs. Yitzhak Tabenkin, one of the leaders of Labor Zionism, expressed this awareness in 1920: "Our Labor and Zionist leaders are being forced to deceive the public with the Utopian vision that we will be able to settle here while maintaining peace with the Arabs. But for the Arab, the justice of war is a way of life." His conclusion was that "all the force in the world will not enable us to reach a compromise solution with the Arabs, but only our strengthening in this Land on the basis of national strength" (Gorny, 1973: 134–36).

DIVERSIONS AND DELAYS: "THE EVENTS"

The second Syrian-Arab Conference met in Damascus on 27 February 1920 and was attended by Arab public figures from Palestine. The conference determined that Palestine was an integral part of Syria and urged the Arabs to oppose the Balfour Declaration and Jewish immigration. On 7 March 1920, the Syrian Congress appointed Feisal king of "United Syria." The developments were welcomed enthusiastically by the Arabs of Palestine. Flag-waving demonstrators in almost all the Arab cities shouted slogans such as "Down with Zionism" and "Death to the Jews" (Malkin, 2007: 274). The charged atmosphere soon led to physical attacks on the Yishuv. The first came on 4 April 1920, when a crowd of Arabs who had returned from the traditional Nabi Musa celebrations attacked Jews in the Jewish Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem, shouting "Idbah al-yahud" (Slaughter the Jews). Six Jews were killed and over two hundred injured. The leading figure inciting the masses was Haj Amin al-Husseini, who had just returned from Damascus

and headed an organization of young members of the prominent Arab families formed to oppose the Balfour Declaration. The British police failed to halt the rioters. Extensive looting ensued, women were raped, and synagogues torched. Weizmann complained to the British high commissioner about the failure to curb the violence, only to be told that the commissioner must also consider the Arab viewpoint and understand that the Arabs of Palestine saw Zionism as an immediate threat to their political and economic well-being (Reinharz, 1996: 361). The calm that had prevailed between Jews and Arabs in Palestine before the riots would never return. In May 1921, Arabs again attacked Jews, and acts of murder, rape, and looting spread across the entire country. The rioting continued for five days, leaving 47 Jews dead and 140 injured. On the Arab side, 48 people were killed and 73 injured, mainly owing to the use of firearms by the British military (Shapira, 1967: 352).

As the high commissioner's comments emphasized, the British recognized that the cause of the riots was the sense of threat among the Arabs because of the growing strength of the Zionist enterprise. Their conclusion was that Zionism must be curtailed. The British White Paper of 3 July 1922 was based on the principle that a balance of power must be maintained between the two sides. The paper reconfirmed Britain's commitment to the Balfour Declaration but also clarified starkly that Palestine would never be Jewish in the sense that England is English. The most significant practical ramification of this approach was the restriction of Jewish immigration. The British also decided to remove Transjordan from the area of the Jewish "national home." Lastly, the high commissioner declared that the British government would never allow a Jewish government to dominate an Arab majority and would not accept the usurping of Arab land and holy places.

Before the British Parliament approved the white paper, it was forwarded to the leaders of the World Zionist Organization and to a delegation of Arab leaders present in London at the time. The Arab delegation argued that the document imposed an unfair compromise between the two sides, and rejected it (Freundlich and Yogev, [1975] 2003: 291). The Zionists, under Weizmann's leadership, were also unenthusiastic about the white paper and saw the removal of Transjordan as the "ripping apart of the Land of Israel," as Weizmann announced, and as "the amputation of part of our body," as another Zionist leader, Moshe Shertok, declared (Naor, 2001). Nevertheless, the Zionists chose to focus on the advantages offered by the white paper, which left the Balfour Declaration intact, and eventually granted their approval. This was not the last time that the Zionists chose to see the glass as

half full, whereas the Arabs, who sensed that their land was gradually being taken from them, could only see a glass that was entirely empty. The white paper was duly presented to the British Parliament on 7 July 1922 and approved by a large majority.

The Zionists were careful not to create any possibility for real diplomacy or practical negotiations with the Arabs. Tom Segev (2018: 156) quotes Ben-Gurion's remarks following the tension between Jews and Arabs caused by the dispossession of Arab peasants from lands that were bought by the Zionist movement: "Everyone sees difficulty in the question of relations between Jews and Arabs, but not everyone sees that there is no solution to this question. . . . [T]here is no solution, there is an abyss, and nothing can fill this abyss. . . . We want the Land of Israel to be ours as a nation. . . . The Arabs want the land to be theirs as a nation. . . . I do not know which Arab will agree that the Land will be [given] to the Jews." At the third conference of the Achdut Ha'avodah (Unity of Labor) Party, on 19 January 1923, Ben-Gurion explained, "We must avoid any illusion that we can ensure our presence in the Land through diplomacy with the Arabs. . . . We must organize ourselves and defend our lives here." Responding to those still enchanted by the "illusion" of diplomacy, Ben-Gurion asserted, "We are facing national opposites: a national war is being waged against us."[11] Ben-Gurion's biographer (Teveth, 1985: 110–17) presents countless quotes showing that, even in the early 1920s, Ben-Gurion already saw the relations between Jews and Arabs as a clash between two national movements preparing for a future conflict. Moreover, Ben-Gurion recognized from an early stage that the Zionists would not benefit from compromise. And when a leader of the Achdut Ha'avodah Party, Shlomo Kaplansky, proposed at the third party congress in 1924 that a parliament be set up in Palestine, composed of both Jews and Arabs—an idea that had been suggested by the British—Ben-Gurion firmly rejected the idea, and the proposal was defeated (Lockman, 1996: 77–78). Even at this stage, the maximum concession by the Jews was a willingness to grant the Arabs autonomy within which they would maintain their rights (Teveth, 1985: 61). From the standpoint of Realpolitik, in terms of the balance of power between the two sides at the time, this was an illusion. But national movements are driven not by rational judgments but by a passionate belief in the justness of their cause. The means chosen to realize this goal, however, were thoroughly rational: the gradual, silent, and consistent acquisition of power of various types—economic, political, and social.

Chaim Weizmann, who became the president of the World Zionist Organization in 1921, was a full partner in this approach, recognizing that Zionism's success depended on its gradual implementation without the need to declare the ultimate goal (Freundlich and Yogev, [1975] 2003: 21–22). The Zionists had several reasons for concealing their true objective. The first was their fear of a militant reaction by the Arabs; the second, concern that the British would withdraw their sponsorship of the Zionist project; the third, the danger that such a reaction would create chaos that would deter Jews from emigrating to Palestine; and the fourth, that a Zionist declaration of the desire for a state would imply an intention to expel Arabs. Some observers have portrayed Weizmann as a moderate and humane Zionist leader who believed that there was room for both peoples and hoped that the Arabs would recognize this and benefit from the arrival of the Jews.[12] Equally, however, he could be depicted as an intelligent and even cunning leader who recognized that the time for forceful Zionism was coming, but that the movement must not rush this process (Rose, 1990: 125; Friesel, 1977: 161–62). However, not everyone in the Zionist camp was satisfied with this tactical ruse.

THE IRON WALL

Jabotinsky, dubbed "the Jewish Garibaldi" by his admirers, was imprisoned by the British for his involvement in the clashes between Jews and Arabs in Jerusalem in 1920. After his release, he began to lead opposition to policies of the Zionist Executive. His main argument was that the answer to all the problems was not tactical trickery but the use of weapons. His attacks provoked an angry reaction from most of the Zionist leaders. Yitzhak Greenbaum, one of the leaders of the Zionist movement in Poland, responded, "Jabotinsky has declared that we should put rifles in the hands of the Jews. . . . So we must ask: Are we prepared for this? The time has not yet come for an overt war against the Arabs" (Freundlich and Yogev, [1975] 2003: 251–53).

Jabotinsky attempted to explain his position to the Zionist representatives, focusing on the assertion that "there is no one to talk to" on the other side. Moreover, the goals of the Arab national movement were identical to those of the Zionists. "Do you believe that a people sells the right to hold its land?" he asked rhetorically. His conclusion was stark: the Zionists must establish an "iron wall" in order to realize their goals through the use of

weapons. "We may tell them [the Arabs] whatever we like about the innocence of our aims, watering them down and sweetening them," he wrote, "but they know what we want."[13]

Jabotinsky also sought to reveal what he regarded as the true positions behind the slogans of the Zionist Executive and the Labor Zionists. "There is no difference between our 'militarists' and our 'vegetarians,'" he declared—both groups sought to acquire the Land by force. "We all demand that there should be an iron wall," he asserted—and correctly. In response to allegations that he was a "militarist," Jabotinsky wrote a further article, "The Ethics of the Iron Wall." He explained, "If it [Zionism] is just, then justice must be realized without taking into consideration anyone's consent or lack of consent."[14] These articles were written after Jabotinsky resigned from the Zionist Executive in January 1923. In 1925, he initiated the formation of the Revisionist Zionist movement, as well as the youth movement Betar (an acronym for the "Trumpeldor Alliance"), which became his pride and joy. Betar emphasized military training and culture, an approach that differed considerably from that of the socialist Zionist youth movements. The participants in the Betar youth groups heard lectures on radical nationalism; the state was portrayed as a natural organism, while the individual human was regarded less as an autonomous being and more as part of a state that constituted a supreme moral value (Stein-Ashkenazi, 1997: 59).

Betar saw militarism as a positive concept. The movement's first newsletter in Riga, Lithuania, published in July 1928, included the article "Militarism as a Worldview." Benjamin Lubotzky, the author of the article, praised those who criticize "the weak and sophists who speak only of peace and love," and saw militarism not only as a political demand but also as a way of life and an ideology (Stein-Ashkenazi, 1997: 18). Jabotinsky, too, admired military life, discipline, and obedience, and he presented a stark demand: "Youths—learn to shoot!"[15]

Jabotinsky appointed himself the head of Betar, a position he would retain until his death. He encouraged a personality cult around himself in a manner similar to that which surrounded Marshal Piłsudski in Poland and other leaders of radical right-wing and Fascist groups across Europe. Like these movements, which flourished during periods of crisis in European democracy, Jabotinsky also centered Betar on a belief in the use of force to solve national problems. Support for Fascism was relatively widespread at the time. The uniforms and customs developed by Betar during this period were similar to those prevalent in Italian Fascist circles and in the Fascist militias of

Central Europe. Jabotinsky was also attracted by the romantic nationalism, heroism, and national eschatology that were promoted by the Polish Legion during this period and sought to transfer these features to Betar (Shavit, 1986; Shapira, 1989).

The revolutionary motif of the "New Jew"—normal, healthy, and disconnected from the character of the Diaspora—was shared by all the Zionist movements, and in this respect Jabotinsky differed little from his socialist Zionist rivals. The same is true of the rejection of liberalism, the refusal to place the individual in the center, and the demand that the individual mobilize for the good of the collective. Betar adopted from the Labor Zionist movement the concept of the "pioneer" to denote someone who devotes his or her life to the collective cause. Trumpeldor's death at the hands of an Arab armed group in a small, isolated Jewish settlement in the north of the country served as the foundation for a formative myth of national heroism and sacrifice and was presented as an ideal both by Labor Zionists and by the Revisionists (Rogel, 1979; Zertal, 2002: 25–44). Both Labor Zionism and revisionism saw a nation not as a matter of choice but as the product of historical determinism. Accordingly, ownership of territory—the "homeland"—was considered both natural and indivisible. Even the recognition that the Zionist movement would ultimately secure its goals by force, including by military means, was shared by both wings of Zionism. The disagreement related solely to the timing, and the differences were mainly stylistic. However, there were others in the Yishuv, on both sides of the political map, who believed that it was possible to shape a completely different reality.

BRIT SHALOM AND BRIT HABIRYONIM

The Brit Shalom (Peace Alliance) association was established in 1925 by individuals convinced that it would not be possible to realize Zionist aspirations without taking into account the Arab majority in the country, and without recognizing that this majority also had national aspirations of its own. Many of the association's members had immigrated to Palestine from Germany. They came from petty bourgeois backgrounds, and their Zionism was motivated not by economic distress but by their experience as Jews in an anti-Semitic society.[16] This background led them to develop a moral perception regarding the Arabs that was not shared by most of the members of the Zionist movement. Like many other Zionists, they adopted an ethno-nationalist

ideology; but unlike others, they argued that cultural ethno-nationalism need not be translated into a political approach based on the domination and discrimination of another people (Ratzabi, 2008).

The moral position of the members of Brit Shalom was also influenced by the developments in Central and Eastern Europe. The new states formed on the ruins of the old empires—Czechoslovakia, Poland, Yugoslavia, and Romania—defined themselves as nation-states, despite the fact that each included many different nationalities. Thus the state became a dominant nation-state, an instrument for the ethnic and national control of minorities, who found themselves with the status of aliens in their own land. The experience of Germany following unification in 1870 also profoundly influenced the worldview of these nation-states, particularly the focus on the state, extreme nationalism, and militarism—values that ultimately led to the outbreak of the First World War. In January 1918, the well-known author Stefan Zweig wrote to Martin Buber, who would later become the spiritual father of Brit Shalom, inquiring "whether the war had led the Zionists to abandon the dangerous dream of a Jewish state based on canons, flags, and medals?" Buber did not disagree with Zweig's warning but argued that pacifism was not the only way to advance the Zionist cause.[17] Interestingly, however, he wrote to Hugo Bergman on the same day, acknowledging that "the majority of the Zionist leaders (and presumably of those they lead) are now unbridled nationalists (according to the European model). . . . Unless we manage to establish an authoritative counter-force, the soul of the movement will be corrupted."[18]

Buber was a philosopher, intellectual, and sociologist. In 1921 he spoke at the Zionist Congress, hoping to promote a moderate vision for Zionism. He emphasized that Zionism did not aim to displace or dominate another people or to deny its rights. The movement sought to form a just alliance with the Arabs so that their shared home would be become a flourishing community.[19] Buber had developed practical proposals on the basis of his approach, but he encountered fierce opposition from the congress. After a stormy debate and protracted political maneuvering, his resolution was amended three times, completely losing its original meaning in the process. Buber felt betrayed and complained that the final version of the resolution included empty phrases (Buber, 1988: 60–64). Following the treatment of his proposal, Buber wrote that he had decided to end his involvement in party politics.[20]

Another participant in the 1921 meeting of the Zionist Congress was Robert Weltsch, who was one of Buber's most prominent students, alongside Hugo Bergman and Hans Kohn. After the meeting of the Zionist Congress

in Vienna in August 1925, the three men founded Brit Shalom, together with Arthur Ruppin and other figures. As the official responsible for preparing the Yishuv's settlement plans, Ruppin was more aware than most Zionist leaders of the serious negative consequences of the purchase of land by Jews from rich Arabs and the displacement of the poor Arabs who lived on the land. Ruppin was a practical man, not a detached intellectual, and he was driven to seek a solution to the problem by his conviction that this issue was jeopardizing the entire Zionist enterprise (Ruppin, 1968: 212). Ruppin supported a separation between Jews and Arabs but argued that this could be implemented without either people dominating the other. Moreover, if it proved impossible to divide the country, it could at least be shared (Gerling, 2008). At the 1925 Zionist Congress, Ruppin presented his proposal for a binational state, to be established "without either side enjoying governmental seniority [Vorherrschaft] over the other, and without the oppression of the other." Ruppin envisaged a situation where both peoples "will work side by side, with complete equality of rights, to promote the economic and cultural development of the country" (Lavsky, 1988).

Paradoxically, Brit Shalom and the Revisionist movement shared a similar view of reality in one respect—namely, the urgent need to solve the problem of Arab-Jewish relations. Both circles criticized the delaying and denying tactics of the Zionist movement and the Labor Zionist parties. But while the Revisionists opted for military force as a solution, Ruppin and the other members of Brit Shalom preferred compromise and, in particular, advocated the creation of a binational state.

Hans Kohn, another prominent figure in Brit Shalom, lived in Jerusalem at the time and was employed in the Jewish Agency for Israel. Kohn was already an experienced scholar of nationalism. His research approach was influenced by the example of Zionism—and his position on Zionism was colored by his scholastic positions. Kohn saw the Arab resistance to the arrival of the Zionists as an example of the aspiration for independence that develops among oppressed peoples. As we saw in chapter 1, Kohn was one of the first scholars to acknowledge that nationalism could appear in different forms: alongside liberal and civic nationalism, influenced by the principles of the Enlightenment, there was also an ethnocentric and self-absorbed ethnonationalism. This form of nationalism develops the hallmarks of xenophobia and a superiority complex toward others, particularly when threatened by them. Kohn was aware that German nationalism had undergone this process, mutating from a liberal form of the phenomenon into an imperialist and

racist ideology. He hoped that Zionism would not follow the same course, but he gradually arrived at the conclusion that his hopes were unfounded.

In order to ensure that a binational state would be feasible, most of the members of Brit Shalom opposed a principle that was seen as cardinal by most Zionists: Jewish immigration to Palestine. Brit Shalom recognized that the purpose of such immigration was to alter the demographic balance between Jewish and Arabs. They also realized that the Zionists sought to use demographics to establish new power relations between the two sides. They were not wrong in these assumptions, of course, but it seems that the members of Brit Shalom ignored—perhaps deliberately—the fact that a key purpose of Zionism, if not its main purpose, was to solve the problem of the distress facing the Jews.

For the Revisionists, any tendency to take into consideration the desires of another nation, even if only for reasons of Realpolitik, was tantamount to "diplomatic treachery"—the term used by the international executive of the Revisionist movement to describe Brit Shalom. The Labor Zionists also considered Brit Shalom to be highly dangerous. In 1925, shortly after the association was founded, Ben-Gurion met with its members. He claimed that the binational formula was misleading and vague, and he accused the members of Brit Shalom of adhering to impractical positions. You say, he began, that we do not want to be a majority in Palestine, but to be many. What does "many" mean? One hundred thousand? One hundred fifty thousand? Many compared to what—compared to the Arab community in the Land [of Israel], or compared to the Jewish population in the Diaspora? Does this imply that we will not be able to multiply in the Land and become a majority? Can we countenance such a restriction? Ben-Gurion's questions were designed to highlight the difference between himself, as a practical man, and the intellectuals of Brit Shalom, but his audience was unconvinced. How, they retorted, did Ben-Gurion intend to solve the "Arab problem?" But Ben-Gurion denied the very assumption of an "Arab problem." Like many other Zionist leaders, he repeated the argument that the Arabs have many countries in the region, while the Jews have none.[21]

Ben-Gurion was forthright in his declaration of the goal: "The Jewish people wants to be a free people in its own land and to be independent, that is to say: a Jewish state." Naturally, he immediately added: "A state . . . with a Jewish majority." Ben-Gurion assured those present at the meeting that "this will not be a state that rules others, but a state that will ensure that we will not be ruled." This formula echoes similar comments that were often made by

Weizmann during this period. However, neither Weizmann nor Ben-Gurion explained what formula would allow the Zionists to be neither rulers nor ruled. Accordingly, Ben-Gurion's position does not seem to be any more practical than that advocated by the members of Brit Shalom, unless he had ideas that he preferred not to state aloud. In any case, from Ben-Gurion's perspective the idea of a binational state was perceived as a dangerous concession by the Zionists. As someone who believed in force, why should he adopt a course of weakness?[22] In the meantime, it was not the Jews who used violence.

In the summer of 1929, Arabs on their way back from the mosques attacked Jewish neighborhoods and settlements in and around Jerusalem, and the violence soon spread to other parts of the country. In Hebron, 66 Jews were massacred, most of them traditional Jews who were not Zionists and whose families had lived in the city for centuries. In the mixed city of Safed, too, almost 20 Jews were murdered. In total, the riots ended with 130 Jewish fatalities and hundreds of injuries. Over 100 Arabs were killed and many others injured, mainly during the suppression of the riots by the British.[23]

Some observers blamed provocations by Jabotinsky's movement for the outbreak of the riots. During this period the Labor Zionist leaders made a great effort to prevent the conflict from acquiring the character of a religious confrontation. The Western Wall, which was considered the most sacred Jewish site since the destruction of the Temple, was also venerated by the Muslims. Recognizing the sensitivity of the site, the British imposed restrictions on Jewish prayer at the Western Wall. In August 1929 a dispute erupted regarding these restrictions, and two hundred youths from the Betar movement held a procession to the Western Wall. The mufti were quick to exploit the incident, claiming that the Jews were intending to occupy the Islamic holy places, and the riots erupted the next day (Gorny, 1973: 162–63; Teveth, 1985: 129–30). The Labor Zionists accused Jabotinsky of inflaming tensions—something that should hardly have come as a surprise, since Jabotinsky had no interest in "anesthetizing" the Palestinians and rejected the tactics of diversion and procrastination.[24] The events also influenced the members of Brit Shalom. They, too, opposed the diversion tactics and hoped to persuade Weizmann that their binational goal did not necessarily contradict the Zionist ideal. Weizmann indeed had a reputation as a moderate Zionist, but the ambitions of Brit Shalom reveal a large measure of naivete. Weizmann's speeches at the Zionist congresses often included the claim that there was room for both peoples in the country, and that Zionism did not seek to expel the Arabs (Weltsch, 1951: 223). However, Weizmann, too, was part of the

Zionist mechanism of diversion and procrastination. He saw the members of Brit Shalom as factionalists who were damaging the Zionist cause: "This new revisionism is much more dangerous than the type of Jabotinsky[:] . . . groups of extreme pacifists, more or less like Magnes [the Hebrew university's president], who would seek to flee the battle and give up everything."[25]

Some members of Brit Shalom drew profoundly pessimistic conclusions from the riots of 1929. Weltsch wrote in the spring of 1930: "This small state . . . will always be armed to the teeth against domestic irredentism and against the 'enemies' around. Aware of its weakness, it will constantly remain a hothouse for excessive nationalism."[26] Faithful to this dystopian vision, Kohn completely rejected Zionism, leaving Palestine and never returning (Kohn, 1965: 50). His teacher Buber continued his efforts to moderate the Zionist position, explaining to Mahatma Gandhi in a letter: "I belong to a group of people who, since the occupation of Palestine by the British, have not ceased to struggle to ensure that the Jews will seek a true peace with the Arabs. By 'true peace,' we meant and we mean that both peoples will run the nation's economy together, without either being entitled to impose its will on the other. In light of the international practices of our time, this seems to us to be very difficult, but it is not impossible."[27]

The British responded to the events in their own fashion. Rather than seeing the Jews as the victims of Arab violence, they focused on the threat that Jewish nationalism posed to the status quo and which was unacceptable not only to the Arabs but also to the British themselves. The result was the Passfield White Paper of October 1930. This was the second British White Paper that concluded that the Balfour Declaration was discriminatory toward the Arabs and, accordingly, that Jewish immigration to Palestine should be restricted and the sale of land to Jews prohibited. The 1930 white paper also recommended the formation of a legislative council reflecting the interests of both sides (Teveth, 1985: 186).

By the Zionist Congress of 1931, the Revisionists had become the third-largest faction in the movement. They tried unsuccessfully to persuade the movement to define its "final goal"—the establishment of a state—and the tension between the two wings of the movement was palpable (Teveth, 1987: 23). This tension escalated into open confrontation following the assassination on 16 June 1933, on the beach in Tel Aviv, of Chaim Arlozorov, one of the young leaders of the Labor Zionists. Although the identity of the assassins remained unknown, the Labor Zionist leaders exploited the incident to accuse the Revisionists of responsibility. They referred to the incitement against Arlozorov

in right-wing newspapers, owing to his efforts to reach an agreement with the Nazis enabling the Jews to leave Germany and immigrate to Palestine. The leaders of Mapai, the dominant Labor Zionist Party by this time, successfully exploited the assassination as part of their campaign for the elections to the Zionist Executive, particularly in Poland, and they duly received over half the votes cast.[28] From this point on, the labor movement in Palestine became the leading force in the international Zionist movement (Teveth, 1987: 53; Even, 1992: 189). The exploitation of the assassination damaged not only the Revisionists but also a small splinter faction that had broken away from Jabotinsky and was known as Brit Habiryonim—"the Thugs' Alliance."

Brit Habiryonim was active from 1930 through 1933, during which time it fiercely opposed the positions of the Zionist movement, Mapai, the British authorities, and even the Revisionist movement, which was accused of an excessively "moderate" approach to British rule. The group was founded by three intellectuals who had all abandoned socialism in favor of a militant right-wing ideology. The group's name embodied its desire to use brute force to impose Jewish dominion over the entire Land of Israel, which it argued belonged exclusively to the Jewish people. This was a brand of Zionism that called for "blood and fire" without the slightest moral reservation and without concealing its intentions. The group even declared its support for acts of individual terror in order to advance the national goal. However, Brit Habiryonim was mainly significant for its publications. The group's writings were based on the propagation of lies and incitement, including provocation to hatred of Arabs. Uri Zvi Greenberg, the poet and one of the three leaders of the group, likened Arabs to wolves or beasts that form murderous packs in order to attack Jews. The events of 1929 certainly influenced his positions in this respect, and in particular he could see no difference between the riots and the anti-Semitic pogroms of Europe. His conclusion was unequivocal, and he called for revenge, terror, and national activism.[29]

After the Hebrew University of Jerusalem established a chair for international peace under the inspiration of the cultural Zionism advocated by Ahad Ha'am, Brit Habiryonim issued death threats against Judah Magnes, an advocate of a binational state. They disrupted the opening ceremony and interrupted the speakers. In their opposition to the chair at the university, they cooperated with the "Revisionist Section," one of whose members was Benzion Netanyahu, whose son Benjamin would later become prime minister of Israel. "The national Israeli youth," they wrote, "believes that the establishment of a chair for peace at our university is an important link in the

chain of treason[,] . . . an anti-Zionist act and a stab in the back of Zionism" (Ahimeir and Shatsky, 1978: 220–22).

During the trial of the activists who disrupted the university ceremony, the prosecutor described the demonstrators' actions as "Hitlerian acts." The attorney defending the members of Brit Habiryonim replied, "I must mention that if the Hitlerists removed hatred of Jews from their program, then we would also stand with the Hitlerists. Had Hitlerists not emerged in Germany, it would have been doomed. Yes, Hitler saved Germany."[30] Abba Ahimeir, a member of Brith Habiryonim, regularly published articles in the newspaper *Doar Hayom* under the heading "From the Notebook of a Fascist."[31] In these articles and elsewhere, he praised the approach of the radical right wing in Europe that had chosen to shape reality by force. "The messiah will come," he declared, "not riding on a white donkey [as in Jewish tradition] but on a heavy tank."[32] Ironically, the members of Brit Habiryonim rarely engaged in concrete actions; they were a small band of intellectuals.[33] Despite this, their influence extended into much broader Zionist circles, and the positions they advocated were manifested in right-wing military frameworks such as the IZL (the Irgun) and Lehi (often referred to in English as the Stern Gang). At this point, however, the Arab Revolt erupted, completely changing the reality in Palestine.

THE ARAB REVOLT

For many Zionists, the early 1930s provided evidence that their gradual and cautious approach was having the desired effect. This period saw massive Jewish immigration to Palestine. In Europe, which was home to almost 10 million Jews, many began to feel insecure because of rising anti-Semitism across the continent. The racist Nuremberg Laws, adopted in Germany in 1935, highlighted the existential threat facing the Jews. At the end of 1931 there were 175,000 Jews in Palestine; by the end of 1935, this figure had doubled to 355,000, constituting approximately one-third of the total population of the country. This dramatic change was one of the reasons for the outbreak of the Arab Revolt. The Palestinian mufti, who became a powerful national leader, declared that Jewish immigration was endangering the Arabs' existence in the country. On 25 November, an Arab delegation appeared before Sir Arthur Wauchope, the British high commissioner, and presented him with three clear demands: an end to Jewish immigration, a prohibition on

the transfer of land to Jews, and the formation of an Arab government. After the British rejected the demands, the Arabs launched a general strike that completely paralyzed the economy. The strike later developed to include acts of terror, guerilla warfare, and a full-scale revolt. The British eventually managed to suppress the uprising after sending military reinforcements to Palestine. Arab society in Palestine collapsed and anarchy prevailed. The revolt continued sporadically until 1939, and total fatalities included some 400 Jews, 200 British, and 5,000 Palestinians, some of whom were killed in internal clashes within the Palestinian national movement (Eyal, 1998).

During the revolt, Ben-Gurion, the leader of the Yishuv and of the Zionist movement, reached two crucial decisions. The first was a policy of restraint in the face of Arab terror. The second was principled agreement to the partition of Palestine into two states. The policy of restraint was not based on any hope that it would be possible to reach an agreement with the Arabs. Its goal was to win sympathy from the British, who were the main target of the revolt and had the tools to suppress it (Teveth, 1987: 164). Nevertheless, the decision to opt for restraint sparked a fierce debate between Ben-Gurion and his allies, on the one side, and the IZL and Revisionists, on the other, who argued that Ben-Gurion and his partners were not nationalist enough, and that the proper response to Arab terror was counterterrorism. Even Jabotinsky abandoned his traditional "British orientation" and supported terror.[34] Indeed, while there appeared to be a battle of principles between these two approaches, the Yishuv leadership—as we will see—did not remain passive, and its response to the Arab Revolt included a military dimension. However, it felt that its declared "restraint" served its own goals.

On the issue of the partition of Palestine, Ben-Gurion faced fierce opposition even within his own party. The idea of partition first emerged in the wake of the Arab Revolt, when the British established a commission of inquiry headed by Lord Peel. The Peel Commission visited Israel at the beginning of 1936 and published its report in July 1937, including a recommendation to partition the country. This suggestion could have been seen as a major victory for the Zionists, who twenty-five years earlier had barely constituted 10 percent of the population of Palestine and who were now offered a large part of the country. The proposal to separate the two populations, as far as possible, could also have been interpreted as a positive move against the background of the violence that had been seen (Dotan, 1979: 47). However, national movements do not advocate the partition of the land they hold sacred, and utilitarian considerations of compromise and realism are accepted

only if they are seen as advancing the movement toward its ultimate goal. This latter point explains why Ben-Gurion supported the partition proposal, arguing that this would strengthen the position of the Jews. He emphasized that the British were offering sovereignty, which would allow the Jews to act freely and to establish a military, and that he could find no reason to miss this historic opportunity. In fact, it was particularly easy for Ben-Gurion to agree to the proposal since it did not require agreement with the Arabs: it was the British who had presented the idea, and they could impose it on the Arabs if they rejected the proposal.

However, many Zionists rejected their leader's approach, and the resulting argument in the Zionist movement was the most passionate since the crisis surrounding the Uganda Plan. Ben-Gurion stood his ground, repeatedly emphasizing that his maximalist territorial ambitions from the Second Aliyah period and the end of the First World War had not changed. He still rejected "improper" boundaries that would artificially divide parts of a country that was indivisible on historical, natural, and economic grounds. The partition proposal was thus the product of ethnic considerations, and Ben-Gurion suggested that these would become moot once the Jews constituted a majority in the country (Dotan, 1979: 66).

Ben-Gurion's biographer Shabtai Teveth (1985: 313) also stresses that the nationalist leader had no doubt that the partition plan was merely the first stage in a process that would later expand to include the entire Land of Israel. While he did not refer explicitly to this expansionist approach, his comrade Moshe Sharett made the point very clearly in a confidential review presented to the Central Committee of Mapai in September 1938: "A state permits the beginning of our full redemption" (Teveth, 1985: 314). Ben-Gurion was also forthright in a letter to his children dated 7 October 1938: "I do not see this state in part of the Land as the ultimate goal of Zionism, but merely as a means for securing this goal." He added, "The state will establish a select military[,] . . . and then I am sure that we will not be prevented from settling in all the remaining parts of the Land, whether through agreement and mutual understanding with our Arab neighbors or by other means" (Ben-Gurion, 1968).

What was the nature of the "agreement and mutual understanding" to which Ben-Gurion referred? What "other means" did he have in mind? He was surely aware that Zionists could settle all the parts of the Land and acquire possession of Palestine by only one of two means: deterrence created by the accumulation of military might, or the actual use of this might.

Neither of these options embodied even the hint of moderation or compromise. It was also apparent, as the Peel Commission recommended, that the partition plan would require the transfer of part of the Arab population. Interestingly, the Zionist opponents of the plan were not even placated by this limited transfer of Arabs from the future Jewish state, arguing that it was insufficient. Berl Katznelson, one of the intellectual founders of Labor Zionism, declared, "I believed, and I believe still, that [the Arabs] will eventually move to Syria and Iraq." He advocated a "Greater Land of Israel" free of any Arab presence. Golda Meir also made no attempt to conceal her ambitions, although she moderated her position through an emphasis on a realistic analysis of the situation: "I would agree that the Arabs leave the country, and my conscience would certainly be clean . . . [, but] is there any possibility that this will happen? . . . Transfer by force, like an attempt to change the borders, means war" (Dotan, 1979: 150–51)—and the Zionist leaders believed that their movement was still not prepared for such an eventuality.

In the end, the British themselves shelved their own proposal. However, during the years of the Arab Revolt, many Zionists, particularly from the younger generation, began to doubt whether Zionism could adhere to its traditional tactics of diversion and procrastination, which they felt had exhausted themselves.

"OUTSIDE THE PERIMETER"

The Arab Revolt sparked a crisis in the Revisionist movement that reached its peak at the Third World Conference of Betar, held in Warsaw in September 1938. Young members of the movement openly opposed Jabotinsky, arguing that Betar should adopt a more militant position and openly advocate the conquest of the homeland by force (Scheib, 1950: 21–25; Naor, 2009). The IZL, as the armed wing of the movement, also displayed its displeasure with the parent organization: "Hollow statements, diplomatic discussions, and tea parties will not swing world opinion in favor of the idea of the Hebrew homeland," the Betar activists wrote, "but rather the language of power and war, the language of explosion and dynamite."[35] The IZL put these beliefs into practice. In July 1938, for example, IZL members placed a bomb in the Haifa market, killing fifty-three Palestinians and three Jews. This was a pure act of terrorism—a practice that Weizmann and his associates utterly abhorred (Rose, 1990: 211). Other young activists felt that even the position of the IZL

was unduly moderate, and in 1940 they left and formed an underground movement known as Lehi. The Lehi fought against the British, completely ignoring the world war that was raging and the fact that the British were struggling to save the world from oblivion (Heller, 1989; Resnick, 1998). However, it was not only the "secessionists" (as those who withdrew from the Zionist movement were called by the latter) who criticized the leaders' policy of restraint: younger members of the "organized Yishuv" and the Labor Zionist movement also shared this position.

The criticisms raised by the younger generation related in part to the partition plan. The youth movement Hamachanot Ha'olim published a booklet in 1937 devoted entirely to explaining its position against partition (*In Your Covenant,* 1937). The movement sought to ensure the "integrity of the Land" by force. The booklet did not even mention the Arabs, as if they did not exist, presenting a typical ethno-nationalist insistence on exclusive ownership of the national territory. As for the restraint policy, some young members chose to manifest their criticism of this approach by joining military frameworks that operated under the auspices of the Haganah but adopted a new military and national approach referred to as "outside the perimeter."

In 1936, in the midst of the Arab Revolt, this new approach led Yitzhak Landoberg (later Sadeh), who had come to Palestine in 1920 as part of the Third Aliyah, to organize youth to engage in a type of military action that differed from what had previously been seen. Sadeh was an example of what Karl Mannheim (1952: 308) refers to as "forerunners," explaining, "It occurs frequently that the nucleus of attitudes particular to a new generation is first evolved and practiced by older people who are isolated in their own generation." Sadeh's interpretation of reality was certainly close to that of the younger activists, most of whom had been born in Palestine or arrived in the country at a young age, reaching adulthood in the 1930s. The "events" and the Arab Revolt had a different impact on this generation than on their parents. The interpretation by what has sometimes been called the "native generation" reflected the unique circumstances of their own lives. Their juvenile experiences included guarding fields and crops, exchanging blows with Arab youths, and receiving a gun to mark their bar mitzvah. Later, as this generation entered the military track, these experiences fueled their actions and eventually shaped their identity and worldview.[36]

The first framework that Sadeh established was called Hanodedet (the Wanderer). Later, in 1937, he formed the Field Companies—mobile units

that moved around constantly with the goal of encountering and confronting armed Arabs. Sadeh brought his young subordinates to these units, including Moshe Dayan and Yigal Alon, who later became known as "Sadeh's lads." They shaped the character of the unit and, later, the Israeli military approach in general. As we saw in our theoretical discussion, militarism is an ideology that emerges from experiences in the military sphere and is based on military courses of action. These are then manifested in everyday life and come to be taken for granted as the only proper way to solve political problems. Now militarism appeared in a new form and among new carriers. The Field Companies transferred the fighting onto Arab territory. They often attacked innocent Arabs, to the point that the command echelon of the Haganah brought them together and attempted to restrain their actions. However, the young activists rejected such criticism, presenting their military approach as a fitting response to the "Diaspora-like" positions of the heads of the Jewish Agency, as manifested in the policy of restraint.[37] Just as the residents of the Jewish agricultural settlements had complained in the past that the members of Hashomer were damaging their relations with the Arabs, the inhabitants of kibbutzim and moshavim now criticized the Field Companies for destabilizing Jewish-Arab relations, demanding that they be removed from their settlements (Avigur, 1955: 964).

Some of the members of the Field Companies were also members of the Special Night Companies, formed by the British officer Orde Charles Wingate as an unusual tactic for suppressing the Arab Revolt. Wingate had received a Protestant education and was deeply influenced by biblical stories, leading him to become a fervent supporter of the Zionist idea. His companies imposed collective punishment on innocent Arabs, including arbitrary executions. The members of the Field Companies were not outraged by such actions: on the contrary, they considered it a great honor to participate in Wingate's raids and to learn his military theory (Brenner, 1980: 222–35; Carmi, 1961: 70).

Another military unit established within the "organized Yishuv" and the Labor Zionist movement that manifested the new military spirit was the Special Actions Unit. The most notable operation of this unit was the sinking of the SS *Patria*. The vessel was carrying illegal Jewish immigrants whom the British planned to deport to Mauritius. The members of the Special Actions Unit detonated a bomb on the ship on 25 November 1940, while it was still in Haifa port, killing over two hundred people. The incident sparked fierce debate within the Yishuv between the so-called activists and moderates. One

of the questions raised was whether certain figures from the security establishment of the Yishuv had accumulated political power and were making decisions without due authorization from the formal political leadership. Discussion also focused on the moral aspects of the action: was it acceptable to sacrifice lives on the ship in order to promote the sacred value of the nation?[38] Clear generational differences could be seen in these debates. The younger generation despised soul-searching and open political debate, emphasizing the value of military action as a means for achieving national goals. The journal of one of the youth movements declared, "We must know that without sacrifices, nothing can be achieved in war."[39]

The British authorities attempted to impose restrictions preventing the Zionists from taking control of the entire country, and remained unmoved even by the appalling anti-Semitic events in Germany, most notably Kristallnacht, on 9 November 1938. In May 1939, Britain published its third white paper (dubbed the "black paper" by the Jews). This document explicitly declared that Palestine could not become a Jewish state against the wishes of the Arab population. The paper proposed the establishment within ten years of a state in which Arabs and Jews would maintain a joint government ensuring the vital interests of both communities. To permit this vision, which was similar to the position of Brit Shalom, to remain a viable option, the white paper called for the restriction of Jewish immigration to Palestine and the prohibition of the purchase of Arab land by Jews.

In response, Ben-Gurion began to refer to a "fighting Zionism" (Teveth, 1987: 315). The younger generation, however, showed a clear tendency to be more critical, and even Ben-Gurion's militant declarations failed to satisfy their demands. At demonstrations, young protestors shouted, "No speeches, only deeds," and demanded the formation of "a Jewish force that can blow away the White Paper regime."[40] The expression "No speeches, only deeds" became the hallmark of the young, who declared, "There are times when it is those who do that influence events[,] . . . not those who explain."[41]

The youngsters knew that politics was not determined only by the upper echelons, and they wanted to influence reality. In the meantime, however, world war erupted, changing plans and priorities on all sides. Ben-Gurion turned back to diplomacy, focusing his efforts on the United States, where he spent most of his time. In Palestine, the young Jewish generation found an outlet for its emotions in military frameworks that suited its nationalist and even militaristic tendencies.

THE PALMACH AND RECRUITMENT TO THE BRITISH MILITARY

Still influenced by memories of the failure of the Jewish battalions twenty years earlier, the leadership of the Yishuv was initially uncertain about allowing its youth to join the British army. However, young people "voted with their feet," reporting for service. Hundreds of members of the Haganah joined the British forces, as did members of the youth movements and kibbutzim.

Alongside their desire to participate in the war against the Nazis, their commitment to the military and to the rigors of army life had a utilitarian component. They had no doubt that they would later be able to put to use, during their service to the nation, the military and professional skills they acquired. Meanwhile, the recruits made a great effort to emphasize their distinct national identity within the British military through the use of symbols and ceremonies.[42]

Within the Yishuv itself, another military framework emerged that combined national ideology and military force. The Palmach was established on the basis of the prevalent myth among the "native-born generation" that its members were completely different from the Jews of the Diaspora; the former were ready to take up arms in order to realize the Zionist goals. The critical feature here, of course, was not the simple fact of an individual's place of birth but the desire to attribute sublime qualities and prestige to those who shared this geographical fact. A typical exposition of this position argued that "those born in the Land are different. . . . [T]hey have been molded by the Land's hills and the heat of its sun. And here they stand before us, raising their heads with pride with an upright spirit that is untouched by fear of the foreigner or the ruler."[43] Sadeh, who, as we have seen, had already established several Jewish military units, was also responsible for establishing the Palmach. Many of the early volunteers for the force were members of the kibbutzim, which had already come to be perceived as the social elite of the Yishuv.

The Palmach faced financial difficulties during this period, and the HaKibbutz HaMeuchad (United Kibbutz) Movement agreed to assume responsibility for the organization.[44] This movement was a political body that operated under the auspices of Mapai, headed by its unchallenged leader, Tabenkin. During this period, the kibbutz movement sought to assert its own political position, opposing the positions of its parent body, Mapai. The

kibbutz leadership saw the Palmach as an important political resource that would help advance the ideology of the kibbutz, including the ideal of seizing the entire homeland. As Tabenkin declared, "From the desert to the sea, the Land is one." Tabenkin even demanded that the Greater Land of Israel include Transjordan, on the grounds that Jews had settled there since biblical times. As we saw earlier, the Zionist movement had been forced to relinquish its claims to Transjordan, but Tabenkin saw this decision as an act of treason. It is important to emphasize that Tabenkin was himself a kibbutznik and a completely secular man; his motives were not religious but ethno-national. He saw the nation as an organic entity "that cannot be dismembered" and that has natural boundaries (Tabenkin, 1944).

Militarism was another key thread in Tabenkin's ideology. "No party to any conflict," he explained in one of his lectures, "has ever relinquished of its own free will, through logic and proof, neither the land, nor its rights, nor property nor belongings. No conflict . . . has ever been resolved without a tangible struggle."[45] This militaristic and deterministic assumption was not far removed from the position of the Revisionists. It provided the foundation for the bond between the HaKibbutz HaMeuchad Movement and the Palmach, where it was inculcated in the young recruits, directly and indirectly, by members of the movement.

The kibbutzim enabled the members of the Palmach to become warrior-farmers, combining the plow and the gun according to what was perceived as the "Russian model"—a model whose prestige was particularly high following the Soviet victory in the Second World War. Yet while Tabenkin himself referred constantly to the Russian model, the Palmach was actually much closer to the Prussian example. In the nineteenth century, Prussian society had seen the emergence of "worker-soldiers," who lived and worked in fortified cities in order to secure control of peripheral regions (Willems, 1986: 38).

As early as 1942, these distinct developments led to an interesting situation in which some members of Mapai supported recruitment to the British military, which they saw as the sole source of might for the future of the Yishuv, while members of the HaKibbutz HaMeuchad Movement placed their trust in the Palmach as an independent force for the Yishuv. Each side saw its respective military format as the best way to advance national liberation. The political struggle for control of the armed forces extended into the military frameworks themselves, leading to status struggles between recruits to the British military and to the Palmach. This competition was accompanied by the emergence of distinct military styles through which each side

sought to glorify its own contribution to national goals. However, while both sides sought to highlight their differences, the result was an emphasis on the common denominator: the conviction that military means were the only way to solve the political problems facing the Yishuv. By the middle of the decade, military action had become a type of status symbol conferring prestige and influence on those who advocated it. Moreover, with the encouragement of the political sponsors of each approach, a set of actions was welded together to become an ideology.

Several formative events contributed to reinforcing the military approach as an ideology presenting an exclusive solution to the Yishuv's problems and, indeed, to those of the European Jews in general. The first were the reports that began to arrive regarding the scale, nature, and scope of the Holocaust. The profound disaster that struck the Jewish people certainly led many observers in the Yishuv to conclude that the Jews had been annihilated because they lacked power and military might. The phrase "like lambs to the slaughter," which came into use in this period to refer to the victims of the Holocaust, was used to call for the establishment of military frameworks in the Yishuv. Again, it was the members of the younger generation who emphasized the difference between themselves and the Diaspora Jews, openly referring to the "shameful weakness" of the latter. Their conclusion was clear: "If we don't act for ourselves, who will? . . . Our healthy response is: a thirst for strength, a surge for strength, a craze for strength. Real strength. Ours. At our disposal."[46]

In 1942, Ben-Gurion launched his Biltmore Program in New York. The plan called for the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, and Ben-Gurion thereby removed in one swift move the mask that had hitherto covered Zionist intentions. When his plan was presented to the Zionist Executive, meeting in Jerusalem in November 1942, most of the delegates offered their unconditional support.[47] There were some critics, however. Writing to his assistant Blanche "Buffy" Dugdale, Weizmann commented that Ben-Gurion had included all his most extreme opinions in the program (Rose, 1990: 381–82). Ben-Gurion proclaimed incessantly that the goal, a Jewish state, would be established by an independent military force. Weizmann was skeptical, complaining that "Ben-Gurion saw the establishment of the army as the only problem facing Zionism. Everything else is meaningless to him" (Segev, 2018: 312).

The members of the Ichud circle, which had inherited the position filled by Brit Shalom, utterly rejected the idea of seizing all of Palestine by force.[48]

It was the younger generation, however, that took the program seriously. Militaristic nationalism as an instrument for conquering the entire country had become their driving force, and they were unwilling to confine themselves to its declarative and symbolic aspects. As the journal of the HaKibbutz HaMeuchad Movement explained, "Our reality . . . as a minority in terms of numbers and land, requires us to engage in a war different from that of any [other] people. A war of conquest, steadfastness, the expansion of borders, and the settlement of every piece of land that belongs and may belong to us. . . . We shall defend this right of creation by means of weapons, too. . . . A homeland is not divided."[49] A few years later, the youth of the Yishuv would realize their mission through a war against the Palestinians. In the meantime, they united to fight the British, with the goal of expelling them from Palestine.

THE JEWISH RESISTANCE MOVEMENT

In the mid-1940s, Mapai secured its political domination in the Yishuv both by expelling members of the HaKibbutz HaMeuchad Movement from the party and by vigorous military action again the IZL. On 1 February 1944, the IZL declared a revolt against British rule. Its members began to place bombs in key government facilities, to attack police stations, and even to rob banks in order to fund their operations (Niv, 1976: 20–32, 276–81). The Lehi—the Jewish underground movement that had been eradicated by the British in 1942—also resumed its activities. Its members carried pistols and, during one period, developed the practice of firing at random on British police officers and officials, often while they were walking in the street, in operations they referred to as "the petty war" (Heller, 1989: 165–228). The leadership of the Yishuv saw such actions as a threat to its authority and responded fiercely, particularly during the so-called Season period, when many IZL members were imprisoned and even turned over to the British, who exiled some of them.

The leadership of the Yishuv was more interested in controlling and guiding the IZL and Lehi than in restraining their operations. Accordingly, it was no coincidence that shortly after the Season, the Jewish Resistance Movement was established. An agreement was signed on 23 October 1945 concerning cooperation between the Haganah (including the Palmach, which operated under its auspices), the IZL, and Lehi. The agreement rested on the twin

pillars of authority and action. The military organizations undertook to accept the authority of a joint command, subject in formal terms to the political echelon. However, they conditioned this explicitly on the new movement engaging in military operations against the British; if it failed to do so, the agreement would be rendered invalid.[50] For the first time, a formal and unequivocal formula was adopted based on obedience to the leadership in return for military action, and not designated as a tool for preventing such action. Moreover, and again for the first time, the national aspiration and the use of the military approach to secure it were presented as a common denominator accepted by all elements in the Yishuv.

The military operations against the British met with an enthusiastic response in the Yishuv, and the military organizations repeatedly demanded that they continue. Operations carried out during the period include the Night of the Trains, on 1 November 1945, when the railroad network in Palestine was sabotaged in 153 different locations. Another action was the Night of the Bridges, on 17 June 1946, when Palmach units sabotaged eleven strategic bridges around the country. The operation at one bridge, close to a river called Achziv, went wrong and fourteen Palmach fighters were killed. As the operations continued, the Palmach became increasingly dominant, and its headquarters effectively served as the operational headquarters for the Haganah as a whole and for the entire Jewish Resistance Movement. At the same time, the military operations led to a change in the attitude of the Yishuv toward the IZL and Lehi, which were now perceived as having rejoined the ranks of the "organized Yishuv."

The British responded harshly to these attacks. In Operation Agatha (known in the Yishuv as Black Saturday), on 29 June 1946, thousands of people were arrested, including members of the Jewish Agency Executive. The British began to behave as occupiers. The event that tipped the scales, however, was the bombing of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem, which was undertaken by the IZL as part of the Jewish Resistance Movement. The explosion in the south wing of the luxury hotel, which was occupied by British administrative personnel, led to ninety-one fatalities, of whom only twenty-eight were British (alongside forty-one Arabs, seventeen Jews, and five foreigners of various nationalities). A further forty-five people were injured.

This was a classic and overt act of terrorism that seemed to imply a new direction. Weizmann, horrified by the attack, demanded an immediate end to the resistance operations, threatening to resign if his demand was not accepted

(Rose, 1990: 259–60). His ultimatum was accepted and the Jewish Resistance Movement was dismantled, much to the disappointment of the young activists. Sadeh was enraged by the dismantling of the movement and wrote an article in which he utterly rejected the concept of "discipline in inaction."[51] This reflected a formula that became a regular feature of the relations between the sociological generations in the Yishuv, whereby the younger generation obeyed its elders, provided that the leadership accepted its militaristic approach. This condition would continue to accompany the relations between the political leadership and the military echelon for many years to come.

In the meantime, the struggle against the British in Palestine continued by various means, despite the dismantling of the Jewish Resistance Movement. The main avenue of action was illegal Jewish immigration to Palestine, which acquired a more militant character than in the past, including the political use of the immigrants—many of them Holocaust survivors—for propaganda purposes (Avriel, 1976: 220–23). One ship after another was caught by the British, but the story of the immigrant ships became the heroic and symbolic story of a nation determined to realize its goals by any means (Zertal, 2002: 68–77). Settlement activities also changed and were defined as "political settlement" designed primarily to prevent the partition of the country.[52]

In July 1946, the British and the Americans launched the Morrison-Grady Plan, which again advocated the partition of Palestine, while declining to grant the Negev (the south of modern-day Israel) to either side. The plan was a revised version of the Peel Commission proposal, with various modifications. Both the young activists and the leaders of the Yishuv considered the plan unacceptable. After all, nationalist movements regard their land as indivisible. After learning of the intentions of the Anglo-American committee, Ben-Gurion made a preemptive decision to order the establishment of twenty-four new settlements, at least twelve of which were to be formed immediately in the Negev.[53] Over the following two years, cooperation between the young activists and the leadership led to the establishment of forty-nine settlements (Oren, 1978: 169–78). The "path of settlement" now became a military- and power-based policy that centered, not on the idea of establishing a state, but on the idea of strengthening the nation by establishing settlement throughout the homeland. As the National Secretariat of Hamachanot Ha'olim explained, "We can no longer be apathetic about the matter of partition. For us, the question of partition is not a political one. It is something instinctive that has grown and taken root in the movement. . . . We have a mission on this matter."[54] In the meantime, the IZL and Lehi

continued their armed operations against the British, some of which constituted acts of terror. The British public was outraged and demanded that the British soldiers be brought home. It was clear that the moment of truth was drawing nearer and the ethno-national conflict would be resolved not by peaceful means but through violence and war.

THREE

The Establishment of a Dominant Nation-State

THE 1948 WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

On 14 February 1947, Britain decided to withdraw from Palestine and to leave the task of solving the ethno-national conflict in the country to the United Nations, thereby presenting the relatively new organization with the most complex problem since its establishment. In May 1947, the United Nations decided to establish the UN Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) to determine the future of the country. Under the guidance of Haj Amin al-Husseini, the powerful leader of the Supreme Arab Committee, the Palestinians boycotted UNSCOP, claiming that Great Britain and the United States had already decided that partition would go ahead. They argued that this approach was contrary to the Arabs' natural right to Palestine (Ben-Dror, 2012: 18). By contrast, the Jews chose to appear before the committee. Ben-Gurion's effort to explain to UNSCOP why the Jews were insisting on Palestine was dominated by ethno-national ideology: "Jews are coming to Palestine because it is our country, it has been our homeland for 3,500 years. . . . We are here on the basis of the fact that it is the country of our people; we were dispossessed by force and we did not give it up. We are coming back to our home."[1] On 1 September 1947, the committee recommended the establishment of two states united by an economic interest. Jerusalem was to be under international control.

Ben-Gurion employed various turns of phrase to convey his opinion on the possible partition of the territory, but their meaning was constant. On 13 May 1947, for example, at a meeting of the Jewish Agency Executive held in the United States, he declared, "We want the Land of Israel in its entirety. That was the original intention." His practical proposal at the same meeting was that a Jewish state would be established in the territory in which the Jews constituted a majority, while the remainder of Palestine would continue to

be subject to the British Mandate.[2] A week later, at the Assembly of Representatives in Jerusalem, he repeated his words.[3] Then, at a meeting of the Mapai Secretariat on 29 November 1947, Ben-Gurion explained that he had not supported the partition of Palestine into a Jewish and an Arab state a decade earlier, but had been "in favor of a state and against partition." Then, too, he now claimed, he did not like the word *partition*. However, if he had to choose between "no state and no partition" or "a state with partition," he preferred the latter option. In order to prevent misunderstandings, Ben-Gurion noted that then, as now, he was convinced that "it would be a mistake to relinquish our right to part of the Land."[4]

Naturally, Ben-Gurion had countless political reasons for refraining from declaring a policy of transfer. He was well aware that neither the United Nations nor the superpowers would accept such a declaration. Moreover, Arab opposition to Zionism was already forceful enough, and Ben-Gurion had no desire to fuel it further by unnecessary declarations. What choice, though, did Ben-Gurion leave to the Palestinians, who still outnumbered Jews in Palestine by two to one? His approach was to change this demographic reality through Jewish immigration and settlement in all parts of the country, transforming the Palestinians into a controlled minority. As Arendt commented, it is evident that on this aspect the Revisionist principle—though not yet Revisionist methods—had scored a resounding victory (Arendt, 2007: 212). This was an overtly insular and exclusive ethno-national ideology, one that reflected a political position that not only focused on the interests of one national group while deliberately ignoring those of the other but also sought to ensure the superiority and control of one group over the other.

Ben-Gurion was in combative mood during this period, telling the members of his party: "We demand a state immediately." He reminded the other members of the party bureau that the founding conference of Achdut Ha'avodah (held in February 1919) had adopted a resolution defining the Land of Israel as a Jewish state. He now added that this state must be established in two stages, that their mission was "to found a Jewish state in that part in which there is a Jewish majority . . . and in the other part to wait until a Jewish majority develops and arises." This, then, was Ben-Gurion's approach to partition.[5] This approach was illustrated at the end of November when the United Nations decided on the partition of Palestine. The Jewish leadership announced that it accepted the plan. This was a sophisticated tactical move. The leadership did not want to be accused of a position referred to explicitly in the resolution: "The Security Council determine as a threat to the peace,

breach of the peace or act of aggression, in accordance with Article 39 of the Charter, any attempt to alter by force the settlement envisaged by this resolution." Moreover, in addition to their numerical inferiority, the Jews owned only 10 percent of the land, and so they had little reason to oppose partition. By contrast, the Palestinians felt that their land was being taken from under their feet. According to the original United Nations resolution, the Jews were to receive 62 percent of the territory of Palestine, while the Palestinians would receive just 38 percent. The balance was changed slightly during the discussions, particularly in the southern Negev region, but the final resolution still allocated 55 percent of the area to the Jews and 45 percent to the Palestinians. What reason could they have to accept such an offer, particularly given that the proposed Jewish area of Palestine would include an Arab minority of 45 percent? The Zionist agreement to the resolution was unsurprising. It was based not only on an examination of the cost and benefit inherent in the proposal but also on a deeper factor that Ben-Gurion expressed clearly in his comments to the central committee of Mapai: "The nations of the world have decided to reestablish a Jewish state. The miracle has come. . . . The Jewish people has believed in this miracle forever, and has anticipated its coming for some two thousand years. . . . We know of no other people that was deprived of its land and dispersed among the nations, hated, abused, and persecuted, without anywhere to rest its feet . . . and nevertheless maintained its unique existence and clung to its faith that one day it would restore its sovereignty to its Land and become an independent nation in its historical homeland."[6] Regardless of one's personal position regarding Zionism, it is impossible to understand the strength of this phenomenon without taking into account the nonmaterialistic Zionist interpretation of reality that Ben-Gurion summarized so succinctly.

As Kimmerling and Migdal (1999: 128) noted, partition was the fashionable diplomatic solution of the period for a series of apparently unsolvable situations, including those in Germany, India, and Korea. In none of these regions did partition prevent repeated wars or international crises, and Palestine would not prove to be an exception in this respect. An examination of the proposed map shows that partition could not have been a lasting solution, and not only because of the inherent difficulty of dividing such a small territory and separating two populations that lived together in the area. The Jewish leadership would certainly not have accepted the United Nations' decision to impose a "special international regime for Jerusalem"—the most important city, from the national perspective, as reflected in the slogan

"There can be no Zionism without Zion." Golani (1990: 304) emphasized that all the declarations by Jewish leaders that they agreed to the partition or internationalization of Jerusalem were purely tactical in nature. It is also doubtful whether the Jewish leaders would have accepted the presence of Jaffa as an Arab enclave inside the Jewish state. The comments made behind closed doors differed dramatically from the public statements. For example, in a speech to the worried members of the Histadrut Executive at the beginning of December 1947, Ben-Gurion promised, "There are no final arrangements in history, no eternal borders and no absolute political claims. Changes and upturns will continue to occur in the world."[7]

These comments were made before the Yishuv faced a tangible threat from the Arabs. This is not to say that the Palestinians had reconciled themselves to the Zionists' plans; but in any case the leadership of the Yishuv saw the situation from the standpoint of an exclusive national ideology embodying a "zero-sum game." An example of this was a comment by Yosef Weitz, an official in the Jewish National Fund. Weitz's son had been killed during the Night of the Bridges, a Palmach operation on 16 June 1946; and a kibbutz named after him had been established in western Galilee, in the area now earmarked for the future Arab state. Weitz wrote that he did not oppose the United Nation's partition proposal, since it provided a historic opportunity to establish a Jewish state. However, he added that "we will have to redeem the western Galilee." As an enthusiastic exponent of nationalism as a civic religion, Weitz declared an undying passion for Galilee and Jerusalem and equated the loss of parts of the homeland with physical amputation: "The removed part is right next to us, in front of our eyes, calling to us morning and night. As we consolidate our position in this part, we will cast our gaze on the detached part" (Weitz, 1965: 180, 200). Weitz worked tirelessly to thwart the idea of partition, particularly through the use of the old/new instrument: settlements established by the Palmach serving as quasi-military bases occupied by young combatants. These settlements were not necessarily planned as permanent communities, but they enabled military control of extensive areas. Thus the Zionist movement effectively managed to conquer the peripheral regions of the country, preventing the emergence of contiguous Palestinian territory (Oren, 1978: 122–32; Kemp, 1991: 43).

War requires preparation, and in this context Ben-Gurion showed a remarkable ability to anticipate—or perhaps to determine—the future course of events. As early as 1946 he demanded the allocation of greater resources and "a completely new type of preparation" (Ben-Gurion, 1950:

135–37). Following the Zionist Congress he assumed control of the defense portfolio in the Jewish Agency Executive. He summed up the needs of the Yishuv as he saw them in simple terms: "Determination by force: Jewish military determination."[8] By comparison to the Jewish side, the Palestinians showed little willingness to fight for their cause at this stage. Their unity was fragile and their combat capabilities in terms of manpower, resources, and weapons were still limited following the suppression of the Arab Revolt a decade earlier. Naturally, this reality did not prevent their leaders from making militant declarations and promising victory to their people (Kimmerling and Migdal, 1999: 119–34; Kabha, 2010). Ben-Gurion assumed that the Arabs would make the first move and launch an attack following the partition decision. Accordingly, he wrote, the newly formed military must "withstand this attack, protect the Yishuv and the settlements, and conquer all or the greater part of the Land." Ben-Gurion saw defense as no more than an initial response to be followed by proactive steps to secure control.[9] In his diary he wrote, "The effectiveness of retroactive steps [i.e., reprisals for every Arab attack] is doubtful." The solution: "We should adopt an approach of aggressive defense. For every [Arab] attack, we should prepare to deal a decisive blow, destroying the place or expelling and displacing the residents."[10] The expression "aggressive defense" effectively served as a euphemism for actions intended to expel and displace Arabs. The fact that this order was given at the beginning of the war strengthens the argument that the "Arab refugee problem" did not emerge by chance and was not an unexpected byproduct of the war. At the same time, of course, the Palestinians also sought to secure exclusive control of the country and to remove the Jews from it; they, too, left the other side with no choice but to fight.

AN ETHNO-NATIONAL WAR

The day after the adoption of the partition resolution by the United Nations, the Palestinians launched a general strike. Riots erupted in Jerusalem and spread to other cities, including exchanges of gunfire between Jewish and Arab areas. As early as December 1947, following the classic dynamics of ethno-national war, many residents began to leave the mixed cities and concentrate in neighborhoods where they felt safer. The Haganah "encouraged" Palestinians to leave. In Jerusalem, for example, members of the Haganah sent warning letters on 10 January 1948 to residents of the Arab neighbor-

hood of Sheikh Bader informing them that they should join residents who were already leaving the area. The same night, the home of the mukhtar of the neighborhood was blown up, probably by Lehi members, and the next day the Palestinians left their homes (Radai, 2016: 36–37). On 11 February, after a violent incident in the Talbiyeh neighborhood of the city of Jerusalem, a Haganah vehicle equipped with a loudspeaker drove through the area, warning Palestinian residents of reprisals and urging them to leave their homes. The Haganah employed psychological warfare, including the use of loudspeakers, wall posters, radio broadcasts, and rumors in order to foment panic and encourage Arabs to leave their homes, particularly in the mixed cities.[11] These are of course examples only. It is important to note that at the same time, the Arab institutions pressured Palestinians to remain in their homes. On 8 March, the mufti wrote to the national committees around the country emphasizing the need for vigorous action to prevent or reduce the departure from Arab neighborhoods. "The [Supreme Arab] Committee sees this act as desertion from honor and sacrifice. . . . [T]he national interest requires Palestinians to continue with their affairs in their land, and not to leave it" (Radai, 2016: 53).

During this difficult period of uncertainty, civilians on both sides paid the price as mutual violence and terror descended into an endless cycle of attacks, reprisals, and counterreprisals. The Arab militias deployed throughout the country managed to disrupt the main transportation routes, and many Jewish settlements were left isolated. The atrocities soon led to widespread feelings of hatred and a desire for revenge in a vicious cycle of violence. For example, a Palestinian massacre at the oil refinery in Haifa on 30 December 1947, in which thirty-nine Jews were killed, came in response to an IZL (the right-wing military framework) operation that killed six Arab laborers at the entrance to the same refinery. The Palmach responded to the reprisal by launching an attack on Balad a-Sheikh, a village near Haifa, killing dozens of Palestinian residents of the village (Avigur, 1955: 1414).

Against this violent background, there was considerable discussion at the time about possible ways to encourage dialogue between the two sides. Perhaps surprisingly, Arabs and Jews continued to cooperate in the economic sphere. In December 1947, for example, an agreement was signed between the leading Palestinian orchard owners in the Jaffa area and Jewish orchard owners in an effort to maintain a calm business environment (Morris, 1987: 74; Giladi, 2007: 15–24; Ben-Pazi, 2006a). This situation was maintained for several months, until the Jewish security forces ended it, forcing the

Palestinians employed in the Jewish agricultural settlements to leave. The Association of Farmers complained bitterly to the Haganah (Ben-Pazi, 2006a: 171–72).

At the beginning of 1948, too, there were still those who were interested in exploring the possibility of understandings and agreements between the two sides. The possibility appeared, for example, in a meeting between the "Arabists" (experts on Arab affairs) and the political and military elites. The Arabist Gad Makhnes said, "Many [Arabs] would have remained quiet were it not for our own provocative actions. . . . We cannot rely solely on force. We need to search for a way to reach an understanding with the Arabs." Another Arabist at the meeting agreed, and painted a picture of a polarized Palestinian society, large sections of which did not favor violence but were being dragged into conflict against their will. The Arabists accused the military leaders of setting policy through violent military operations. They agreed that it was important to respond forcefully to elements responsible for fomenting violence, but stressed that this should be done without drawing Arab groups and circles that had not adopted violence into the cycle of escalation.[12]

The Arabists' position was based on their personal acquaintance with Palestinians. The military commanders had no interest in such niceties, however: the only course they saw before them was the military one, and this dictated their response to the Arabists. At the meeting, Haganah officers such as Yigael Yadin (Sukenik) and Yitzhak Sadeh demanded a transition to proactive and broad-based military operations instead of localized reactions. They also argued that the Jewish side should not rely on local agreements or the strength of the Palestinian opposition, but should act on the basis of national considerations, acknowledging that Palestinians who did not wish to participate in attacks against the Yishuv would also suffer as a result. Yigal Alon, another Haganah officer, explained his position on the question of combat morality at the meeting: "It is impossible to avoid harm to children, because it is impossible to separate them and enter every house to this end. The Arabs are defending themselves now and there are weapons in every home. All that is possible now is collective punishment. A call for peace will be interpreted as weakness." Moshe Dayan, another officer who attended the meeting, agreed with these remarks, adding that causing economic harm to the Arabs was also part of the struggle. He recommended, for example, that the Bedouin wells in the Negev be blocked so that they would be dependent on the Jewish water line—a tactic the Arabists found distasteful. They retorted that revenge tactics would not be effective and would not reduce the

level of violence—on the contrary, they would merely serve to draw the victims into the circle of violence.[13]

The Arabists mentioned a reprisal raid by the Palmach on 18 December 1947 in a Bedouin village in Galilee named Al-Khisas, citing the raid as a mistake. They claimed that this operation had led to a change in the situation in Galilee. Yosef Nachmani, an Arabist who lived in Tiberias, had managed to ensure that peace prevailed in the city between Jews and Palestinians: "The incident in Al-Khisas profoundly depressed me. . . . [T]he situation in the Galilee was tense, but this had not led to attacks on Jews and this [the attack in Al-Khisas] was the reason and cause for the untimely eruptions" (Morris, 2000: 66–67). The operation also aroused the fury of Nachum Horowitz, another Arabist and a resident of Kfar Giladi known for his good relations with the local Arabs. Horowitz was concerned that years of work in nurturing neighborly relations was about to be thrown away. He traveled to Tel Aviv to meet Ben-Gurion and other figures, demanding that the Palmach commanders be tried and punished for their part in the murder of Arab women and children.[14] On the broader level, the Arabists complained of the devaluation in their status as civilians facing military commanders. As the Arabist Ezra Danin remarked, "Our colleagues have only the right of weak and nonbinding advice [while] our army does as it pleases."[15]

The Arabists continued to maintain their distinct position for some time; in March 1948, some of them submitted a plan to Ben-Gurion calling for an Arab state alongside the Jewish one and stressing the need to ensure "that the Arabs have a way forward and we have the possibility to seek points of contact" (Milstein, 1991: 146). This was a lost battle, however. Nachmani repeatedly described the pleas for calm from Arabs in Tiberias, who were anxious about their fate. However, the Haganah commanders refused to meet with them or to reach any kind of agreement. Nachmani did everything in his power, and even attempted to reach Ben-Gurion, but in the meantime the Jewish forces occupied the city. The Arabs who did not flee were deported, in part owing to the settling of old scores dating back to the Arab Revolt. The old city was demolished and razed to the ground. As these events clearly show, the military commanders were calling the tune now, and there was no competing force that could moderate what Nachmani described as "the erupting instincts of some of our young men."[16]

The Palestinians caused significant Jewish losses, particularly after they were joined by the Arab Salvation Army, an army of volunteers from Arab countries that organized under the command of the Syrian Fawzi Kaukji of

the Arab League. By the end of March, the Yishuv had sustained a thousand fatalities, most of them civilians. This was a very high figure and did not bode well for the future. The Arab fighters operated out of the villages scattered across the entire country. The supply lines to the Jewish settlements were disrupted, and food shortages developed even in Jerusalem and other cities. The armored convoys that set out for the settlements did not always reach their destinations, and many of their fighters were killed or injured. This was a full-scale war for survival, and in March the Palestinians had the upper hand. They realized that the Jews' weak point was the roads and, accordingly, acted to disrupt transportation. In response, both the military and the political leadership on the Jewish side sensed that the time had come to adopt a proactive strategy.

The turning point of the war came with Operation Nachshon, which began on 5–6 April and continued until the fifteenth of the month. The goal of the operation was to create an open and secure route to Jerusalem. This period also saw for the first time the full consequences of militaristic nationalist ideology: the occupation of villages and land, the flight of residents, destruction, killing, and expulsion, ending with resettlement by the ethnic population of the victorious side in the homes of those who had fled. All these are part of the standard "recipe" of ethno-national conflict, and Palestine was no exception. In the case of the Israelis, however, this conflict did not constitute an eruption of emotions and of long-seated hatred that now found violent expression. On the contrary: these actions were undertaken by a disciplined military acting in accordance with its orders to occupy the villages along the road to Jerusalem. Jerusalem and its access route had not been included within the borders of the Jewish state as part of the partition plan, but the occupation of the area created facts on the ground.

The proactive war subsequently spread from the Jerusalem corridor to other areas. The Israeli military success was remarkable. Within six weeks, by the end of the mandate on 15 May, four mixed cities were occupied (Tiberias, Haifa, Jaffa, and Tzfat), while many dozens of Palestinian villages were emptied of their residents. The Jewish leadership ordered that Jewish immigrants who had just arrived in the country be settled in the depopulated villages, towns, and mixed neighborhoods. This process was indeed implemented in Jerusalem, Haifa, and, later, in Jaffa. Speaking to the Central Committee of Mapai, Ben-Gurion proudly declared that since its devastation by the Romans, Jerusalem had never been as Jewish as it was now: no Palestinians remained in most of the western neighborhoods of the city. Ben-Gurion also

anticipated that dramatic demographic changes would occur over the coming months, and that what had been seen in Jerusalem and Haifa would be repeated elsewhere (Gelber, 2004: 143). Once again, it is reasonable to suggest that Ben-Gurion not only "prophesied" the future but also played an active role in shaping the emerging reality.

Insofar as the process of mass departure was one of panic and flight, the Deir Yassin affair came to be seen, more than any other single event, as the cause of the Palestinians' departure. On the morning of 9 April—the day of the funeral of Qadr al-Hussein, the much-admired leader of the Palestinian forces in the Jerusalem area who was killed in the fighting on a mountain called Castel—a force of 120 combatants from the IZL and Lehi attacked the village of Deir Yassin, which was home to some 750 Palestinians. The operation was approved by David Shaltiel, the Haganah commander in the city, despite the fact that a noncombat agreement had been signed in January between the village and the adjacent Jewish neighborhoods. During the course of the fighting, most of the residents fled, but many others—over a hundred people, all of them civilians—were shot without distinction. The IZL also captured dozens of women and children and drove them through the streets of Jerusalem in a victory parade. Seven or eight Palestinian fighters who had been captured were also paraded through the streets before being taken back to the village and executed (Levi, 1986: 340–44). The event sparked shock and terror among the Arab population. The press published extensive descriptions of the murder and massacre, and the mufti compared the incident to the massacre committed by the Germans in the Czech village of Lidice during the Second World War (Radai, 2016: 123–25; Levi, 1986: 340–46). On 13 April the Palestinians avenged the massacre, attacking the Jewish convoy that traveled through Arab neighborhoods on its way to the Hebrew University and Hadassah Hospital on Mount Scopus. Hundreds of fighters participated in the attack and slaughtered 78 of the 112 passengers in the convoy; 24 others were injured. The killed and injured included many women.

As the war progressed, the idea that the fighting would determine Israel's future borders became universally accepted. At the end of an officers' course on 8 April, Israel Galili, the head of the Haganah headquarters, was asked whether the Jewish forces would confine themselves to the areas allocated to the Jewish state in the United Nations resolution, and what would be the future of dozens of Jewish settlements outside these borders. Galili responded, "We are fighting and we shall fight for all the areas occupied by Hebrew settlement to this point. . . . [T]he borders of our state will be determined by

the borders of our strength. . . . [T]he political borders will be identical with the borders of the territories we liberate from the enemy—the product of our conquests" (quoted in Milstein, 1991: 146).

"Plan Dalet" (Plan D) was the plan used to manage Operation Nachshon and numerous subsequent operations. Unlike earlier Palmach plans, it addressed the conquest of territory, demolition of villages, and expulsion of residents in order to secure the area earmarked for the Jewish state in the United Nations Partition Plan, as well as additional areas settled by Jews.[17] It was a military plan rather than a diplomatic or political one, and its basic assumptions recognized a distinction between the area earmarked for the Jewish state and other areas. After all, it was impossible to ignore the partition designated by the United Nations, and at least officially Israel did not oppose this. Nevertheless the plan was based on ethno-national assumptions, including the assumption that the war would permit the partial expulsion of Palestinians. The plan provided for the following: "Operations against enemy settlements[,] . . . the destruction of villages (burning, explosion, and mining of ruins)—particularly regarding settlements that we cannot take control of on a permanent basis[,] . . . operations for elimination and seizure of control . . . in the event of resistance—destruction of the armed force and expulsion of the population beyond the state's border." Regarding the mixed cities, too, it was noted that in the event of resistance in Arab neighborhoods bordering Jewish areas, the Arab population would be expelled to the central urban area already populated by Arabs (Stiftel, 2008: 298–99).

In the final analysis, military plans such as Plan Dalet were intended to protect the Yishuv during an existential war. Any other reading of the situation ignores the fact that, by its nature, an ethno-national conflict often threatens the civilian population on both sides—with expulsion if not annihilation, and with subjugation and occupation if not expulsion. The military plans prepared by the IDF sought to avoid such a situation. However, this cannot obscure the fact that behind these plans were also hidden political goals, such as the expulsion of Palestinians and the demolition of their villages, at the very least within the area earmarked by the United Nations for the Jewish state.

By the first lull in fighting, or by the beginning of June, approximately 300,000 Palestinians had left their homes, accounting for almost half of the 650,000 Palestinians who were displaced from their homes and land by the end of the war (E. Oren, 2004: 47). This was not genocide, but it was certainly ethnic cleansing—even during these first few months of the war.

"Ethnic cleansing" is a modern term for an ancient and familiar phenomenon. In 1994, following the civil war in Yugoslavia, a committee of United Nations experts defined it as "rendering an area ethnically homogeneous by using force or intimidation to remove from a given area persons of another ethnic or religious group" (Fialkoff, 1993; Kaldor, 2007: 105).

From the end of April 1948, after appraising the military situation in eastern Galilee, Yigael Yadin began to recommend a series of steps that would allow the Jewish people to occupy the area and expel its residents. Yigal Alon was appointed commander of what later became known as Operation Yiftach, which began on 28 April and lasted for approximately one month. His units occupied dozens of Arab villages, employing tactics that included the initial shelling of the village, partly in order to encourage the residents to flee. In most cases, those who remained were expelled and some or all of the homes in the village were bombed, thereby preventing the return of residents (Morris, 1987: 101–10). Alon was a member of HaKibbutz HaMeuchad, which continued to support a policy of expulsion. Morris claims that Alon had a reputation as a commander who sought to ensure that the rear area behind his troops' line of advance was left "clean of Arabs."[18] Naturally, the reason for this was not exclusively military: after all, in many instances those involved were old people, women, and children. The dominant factor was the desire to achieve national integrity through territorial conquest.

The same motive guided the actions of the Carmeli Brigade, which occupied western Galilee on 13–14 May. Again, this area was supposed to form part of the Arab state. The actions of this brigade were intended, in part, to avenge the deaths of forty-six fighters from the brigade in a Palestinian ambush against a convoy heading for Yehiam. There is no known evidence showing that the Haganah headquarters, or the political echelon, explicitly ordered the Carmeli Brigade to expel the Arab population from the areas they occupied. However, the brigade acted in precisely this manner, and its commanders knew that no one would prevent their doing so or make complaints after the event.[19]

The book written in 1949 by Moshe Carmel, the commander of the Carmeli Brigade, does not include any boastful description of the expulsion of Palestinians. On the contrary, Carmel provides a lengthy and somber portrayal of the countless convoys of refugees heading north, including appalling images of dead babies, lost women, and exhausted old people. Carmel was aware of the human tragedy that surrounded him, yet he took no action to halt the flow of refugees that he essentially caused through his own actions,

despite the fact that he could easily have done so had he wished.[20] Once again, Carmel shows the gulf we have already encountered between speech and action. He was aware of the Palestinian tragedy in the war, and he sometimes even made verbal expressions of regret while swearing his allegiance to supreme morality, but he did so without allowing this consciousness to color his actions. This typical pattern of conduct would later become known in Israeli discourse as "shooting and crying." The gulf between speech and action was also seen among the political leadership, which consented to the expulsions without stating so explicitly. On the contrary, Ben-Gurion and his associates continued to employ the rhetoric of moderation throughout the war, depicting Israel as a nation that sought to reach peace with the Arabs and form an alliance with them.[21] As in the 1920s and 1930s, the leadership again realized that this type of rhetoric ensured its freedom to act.

The occupation and expulsion operations led by the Jewish brigade commanders in April and May were relatively effective. By mid-May, when the establishment of the State of Israel was declared, the dominant nation-state was an accomplished fact, thanks in no small part to the military achievements that had created a territorial continuum. Four of the five mixed cities that were conquered had been almost completely emptied of their Palestinian residents.[22] Important Palestinian neighborhoods in Jerusalem had been conquered and the city of Akko was almost under complete control. Around a hundred Arab villages in different parts of the country had been emptied of their residents, as well. Conversely, the Palestinians had not managed to conquer even a single Jewish settlement. The ethno-national perspective dictated borders synonymous with the borders secured in the war. Accordingly, the People's Council decided not to include any definition of the state's borders in the Declaration of Independence.[23] The state was subservient to the nation—a reality that continues to this day, since Israel's borders continue to be undefined. The declaration of the state had led to the invasion by the Arab armies; yet, although the war was at its peak, Ben-Gurion decided to dismantle the Palmach.

Ben-Gurion suspected the Palmach of a lack of discipline and of refusing to accept the full authority of the IDF; he also condemned its political ties with the new political party Mapam, which was led by the kibbutz movement and positioned itself in opposition to Mapai.[24] The desire to dismantle the Palmach formed part of a broader struggle that developed between Ben-Gurion and senior officers, who complained that he interfered constantly in military decisions and appointments.[25] For his part, Ben-Gurion disapproved

of attempts by the senior military echelon to intervene in political decisions.

The IZL, too, faced a test of acceptance of its political authority when it brought the SS *Altalena* to Israel loaded with weapons and ammunition. The IZL demanded that the cargo be transferred to Jerusalem to aid in the ongoing fighting in the area; Ben-Gurion retorted that the elected government of Israel would decide on the matter.[26] IZL members were reluctant to accept this demand, seeing their autonomous existence as a factor that would prevent the partition of the country and the internalization of Jerusalem. Ben-Gurion claimed that the organization's conduct constituted a revolt and ordered a military operation.[27] The ship eventually sank, in part owing to the actions of the Palmach. The ammunition and weapons were lost and twenty-eight people lost their lives in the traumatic incident (Niv, 1976: 275).

After the Arab armies invaded Palestine, the war was fierce and bitter. All sides sustained extensive losses, and within less than a month they agreed on a cease-fire, which went into effect on 11 June. The IDF—the military formed through the unification (rather than the dismantling) of the underground forces—took advantage of the lull in fighting to recruit new immigrants who had just arrived in the country and to acquire substantial quantities of ammunition. The goal was to launch a renewed campaign to conquer the entire country. Such action was considered particularly vital after 28 June, when the United Nations mediator Folke Bernadotte proposed a federal state divided into a Jewish and an Arab canton; according to the plan, Jerusalem was to be included in the Arab canton. The plan was actually formulated by Bernadotte's assistant Ralph Bunche, who had been influenced by Yehuda Magnes's ideas (Ben-Dror, 2012). Thus Brit Shalom gained an indirect foothold in the diplomatic negotiations, and its hallmark policy of forming a binational state was reflected in the proposal. However, the plan implied that Israel would be required to relinquish areas it had already conquered, and that in place of full independence it would become part of a wider confederation. This was something that the Israelis could not accept. Indeed, it seems that Bernadotte was unaware of the ethno-national character of the conflict in, for example, proposing that Jerusalem would not be included in the Jewish area. Ben-Gurion responded angrily, utterly rejecting the proposal and determining that the response would be provided by the military.[28]

At the end of June, as the lull continued, the Israeli generals, heads of the divisions in the General Staff, again threatened to resign because of Ben-Gurion's intervention in military affairs, including in military appointments.

Once again, Ben-Gurion claimed that their actions constituted a political revolt in the military.[29] After he threatened to resign, the generals relented. They did so not because they believed that Ben-Gurion was irreplaceable, but because they recognized that he was realizing the collective ethno-national aspirations through military means and intended to launch major operations to prevent the partition of the country. This process established a clear link in security discourse between two components: the adoption of militaristic policy based on cooperation between the political leadership and the heads of the military, and, in return, the abandonment of the inherently subversive character of armed forces such as the IZL and Palmach in their prewar forms.

A WAR OF CONQUEST

The military operation that marked the end of the lull was known as Operation Danny. Ben-Gurion chose the Palmach brigades to undertake the operation, at precisely the same time that he accused them of subversive tendencies. The operation formed part of a blitzkrieg conducted by the IDF during the ten days beginning on 8 June 1948, drawing on a large, professional, and well-trained military force of some eighty thousand soldiers. The fighting was fierce and took place on several fronts simultaneously, but the IDF secured impressive achievements. The Israeli forces occupied extensive areas in Lower Galilee, including the city of Nazareth, as well as in the Jerusalem corridor and along the coastal plain. The cities of Lod and Ramle were occupied, and with Ben-Gurion's approval some sixty thousand Arab residents were expelled.[30] As the campaign continued, the IDF and the political leadership had no choice but to address in practical terms—for the first time since the emergence of Zionism—the question of the fate of the Palestinians in the occupied areas.

Several massacres occurred during the war, most infamously the atrocities committed against the residents of the village of Al-Dawayima, in which more than one hundred men, women, and children were killed (Morris, 1987). Nathan Alterman, one of Israel's best-known poets, published a poem in the press condemning the massacre.[31] Nevertheless, it can be argued that the 1948 War of Independence entailed a relatively small component of senseless massacring in comparison to wars in general and to ethno-national wars in particular. The Zionist ethno-national project that the leadership sought to realize was not founded on the killing of Arabs. The nation's lead-

ers confined themselves to the goal of transforming the Arabs into a minority—first, through constant Jewish immigration, and later, during the war, through the expulsion of some Arabs and the flight of others. Not all the Palestinians left, however, and there was a fear that those who had fled would attempt to return. This scenario was a source of constant concern to Yosef Weitz, of the Jewish National Fund. He implored the military commanders to use "counterpressure," as he put it, in order to ensure that the remaining Palestinians would also leave, and called on the military to continue the work of demolishing homes in the Arab villages, since "war is war." At the same time, Weitz pressured the political leadership to allow Jewish settlement in the areas occupied by the military, including the abandoned Palestinian villages—not only within the intended area of the Jewish state, as he was careful to emphasize, but also in areas that had originally been earmarked as part of the Arab state (Weitz, 1965: 271–73, 278–79).

Perhaps surprisingly, Weitz enjoyed the support of a number of Arabists, such as Ezra Danin, who were swept along by the Zeitgeist and who abandoned their former moderate positions. Together they reached the conclusion that it was important to structure the process of ethnic cleansing, which hitherto had a sporadic character, and to determine its outcome in a manner that would prevent any return to the status quo ante. Weitz began to meet with the political leadership, raising the idea of "retroactive transfer"—a euphemism for a policy that was already being universally applied, but which no one had so far dared to call by name. He proposed the formation of a committee with three members—himself and two Arabists—that would prepare a plan of action for the purpose of transfer. His lobbying work was successful, and the "Transfer Committee" was indeed established (Weitz, 1965: 293–94). On 4 June, he reported that 155 Palestinian Arab villages within the area of the Jewish state as designated by the United Nations plan had been abandoned, as well as thirty-five additional villages outside this area. Some 150,000 Palestinian villagers had left the country, along with some 200,000 others from the cities. "Who could have anticipated such a miracle?" he asked (Weitz, 1965: 297). Weitz continued the work of destroying the villages in order to prevent refugees from returning and in order to prepare these areas for the intake of new immigrants. He managed to secure the military's cooperation in this task, including preventing the return of refugees "through live fire, if necessary," as the military order emphasized (Morris, 1987: 145).

As usual, the political leadership approved Weitz's actions without declaring so overtly (Weitz, 1965: 297–301). Weitz's diary is a model of militaristic

nationalist ideology free of moral inhibitions—an ideology that found its expression in the expulsion of Palestinians and the destruction of the Palestinian villages: "I visited the village of Meghar. Three tractors are completing its demolition. I was surprised to find that I was not moved in any way by the sight of the destruction—neither regret nor hatred, as if this is the way of the world. . . . We simply wish to live, and the inhabitants of these earthen homes did not wish us to exist here. They sought not only to take control over us but also to annihilate us. And it is interesting to see that this is the opinion of all our young men, from one end to the other" (Weitz, 1965: 303).

The historian Benny Morris searched for the "smoking gun" of an expulsion order, but to no avail. This is hardly surprising, since there were no such clear orders; there was only a state of mind, a cultural perception, an ideology, and tacit consent to the military's practice of expulsion. When Ben-Gurion wished to prevent expulsions, he had no difficulty doing so. On 18 July, for example, Moshe Carmel ordered the expulsion of all the residents of Nazareth. Ben-Gurion heard of this and immediately sent a telegram forbidding the action, presumably owing to his fear of the reaction of the Christian world and the Vatican, given the special significance of the city (Ben-Gurion, 1984, 598–99).

Nevertheless, a political decision was needed concerning the situation that had emerged on the ground. At a meeting of the provisional government on 16 June 1948, Ben-Gurion overtly declared that the United Nations resolution of 29 November 1947 was dead. The ministers agreed to prevent Palestinian refugees from returning to the country, thereby determining Israel's character not only as a nation-state but also as a dominant nation-state—that is, a state based on a claim of one ethnic group's superiority over the other(s) and on giving preference to the former.[32] From my perspective outlined in this book, the historiographic arguments regarding the precise number of refugees who fled vis-à-vis those who were expelled is less important. What matters is the fact that the government did not allow them to return. This was a fateful decision, since it determined the future course of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

During the second truce, which started on July 19, not all the Israeli ministers were enthusiastic about the renewal of the fighting. The army generals, however, pressed for a war of conquest. Alon pressured the government to intensify the conquests in the south, and Dayan pressed to attack Jerusalem. In fact, the army chiefs did not have to apply heavy pressure. Ben-Gurion was the one who decided, and he saw the benefit of using the army to "cleanse" the land of Arabs. As he explained in September 1948 in a government meet-

ing, the renewal of the fighting would allow Galilee to be "cleansed of 100,000 [Arab] refugees who were still living there. With the war, and without great effort, the Galilee is clean" (Segev, 2018: 420).

On October 15, the second truce ended. The government decision not to allow the refugees to go back to their homes and land led to an intensification of the process of transfer and resettlement in the abandoned villages. Weitz and his colleagues in the Jewish National Fund presented Ben-Gurion with a plan to establish twenty-one settlements, most of which were located on Arab land outside the partition borders. The settlements were duly established over the following months, and the state encouraged newly arrived immigrants to settle in the "abandoned" areas of the country.[33] Ethnic cleansing, the expulsion of Arab residents, the exploitation of their departure, and above all, actions to prevent their return—all these were the product of a militaristic nationalist ideology.

Over the months from November 1947 to the end of 1948, the Palestinian-Arab community ceased to exist as a distinct social and political entity. More than seven hundred thousand people became refugees, and some two hundred villages were destroyed. Here and there, members of Hashomer Hatzair within Mapam expressed opposition to the policy of expulsion. At a meeting of the executive committee of the Histadrut on 14 July, for example, they protested at the "unnecessary" expulsion of women and children while also complaining that the military was establishing facts on the ground without seeking the approval of the political echelon.[34] More forceful criticism came from the members of the Ichud, the successors to Brit Shalom. The April 1950 edition of their journal, *Ner,* included an expression of remorse for the expulsion of the Palestinians. Some members of the group referred to the events as a crime and an abomination and regretted the character of the state that had emerged: "Dark, dim urges have prevailed, and the ingathering of the exiles has taken place not according to Herzl's approach . . . but according to the cursed and damned militaristic approach that has been seen from the time of Cain to the present day."[35]

Meanwhile the military continued its conquests, moving far beyond the existential danger Israel had faced at the beginning of the war. A second lull began on 21 July after pressure from the United Nations. Bernadotte prepared a new partition plan that called for the internationalization of Jerusalem and abandoned the idea of a confederation. However, he continued to advocate the unrestricted return of refugees to their homes. Unsurprisingly, the Israeli government rejected all his proposals and demanded that the territorial

changes on the ground be recognized in any future agreement. Bernadotte stood his ground and managed to secure the support of the United States and Great Britain for his plan, leading their representatives to declare that Israel would be forced to accept the proposal.[36] However, Bernadotte was assassinated in Jerusalem by members of the Lehi, putting an end to the proposal. The Israeli General Staff prepared a plan for the rapid conquest of the northern Negev—and, later, the remainder of the region—in order to thwart any possibility of implementing the "Bernadotte Plan."

On 15 October the IDF ended the second lull, launching Operation Yoav. Infantry and armored troops seized control of the entire Negev, including the city of Beersheva. Later, on 28 October, the IDF launched Operation Hiram in order to complete the conquest of Galilee. Again, Palestinian residents fled or were expelled to Lebanon. Operation Horev, from 22 December 1948 through 7 January 1949, sought to prevent any possibility that the Negev might not be included as part of the territory of Israel. The IDF forces attacked the remaining Egyptian forces in the area, and Israeli armored forces even entered the Sinai Peninsula, reaching as far as El-Arish. The commanders' initiative knew no bounds, and in many cases they concealed their conquests even from the military headquarters. In this case, however, news of the dramatic conquest spread. After the headquarters ordered the forces to withdraw from Sinai, Alon—the commander of the operation—flew to Tel Aviv to protest to Ben-Gurion.[37] Great Britain and the United States intervened to restrain Israel, and Alon's pleas were unsuccessful.

Ralph Bunche, Bernadotte's deputy and his replacement following his assassination, was not surprised by Israel's military successes. In December, he noted that the Israeli government preferred the military option to the diplomatic one (Ben-Dror, 2012: 177). Bunche's only mistake was to attribute this preference to the government, which in reality had made very few significant decisions since the war began. The real decisions were made by Ben-Gurion and the military commanders. At the moment of truth, Ben-Gurion recognized that Israel was following a course of militaristic politics. Such a moment came in his speech to the military commanders at the end of November 1948: "It has been said that war is the continuation of politics by other means. This is not always the case. . . . Initially, our war was defensive, against the attempt to destroy us. . . . [I]t has fundamentally remained the same[,] . . . but since the first lull, our military operations have included a type of political action" (E. Oren, 2004: 54; Ben-Gurion, 1951: 264–71). Ben-

Gurion's point was, of course, that the IDF had now launched a campaign to conquer the entire homeland.

The campaigns during the final months of the war indeed provide a model example of militaristic and ethno-nationalist politics. This was no existential war—the outcome of the war had long since been determined, and the State of Israel was an accomplished fact. The campaigns had a clear ethno-national purpose: to prevent any possibility of future partition. The campaigns also served to inculcate the idea that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict would be resolved solely through military might, without any compromise or "concession." As the military journal *Bamachaneh* explained, "We have never relinquished and will never relinquish the vision of the entirety of the Land. We have always found partition to be a painful concession. . . . We will not accept the partition borders."[38]

Under pressure from the superpowers and the United Nations, Israel was forced to agree to enter into diplomatic negotiations with a view to reaching armistice agreements with its enemies. The talks opened in Rhodes on 12 January 1949, leading to disappointment among the military commanders, since this marked the end to the conquests. Their concern that an agreement would be reached at the price of relinquishing territory was softened through their active participation in the talks—the beginning of a phenomenon of "diplomacy in uniform" that placed military considerations before any other factors and placed commanders above diplomats.[39] An armistice agreement was signed with Egypt on 24 February 1949, but Israel had still not abandoned the hope of further conquests. On 5 March the IDF took control of the Arava Valley and Eilat. Further armistice agreements were later reached with Lebanon and Jordan and, eventually, with Syria. Bunche received the Nobel Prize for his efforts, but the armistice agreements did not lead to the desired peace. Israel's leaders were convinced that they had proved their ability to take their fate into their own hands and, accordingly, felt that they had no need for the United Nations or any other player that might deprive them of their victories. If the fruits of victory prevented peace, this was not seen as a problem. Ben-Gurion repeated a comment he had heard from Abba Eban—"One should not run after peace"—explaining that an armistice was sufficient. "If Israel seeks peace," he expounded, "the Arabs will demand a price in return—in terms of borders, refugees or both" (Ben-Gurion, 1984, 993). Thus Ben-Gurion established a political approach that would guide Israel for many years to come. It would later become apparent that even the establishment of the

state had not satisfied the nation's territorial desires. An additional problem was the refusal of the Palestinians to accept their disaster, and the inability of the Arab nations to overcome their defeat. Ben-Gurion responded by developing a deterministic approach, observing in his diary on 27 November 1948: "Will there be an end to war? . . . And if peace is reached, has there ever been a war that was not preceded by peace?" (Ben-Gurion, 1984: 582–83). The ethno-national character of the Arab-Israeli conflict indeed encouraged its perception in deterministic and fatalist terms. This perception not only reflected reality but also shaped it in the new state.

FOUR

A Nation-in-Arms

THE SINAI WAR OF 1956

In 1952 a young man by the name of Arik Scheinermann, who later changed his surname to Sharon, took leave from the military in order to study at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Sharon, whose parents had immigrated to Palestine in the 1920s, was a native of the country and had grown up in a rural community, helping his parents with the farmwork from an early age. He participated in the 1948 war, commanding a platoon and sustaining a serious injury during combat. After leaving the military, Sharon was appointed commander of a reserve battalion in the Jerusalem Brigade. By that time, he had already earned a reputation as an unorthodox, courageous, and ambitious commander who was not inclined to follow the rules and was more than capable of bypassing military procedures when he considered it to be necessary. Sharon discovered that the military's standing orders authorized a battalion commander to fire mortars without the approval of his superiors in the event of an exchange of fire requiring artillery support. He decided to exploit this provision during training exercises in the Jerusalem Hills, gathering his officers and informing them that Palestinian women from the village of Qabatiya were entering Israeli territory on their way to draw water from a well. He ordered that an ambush be laid and the women shot. Sharon also placed the battalion's mortar unit on alert in case the shooting of the village women led to the opening of artillery fire from the Arab village. Sharon instructed his officers to keep the plan confidential in case the regional or general command foiled the proposed action. The officers duly lay in wait at night by the well, shooting and killing two women who had come to draw water. The Jordanians predictably responded by opening fire on Israel, and Sharon's battalion mortars sprang into action (Benziman, 1995: 39–40).

This relatively minor and localized incident illustrates several of the characteristics that emerged among young combat officers in the Israeli military during this period: launching initiatives without the approval of the senior military echelon; constant crossing of the territorial border with or without authorization, at least in part for the purpose of proving their courage and ability to overcome difficulties; and a trigger-happy approach that often led to the killing of innocent people, including Palestinians who refused to accept the outcome of the war and their expulsion from their homes, as well as Jordanian civilians or soldiers on the other side of the border. A passion to engage in military action is a common trait among soldiers, and particularly so in elite units. Among the new cadre of Israeli officers, however—as exemplified by Sharon—this military characteristic also included a political dimension.

Sharon and many of his fellow officers, some of whom had already left the standing army, disapproved of what they considered the government's failure to respond to frequent incursions into Israel by Palestinian refugees from the neighboring states. They were convinced that military might was the only way for Israel to solve political problems, and accordingly they came to believe that the proper response would be implemented only when the political leadership of the nation rested with vigorous and potent leaders who could use the IDF as an active policy tool. In order to understand the criticisms leveled by the young officers, it is important to recall that under the influence of both the former chief of staff Yigael Yadin and Brigadier General Haim Lasskov, the Israeli military in this period was influenced by the tradition of the British army. This tradition highlighted the values of discipline, obedience to orders, formal procedures, and military ceremony. Like many of his contemporaries, Sharon and his fellow officers believed that this tradition constituted an obstacle to military excellence. Their criticism was not without foundation: in a significant number of operations conducted after the end of the 1948 war, particularly actions intended to end incursions by Palestinians seeking to return to their homes and villages, the Israeli soldiers showed a poor level of performance. In 1953 alone, fifty-three Israelis were killed by infiltrators who crossed the border, ninety-three were injured, and 263 clashes involving firearms were recorded. It was clear that the young state and its military faced a complex problem.[1]

Sharon's commanders were well aware of his enthusiasm for launching operations involving the crossing of the border and audacious actions. They called on him to abandon his academic studies and return to the military.

Sharon agreed, establishing a special commando unit that came to be known by the mysterious-sounding name "101." Although the unit functioned for only a brief period, it gained fame for its unusual operating methods. Unit 101 later merged with the paratroopers, infusing first the battalion and later the entire brigade with its unique spirit (Milstein, 1985: 204–54). Combat paratroopers who operated beyond enemy lines showed exceptional courage. Their fame was also fueled by the stories of heroism they disseminated themselves, thereby creating a romanticized image of war and replicating the ethos of the native Sabra, the native-born generation that had already been created by the youth movements and the Palmach in the 1940s. The worldview of the young commanders of these units was dominated by two themes. First, while they were loyal to the young state and its institutions, their dominant hallmark was the fervent nationalism typical of the new, young Israelis who, as we saw in the previous chapters, utterly negated the Diaspora. As part of this approach, the youngsters were convinced that the entire Land of Israel—the historical entity on just part of which the State of Israel had been established—belonged to them. Out of loyalty to the ethno-national perspective, they certainly did not sanctify the state per se or such values as sovereignty, permanent fixed borders, and the rule of law. Second, the young officers' perception of the Israeli-Arab conflict was essentially deterministic, reflecting their adoption of a characteristic position we have already seen with regard to Ben-Gurion. The Arabs, they believed, would never reconcile themselves to Israel's existence; accordingly, the political problems of the young state could be resolved only through military action. The former of these two themes reflects an ethno-national perception; the latter embodies militarism. Together, these two perceptions had an extremely important influence in the military and political arenas, serving as the foundation for the transformation of Israel into a nation-in-arms.

A NATION-IN-ARMS

In its early years, Israel became a nation-in-arms as part of the consolidation of a system of control known as "statism." This system was based on the imposition of the state's authority through concentrated power; the blurring of the boundaries between state and society; the neutralization of alternative power bases; and the positioning of the nation-state as the central focus of identification. The interesting feature of this system, which was first

introduced by the Jacobin regime in France, and which was also implemented rigorously by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in Turkey, was the imposition of a modern centralized system of domination based on the mobilization of the population for collective goals determined by the leadership.[2] Opponents of statism in Israel argued that the bureaucratic state that would flourish under the guise of statism would undermine the emotional components that both accompany the nation and imbue it with vitality.[3] Ben-Gurion, however, had no intention of accepting their criticism. He turned Israel into a nation-in-arms, which combined the rational and the emotional together. In the nation-in-arms model, a population composed mainly of recently arrived Jewish immigrants was turned into a nation, and more specifically into a fighting nation, in which the military and war formed a central project. Historical examples of nations-in-arms include postrevolutionary France, Prussia following the defeat by Napoleon in 1806, and Japan following the Meiji Restoration (1868–1896). In all these instances, war-making was rooted in a profound nationalist sentiment that was not mirrored by the nation's enemies, and in the mobilization of the "entire" population, directly or indirectly, in the war effort. In direct terms, the character of the nation-in-arms was manifested primarily in compulsory mobilization, which began with the famous levy en masse of the Jacobin state, later enabling the formation of Napoleon's Grand Armée. However, the nation-in-arms included numerous additional features, such as a war economy and the focus of the entire home front, from women and children to journalists and writers, on providing practical and often enthusiastic support for their nation's war plans (Ben-Eliezer, 1995).

Ben-Gurion's approach was that Zionism, as a national movement with a voluntary foundation, had managed to secure a state, but the newly arrived Jewish population still did not constitute a nation. Accordingly, the population had to be turned into a nation, and who was better positioned to achieve this than the military? He wrote, "I have been a Zionist all my life, and I do not—heaven forbid—dispute the existence of the Jewish people. However[,] . . . even the English people were not always such a people . . . but rather composed of different tribes, alien to each other and fighting one another. Only after centuries of development did they become one people. . . . We do not have centuries at our disposal, and without the instrument of the military . . . we will not become a people in time (Knesset Proceedings, 19 August 1952). Ben-Gurion believed that the transition of Israel into a nation-in-arms, through the instrument of the military, was vital, since the conflict was not over and the national missions were not completely accomplished.

The model of a nation-in-arms was applied on the basis of a stark calculation: it would be easier and cheaper to mobilize citizens for war on the basis of an imposed obligation than to rely solely on a professional military. Moreover, the concept of the fighting nation instills recruits with the motivation needed to fight and win wars.

The Israeli model of a nation-in-arms included four complementary layers. The first was the formation of a standing army based on compulsory conscription. The second was the establishment of a permanent military based on professional soldiers. The third was the mobilization of women. The fourth was reserve duty, which was implemented on such a scale that Yadin, the chief of staff, remarked that an Israeli is merely a soldier who is currently on eleven months' leave. These layers defined a number of principles that would dominate Israeli reality for many years to come. One of these is the principle that the Israeli military was less the military of the state and more that of the nation—or more precisely, the military of the dominant nation. The immediate ramification of this principle was that the Palestinian citizens of Israel—those who remained in the country following the war—did not serve in the military (Peled, 1998; Cohen, 2010). A further ramification of Israel's model of the nation-in-arms was that its military was perceived as symbolizing the nation and even as epitomizing its best features—the "true Israel," united and free of problems that, so to speak, were stopped at the entrance to the base. A second principle, and a characteristic feature of nations-in-arms, is the high level of cooperation between the military and political echelons based on shared interests and similar worldviews. This principle explains why nations-in-arms do not usually experience military coups. The military stands at the center of society and its officers enjoy prestige, political influence, and generous resources, so why would they revolt? A third principle is that the military in a nation-in-arms is not political in the narrow sense of the term: it is not sectarian or aligned with any particular class or political party. The military is, however, fundamentally political in the sense that its loyalty lies with the nation, and that its leaders consider themselves obliged to defend its basic values. As the result of this principle, the political echelon often finds it difficult to cope with the political influence enjoyed by the military. A fourth principle is that since the nation-in-arms constitutes a model for mobilization, a considerable degree of blurring can be seen between the military and society. The perception of "security" is unusually broad, as Ben-Gurion often remarked: "Security means Jewish immigration[,] . . . security means settlement[,] . . . security means conquering

the sea and skies."[4] Various mechanisms adopted in Israel after 1948 blurred the distinction between the military and society. The reserve army in general softens the dichotomy between civilians and soldiers. The Nachal (Fighting Pioneer Youth) was a paramilitary program that combined military service with the establishment of agricultural settlements, while the informal practice of planting ("parachuting") generals in politics further obscured the boundary between military and civilian life (Peri, 1983). In nations-in-arms, this process is so profound that the very term *civilian* acquires a distinct character by comparison to its use in liberal societies. A fifth principle is that nations-in-arms are characterized by a cultural militarism that can be identified among both the public and the leadership, who share a conviction that military solutions to political problems on the national level are desirable and even essential.[5]

This model of the nation-in-arms left little room to maneuver for the Palestinians who remained in the country. Although they were granted citizenship, they were placed under military rule and constantly suspected of forming a fifth column.[6] If the Palestinians had any role in the nation-in-arms, it was the role of the "other," the alien or the enemy. By way of example, the military journal *Bamachaneh* expressed no doubt about who was responsible for the failure to resolve the refugee problem: "Dishonest [Arab] leaders sporadically raise the possibility that they will be able to return to homes that no longer exist, to demolished villages, and to communities they left due to incitement from their leaders, who promised them more luxurious homes in the conquered Tel Aviv."[7] The military journal referred to refugees as "departers" and claimed that they were merely "tools of deception held by the Arab states." From this perspective, the refugee problem was a malicious and threatening Arab plot that had to be opposed by the entire armed nation.[8]

The model of the nation-in-arms provided a common denominator that was supposed to serve as a unifying force in a society divided between Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews, religious and secular, new immigrants and veterans, urbanites and country dwellers, and so forth. This unity was regarded as an inherent value in its own right but also as an essential condition for war. An opposition to this trend was expressed, somewhat weakly, by a number of professors at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem who criticized the prioritization of the state over society and the dominant role of the military in the processes of nation building (Keren, 1983: 85–87).

More forthright criticism was raised by the members of the Ichud, whose positions were presented in their journal, *Ner.* The journal included angry

attacks on the state's attitude toward the Palestinians who remained within its borders, as well as concern at the growing trend toward militarism. The writers expressed their shock at a speech by Yigael Yadin, titled "On the Military and School," in which he asked the various corps of the IDF to raise proposals from their own perspectives regarding subjects that should be emphasized in schools in order to strengthen the military.[9] The writer in *Ner* rhetorically asked, "What level of Prussianism or Spartanism have we reached now?"[10]

Ichud was a small group. This does not mean, however, that controversies did not appear within the Zionist mainstream concerning the way the Zionist idea should be realized, especially with regard to the Israeli-Arab conflict. In the government, a gap emerged between Ben-Gurion's positions and those expressed by Moshe Sharett. Sharett had already exerted a measure of influence over policy during his period of office as foreign minister, before becoming prime minister. He believed that Israel could afford to consider diplomatic compromise now that a Jewish state had been established, thereby realizing the central goal of Zionism—and particularly since armistice agreements had already been signed with the vanquished neighboring states. Sharett saw the signing of these agreements as an important achievement. Even if peace seemed a long way off, he was convinced that it would, at least, be possible to create the conditions that could bring peace in the future. Sharett also argued that building trust and a willingness to compromise with the Arabs could be achieved through cooperation with the superpowers, particularly the United States, and the United Nations.[11] However, Ben-Gurion, the prime minister, led Israel in a different direction with the support of the military, as manifested in the "reprisal operations."

THE "REPRISAL OPERATIONS"

During the early years following the establishment of the state, Israel experienced constant attempts by Palestinian refugees to infiltrate its borders. Some sought to enter Israel with the goal of remaining in the country; others were interested to see what had become of their villages, fields, homes, and livestock. Israel responded by adopting a policy of shooting at infiltrators in an attempt to stop the phenomenon. In return, some of the infiltrators began to equip themselves with firearms, which in some instances were provided by the militaries of the surrounding Arab countries. The phenomenon of the *fidayun* (guerrillas) undermined the security of Israeli citizens throughout the

country, and the military was instructed to respond to the incursions by various means, including reprisal operations against the neighboring states and their militaries (Morris, 1997). These operations reached their peak in the raid on the village of Qibya in the Jordanian-controlled West Bank on 14 October 1953. The raid was launched after a group of Palestinians infiltrated Israel and threw a hand grenade into the home of a family in a small village named Yehud, killing the mother and her two small children. Ben-Gurion and the military decided to respond forcefully, despite assurances by the Jordanians that they would do everything possible to apprehend the attackers. The government was not involved in the decision to launch the raid on Qibya. Sharett, who was foreign minister but was serving as acting prime minister while Ben-Gurion took a vacation, tried for two days to cancel the operation, claiming that there was no evidence that such reprisals discouraged further incursions. But the acting defense minster, Pinchas Lavon, and Ben-Gurion supported the operation, and Sharett responded by sending Ben-Gurion a note reading, "At some time there will be a resignation about this."[12]

The relevant military document explained that the purpose of the operation was to kill as many residents of the village as possible. This plan was executed efficiently under Sharon's leadership, in a raid involving some 130 soldiers—paratroopers and members of Unit 101—who carried dozens of kilograms of explosives on their backs. They blew up some forty-five homes in the village, killing sixty-nine residents, most of whom were women and children (Morris, 2000: 176). The bullet-ridden bodies of the dead, found by the entrances to their homes, and the numerous bullet holes in the doors of the demolished homes, showed that the residents had been forced to remain in their homes until the homes had been blown up with them inside. The later claim by the commanders that they did not realize that the homes were inhabited was mendacious.

Out of the public eye, both Ben-Gurion and Dayan welcomed the operation and expressed satisfaction at its success.[13] By contrast, Sharett was furious at the turn of events. He claimed that the military had misled him by failing to reveal the scale and character of the operation. A fluent Arabic speaker, Sharett listened to Radio Ramallah and wrote in his diary that he was appalled to hear the descriptions of the devastation in the village. In his capacity as foreign minister, Sharett was also forced to respond to hostile reactions from around the world following the murderous attack. He realized that such actions would have far-reaching consequences and would stigmatize Israel as a bloodthirsty nation.

When Sharett and some other ministers attempted at the government meeting on October 18 to present the damage caused to Israel by the operation, a storm erupted. Sharett wrote in his dairy that he realized immediately that the action had been taken, "if not as a calculated plan to cause the outbreak of war, then out of an acceptance that war might break out following the operation."[14] In other words, he understood that, despite his opposition, a militaristic policy was being implemented in front of his eyes, based on the assumption that military force constitutes the only effective policy tool and must ultimately serve to spark a total war. This mind-set was evident both among the political leadership and among the heads of the military. During the same period, Sharett heard a lecture by Colonel Matti Peled. Without the slightest sign of awareness that his comments were problematic, Peled gravely informed the members of the government that the military believed that the existing border with Jordan was totally unviable. Peled was convinced that the convoluted border should be replaced with a straight line, and he emphasized that the military was ready to conquer the entire western Land of Israel.[15]

Sharett found it equally difficult to accept the prevailing ethno-national approach among the public, according to which the Jews were invariably the victims of a reality imposed on them by force. This approach was exemplified every day in the press following the massacre in Qibya.[16] In the Knesset, too, speeches were dominated by the motif of the Jew as a victim. Meir Levin of the ultra-Orthodox Agudat Yisrael declared, "We saw the storm raised by great and small nations following the incident in the village of Qibya and how the entire world was incited against us. . . . Where was this world when our blood was being shed like water every day, when millions of our people were cruelly annihilated? . . . Were they pleased then by our suffering or were they also shocked at our spilt blood?" Like other speakers, Levin combined the motif of the victim with the motif of ethno-national insularity, which he saw as an important component of Israel's identity (Knesset Proceedings, November 30, 1953).

Some members of Knesset used the debate on the massacre at Qibya to criticize the government for what they considered its excessive moderation. They opposed the attempt to resolve the tension created by the massacre by diplomatic means, and they objected to the government's insistence that forces crossing the border for reprisal operations should return to Israeli territory rather than conquering areas of the homeland that were not yet within its sovereign borders. As Haim Landau of the Herut Party declared, "We proceed from restraint to concessions and from concessions to withdrawals. . . .

Our government believed, and evidently continues to believe, that withdrawal is the course that leads to peace. . . . You repeatedly appealed to Jordan, which usurped parts of our homeland. . . . Peace and permanent peace will be secured only when Israel reaches its historical and strategic borders. Securing control of the entire homeland and freeing those parts under occupation is the only guarantee for our future security and well-being (Knesset Proceedings, 30 November 1953).

Herut was political party founded on the basis of the Etzel military organization immediately after independence. It claimed much of the credit for expelling the British from Palestine and for leading the war against the Arabs, but its chief message was that the national struggle was far from over. It would be complete, Herut argued, only when the entire Land of Israel was once again held by the nation. Menachem Begin, the leader of Herut, and the other members of the party claimed that Ben-Gurion and his associates had abandoned this principle of the "entirety of the homeland." Moreover, the leadership of Herut emphasized that the homeland included both banks of the River Jordan. When the Etzel was formed and, subsequently, took effective control of the Revisionist Zionist movement, its emblem featured a map of the entire Land of Israel, east of the river as well as west, together with a stylized image of a hand holding a rifle and the slogan "Only thus!" At Herut rallies following the establishment of the state, Begin always stood in front of three maps. One showed the United Nations partition plan of 1947, another showed Israel's borders within the "Green Line," as determined in the 1948 war, and the third showed Etzel's vision of the entire Land of Israel extending across both banks of the River Jordan (Weitz, 2002: 19–20).

When the Palestinian incursions continued, in some instances acquiring a virulent character, as in an attack in which eleven passengers on a bus in the Negev were killed, Herut and other circles criticized the government for excessive moderation. In the Knesset Begin called for war: "If you ask us whether it is permissible to put an end to this bloodshed . . . by means of an overt and general war, we will respond, 'It is indeed permissible!'" Begin positioned the nation at the center of the call for law, attacking the false universal pacifism and stressing that the war was "not to occupy foreign lands, but to liberate our own land."[17]

Given the constant incursions, the natural question is why Israel did not respond by closing its borders with a fence or wall, as advocated in some circles.[18] The answer to this question lies in the emotional rather than the rational realm. From an ethno-national standpoint, the borders were not

perceived as final, even among large sections of the Mapai leadership, let alone among the hard-liners of the HaKibbutz HaMeuchad Movement and the right-wing Herut. Moreover, a border fence would have violated the dominant spatial approach at the time, as discussed in detail by Adriana Kemp (2000). According to this approach, an unfenced border conveyed a cultural message of transience and of openness to the territories that lay beyond the current order, thereby galvanizing the desire for further expansion that had been cast by the native-born generation in the late 1930s, under the slogan "Outside the perimeter." Indeed, in this period, Israelis saw a fence as a symbol of siege, closure, stagnation, and weakness, and thus they objected to the idea of its construction.[19]

The ultimate purpose of Dayan's military and political convictions as chief of staff, and of the operational methods adopted by the IDF, was to lead the country to war. Teddy Kollek, who served at the time as director of the prime minister's office, told Sharett, who assumed the position of prime minister in December 1953 after Ben-Gurion resigned, that the senior echelons of the IDF were "totally consumed by a lust for war."[20] Dayan did not even attempt to convince Sharett of the importance of war: Ben-Gurion's support was sufficient for his purposes. Concern at the loss of control over the military intensified after the news emerged, at the same time, that the IDF had operated a terror cell composed of young Egyptian Jews, including a woman, in the two main cities in Egypt. The members of the cell exploded bombs in several public locations with the goal of disrupting the relations between Egypt and Great Britain, which was about to hand over to Egypt its military bases along the Suez Canal. All the members of the cell were arrested: one killed himself, two were executed by hanging, and others were sentenced to long periods of imprisonment.[21]

For our purposes, it is fascinating to note that following the exposure of the failed operation in Egypt, attention in Israel focused solely on discussing who gave the order, not on why the order was given. The operation formed part of a militaristic policy applied by senior officers and security chiefs, or both together—without governmental supervision. As such, the "Bad Business," the name given to the failed operation in Egypt, cannot be considered in isolation from other actions during the same period, particularly the reprisal raids that also reflected the supremacy of militaristic nationalism over policy. This approach even led to the coining of a new Hebrew word (*bitchonizm*) that can be translated as "securitism." This term was used by critics of the prevailing mood, who were reluctant to use the term "militarism,"

though naturally the meaning is essentially the same.[22] A phrase that also gained currency during this period, "the imperialism of the Defense Ministry," highlights the fact that there were those who criticized the ministry's influence and its tendency to extend the concept of "security needs" into an increasingly wide range of fields (Hassin and Horowitz, 1961: 26).

Sharett shrewdly understood that the problem was not merely political, involving the relations between the political and military echelons, but essentially cultural. Almost invariably he opposed these operations, not only from the standpoint of proper governance and democratic procedures, but also because he was convinced that they both reflected and replicated a culture that placed its confidence in military might. However, Sharett's moderate policy was subjected to increasing criticism. During a Knesset debate, he declared that Israel would have to decide whether it was "a state of law or a country of robbery." In response, a well-known journalist commented, "This week, four Arabs put on their ammunition belts, slung their submachine guns over their shoulders, and set out. And while the prime minister declared that Israel must choose whether it wishes to be a state of law or a country of robbery, the four stood on Israeli soil . . . and there were already two corpses on the ground."[23] On 22 February 1955, Ben-Gurion ended his "vacation" in Sde Boker and returned to the government, assuming the position of defense minister. He made no effort to conceal his intentions in this position: he had come to impose the approach formulated by the chief of staff, Dayan, in place of Sharett's policy, and to lead Israel to war.

ON THE WAY TO WAR

The first signs of a new approach came just a few days after Ben-Gurion resumed his position as defense minister in Operation Black Arrow (the Gaza Operation), launched on 28 February 1955. As usual, the officers of the Israeli paratroops, under Sharon's command, ignored military regulations and expanded the operation. They raided an Egyptian military base, a water plant, and a railroad station in Gaza City and blew up several buildings. Their principal goal was to kill as many Egyptians as possible: thirty-eight Egyptians were killed in the operation and thirty-one injured. Eight Israelis were also killed and thirteen injured—a relatively high number of losses on the Israeli side owing to the complex and ambitious nature of the operation. Significantly, this was the first operation to target the Egyptian military—a

deliberate provocation that Ben-Gurion and Dayan anticipated would eventually lead Israel to war. The operation also marked Ben-Gurion's return to his favorite governmental position, and many Israelis responded to the news of the incident by remarking, "Ben-Gurion has indeed returned."[24]

Ben-Gurion was impressed by the heroic spirit shown by the paratroopers during Operation Black Arrow, whereas Sharett highlighted the diplomatic damage it caused. Predictably, the press repeated its usual mantra: the isolation and persecution that had been the Jews' lot throughout history served as justification for military operations that were considered legitimate even if they led to dozens of casualties.[25] In Egypt, the provocative operation caused fury, insult, and popular tumult, to the point that it endangered Nasser's regime. Indeed, it is not implausible to suggest, as Sharett did, that the operation led to a shift in Nasser's attitude toward Israel (Raphael, 1981: 49).

During the same period, Sharett was involved in indirect contacts with Nasser, at the Egyptian leader's behest, in an attempt to calm the relations between the two states and even to create the possibility for a later peace agreement. As Nasser himself stated, one of the results of the Gaza Operation was that Egypt decided to forge closer ties with the Soviet Union and to strengthen its military through a major arms deal with Czechoslovakia, with Soviet approval. The Israeli operation did not end the incursions from Egypt: on the contrary, Egypt intensified its mission to send cells into Israel, both for intelligence purposes and in order to carry out violent attacks. As a result, the insecurity and anxiety in Israel grew still further.[26]

On 29 March, as the incursions continued to cause losses among Israeli civilians, Ben-Gurion suggested that Israel "expel Egypt from the Gaza Strip." Naturally, this would automatically imply the nullification of the armistice agreement between the two countries. From the ethno-national standpoint, the Gaza Strip had always been regarded as a part of the homeland that had been usurped by Egypt. Sharett vehemently opposed Ben-Gurion's plan, fearing that the superpower would intervene. He was also concerned that the action would lead to war with all the Arab countries, and argued that the occupation of Gaza would not solve the refugee problem, which he (in sharp contrast to Ben-Gurion and Dayan) saw as the main reason for the inability to solve the conflict.

During the government meeting, Sharett mentioned that the United Nations resolution of 1947 had led to the establishment of the State of Israel. Ben-Gurion reacted furiously: "Not at all! Only the daring of the Jews founded this state." Ben-Gurion referred to the United Nations by a play on

words using its Hebrew acronym: "Um-Shmum" (an English equivalent might be to speak of "that UNimportant organization"). This expression has been used ever since, whenever Israel takes military action by itself, leading to criticism from the United Nations, which has never been widely admired in Israel. Despite Ben-Gurion's passionate intervention, Sharett managed to secure a majority of nine ministers, against five, opposing war. Ben-Gurion did not abandon his plan, however, convening a further government meeting that resulted in a stalemate between the two sides, again preventing the execution of the proposed operation. Sharett wrote in his diary, "I saw myself as someone who had evaded danger by the skin of his teeth. This government was on the verge of bringing an international disaster on the state, and I was on the verge of resigning from the government."[27]

The rift between Ben-Gurion and Sharett was widening rapidly. Sharett repeatedly demanded the supervision of the reprisal raids and managed to pass a government decision curbing the actions of Ben-Gurion and the military. By way of example, Sharett thwarted plans to invade Syria or to occupy southern Lebanon and transform it into a Maronite state. Sharett mocked Dayan's proposal regarding Lebanon: "Surely, all we need is to find an officer . . . who can be persuaded or paid to declare himself the savior of the Maronite population[,] . . . and then the IDF will enter Lebanon and occupy the territory. . . . The Christian regime will make an alliance with Israel, and the area south of the Litani [River] will be annexed to Israel. And all this will be completed peacefully!"[28] Decades later, Israel would indeed implement Sharett's nightmare scenario, and as he anticipated, the failed adventure proved to be anything but peaceful.

During this period, Sharett was interested in forging a military alliance with the United States. Dayan viewed such an alliance as highly dangerous, since it would limit Israel's freedom of action and prevent it from launching reprisal operations. Dayan explained that such operations helped maintain tension in the public and in the military. Without this tension, Israel would not be a fighting nation—and if it were not a fighting nation, it would be doomed. Sharett violently objected to this equation, which he saw as ignoring Israel's international and economic challenges and the need to seek peace. He was unable to accept the view that the sword is the main, if not the only, instrument for raising public morale and for maintaining moral tension.[29]

Dayan made no attempt to conceal his deterministic view of the conflict. He presented it by the grave of Roi Rotenberg, a member of Kibbutz Nachal Oz, who was killed in the fields of the kibbutz close to the border with the

Gaza Strip: "Let us not shift away our gaze lest our hand be weakened. This is the fate of our generation. This is the covenant of our lives—to be ready and armed, strong and firm. If the sword slips from our fists, our lives will be ended."[30] Dayan was fond of using a stereotype that was popular among his audiences, referring to the diplomats of the Foreign Ministry as "the cocktail guys." It was also Dayan who proposed a distinction between "Sharettism" and "Ben-Gurionism," suggesting that the latter embodied activism, leadership, and courage in the face of risks and difficulties, while the former was characterized by compromise, reluctance, and acceptance of reality rather than a determination to change it (Dayan, 1976: 208). There were even those who informed Sharett that Dayan would be willing to interfere in domestic politics in order to preserve the perception of military force as a tool for political action. It emerged that Dayan had appeared in civilian dress at a meeting of youth from agricultural settlements. In his speech, he had described Israel's foreign policy as "obsequious," urged the youth to seize control of Mapai and to revolt against the "old guys," and called for an end to the party's "defeatist" leadership of the Histadrut and the government.[31]

In the elections to the Third Knesset on 26 July 1955, Mapai lost 5 seats, falling to a total of 40 seats in the 120-member chamber. Conversely, the right-wing Herut Party doubled its strength, winning 15 seats and thereby becoming the second-largest faction in parliament. The results were a warning to the Mapai leadership that the public was dissatisfied with Sharett's leadership, and Dayan moved immediately to exploit this concern. After failing to overcome Sharett's opposition to a planned reprisal operation, Dayan submitted his resignation. "The contradiction between the security policy that has been set recently by the government and the security policy that seems to me to be vital prevents me from accepting the required responsibility," he wrote (Dayan, 1976: 151). The resignation was effectively an ultimatum, and Ben-Gurion, who was due to assume the office of prime minister in the near future, took full advantage of Dayan's move. He demanded that the government choose between his own position and that advocated by Sharett, left the room, and disappeared for twenty-four hours. Sharett was forced to back down and approve the operation he had previously thwarted, in a humiliating volte-face. Thus, Operation Khan Yunis proceeded as planned on 31 August. The paratroopers occupied territory in the south of the Gaza Strip and destroyed a local police station, resulting in seventy-two deaths and fifty-eight injuries on the Egyptian side (Dayan, 1976: 150–52; Drori, 2006).

From a nationalist and militarist standpoint, there was no distinction during this period between the ostensibly "leftist" Achdut Ha'avodah and the positions expressed by the right-wing Herut Party. Both parties argued that the Rhodes agreements (the 1949 armistice agreements) were a mistake. Both claimed that the reprisal operations were insufficient, and that it was futile arguing about a preemptive war, since such a war had effectively already been waged. Both parties advocated the conquest of the entire Land of Israel as a substitute for the "narrow corridor state," as Yigal Alon, the Achdut Ha'avodah leader, called it.[32]

Ben-Gurion, too, felt that the armistice agreements were bad for Israel. Zionist ideology saw the West Bank as an integral part of the biblical Land of Israel. Throughout the early 1950s, the Jewish leadership profoundly regretted the fact that Israel had not conquered this area in the 1948 war. Using a phrase from the Talmud, Ben-Gurion referred to this failure as a "weeping for the generations" and blamed Sharett for preventing seizure of the area. This accusation was groundless, however. At a government meeting in September 1948, Sharett indeed opposed a proposal to take Latrun—an action that would undoubtedly have led to war with Jordan and thereby created an opportunity to take the West Bank. However, if Ben-Gurion had truly sought to take the area, he would not have brought the matter to the government but acted alone, as he did dozens of times when approving military operations and conquests. In all probability, reluctance to enter into a war with Jordan, together with concern over the reaction of the superpowers to further Israeli conquests, persuaded Ben-Gurion not to use the military in this instance. Indeed, ideology does not always dictate politics; sometimes other considerations penetrate, some of which are practical, and these prevent its implementation. Thus, the "weeping" that not all of the Promised Land was occupied would have to wait for another time for its realization. Be that as it may, the sense of a lost territorial opportunity and the desire to complete the conquest of the historical Land of Israel was mentioned many times by Ben-Gurion. Zaki Shalom (1998) shows this clearly, offering dozens of examples. For example, Ben-Gurion's ethnonationalist fervor led him to distinguish between the "border of the Land" and the "borders of the state" while bemoaning the fact that these two were not identical. He declared in a speech in 1952, "The State of Israel differs in two fundamental aspects from any country. This state is not identical to the land; this state is not identical to the people. . . . These are two different things. . . . Anyone who looks at the lines on the map will find it difficult to assume that these are stable borders. They are not natural borders or historical borders but

unnatural borders. And we must distinguish between the State of Israel and the Land of Israel."[33] Shalom also notes a phenomenon that is evident throughout this book: the gulf between speech and action in the Zionist—and later the Israeli—leadership. The Israeli leadership, during the 1950s, publicly and officially declared that it considered the armistice borders the state's final boundaries. On the other hand, in various ways—including indirect allusions—it evinced a conviction that these borders had an interim character and could not be regarded as Israel's final form. They were temporary "pending the realization of our desires," as Ben-Gurion declared, repeatedly emphasizing that Israel could not achieve its territorial ambitions instantly or proactively for the foreseeable future. The nation's right to the Land would be realized gradually, stage by stage. "For the moment," he told Menachem Begin after the Herut leader demanded the completion of the conquests, "there are various things we must think about, but never talk about."[34]

Ben-Gurion did not realize his plan to occupy the West Bank in those years. He saw the main problem of Israel in the south. But the idea that Israel had not yet achieved the occupation of its entire sacred land was deeply rooted in the hearts of many Israelis from across the political spectrum. Equipped with a suitable alliance with Achdut Ha'avodah, Ben-Gurion and his associates now sought to recruit public support for their policy to go to war against Egypt. The arms deal between Egypt and Czechoslovakia provided the perfect instrument for this purpose. Israel felt threatened by the deal, which, as noted, was in itself an Egyptian reaction to the IDF's Operation Khan Yunis. Egypt was seeking to defend itself against Israel, and perhaps to deter it from such acts, but not more than this. Isser Harel, director of the Shabak, the Israeli security agency, informed Sharett that Nasser had no plans to attack Israel—indeed, the Egyptian leader was willing to meet with Ben-Gurion, despite his lack of trust in the Israeli leader.[35] Even so, the deal enabled the Israeli leadership to mobilize and unite the public for war purposes. This was the finest hour of the nation-in-arms. A campaign titled the "Defense Fund" began to collect donations in order to purchase weapons for the IDF. Money poured in from places of work, institutions, organizations, cities, and agricultural settlements. The newspapers published the amounts received from different sources. Young children accompanied by their parents brought their savings. "We're all in the same boat," the prime minister declared in the Knesset. The campaign was undoubtedly an impressive display of national unity, but it is worth asking whether the nation was being asked to unite for the purpose of self-defense or in order to wage war.[36]

Israel solved the existential threat relatively quickly thanks to the purchase of weapons from France. Bypassing the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, officials from the Defense Ministry managed contacts with the French government and military, signing a major deal for the supply of planes and tanks. When Ben-Gurion formed a new government, Sharett agreed to serve as foreign minister after considerable persuasion. In those months, Dayan tried incessantly to convince Ben-Gurion to allow Israel to embark on an initiated war. Segev (2018: 536) writes that the pressure was very heavy, and the army generals shared Dayan's opinion on the matter. At one of the meetings of the general staff, Ben-Gurion conducted a kind of referendum among the generals, all of whom were in favor of a preemptive war.

On 11 December 1955, Israel again launched a major reprisal operation—Operation Kinneret. The operation came shortly after Ben-Gurion took over as prime minister, and was meant to clarify the approach he intended to adopt in the future. Syria made a greater effort than Egypt or Jordan to prevent Palestinians from entering Israeli territory. However, disagreements developed between Israel and Syria regarding the buffer zones and regarding sailing and fishing rights on the Sea of Galilee. On 10 December 1955, the Syrian artillery opened fire on Israeli fishing boats on the lake in an attempt to prevent Israel from using the entire lake without restriction. Although there were no injuries in the incident, Israel seized the opportunity. Israeli forces entered Syria, killing over fifty people and taking some thirty prisoners (Bar-On, 1992: 76–89). The operation was not approved by the government, and its timing was far from coincidental. Minister Sharett was visiting the United States at the time, waiting impatiently for the Americans to respond to a request to supply weapons. It is possible, as Shabak director Isser Harel suspected, that Dayan chose the timing of Operation Kinneret deliberately in order to thwart the proposed arms deal with the United States. The operation indeed prevented the implementation of the deal. In a frustrated comment for which he later apologized, Sharett said, "Even the devil could not have chosen a worse timing. . . . The arms deal was assassinated. . . . Again the impression is of a desire [on Israel's part] to spill blood and provoke war."[37]

Operation Kinneret was also intended to highlight the prioritization of military considerations over civilian ones. Ben-Gurion was finding it difficult at the time to convince the government to approve a preemptive war against Israel's neighbors—a move that was prohibited under international law. Accordingly, his only alternative was to use the IDF in order to provoke Nasser and Egypt into launching such a war. Operation Kinneret, which

formed part of this effort, was just one of a series of so-called detonation operations intended to escalate the situation. Nasser, however, realized that he was being baited and controlled his response. In the meantime, the IDF command began to develop plans for a proactive war to be launched by Israel. The process was led by the head of its planning department, Lieutenant Colonel Yuval Ne'eman. Ne'eman boldly declared that his objective was to achieve peace with Egypt following a successful war. This ambition faithfully reflected the Israeli conviction that peace is not secured through compromise and consent but imposed by force. Some historians have argued that the decision to launch a proactive war developed only after the arms deal between Czechoslovakia and Egypt.[38] As I will clarify, such a perspective is limited and narrow. It is vital to understand the dynamics that led to the war, against the background of the reprisal operations, the mobilization of a nation-in-arms, and the legitimization of military force as the chief tool for solving political problems. "Again I asked myself," Sharett wrote, "whether the consolidation of the assumption that we are on the brink of war, and its rooting in the minds of the masses, is not liable by its own force to become a factor that will ultimately bring war into our world."[39]

While still serving as foreign minister, Sharett was appalled by the bombardment of Gaza City by the IDF, in what he described as a "savage and stupid" action. The attack was launched on 5 April 1956 after a trivial incident. The IDF bombarded the center of the city, killing 60 civilians, including many women and children. The Egyptian response was swift: between April 7 and 9, Egypt sent sixteen details into Israel, composed of some 150 armed Palestinians, who sowed death and destruction. At a meeting of the younger generation in Mapai, Sharett sharply criticized Israel's policy.[40] Ben-Gurion eventually tired of his opposition, dismissing him on 19 June 1956.[41]

"THE THIRD DOMINION OF ISRAEL"

Sharett's departure removed the last brake on Israel's reprisal operations, and Dayan enjoyed almost complete freedom to set policy. On 25 September, for example, the IDF bombed the police station at Husan, near Bethlehem, killing thirty-nine Jordanians; ten Israelis were also killed in the operation. On 10 October, the IDF attacked the Qalqiliya police after two murders in Israel by assailants who entered from Jordan. The raid led to a fierce battle, ending with eighty-eight Jordanian fatalities; eighteen Israeli soldiers were also

killed. The raid was a failure in military terms, and in any case the price paid for the desire to punish the Jordanians for their failure to prevent border incursions was disproportionate. Moreover, the Jordanians had actually shown a considerable measure of success in preventing incursions into Israel, arresting some one thousand Palestinians who were on their way to the border (Kabha, 2010: 194). These efforts failed to placate Israel, however, leading to an endless series of attacks and reprisals. On 24 October, the Egyptians, Jordanians, and Syrians established a joint military command, setting in motion a process that would ultimately and inevitably lead to war.

In a lecture titled "Military Operations in Peacetime," Dayan explained, "We cannot protect every water pipe against explosion and every tree against uprooting. We cannot prevent the murder of laborers in the orchard or families in their sleep. But we can set a high price for our blood—a price that will be more than is worth paying for the Arab inhabitants, the Arab military, and the Arab governments" (*Bamachaneh,* 14 September 1955). Less than a year after Dayan presented this position, his hypothesis collapsed. The number of Israeli soldiers killed or injured in the reprisal operations grew, and the region only became less stable. This reality led to doubts about the reprisal method of operation both in the military and beyond.[42] Members of Knesset from both Herut and the HaKibbutz HaMeuchad Movement loudly proclaimed that there was only one answer: war.[43]

For two days, between the twenty-second and twenty-fourth of October, French and Israeli representatives met secretly in a Parisian suburb to discuss the planned war. The idea was that France, Great Britain, and Israel would launch a coordinated military attack against Egypt. Ben-Gurion and Dayan were present at the meeting, but the Israeli Foreign Ministry was excluded, despite the presence of the British and French foreign ministers. After claiming for years that Israel must rely solely on its own strength, Ben-Gurion now joined together with two world powers in a questionable war. In return, he received not only generous supplies of weapons but also the promise of complete aerial protection. On October 29, Israel launched the war, occupying the Sinai Peninsula in a lightning move. In Israel, the war was known as Operation Kadesh, after the biblical site of Kadesh-Barnea, from which Moses is said to have dispatched the spies who toured the land of Canaan. Thus the name added an ethno-national flavor to the war. The fighting ended on November 5, with Israel scoring impressive military successes. Thousands of Egyptian soldiers were killed or injured, and 6,000 were captured by Israel. On the Israeli side, 177 soldiers were killed (Dayan, 1965; Golani, 1997).

During the outbreak of euphoria that followed this victory in Israel, Ben-Gurion was careful to draw upon the nation's ancient history in order to legitimize the occupation of Sinai. In a comment that seems almost to obscure the distinction between past and present, he enthusiastically announced, "In a tremendous combined thrust by the IDF corps, you reached out a hand to King Solomon, who used it to open up Eilat as the first Israeli port three thousand years ago, and from there he led the ships of Tarsus. Eilat shall once again be the Hebrew port in the south, and the straits of the Red Sea shall be opened to Israeli shipping. And Yotvata, now known as Tiran, which until some fourteen hundred years ago was an independent Hebrew state, shall once again form part of the third Hebrew dominion." Ben-Gurion wrote these comments to the IDF unit that reached Sharm el-Sheikh, and Dayan read them to the troops. Ben-Gurion added, "Once again we shall be able to sing the ancient song of Moses and the Israelites: 'The people will hear and be afraid; sorrow will take hold of the inhabitants of Philistia. Then the chiefs of Edom will be dismayed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling will take hold of them; all the inhabitants of Canaan will melt away. Fear and dread will fall on them; by the greatness of Your arm they will be as still as a stone, till Your people pass over, O Lord, till the people pass over whom You have purchased.'"[44] An archeological delegation quickly entered Sinai and found inscriptions in Hebrew at Kadesh-Barnea.[45] At the same time, in Israel, a debate developed on the question of how sacred Mount Sinai is in Judaism.[46] Some questioned the identification of the mountain and stressed that, in any case, "our interests are not religious: we set out to defend ourselves, not to occupy." Others disagreed, emphasizing that sanctity is a matter of feelings and emotions.[47] Others, more boldly, declared that the biblical borders of the Land of Israel extended as far as the Nile, so that Sinai formed part of the Promised Land.[48]

Only Sharett continued to have doubts, recording in his diary: "[Ben-Gurion's] appetite is growing as he eats. First they said we were setting out to battle and conquering what we conquered in order to eradicate the nests of murderers and eliminate those who send them. Yet now we have not only invaded Sinai but returned to the depths of history, creating a new theory in order to prove that this territory is essentially ours. If those islands are Israel's inheritance from ancient times, in what way would the status of the venerable Mount Sinai be any less? But Mount Sinai is already ours; what about the great River Euphrates?"[49]

Like Sharett, the Soviet Union and the United States were unmoved by the Jewish historical affinity to Mount Sinai. Under their pressure, as well as

that of the United Nations, France and Britain were forced to halt the operation, and Israel was later required to withdraw from Sinai. Though routed in battle, Egypt emerged stronger from the war in diplomatic terms. As well as gaining ownership of the Suez Canal, it maintained its control of the Sinai Peninsula and could. therefore. portray itself as a nation that had honorably withstood a three-sided assault. Herut and the HaKibbutz HaMeuchad Movement implored Ben-Gurion not to withdraw from the Gaza Strip, which they defined as "the liberated part of the Land of Israel."[50] However, Israel had no choice in the matter. Ben-Gurion had constantly belittled the importance of the United Nations, declaring that "our future depends not on what the Gentiles say but on what the Jews do." This position was now exposed as empty bravado.[51] Israel's strong man was eventually forced to speak on the Israeli broadcast "the Voice of Israel," confirming in a sad voice that the IDF would withdraw from Sinai. Unexpectedly, however, the withdrawal did not lead to significant doubts about the dominant ideology of militaristic nationalism.

FIVE

Militaristic Nationalism and Occupation

THE SIX-DAY WAR OF 1967

On 16 June 1963, at the age of seventy-seven, Ben-Gurion resigned from his joint position as prime minister and defense minister. Together with his allies, including Moshe Dayan and Shimon Peres, he left both the government and his party, Mapai, founding a new party called Rafi. Ben-Gurion's goal was to secure as many seats as possible in the upcoming elections, before returning to Mapai as a victor. However, in the elections held on 2 November 1965, Mapai (which was now called the Ma'arach, or "Alignment") won forty-five seats, while Rafi managed to obtain just ten. After Ben-Gurion's resignation, Levi Eshkol assumed the office of prime minister and decided to follow Ben-Gurion's example by simultaneously holding the defense portfolio, despite his lack of military experience.

On 8 July 1963, Eshkol met with the general staff of the IDF for a series of three discussions. To his surprise, he learned that the chief of staff and the IDF generals were used to expressing their opinions on issues that went far beyond the military sphere, relating to the affairs of the nation and state. The generals were even eager to offer their views concerning the desirable borders of Israel. Yitzhak Rabin, for example, who at the time served as deputy chief of staff, suggested that it was desirable for Israel to launch a military initiative to improve its borders, adding that these should include the River Jordan to the east, the banks of the Suez Canal to the south, and the Litani River to the north.[1]

Several years earlier, the generals had experienced both a splendid military victory and what they saw as a shameful retreat. They had not tasted war since the Sinai operation of 1956, and they gave the impression that they were longing for an opportunity to correct this situation. Or perhaps they simply thought that only military solutions were good for Israel. Just as the IDF generals wanted to initiate a war of conquest in the early 1950s, now, too, the

generals were constantly engaged in the idea of conquering the West Bank. Needless to say, they emphasized during their meetings with Eshkol that the elected civilian authority would make the decisions on such matters. However, their declarations acquired the character of attempts to influence policy in what they saw as the desirable direction. In other words, they raised ostensibly military considerations that embodied clear ideological assumptions. These generals were the children of a nation-in-arms that had placed the military at its center. Many of them had been born in the country or had arrived at a young age. They embodied the native-born ethos that created a contradiction between their character—as young, courageous, and goal-oriented natives of Israel, convinced that the country's problems would be solved only by military means—and the older political leadership, which placed greater value on moderation and compromise. At meetings of the general staff, officers regularly referred to the members of government as "the Jews," associating them with the stereotype of the timid Diaspora Jew, more skilled with words than in action. It was indeed true that most of the ministers at the time had been born in the Diaspora, were twenty or more years older than the military officers, were professional politicians, and had steered clear of the military. They were ethno-national and suspicious of, and skeptical about, any possibility of peace, but were not necessarily militarists.

In contrast, many of the officers in the general staff, and certainly those who were veterans of the Palmach, were influenced by the worldview of the HaKibbutz HaMeuchad Movement, which continued to advocate conquest of the entire Land of Israel.[2] Their peers from different backgrounds shared the same positions. For example, Air Force commander Ezer Weizmann explained to the prime minister that Israel must implement its offensive approach and avoid a purely defensive stance, "whether or not this is consistent with the diplomatic approach." Such comments reflect a form of militarism that is neither subtle nor concealed, a form that prompted Clausewitz to propose that politics is the continuation of war. Weizmann combined his militaristic approach with ethno-nationalist arguments, explaining at the meeting: "If the goal of the State of Israel is a Hebrew state as our ancestors saw it, then it may be that between the desired peace and everyday reality, some things need to be done that it will not be possible to do when there is peace."[3] Thus Weizmann believed that the results of Israel's conquest would lead to the "borders of the promise" God made to the nation's founding father at the Covenant between the Parts. It is important to note that this promise included not only the acquisition of the Land of Israel but also the supplanting of the

various peoples who lived in it.[4] Weizmann's remarks must be understood, of course, against the background of the sense of missed opportunity that accompanied the entire 1950s and early 1960s, the "weeping for generations" that Israel did not occupy the West Bank in 1948 and made room for diplomacy at the end of the war. But the "weeping for generations" was, of course, not the result of actions taken on empty soil, but the result of the same "path dependence" logic that began in 1948 and continued in 1956, according to which the use of the army for territorial conquest was vital to Israel.

Eshkol, however, was taken aback by such comments, warning the generals explicitly against "any thought of a preemptive war or one to change our borders."[5] However, the comments Eshkol heard may have influenced him after all. A little later, at the annual gathering of the paratroopers in Ramat Gan on 12 August 1963, he warned the Syrians that the time might come when the paratroopers and the entire IDF would determine Israel's borders, and not anyone else.[6]

THE MILITARY LEADS THE WAY TO WAR

There was a long history of border incidents between Israel and Syria, often involving demilitarized zones whose ownership had not been defined in the Rhodes agreements. The two states thus argued about farming rights in these areas (Nimrod, 1967). Another subject of disagreement concerned the waters of the Jordan River. On 10 June 1964, a year after the meeting between Eshkol and the general staff, Israel celebrated the inauguration of the National Water Carrier, which was constructed to transport water from the river to the country's arid south. The project involved the diversion of water from the river and, accordingly, led to considerable tension between Israel and its neighbors, particularly Syria (Gat, 2002).

When Syria began to divert the course of the river in order to prevent Israel from going ahead with the National Water Carrier project, Israel responded by shooting at Syrian workers and demolishing their equipment (Shemesh, 2000: 163). In addition to the disagreements about farming and the diversion of water from the River Jordan, Syria also demanded sailing rights on the Sea of Galilee, despite the fact that the entire lake was under Israeli sovereignty. Aryeh Shalev (1990: 298), who had served as a member of the Israeli-Syrian armistice committee, has claimed that contrary to the prevailing opinion in Israel, both Israel and Syria were responsible for the mutual

tension and violent incidents. On 13 November 1964, for example, Israel used aerial force against the Syrians at Tel Dan, in violation of the armistice rules. Since 1951, Israel had refrained from using airplanes in incidents with the neighboring countries, because Ben-Gurion anticipated that the use of airplanes would lead to war. It now deliberately escalated the situation, and it was clear to all those involved that the leaders of the military were exploiting the influence of Rabin, the chief of staff, over Eshkol, owing to the latter's inexperience in the field of defense (Cohen, 1992). Rabin was a regular participant in government discussions on security matters, to the point that he almost functioned as a de facto defense minister, influencing decisions on what was presented as Israel's "response" to Arab aggression. Alongside Rabin, the general of the Northern Command, David Elazar, did his best as well to maintain a high level of tension along the border.[7]

A further point of dispute between the two countries was the presence of Fatah, which began to launch operations against Israel, some of which were staged from Syrian territory. The Palestinian organization Fatah had been established in Kuwait in 1959 by a handful of young activists, headed by Yasser Arafat. The group claimed that the Arab countries were failing to make any real effort to help the Palestinians and had certainly not shown any determination in 1948. Their conclusion was that the Palestinians had to take their fate into their own hands. In May 1964, the Palestinian National Council met in the Old City of Jerusalem, which was at the time under Jordanian rule, and decided to form a further organization, the Palestine Liberation Organization. These developments reflect a process of "Palestinization" and the failure of Jordan's attempt to annex the West Bank at the price of granting rights to its Palestinian residents. The Fatah, in particular, sought to liberate Palestine through an armed struggle, drawing inspiration from the example of the Algerian struggle for independence from France. The organization's attacks included attempts to sabotage the National Water Carrier. During the first few years, however, the attacks were relatively unsuccessful and caused little damage to Israel. Nevertheless, the emergence of Fatah and the Palestine Liberation Organization provided further grounds—or a further pretext—for the constant tension between Israel and Syria.

Fatah's terror operations endangered the Jordanian regime still further, and its leaders attempted to curtail these activities. Egypt and Lebanon also sought to prevent Fatah operations on their territory, although neither was fully successful in this effort (Shemesh, 2000; Kabha, 2010: 216–29). During this period, Israel engaged in secret contacts with King Hussein of Jordan in

an attempt to calm the situation along the border. The Egyptian president, Nasser, was also interested in opening a channel of communication with Israel—as noted earlier, he had previously and unsuccessfully attempted to do so in the early 1950s. It was at the beginning of 1966 when an Egyptian Air Force officer, Major General Mahmud Halil, invited the Operation Division head, Meir Amit, to visit Egypt and meet with senior figures in the regime. Amit gained the impression that the invitation was serious and that this was an opportunity worth seizing. He excitedly wrote to Eshkol that "we must make a gesture of good will. . . . We are about to make history here" (Amit, 1998: 302–3). Suggestions included establishing a telephone hotline between Egypt and Israel in order to lower the level of tension—a proposal that, had it been implemented, might have prevented the subsequent war. Eshkol took Amit's comments seriously, convening a meeting with senior officials on 3 February 1966. The other participants in the meeting were suspicious and unimpressed. Aryeh Livni, for example, the director general of the Foreign Ministry, remarked, "Have we been defeated that we should travel to Cairo?" The speakers at the meeting suggested that Israel place obstacles in the way of further dialogue and demanded additional preparatory actions before any meeting took place. In reality, their goal was to thwart a possible meeting (Shalom, 2001). Amit bitterly commented in his diary: "For 17 years we have been crying out that we want dialogue [with the Arabs], but when the opportunity comes along, we begin to hesitate, cough, and check the horse's teeth." Amit attempted for a little longer to make progress on the matter, before giving up hope and desisting (Amit, 1998: 306–9; Shalom, 2001: 331).

The members of the general staff regularly expressed their desire to conquer the West Bank.[8] They were particularly disturbed by proposals to develop protective means, such as electrified fences, to block the border, dismissively referring to this approach as part of a "Jewish mentality" that would turn the State of Israel into a ghetto.[9] When Syria allowed a Fatah cell to enter Israel, Rabin, in an interview with *Bamachaneh,* openly called for intervention in the country's internal affairs in order to change its regime. His comments provoked a fierce reaction across the Arab world, in the Soviet Union, and in Israel. Even the prime minister chastised him, understanding the possible ramifications of Rabin's efforts to provoke the Syrian ruler.[10] Since it was impossible to rule out the possibility that Rabin was serious in his remarks, Egypt was forced to come to Syria's assistance, and the two countries signed a mutual defense pact on 4 December 1966. The pact stated that, in the event of war, the Egyptian chief of staff would enjoy supreme control

of both countries' militaries. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union warned Israel not to interfere in Syrian affairs. In Israel, military service for men was extended to thirty months. The anticipation at the time was that any Israeli attack would target Syria, which had made less of an effort than the other neighboring states to prevent attacks from its territory. Accordingly, it came as a complete surprise when Israel struck Jordan.

After three paratroopers were killed when their vehicle hit a landmine, the IDF pressured Eshkol to allow them to act openly and forcefully against Jordan in order to ensure effective deterrence. Eshkol agreed to a limited operation, but, as in the early 1950s, the military ignored this. The IDF attacked the village of Samu'a, twenty-two kilometers from the border. For the first time, a reprisal raid was conducted in broad daylight, in the largest operation since the end of the Sinai War. The troops destroyed dozens of homes in the village—40 according to Israel's statement, 60 as stated in internal reports, and some 125 according to the United Nations, which reported that a school and clinic were among the buildings demolished. The Israeli Air Force was involved in the operation, leading to an air battle (Tal, 1996: 35). On the Jordanian side, fifteen soldiers and five civilians were killed, while thirty-four soldiers and six civilians sustained injuries. One Israeli officer—the commander of a paratrooper battalion—was killed. The raid went beyond previous operations in various respects, reflecting the military's perception of the existing reality and possibly Israel's intentions concerning the West Bank. First, the operation did not adhere to the convention that IDF forces must leave enemy territory by early morning, thereby violating Jordanian sovereignty more forcefully than in the past (Bar-On, 1998: 331). Second, the operation involved the use of airplanes; while this was becoming almost routine, this aspect of the raid certainly contributed to the general escalation (Gluska, 2004: 12).

The Americans, who attached great importance to the stability of the Jordanian regime, were furious at the Israeli operation. President Lyndon Johnson sent a letter of condolence to King Hussein regretting the pointless loss of life. He also took the opportunity to express support for the territorial integrity of the kingdom (M. Oren, 2004: 57–58). With the help of his advisors, Johnson may have realized that Israel had set its sights on the West Bank. Even Eshkol felt that the IDF had gone too far, though he was careful to express his support for the chief of staff. Eshkol had long been under Rabin's influence. More generally, the military is seldom subjected to criticism in a nation-in-arms, and its actions are often approved retroactively. In

any case, the operation marked a turning point in Hussein's attitude toward Israel. He had always maintained contacts with Israelis, including clandestine meetings abroad, and he had never imagined that Israel would act in this manner on Jordanian soil. It seems likely that he began to recognize Israel's ultimate intention to occupy the West Bank, and this may help explain why he later joined Egypt and Syria in the war against Israel. He may well have been convinced that Israel would use the war to realize its ambition, whether or not Jordan participated (Shlaim, 2000: 232).

Later, before the Six-Day War of 1967, Dayan would accuse the senior echelon of the IDF of responsibility for the turn of events: "You undertook ill-advised operations, flying as far as Damascus and attacking Samu'a in broad daylight" (Bar-On, 1998: 333). The first of the "ill-advised" operations Dayan alluded to had occurred on 7 April 1967. In this case, the IDF did not merely use a few airplanes, which would have been problematic enough, but used the entire air force. After Syria shelled Israeli villages, Israeli planes attacked the Syrian positions, and an aerial battle developed between the two countries. The daylong incident included the downing of six Syrian MiGs. Israel's response was unprecedented in its scope: 130 airplanes participated in the fighting and were used, not only against the Syrian facilities near the border for diverting the river, but also against targets deep inside Syrian territory. They even flew over the Syrian capital, making sonic booms that were intended to humiliate the Syrian regime and flaunt Israel's military superiority. Dayan's assessment was accurate in this instance.[11]

By the beginning of 1967, the tension between Israel and its neighbors was increasing constantly. On 12 May 1967, Major General Aharon Yariv, the head of the Intelligence Division, gave a briefing for foreign journalists in which he explicitly threatened the Syrians: "If Syria continues its new campaign of terror in Israel, this will inevitably lead to a military action designed to bring down the regime in Damascus" (Bar-On, 1998: 330). Once again, an Israeli general was threatening the Syrian regime, consciously repeating Rabin's earlier remarks. The IDF was well aware that Rabin's threats had been taken seriously and had led to preventative action against Egypt and Syria. Accordingly, the comments by the head of the Intelligence Division were clearly designed to bring war closer.

Russian observers interpreted the situation exactly as Yariv expected. On 13 May, the day after his threats, the Soviet Union informed Syria that Israel was heightening its military preparedness along the border and was planning an attack. Egypt received a report to the same effect. Two days later, while

Israel held parades to mark Independence Day, Rabin was informed that Egyptian troops had entered Sinai. The Egyptian chief of staff flew to Damascus the same day to coordinate the two countries' actions.

Did the entry of Egyptian troops into Sinai, in violation of the demilitarization agreement signed after the Sinai War, reflect practical aggressive intentions on Egypt's part? Did this threaten Israel's deterrent capability? Was Egypt interested in war at this point? Had the latter been the case, it is hardly likely that Egypt would have sent the troops across the Suez Canal in such a loud and overt manner, staging a parade that began in Cairo and continued through the cities along the canal. Nasser was seeking to convey a message to Israel: while Egypt did not have belligerent intentions, it would not accept Israeli aggression against Syria. The message was also intended for Syrian ears, as a gesture of solidarity (M. Oren, 2004: 85). Be that as it may, Israel responded by mobilizing its reserves.

On 17 May, Radio Cairo announced that Egypt had asked the United Nations emergency units to leave their positions along the border with Israel by the Gaza Strip. Eshkol made conciliatory statements, but by this point these were too late. Rabin declared that "the time has come for us to stop fooling ourselves that anyone will come to our aid." The comment emphasized his conviction that only the IDF could save Israel, and it implicitly criticized the government for pinning its hopes on diplomacy (Gluska, 2004: 251). The generals had failed to learn the lessons of 1956 and continued to be driven by the ethos of a nation-in-arms that must act solely through its own might. On 19 May the "trigger-happy" general staff, as Laron (2017) called it, decided to announce a general mobilization of reserves with the objective of conquering the entire Sinai Peninsula, together with the Gaza Strip. Rabin casually notified Eshkol of the decision (Gluska, 2004: 255). However, Eshkol was reluctant to choose war as a solution, and Israel became embroiled in one of the most serious political crises in its short history.

THE POLITICAL CRISIS

The mobilization announced on 20 May 1967 included tens of thousands of reserve troops, who were deployed along Israel's southern border. The tension rose daily, and Israelis were gripped by a sense of anxiety, partly due to Nasser's proclamations of his intention to "eliminate the Zionist entity." Dayan, who was no longer in the military and who had been rejected by the

electorate, requested permission to tour the IDF units in order to assess their military capabilities. Eshkol's military secretary, Brigadier General Israel Lior, quickly understood that Dayan's true intention was to return to the public stage and subsequently to government (Haber, 1987: 157). Dayan's visits indeed bolstered his image as a strong leader returning to his natural place as his country faced danger, but this image also required him to underscore the alleged impotence of the current government, depicting Eshkol as weak and creating panic among the public. Ben-Gurion and Peres were happy to help Dayan realize his ambitions. Ben-Gurion had always undermined Eshkol and had no reason to change his habit. Peres joined in with his full force and organizational capability in an attempt to regain the influence that Rafi had lost in the election. Dayan himself demanded that he be drafted for active service, declaring his willingness to serve in any position, even that of general commanding officer (GCO) of the Southern Command.

In his efforts to shape the political landscape, Peres managed the impossible, creating a united front with Ben-Gurion and Begin, despite the fact that the former had only a decade earlier referred to the right-wing leader and his speeches as "Hitlerian." The initiative to form a government of national unity began on 22 May, involving the National Religious Party, Gahal (formerly Herut), and Rafi. Peres essentially arranged "civilian putsch" against Eshkol, holding hundreds of discussions with coalition and opposition members and with retired and serving military figures. He attempted to convince all those he met with, including members of Mapai, that the present leadership was incompetent, claiming that the military was unprepared for war (Nakdimon, 1968: 54–62). After a historic meeting at Ben-Gurion's home between the veteran leader and the heads of Gahal, all those present agreed to demand the appointment of Dayan as defense minister (Nakdimon, 1968: 100–101).

Once Peres had managed to persuade the public that it must choose between Dayan and Eshkol, there was no doubt which way it would lean. Extra-parliamentary groups emerged, sometimes thanks to careful orchestration from above, and demanded that a decisive and forceful leader be appointed to take Israel into war. As during Sharett's time, a nation-in-arms found itself with a leader whose policies, and even worldview, were inconsistent with the founding values of militarism. Meanwhile, the question arose as to how long Israel could maintain a state of military alert, given that its military was based on reserves whose mobilization would paralyze the economy. When Nasser decided to close the Straits of Tiran on May 23, and by doing

so prevented Israel's access to the Red Sea, Israel declared that Egypt's actions constituted a casus belli. The army claimed that Nasser's measures threatened Israel's deterrence capability. It was a feeble argument. After all, Nasser had not moved substantial forces to the border, let alone tried to invade Israel. The problem was more in the red lines that Israel marked with regard to deterrence than with Nasser's offensive intentions. After all, there were precedents from the early 1950s, when Egypt not only prohibited the passage of Israeli ships through the Suez Canal but even blocked the transfer of goods to Israel via the Suez Canal. At that time, Israel had chosen to attempt to solve the problem by diplomatic means (Golan, 2000: 346–56). The closure of the Straits of Tiran could probably also have been resolved through international pressure without going to war. The Americans pointed this out to Israel, adding that the deployment of the Egyptian troops in Sinai proved that Egypt was not planning to launch a war. Ben-Gurion, too, as Segev (2018: 633) wrote, did not believe that Egypt was going to war. "In my opinion, on Nasser's side nothing will be done," he noted, "It is sufficient for him to close the Straits of Tiran. The Americans also expressed their confidence, including in meetings with Israeli figures, that if war did erupt, Israel would emerge victorious (Nakdimon, 1968: 87).

Following Nasser's announcement of the closure of the straits, Eshkol held an early morning meeting with the general staff. Rabin, as the supreme military authority, revealed the generals' hand when he declared, "We must know the truth: first we will strike Egypt, but after that we will also strike Syria and Jordan" (Haber, 1987: 164). The general staff had a clear political objective, and its members emphasized that military success would depend on receiving approval to launch a war "as soon as possible." The generals were united and unanimous, but Eshkol remain unconvinced, desperate to leave an opening for a diplomatic initiative that might prevent war. On that day, he sent the foreign minister, Abba Eban, to France, Britain, and the United States, in part in order to gauge how much leeway the superpowers would grant Israel in launching a war. It emerged that the French and the British were strongly opposed to the idea, and the powers in Washington, DC, also asked Israel to show restraint.

The crisis led to the suggestion that Gahal, the militant right-wing opposition, might join the government. As noted, the party had, with its twenty-six seats, become the second-largest faction in the Knesset following the elections in November 1965. At a meeting of the faction, one of the main arguments raised in favor of joining the government was based on militaristic

nationalism. As one of the party's parliamentarians explained, "In the present circumstances, the government may face a historic opportunity to liberate permanently occupied parts of the homeland, and we will [thereafter] need to stand on guard to ensure that these are not returned to the enemy" (Gluska, 2004: 171). Public demonstrations were organized to show support for Dayan, the representative of a "hawkish" policy, which was presented against Eshkol's moderation. Haber quotes Eshkol's military secretary, who made frequent use of terms such as "subversion" and "coup" to describe the developments (Haber, 1987: 177). The elected government of the day was indeed undermined, exposing both the fact that democratic considerations are subservient to security arguments in Israel, and the ongoing presence of an informal military and civilian alliance that was committed to military action as the way to solve problems.

President Johnson applied heavy pressure on Abba Eban during his visit to Washington, DC, on 24 May, demanding that Israel refrain from military action (Indyk, 1996: 14). The Russians, too, warned Eshkol sternly against launching a military operation. Eshkol was more than willing to wait for two or three weeks in order to give diplomacy a chance, but at a government meeting on 28 May it emerged that he would not be able to impose his will. The ministers were divided equally on the question of war, with nine voting in favor and nine against. As befits a nation-in-arms, three major generals participated in the meeting (without the right to vote), naturally favoring the more militant camp (Gluska, 2004: 322–23). Nevertheless, the moderates eventually won the day, and the government decided to honor Johnson's plea to allow the superpowers a period of three weeks to convince Egypt to open the Straits of Tiran.

During the government meeting, Eshkol suggested that Israel should publicly call for a mutual thinning of the forces on both sides of the border, including the gradual demobilization of its reserves. Rightly or wrongly, Eshkol has gained a reputation in history as a hesitant man, yet he acted decisively in this government meeting, securing a government decision to attempt to avoid war and to demobilize as many as forty thousand reserve soldiers. Rabin, who was present at the meeting, did not state any opposition to this decision, but the military simply declined to implement it. Eshkol's military secretary, Israel Lior, viewed this disobedience as very grave, but chose to conceal this fact from Eshkol in order not to embarrass him (Haber, 1987: 193). Thus the pattern established in the 1950s repeated itself: a prime minister may make decisions, and the government may even vote on a

resolution, yet the IDF generals may choose to act as they see fit, particularly when they fear that war is slipping out of their hands.

Did Israel truly face an existential threat at this point? A few years after the war, two members of the general staff, Matti Peled and Ezer Weizmann, claimed that there had been no such threat. Indeed, Peled argued that this claim was a bluff invented after the war.[12] In the meantime, Eshkol needed to present the government's decision to the public. Owing to the pressure of the events, his live radio address on the evening of 28 May was not well prepared, and he tripped over an unclear emendation in the text. The Israeli people interpreted Eshkol's stuttering as a sign of hesitation and weakness that proved his unsuitability to lead Israel at such a difficult time. The opposition, led by Dayan, naturally exploited the unfortunate speech to the fullest extent.[13] What followed later became known as the "revolt of the generals."

The Sunday in question was a difficult day for Eshkol, after the Jordanians announced that they were joining the Syrian-Egyptian alliance. However, the members of the general staff were disinclined to be considerate when he met with them. Eshkol acknowledged their disappointment but stressed that Israel's behavior had to be guided by military and diplomatic maturity. The officers were unconvinced. For example, Arik Sharon, a thoroughly ideological officer, made no attempt to conceal his criticism of the prime minister: "All our pleadings portray us as weak. . . . We present ourselves as an empty shell, an impotent nation. We have never humiliated ourselves as we are doing now."[14] Sharon even hinted that the IDF might act without government approval. Such comments were alien and infuriating to Eshkol, but he nevertheless attempted to placate the officers. He began by challenging the familiar formula that Israel must rely solely on its own strength. "We have no survival without outside help," he declared. Next, he spoke in favor of peace and against war, before expressing his hope that Britain and the United States would act to remove the blockade of the Straits of Tiran. Lastly, he sharply criticized the officers for interfering in matters of policy. He demanded that they appreciate the position of the politicians and not allow themselves to be swayed by their sense of disappointment. However, the generals had consolidated their positions and remained adamant.

Eshkol was unconvinced, calling for patience and rejecting the notion that the entry of the Egyptian military into Sinai obliged Israel to declare war. He presented an overtly civilian worldview, asking, "Are we to live forever by the sword?" He emphasized that they had received these weapons so that Israel could be victorious if necessary, and not in order to wage a preemptive war.

He rejected Sharon's scornful comments about Israel's diplomatic efforts: "Every aspect of the material strength of our military comes from this diplomatic running about. Let's not forget that, and let's not see ourselves as being like Diaspora Jews. We have no strength with unarmed and unequipped fists." Israel Lior resented the generals' lack of confidence in the prime minister and in the government as a whole, describing their comments as an almost overt revolt by the military echelon. Indeed, Eshkol cut the discussion off midway and angrily left the room.[15] Lior compared the situation to the rebellious conduct of the military leaders against Ben-Gurion during the 1948 war, but a more accurate analogy would be to Dayan's actions during the period leading up to the Sinai War of 1956 and his complete disregard for Sharett. In both instances, the senior military cadre disrespected a moderate prime minister, challenged his authority, and at least indirectly, undermined civilian rule.[16]

Israel now faced a tangible threat of military intervention in politics so great that, on 20 May, former prime minister Ben-Gurion was summoned from his home in the far south to defend the nation's democratic regime and attempt to prevent war. Ben-Gurion convened a surprise press conference, at which he read prepared remarks. After stating that Israel faced an existential danger in light of the constant threats of the Arab countries, and particularly Egypt, he went on to say, "We must recall two fatefully important matters. Firstly, the military in a democratic country does not act of its own accord or in accordance with the opinion of its military commanders, but in accordance with the civilian government and its instructions. Secondly, war is not conducted solely by means of military operations. . . . Even a defensive campaign is not waged solely through military force, particularly in a small nation such as Israel. It also requires diplomatic action. We have enemies . . . in the world, but we also have friends. . . . Constant and careful action is needed in order to maintain this friendship. . . . The pursuit of war, if it is imposed on us, demands both military responsibility and wisdom and diplomatic responsibility and wisdom."[17]

Ben-Gurion had sprung into action after hearing about the events during Eshkol's meeting with the generals. He told former Mossad chief Isser Harel, "Some people are talking about [a military coup]—that would be the final disaster. That's all we need. There is a mood like that in the military and it worries me. I'm very concerned" (Nakdimon, 1968: 140). Thus Ben-Gurion noted his alarm at two trends: praetorianism and militarism: the danger that the military would seize power, and the danger of military politics leading to war.

Ben-Gurion had good cause to be alarmed. The day after its tense meeting with Eshkol, the general staff again expressed its concern that war was slipping away. Weizmann was the most forthright of all the generals, arguing that the general staff must force Eshkol to take action: "We need to attack[,] and we need to discuss in a very small forum how to ensure that we will attack within one week. . . . That forum should find a solution for how to reach a decision" (Gluska, 2004: 336). In a subsequent grave incident, Weizmann, the head of the Intelligence Division, burst into the prime minister's office on 1 June, shouting and crying, "The country is being destroyed, everything is being destroyed. . . . Eshkol, just give the order and the IDF will go to war. . . . We have a strong military and it is only waiting for your order. . . . We will win and you will be the prime minister of victory." The astonished Eshkol was engaged at the time in a conversation with one of his ministers, who burst into tears on hearing the general's words. Weizmann tried to pull the insignia off his own epaulette before leaving. In many countries, such conduct would have been followed by immediate dismissal. The drama had certainly reached a peak.

The Israeli public was not completely aware of these developments. In a nation-in-arms, disagreements on security matters are conducted behind the scenes. The public was not informed of the disagreement between Eshkol and the military and was even unaware of the foreign minister's mission. Accordingly, it saw the delay in declaring war as evidence of impotence on the part of the political leadership. Eventually, even the members of the Mapai Secretariat relented and agreed to support the idea of appointing Moshe Dayan defense minister. On 1 June 1967, Eshkol submitted to the pressure. He also agreed to form a government of national unity—the first in Israel's history. The new ministers included representatives of Gahal—the stream that had long since been dubbed "the dissidents." On 2 June, Dayan began his first day as defense minister. Lior, Eshkol's military secretary, interpreted Dayan's entry into the government as nothing less than a coup—a bloodless putsch.

Eshkol was forced to endure a second meeting with the generals on 2 June. Israel now had a government of national unity, and the meeting was attended by all members of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, as well as by Dayan and Begin. The discussion began tensely. Once again Sharon spoke overtly and dismissively about the political leadership, preaching to the elected representatives and attempting to give a lesson in policy. His comrades again asked, "What are we waiting for?" This time, however, it was clear

that Israel was heading for war, if only because of the change in the composition of the government.

The public responded enthusiastically to Dayan's appointment and the formation of the unity government. Dayan began to ponder a second front against Jordan, according to Israel Lior, who added that Dayan scoffed at those ministers who proposed warning Jordan. "Does Hussein not know that he should not attack us?" he asked rhetorically (Haber, 1987: 222).

JERUSALEM OF GOLD OR IRON?

The war began on the morning of 5 June with an Israeli air assault. The command of the day issued by Motti Hod, commander of the Israeli Air Force, emphasized the connection to Jewish history: "The spirit of Israel's heroes throughout the generations will accompany us in battle. . . . The immortal heroism of the warrior Joshua Bin Nun, King David, the Maccabees, and the fighters of the War of Independence and Sinai will be a source from which we will derive strength and determination to strike the enemy" (M. Oren, 2004: 212). The attack by some two hundred Israeli airplanes destroyed most of the Egyptian air force while it was still the ground, thereby determining the course of the war. At the same time, three armored divisions and two other divisions entered Sinai and the Gaza Strip, launching a rapid and extensive campaign of conquest. The divisions were Israel's "secret weapon," and by this point the IDF was a modern military with innovative and advanced weapons. An argument erupted between Dayan and the division commanders on the southern front. The commanders wanted to reach the Suez Canal, while Dayan argued that this would lead Nasser to refuse to reach a ceasefire, so that the war would drag on for years. However, as Dayan acknowledged after the war, "The military presented me with an accomplished fact," as the divisions sped on unchecked (Gilboa, 1968: 207).

On the morning of the first day of the war, the Jordanians began to shell Israeli border settlements, including west Jerusalem. Israel responded by occupying the entire West Bank in just three days. As we have already seen, the general staff had long wanted to take this area. In his command of the day (a communication written by the highest-ranking officer to explain to the soldiers what is going on and to encourage them), Major General Uzi Narkiss, who was responsible for the campaign, wrote, "Today Jerusalem, the city of the Patriarchs, is liberated. . . . [T]hrough this action, the IDF is today

cleansing the stain that has marred the map of our land for twenty years, after our holy and ancient capital was taken from our nation" (Gluska, 2004: 189). If this was indeed the motive behind the conquest of Jerusalem, then the Jordanian bombardment was no more than a pretext.

Mordechai (Motta) Gur, the commander of the paratroops, sent a message to his battalion commanders as they entered the Old City: "The city we have dreamed of and longed for over generations. The Jewish nation awaits our victory. Israel anticipates this historic hour" (M. Oren, 2004: 293–94). Gur later described himself "running" to the Western Wall, speaking words that would enter history: "We passed the burning car and saw that at the [Lion's] Gate the door was half open. There might be grenades there, surely there must be grenades there. 'Ben Tzur—drive on!' [Gur had said to his driver], and he stepped on the gas, throwing the door aside[,] . . . and we drove over all the stones. As we entered, an Arab was standing on our right—would he throw something or not? He did not throw anything, and we managed to pass him. We turned left[,] . . . reaching the third gate, where a motorcycle was standing in front of the gate. Was it booby-trapped or not? Ben Tzur drove over the motorcycle, and we reached the square by the Temple Mount. We said: Once we have reached the Temple Mount, we have performed our task in every respect. We don't fire here. This is a holy place." Gur then uttered his famous cry, "The Temple Mount is in our hands!" and the entire country was seized by excitement (Segev, 1967: 199–200).

Even before the war, the historical memory and national sentiment surrounding Jerusalem had become prominent in the public's conscience (Segev, 2005; Shenhav, 2012). During the two weeks preceding the war, a song called "Jerusalem of Gold" was performed at the Israel Festival and was later broadcast incessantly on the radio, becoming an unofficial second national anthem, in a process that emphasized the Land of Israel over the State of Israel. The song described the divided city of Jerusalem, a wall at its heart, its marketplace empty. This description can hardly be considered accurate: even before the war, east Jerusalem (like the western section) was a bustling city. But the ethno-national refusal to see the Arabs, and the conviction that here was "a land without a people for a people without a land," had accompanied the Zionist movement from the outset, and the song expressed this sentiment perfectly. Indeed, in ethno-national terms, only one nation existed. Some commentators have also found a dirgelike quality in the song, which speaks of the "dried up wells" in the city, reflecting the sense among various circles in Israel since 1948 that the failure to conquer the West Bank had been a

historical failure. The song was first performed three weeks before the war erupted. The songwriter, Naomi Shemer, subsequently added a further verse, declaring, "We have returned to the wells" and "the shofars sound on the Temple Mount." A singer and paratrooper by the name of Meir Ariel attempted to demythologize the song, which became the emblem of Israeli ethnic nationalism, when he wrote of "Jerusalem of iron, lead, and bereavement," protesting at the lives lost in the war and rejecting the enthusiasm at the occupation of the city.[18] However, the sorrow of bereavement is usually drowned out by cries of victory. Moreover, of course, from the Israeli perspective Jerusalem had not been "occupied" but liberated, and no one imagined that this would be a temporary presence. The defense minister declared, "The IDF liberated Jerusalem this morning. We reunited the divided city of Jerusalem, the sundered capital of Israel. We returned to our most holy places. We returned, never again to be parted" (Gilboa, 1968: 228). Dayan was the first to reach the Western Wall, ensuring that he won all the credit. Once again he outmaneuvered Eshkol, who was no match for Dayan when it came to public relations.

On 9 June, as the fighting in Sinai and on the Jordanian front waned, the IDF finally turned its attention to the north, occupying the Syrian Heights. Following the conquest of Sinai and the West Bank, representatives of the Israeli communities in eastern Galilee had requested, and indeed demanded, a similar tactic regarding this area (Haber, 1987: 246). Alon, who was a member of Kibbutz Ginosar in the north, faced particularly strong pressure. The GCO of the Northern Command, David Elazar, also applied pressure, constantly going back and forth between his command and Tel Aviv in an attempt to persuade the powers that be to accept his position. Dayan eventually ordered the occupation of the Syrian Heights, and Eshkol was not even informed of the decision. Dayan treated the prime minister as if he had been deposed. Indeed, the entire government was left in the dark; as Lior commented, Dayan "made a mockery of the government and its ministers" (Haber, 1987: 251–53; M. Oren, 2004: 348–49). Dayan later regretted having approved the occupation of the Syrian Heights, stating that this had been a mistake, since Israel did not face any real threat from Syria. He even accused the kibbutzim in the north of demanding the conquest in order to gain control of the fertile land across the border (Guy, 1998: 142). However, the communities of the north had indeed suffered from Syrian shelling for years, and it was only natural that they would call for occupation of the Syrian Heights (Laron, 2017).

The IDF's conquests went far beyond the politicians' expectations. "The government does not determine operational objectives—these emerge from the bottom up," Major General Rehavam Ze'evi commented. "They come up from the military to the political echelon, and after the war is over, its goals are defined" (M. Oren, 2004: 312). Indeed, the goals of the 1967 war had never been defined, and it had never been determined how far the troops were to advance. As in the case of the Palestinian towns and villages in 1948, the political echelon once again allowed the senior commanders to decide fateful matters. The government "decided not to decide" about the future of the conquered territories. At the same time, it allowed other players, including the military, to create political facts regarding these territories, as I discuss in the next chapter.

From a military perspective, the war was an exceptional success. The Israeli forces occupied areas that were three times the size of the State of Israel. These included the Syrian Heights, the West Bank, and the entire Sinai Peninsula, including the Gaza Strip. East Jerusalem was also conquered, ending the division of the city.[19] Israel sustained 780 fatalities and 2,500 injuries, and 15 Israeli soldiers were captured alive. In Syria, over 100,000 civilians fled the Golan Heights and became refugees. Approximately 1,000 Syrians were killed, and Israel captured 361 Syrian soldiers. The Egyptian military sustained the heaviest losses, with between 10,000 and 15,000 killed and over 5,000 taken prisoner. Around 1,000 Jordanians were killed and 3,000 injured. In the West Bank and Gaza Strip, around 250,000 Palestinians fled, most of whom were not allowed to return after the fighting died down.

The Israeli press could not control its enthusiasm. Victory albums, songs, and films were published containing boastful texts that reflected the euphoria of success (Segev, 2005). Myths quickly emerged surrounding Dayan and the IDF generals, who were elevated to the status of gods.[20] One of the most important consequences of the war and Israel's occupation of the territories was that the ethno-militaristic approach returned to center stage in public attention. Now, however, it was combined with religious and messianic motifs in a manner that had not been seen in the past. This process began with the occupation of the Old City and the Western Wall. In a particularly fascinating scene, the IDF chief, Rabbi Shlomo Goren, was surrounded at the wall by weeping paratroopers. The military correspondent of *Bamachaneh* described the scene: "I had never seen the Western Wall. We ran as if blind. The soldiers caressed the stones and knelt down, weeping. Then they hugged and kissed each other, not knowing what to do. Strange sounds came from

their mouths. . . . 'We are in the Old City, do you understand?' The Western Wall . . . Everyone understood, even if they could not believe it. 'Jerusalem is ours,' one of them shouted. The Western Wall, the Wailing Wall—it is easy to cry, the tears well up by themselves, choking your throat and bursting out. The stones are warm, as if they were alive, and you stand and stroke and kiss them, thinking how you have never known a sweeter kiss. And you search for the best and the holiest words. You hear them at every turn. Most of them say 'Hear O Israel,' 'Blessed are you, Lord, who has kept us . . .' And in a quivering voice, Rabbi Goren declares that he will hold a first afternoon service. The paratroopers, many of whom have not been to synagogue since their Bar Mitzvah, listen in awe, their lips moving in silent prayer."[21]

All the newspapers claimed that Israel had miraculously liberated Jerusalem and the Western Wall from the enemy. "The people returns to its Mount," the press announced with enthusiasm, "the occasion we anticipated for two thousand years." Rabbi Goren brought a Torah scroll from the first occupation of Sinai in 1956 and, at the Western Wall, called out, "We swear!" And hundreds of soldiers answered, "Amen!"[22] According to the Religious-Zionist perspective, it was not the fighters who were about to save Israel, but God. Goren explained that his own role was that of the priest who anoints those about to go to war, standing before the troops and reading verses from the Torah to encourage them.[23] And now he stood by the Western Wall, blowing the shofars. "Jews, Jews!" he proclaimed. "We are in the period of the messiah!"[24] He was a faithful harbinger of the religious nationalism that has since acquired enormous influence in Israel.[25]

Some went so far as to employ biblical language to describe the sight of the conquest of the Western Wall, as the present-day fighters and commanders engaged in dialogue with the heroes of the biblical past, resurrected for this purpose: "And the chief of staff and his entourage came to the Tomb of David that is on the mount[,] . . . and the chief of staff saluted and said, 'O Lord my King, the Mount of the Temple has been freed.' . . . And the king's voice cracked and he said, 'Speak to me, Yitzhak.'" The chief of staff then went on to speak to King David, explaining that it was not only they who had freed the mount but also David himself and the other biblical heroes. "An entire brigade of warriors from Masada and the days of Bar Kochba, together with the underground fighters sent to the gallows by the British in 1948, and all the fallen warriors of the Lehi, Etzel, and Palmach. . . . And the song on their lips excites our blood: may the Temple be built speedily in our days. . . . And King David asks how can paratroopers be crying, how can they be

touching the Wall with such excitement. Perhaps because nineteen-year-old lads born when the state was established are carrying two thousand years on their shoulders." God was not absent from this feverish vision, passing among the dead with tears in his own eyes, kissing the wounded, and telling the white angels, "These are my sons[,] . . . this is the parade of the fallen in the skies. . . . And the angels feed them sweetmeats and hang flowers around their necks" (Hefer and Janco, 1968). The same blurring of imagination and reality, past and present, was seen when one of the journalists from the Labor Party wrote, "The messiah came to Jerusalem yesterday, tired, gray, riding on a tank. . . . The messiah this time wore the uniform of an IDF soldier. A Jewish warrior."[26] Following the war and the dazzling victory, the press spoke of "the new national unity" and the revelation of "the living pulse of the nation."[27] The journalists might almost have been quoting Anthony Smith, who has argued that war creates a nation by forging unity and solidarity. Yet, however successful this war was, it also brought something else—something that was overlooked in the euphoria of victory and the worship of the military, something that has nothing to do with the ethno-symbolist idea that wars bring to national unity. What the war brought was Israel's control and suppression of another people in the name of its own sanctity. At the time, just after the war, hardly anyone in Israel seemed to have anticipated the significance that the occupation—or "liberation"—of the territories would have for Israel's fate.

SIX

The Price

THE YOM KIPPUR WAR OF 1973

The few soldiers left at the crumbling outpost (*maoz*) on the banks of the Suez Canal faced a dismal fate on 7 October 1973. They clung to the side of the Israeli tank that had come to evacuate the wounded during the war that erupted on Yom Kippur. The members of the tank crew pulled their comrades' fingers off the metal of the tank, condemning them either to death or to capture by the Egyptian forces. Twice, the tanks from the 198th Battalion of the 460th Brigade arrived at the outpost to evacuate those injured. Only five uninjured fighters remained at the outpost, yet the tanks twice refused to evacuate them.[1] What use could five fighters be? What use were the few hundred Israeli combat soldiers who huddled in outposts that had been neglected for years, without proper weapons or equipment? The outposts, called the Bar-Lev Line—a series of fortified outposts extending 160 kilometers along the canal—had been built without firing positions facing the canal; their barbed-wire perimeter fences were full of holes, and the mines that were supposed to protect the soldiers were no longer functional. Motti Ashkenazi, the commander of the "Budapest" outpost, asked, "'Where are the two heavy machine guns that appear in the records?' The response: 'They were moved to another outpost months ago.' 'And where are the two bazookas?' 'Does it say two? Maybe. Anyway there's only one and it was sent to be repaired last week'" (Ashkenazi, 2003).

In the midst of the traumatic and exhausting events of 6–7 October 1973, it was doubtful whether the young Israeli tank crews understood what they were doing. They had received an order not to evacuate the soldiers in the outpost, and as obedient (perhaps overobedient) soldiers, they acted accordingly. The son of one of the men in the outpost—a reserve duty soldier from the Jerusalem Brigade by the name of Dov Katschur (Katzir), who was

captured by the Egyptians—expressed his understandable feelings about the incident: "My father could never understand how they left behind soldiers, people, in the combat zone instead of rescuing them; how they refused to respond to their cries of 'firing at our outpost,' and how they rejected their request to evacuate themselves."[2]

The young tank crews were certainly unaware that the order not to evacuate the outpost crew was rooted in ideology—an ideology that was not examined by the Agranat Committee, the legal committee established later to examine the circumstances behind the outbreak of the 1973 war. This chapter's harsh opening scene of Israeli soldiers refusing to evacuate their comrades highlights the reality of a society that had become enslaved to the ethos of "not one inch." "Liberated" land was not to be returned, even if it was in the middle of nowhere in the Sinai Desert, 350 kilometers from Tel Aviv and just 60 from Cairo. General Emanuel Sakel (2011), who served as a battalion commander during the war, felt that the chief of staff should have spoken out clearly on such a critical issue as the evacuation of the outposts. Yet neither the chief of staff nor the GCO of the Southern Command, Shmuel Gorodish (Gonen), gave the order to evacuate. What stopped them from doing so? The outposts played no useful military function; indeed, they actually complicated the IDF's job, requiring the allocation of tank companies to assist the outposts, thereby dividing the Israeli forces and requiring small units to wage separate wars for survival.

One of the stories told about the 1973 war concerns a woman soldier by the name of Tiki Vidas. Vidas was stationed as a signal operator in one of the divisions at Baluza in Sinai. She insisted on remaining in her position after all the other female soldiers were evacuated to the home front. From the signal room, Vidas maintained constant contact with the outposts and their dwindling occupants. She recognized that her superiors were reluctant to order the soldiers to abandon their posts, despite their repeated pleas, and accordingly, at 10:30 p.m. on Sunday, 7 October, she authorized them to do so on her own account (Vidas, 2004).

The ethno-nationalist "not one inch" ideology had been apparent before the war, regarding the outposts among many other issues. The chief of staff David Elazar explained to the writer Hanoch Bartov (2002: 212), "Even if I thought that the outpost was not good from a military standpoint, I had a dilemma when it came to abandoning it, from the political standpoint. The reality of the outposts positioned along the waterline [of the Suez Canal] had a profound influence on the mind-set of the decision makers. I do not want to compare the canal to Kibbutz Dan or Kibbutz Dafna [within the State of

Israel in the north], but there is a certain similarity." Here is an example of an ideological chief of staff who knows what is best for the nation. According to Bartov, Dayan shared this approach, equating the outpost with a settlement in the territories. Accordingly, he was vehemently opposed to withdrawal from the canal.

In 1968, Dayan held a discussion at the General Staff Headquarters to discuss the importance of the outposts that were to be built along the Suez Canal. Some generals, including Sharon, opposed the defensive and static approach symbolized by the outposts. As discussed throughout this book, militarism and defensive strategy do not go well together. However, the chief of staff explained that the issue was not only a military one but also one with political ramifications, in particular the desire to deny the Arabs any opportunity to secure advances on the ground, even if these were only temporary (Nadal, 2006: 163). After Sharon was appointed GCO of the Southern Command, he lobbied for the closure of the outposts. His request was met in part: five outposts were closed immediately; and by the outbreak of war in 1973, fourteen of the thirty outposts built along the Suez Canal had been abandoned. This outcome, which was a kind of compromise between the two approaches, represented the worst possible alternative from the Israeli perspective.[3]

Symbolic considerations played an important part in the construction of the outposts, which conveyed a sense of power, and even superiority, by flaunting the Israeli presence in response to the Egyptians on the opposite bank. They reminded the Egyptians that Israel had managed to close the vital waterway that formed the backbone of Egypt's economy and to deplete the cities along the canal of hundreds of thousands of residents. The outposts highlighted the ethno-nationalist approach to the use of force and war, fueled by the conquest of Sinai and the new expanses it opened up for national activities. During this period, "civilian" Israeli settlements, too, were established throughout Sinai, including vacation complexes, fishing villages, and even a small city.

TERRITORIAL APPROPRIATION

After the conquests of June 1967, Dayan decided that Jerusalem must be united and its eastern part annexed to Israel. On 26 June, the government duly approved his decision. Sacred places cannot easily be shared, because exclusivity over a sacred site also allows for political control and supremacy

(Hassner, 2009). However, the Israeli government did not consider giving up the rest of the Occupied Territories.

In fact, following the war, Israel's leaders vied with each other to flaunt their intense loyalty to the Land of Israel—the cradle of the nation. "The Israel we want," Dayan declared at the conference of the Rafi Party in Jerusalem on 12 December 1967, "is one that has borders permitting the expression of the Jewish people's affinity to its historical homeland" (Dayan, 1969: 18). This position was accompanied by a specific political approach. On numerous occasions during this period, Dayan emphasized that Israel must not be "misled by talking, formulas, and pieces of paper whose value may vanish with the wind" (Dayan, 1969: 54). His lectures often included emotional references to the soil of the homeland. On 3 August 1967, at a memorial service for those killed in the Old City in 1948, he waxed lyrical: "We have returned to the Mount, to the cradle of our people's history, to our ancestral inheritance—the land of the Judges and the resting place of the Kingdom of the House of David. We have returned to Hebron and Nablus, to Bethlehem and Anatot, to Jericho and to the crossings of the Jordan in the city of Edom" (Dayan, 1969: 173). Menachem Begin, who had moved inside the national "consensus" just before the war, helped legitimize the occupation: "We cannot imagine or suggest," he declared, "that even one clod of our Land, given to our ancestors for eternity, might be handed over to any foreign rule" (Naor, 2001: 66).

The strategic depth provided by the territories gave Israel an illusion of security, accompanied by the sense that it was the Arabs, rather than Israel, who had something to gain from peace. "What will the Arabs give us and what will they take from us?" Dayan was asked at the end of the war. His reply: "We will give peace and we will take peace."[4]

Both Dayan and Alon spoke out against peace treaties, which the latter described as "the weakest guarantee for the future of peace and the future of security. . . . Only Israel's de facto control of the territory is a guarantee for the preservation of its security." In reality, of course, the opposite was the case. The Occupied Territories brought only violence and war. However, Alon and Dayan were the main carriers of the message of ethnic nationalism achieved by militaristic means. They had been educated since childhood to believe this, and they were now in a position to put it into practice. The Arabs were not perceived as a factor that might disrupt Israel's plans. Alon, for example, argued that Israel should expel the residents of the Gaza Strip. He successfully displaced several hundred Palestinian families living close to the

Western Wall in order to renovate the Jewish Quarter and establish a plaza by the wall (Haber, 1987: 278).

Alon was essentially implementing the theoretical approach developed by his mentor and guide, Yitzhak Tabenkin. In the articles he published after the 1967 war, Tabenkin repeatedly emphasized his opposition to the partition of the Land and his conviction that "we have historical rights to this Land" (Tabenkin, 1970). He described the nation in terms of an organic entity that must not be harmed and vehemently opposed any peace agreement based on "territorial compromise." Tabenkin repeated the popular claim that there were fourteen Arab countries to which the local Arabs could move, if they so wished (Tabenkin, 1967). Under his leadership, the HaKibbutz HaMeuchad Movement did not confine itself to declarative steps. Immediately after the war, the movement decided to "establish settlement points in the liberated territories." It subsequently became an important player in the process of settling the Occupied Territories.[5]

The military also contributed to the entrenchment of the occupation by other means, legitimizing the concept of the "whole" ethno-national Land of Israel by presenting the occupation as part of Israel's security needs. Before the prime minister, Eshkol, visited Washington, DC, the generals openly warned him against any possible acquiescence to territorial compromises. At the meeting before his departure, Major General Ezer Weizmann, for example, explained, "There is no chance of sitting down with the Arabs. They hate us. . . . What's the rush to make peace with the Arabs? . . . We're sitting pretty, and our goal is to strengthen the State of Israel. I wouldn't run after peace. I'm not worried about the Arabs. I'm not bothered by the Russians in Egypt. [. . .] I'm not willing to sell myself for fifty Phantom jets. . . . I propose that we not withdraw from the [new] borders on any condition" (Haber, 1987: 297–98; Nadal, 2006: 96–100). At the beginning of August, after Eshkol rejected Dayan's plan to establish isolated Jewish settlements along the central mountain ridge, the military simply transferred its training and exercise bases to the area, establishing a permanent presence. This, too, is a form of annexation.[6] Dayan also implemented a tactic of combining military bases and civilian settlements in Sinai and the Golan Heights, facilitating the military justification for these actions and using the military as a tool for appropriation (Gorenberg, 2007). The generals freely offered their expert advice; the GCO of the Northern Command, David Elazar, declared that "the boundary line with Syria is a 'natural border.'"[7] Senior military figures expressed strong optimism and confidence regarding Israel's position, and in

a nation-in-arms their position played a crucial role. In an interview for a German newspaper, Dayan announced that Israel would also be willing to fight Soviet soldiers. According to *Maariv,* he even claimed in the interview that the IDF could beat the Soviet military.[8]

Grassroots pressure to appropriate the territories began immediately after the war ended. Some 160,000 citizens signed a petition titled "Liberated Land Is Not to Be Returned," which was presented to the prime minister on 1 August 1967 (Pedatzur, 1996: 173). An organization called the Movement for the Whole Land of Israel was formed to oppose any withdrawal from the territories. The movement included politicians, rabbis, former generals, writers, journalists, academics, and even well-known poets. This organization represented an innovative development in Israel in several respects. First, the country had previously had little experience of grassroots public protest outside the framework of parliamentary politics. Second, the organization included both religious and secular Jews. Third, its demands combined religious and nationalist arguments and were not based solely on security considerations. Indeed, the members of the movement even emphasized that Israel should not "hide" behind security arguments.[9] An argument raised by the religious circles within the movement became particularly prominent, proposing that neither the Israeli government nor any human being had the right to relinquish parts of the Land, since it had been given to the Jews by God.[10] The movement saw itself as representing a nation that was not yet contained by its state. Its members demanded the imposition of Israeli law to the territories and applied constant pressure on politicians to this end.[11]

Many of the members of the Movement for the Whole Land of Israel were also members of the National Religious Party, which underwent a dramatic ideological shift following the 1967 war, led by its younger members. The party's newspaper adopted the narrative that the outcome of the war was proof of divine and miraculous intervention; that the Jews were now living in the messianic age; and that the war was a religious imperative and not a war of choice, since its purpose was to take control of the Land. The religious press also began to promote the idea that peace in general was a threat to Israel.[12] At the same time, extreme right-wing groups openly called for the transfer of Arabs.[13] Even Eshkol declared that, not only Jerusalem, but also the Gaza Strip, would remain under Israeli control, suggesting that the refugees in the area could be transferred to the West Bank. Alternatively, he proposed that Iraq could absorb a hundred thousand Palestinian refugees, since it had large reserves of land and plentiful water.[14] Young members of the National Religious Party

began to settle in the territories, beginning with the Gush Etzion area south of Jerusalem, which had been abandoned by its Jewish settlers during the 1948 war, and continuing to Hebron. The government responded sympathetically to this initiative, though it did not provide its official approval. After Rabbi Levinger settled in Hebron, Alon commented, "It is unthinkable that Jews will be prohibited from resettling the city of Hebron." Dayan sent a congratulatory telegram to the rabbi.[15] The presence of some seventy thousand Palestinians in the city at the time was not regarded as a serious obstacle.

The military also undertook settlement activities in the territories. On the Golan Heights, the process began with the opening of work camps inside military bases. The military also formed Nachal (Fighting Pioneer Youth) groups to settle locations in the territories (Gorenberg, 2007). The Nachal framework permitted the establishment of civilian settlements in areas where the government did not wish to openly allow settlement, fearing international opposition (Admoni, 1992). By July 1968, there were already six settlements on the Golan Heights, accompanied by the emergence of a new slogan: "The Golan Heights are an integral part of the State of Israel." Turning south, a Nachal settlement point was established on the shores of Bardawil Lake in northern Sinai. In many instances, a Nachal military settlement point was established alongside a civilian settlement. Bardawil Lake is rich in locus fish, providing a lucrative source of income. To this end, the settlers needed to expel the local fishermen and Bedouin, and the military stepped in to perform this function. This was a colonialist process by any standards. Yet the collective dining room in the settlement featured a large banner declaring, "This foothold we are gaining in the expanses of Sinai is marked by a return to the source, to the path on which our ancestors stood." This declaration provides a perfect example of the expropriation of history for nationalist needs. Many Israelis came to visit the exotic settlement, including the national songwriter Naomi Shemer, whose song about "the beautiful things" she saw "at the Nachal settlement in Sinai" became very popular.[16] The settlements in this area of Sinai were established with the agreement and encouragement of the government, which was aware that they entailed the eviction of local residents. As in earlier instances, and particularly the expulsion of the Arabs of Palestine in 1948, the state confined itself to providing tacit consent. On 13 September 1967, the subject was discussed by the Ministerial Committee for Security Affairs, whose proceedings were confidential. The committee approved the establishment of the settlements, and the prime minister confirmed it during his visit to the area (Admoni, 1992: 33).

All the government ministers agreed on the need to settle the territories; the differences of opinions related solely to the location of the settlements. Alon's plan differed from that of Dayan and was eventually approved, partly because it entailed less friction with the Arab population. The informal implementation of the Alon Plan led to the construction of ten new settlements on the Golan Heights by the summer of 1969. Alon also attached great importance to the Jordan Valley, as a buffer zone between the West Bank and the Kingdom of Jordan. Three settlements were established in the area within the first year of the occupation. Three settlements were also founded in Sinai in the same period, and plans began to be prepared for hotels and a vacation village at Sharm el-Sheikh.[17]

These settlements were established with great discretion and without the need for dramatic and provocative decisions. The old Zionist approach that had proved itself in the past was again put into action. The Israelis were convinced that their actions would not cause any difficulties provided that the occupation was an "enlightened" one. Dayan's decisions in this respect included an "open bridges" policy with Jordan, preventing the disconnection of the local residents from the kingdom and allowing for the two-way flow of goods. At Al-Haram a-Sharif, or the Temple Mount as it is known by Jews, Dayan allowed Muslims to continue to manage the site and the mosques on an autonomous basis. He hoped to create a "calm and normalized life"—an approach that was also useful for Israel's propaganda efforts (Teveth, 1969: 124–35; Dayan, 1976: 497–503). However, the attempt to maintain a "de luxe occupation," through indirect domination, did not last long.

THE WAR OF ATTRITION: A WARNING SIGN

Egypt and Syria refused to accept their defeat in the 1967 war and the loss of their territory. The War of Attrition erupted immediately after the Israeli victory in the war. Israel decided that its ships would pass through the Suez Canal, and even sent rubber dinghies bearing the Israeli flag. The Egyptians responded by shooting at the boats, resulting in a number of fatalities and injuries on the Israeli side. In response, the Israeli Air Force attacked the cities along the Suez Canal, leading to a mass exodus by hundreds of thousands of residents. The United Nations eventually secured a compromise, according to which both sides would refrain from using the Suez Canal.

A little later, the Egyptians began to shell the IDF forces positioned along the canal. Sated with victory, the Israeli generals remained unconcerned. As they were lauded in victory albums and books were written singing their praises, the generals enjoyed celebrity status and a luxurious lifestyle (Segev, 2005: 437–55). Meanwhile, their soldiers were left to fight far away on the banks of the Suez Canal.[18] Major General Rehavam Ze'evi raised a panther as a pet on his military base and maintained contacts with criminal elements. After his death, several women claimed that he had sexually assaulted them while they were serving as soldiers.[19] Major General Eli Zaira employed soldiers from the Engineering Corps, and took building materials from the IDF, in order to renovate his home in a rich neighborhood called Tzahala, and a committee was even formed to investigate the affair. Zaira was eventually found guilty; his "punishment" was a reprimand—the usual means by which the senior officers penalized one another for infractions.[20]

Many senior officers became prominent figures in the nightlife of Tel Aviv, starring in gossip columns, appearing in photographs alongside models, smoking cigars, and attending premiers and opening evenings of cultural events. They ate in luxurious restaurants at the IDF's expense.[21] Their role model in this respect was Dayan, who instilled the perception that security chiefs were above the law, above morality, above criticism, and above suspicion. As the War of Attrition dragged on, Dayan was busy stealing antiquities, sometimes from the territories occupied by Israel. In doing so, he violated a number of Israeli and international laws. On 7 December 1969, for example, an IDF helicopter took him to an antiquities site in northern Sinai to steal objects. He was accompanied by armed soldiers, yet no one saw anything improper in his conduct. He was lucky and, after excavating for just two hours, found several fine ancient jars, including one that was tentatively dated to the seventeenth century BCE.[22]

Back on the Suez Canal the Egyptian bombardments intensified, exacting an increasingly high price from the Israeli side. On 8 September 1968, ten IDF soldiers were killed and eighteen injured in an Egyptian artillery attack. The IDF responded with a series of severe strikes against the cities along the canal. Some six weeks later, in October 1968, the Egyptians suddenly launched an artillery attack along the entire Suez Canal front, without Israeli intelligence anticipating the incident. The attack killed fifteen Israeli soldiers and injured dozens. Entire bunkers were destroyed as the Egyptians used some 150 artillery batteries in the attack. The Egyptian naval commando

force even crossed the canal and attacked IDF troops. In response, the Israelis launched nighttime raids inside Egypt and began to construct the Bar-Lev Line (Guy, 1998: 182). The line had symbolic importance. As Dayan explained, "For the first time we are sitting on the banks of the Suez Canal, and the Egyptians are looking into the eyes of soldiers 150 meters away, and in their pupils they see at close hand Israel in its full might."[23]

On 22 November 1967, the United Nations Security Council provided diplomatic support for the Arab countries' campaign against Israel. It adopted Resolution 242, which called for the "withdrawal of Israel armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict" (Israel would later argue that the resolution actually called for a withdrawal "from territories" and not "from the territories"; it does not have to withdraw from all of them). The resolution also called for an end to the state of war and for all the countries in the region to respect each other's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence.[24]

In contrast to Egypt and Syria, Jordan was careful not to attack Israel after the 1967 war. However, it was unable to prevent Fatah combatants from entering Israel and the West Bank from its territory. The Fatah operatives committed attacks in Israel, including laying landmines and conducting various sabotage operations (Dayan, 1976: 531; Drori, 2012: 110–12). When a bus carrying high school students from Tel Aviv drove over a mine, and 2 students were killed and 27 injured, Israel decided to respond. Because of its desire to protect the Jordanian regime, the United States asked Israel to refrain from responding. Indeed, King Hussein sent a telegram of apology for the attack and promised to apprehend those responsible. President Johnson even threatened to halt the supply of Phantom jets to Israel if it acted against Jordan. However, the military applied pressure and the government approved an operation, confining itself to imposing various restrictions. As usual, the military paid little attention to these restrictions. Infantry and armored troops and planes attacked the town of Karameh and several adjacent villages. The operation went awry after the IDF encountered "more vigorous resistance than expected," as Dayan later admitted, and Israel sustained 33 fatalities and 161 injuries (Drori, 2012: 140–41). Like Sharett before him, Eshkol felt that Dayan had tricked him by failing to keep the restrictions imposed on the operation by the government. Karameh could have served as a warning about the price of the occupation, but Israel was too deeply entrenched in the ethos of a nation-in-arms, where military force is always a solution and never a problem.[25]

A further hint of what lay ahead came in the form of the War of Attrition. The beginning of this war is sometimes given as 8 March 1969, when the Egyptian chief of staff and several other senior officers were killed during an artillery exchange while visiting the Suez Canal. From this date, the Egyptians continually bombarded the outposts along the canal and attacked anyone who attempted to approach the areas. The outposts built by the IDF did not provide complete protection for the soldiers, who many times became sitting ducks. The Egyptian commando, too, often raided the outposts (Bar-Siman Tov, 1980).

During this period, criticism of the occupation and the war began to emerge within Israeli society. On 28 April 1970, a group of twelfth grade high school students from Jerusalem published an open letter to Golda Meir, who had replaced Eshkol as prime minister, asking why they should go off to be killed along the Suez Canal as a result of the failure of the Israeli government to take steps to secure peace. The background to the letter was the invitation sent by Egyptian president Nasser to Dr. Nachum Goldman, president of the World Zionist Congress, inviting him to Cairo for talks about the possibility of peace. Goldman requested permission from Meir to make the journey, and she flatly refused. The students criticized the increasingly militaristic mood in Israel, and their appraisal was corroborated by the harsh reaction to their letter. Many of Israel's leaders found it difficult to accept that criticism of a nation-in-arms is a legitimate activity.[26]

Around the same time, the Cameri Theater in Tel Aviv staged a satirical play titled *The Queen of the Bath*. Like the students' letter, the play slaughtered some of the holy cows of a nation-in-arms, criticizing Meir's government, the military, and the euphoria that had followed the 1967 war. The play even implied that Israel was building itself on the suffering of others. The public reaction was fierce, with criticism focusing in particular on a scene based on the biblical story of Abraham and Isaac, in which Israeli fathers sent their sons to die. The public reaction was not confined to verbal disagreement. Some Israelis bought tickets with the intention of disrupting the play, booed during the performance, threw stink bombs, and made false calls claiming that bombs had been placed in the theater. Members of the public even went up on the stage, breaking equipment and disrupting the play, to the point that the police were called to the scene.[27] The theater eventually gave in to the pressure, and the play was withdrawn after nineteen performances. The most interesting feature of the reaction was that the play was ultimately brought down not by the authorities but by a public passionate in its defense of the "sacred values of the nation."

The military continued to display optimism and even arrogance but found it difficult to cope with the situation along the Suez Canal.[28] The small Israeli outposts were faced by six Egyptian divisions. Moreover, it was the Egyptian side that now showed the greater initiative, its soldiers determined to restore their honor and regain the territory Israel had occupied. By the end of 1969, the high number of fatalities on the Israeli side led to the use of airplanes to bomb targets deep inside Egypt, including military bases, missile installations, and radar stations. This was a controversial decision, since it was obvious that such a response would only lead to a further escalation.[29] Unable to compete with the Israelis in the air, the Egyptians called on the Russians for assistance. The Soviet military duly established batteries of surface-to-air missiles along the Suez Canal and installed advanced military technologies. Russian pilots came to Egypt, and in an air battle on 23 July 1970, the Israeli Air Force shot down five MiG jets manned by Russian pilots. Against the background of the exhausting War of Attrition, it was perhaps this incident that encouraged Israel to agree to a cease-fire two weeks later, fearing that the Soviets would join in the war. Israel was also concerned because Egypt had advanced its missiles up to the bank of the canal, downing five Phantoms and thereby challenging Israel's aerial superiority. Moreover, the Americans pressured Israel to agree to a cease-fire, thereby ending an unusual war that Israel could never have hoped to win (Schiff, 1970; Gazit, 1984: 36–39; Drori, 2012).

Over the seventeen months of the War of Attrition, Israel sustained about a thousand fatalities and four thousand injuries on all fronts. It might have been expected that such heavy losses would lead to questions about the use of war as an instrument for solving the conflict between Israel and its neighbors. However, the senior officers had no time for such doubts. The chief of staff, Haim Bar-Lev, for example, made no attempt to conceal his contempt for Arab soldiers, which was not moderated by the War of Attrition: "When the Israeli fighter and the Arab fighter meet face-to-face, the Arab tends to break down and abandon the pretense of 'fighting to the end.' . . . The difference is not only one of worldview . . . but also one of professional qualities. The Arab soldier lacks the qualities needed for modern war" (Guy, 1998: 209).

When both sides signed a cease-fire agreement, a window was potentially opened for talks about a lasting peace agreement between Israel and its neighbors on the basis of Security Council Resolution 242. At the beginning of December 1969, the US Secretary of State, William Rogers, suggested that Israel should withdraw to the international border. Its freedom of movement in the Suez Canal would be guaranteed, while the status of Gaza and Sharm

el-Sheikh would be determined by negotiations. Jerusalem would remain united, but would be managed by representatives of all three faiths. Both Egypt and Israel rejected Rogers's proposals. In June 1970 he submitted a revised plan for negotiations between the two sides, under the mediation of the UN envoy Dr. Gunnar Jarring. This plan, too, was based on Resolution 242 and included a cease-fire along the Suez Canal. Egypt accepted the plan, while Israel initially rejected it but was forced to change its position under American pressure. This development led to the dissolution of the government of national unity; Begin took his right-wing party, Gahal, out of government and proposed that a popular movement be established to oppose any withdrawal from the territories. "Who would imagine," he thundered, "that we would hand over the heart of the nation to foreigners, and declare that we have no right to parts of our homeland?"[30]

Egypt exploited the cease-fire to deploy missiles along the Suez Canal, and Israel eagerly seized on this action as a justification for abandoning the talks. Israel had no real interest in reaching an agreement based on its withdrawal from any of the territories it had occupied. The talks resumed under American pressure six months later, in February 1971. Under its new president, Anwar Sadat, Egypt made the statement that Israel claimed it had awaited for decades, and on which Golda Meir had conditioned any peace agreement in a speech to the Knesset just a week earlier. The Egyptian response dated 15 February included the explicit declaration "Egypt is willing to reach a peace agreement with Israel." Israel was surprised; but did the dramatic change of position have any impact on its positions? The Israelis informed Jarring that they would not return to the borders they had set on 4 June 1967. Around this time, in March 1971, Dayan gave a speech at the Weizmann Institute in which he declared that "our situation has never been better" and claimed that if war erupted again, Israel would emerge stronger than ever (Schiff, 1974: 59). If this was the case, why make peace?

Years later, when Sadat met Golda Meir in Jerusalem, he was unable to resist asking the "old lady," as he called her, why she had rejected the proposals he submitted via Jarring in February 1971. She could have chosen the path of peace at that point and avoided a bloody war.[31] Whatever her reasons, Meir had rejected Egyptian proposals that Israel would later be forced to accept almost in their entirety following another war (Vantik and Shalom, 2012).

The Israelis should have recognized that Sadat was serious in his proposals. By way of example, and in a move that showed considerable courage and leadership, he had expelled the Soviet advisors from Egypt on 17 July 1972. Acting

in a calculated manner, he immediately turned to the Americans, hoping to recruit their support for his peace initiative. Kissinger attempted several times to persuade Golda Meir to accept the Egyptian proposal, including during a secret meeting on 28 February 1973, but his efforts were unsuccessful (Kipnis, 2012: 11–12). Kissinger was impressed by the analytical capabilities of the Egyptian president and expressed his disappointment that Israel did not have its own Sadat, and that its leader was less capable of analyzing complex situations. However, this was not the main reason for the Israeli refusal to accept Sadat's proposal. Israel's position was the product of the ethno-nationalist and militaristic assumption that Egypt would never launch a proactive war after its rout in 1967, and that even if it did so, it would easily be defeated thanks to Israel's tremendous military might. This assumption was accompanied by the conviction that territorial depth gave Israel an advantage. Moreover, Israelis adopted a stereotypical image of the "other." Even Sadat came to be depicted in Israel as an ignorant Egyptian peasant and a target for mockery.

As always, Dayan offered the most succinct summary of Israel's position, declaring that "Sharm el-Sheikh without peace is better than peace without Sharm el-Sheikh." The public accepted his maxim: an opinion poll conducted at the beginning of 1973 by the Institute for Social Research at the Hebrew University found that 96 percent of Israelis agreed that Sharm el-Sheikh should not be returned even for full peace. The military added its powerful voice, calming the nation. In an interview in the newspaper *Davar* marking the end of his first year as chief of staff, David Elazar commented, "Our chances of winning and their chances of losing have remained more or less as they were in 1967" (Bartov, 2002: 245). The complacency continued. Just over a month before the 1973 war, Dayan stood on top of Masada, a mountain that turned out to be a symbol of heroism in a Zionist myth, and boasted, "It is the superiority of our forces over our enemies that ensures peace for us and for our neighbors." He went on to promise, "We are closer to peace now than we were two years ago."[32]

Before the 1973 elections, recognizing his electoral value to Mapai, Dayan conditioned his participation in the next government on a document clarifying the party's support for the appropriation of the territories. The wordsmith Israel Galili, a minister in the government, was happy to draft just such a document, which declared that there would be no change in the political status of the territories or of their inhabitants. The document included encouragement for Jewish settlement around Rafah in northern Sinai, in the Jordan Valley, on the Golan Heights, and in the Jerusalem area. The repre-

sentatives of the Labor Party approved the document almost unanimously. Of the eighty members of the party secretariat who met in September 1973, seventy-nine voted in favor (Eliav, 1983: 325; Shifrish, 2010: 297). As this document shows, the determination to stay in the territories was not merely a whim of the far right or of religious nationalists but formed part of the ideological platform of the Labor Party. Similarly, all sides of the political mainstream agreed that Israel's exclusive right to the territories would be realized through military might. Most Israelis felt that Israel was so strong that no one would dare to wage war against it.

"TO OUR AMAZEMENT, THE ENEMY DID NOT GUESS THE TRUTH"

Before the outbreak of the 1973 war, Israeli intelligence secured information from various reliable sources regarding the situation in the enemy countries. These means included wiretapping and spies, such as Ashraf Marwan ("the Angel"), who occupied a senior position in the Egyptian regime (Bar-Josef, 2011; Zamir, 2011). Israel also enjoyed the service of credible informants, including King Hussein of Jordan, who warned Israel of impending war. Israel's lookouts were stationed on high towers along the Suez Canal and reported the preparations they saw with their own eyes. Israeli planes conducted reconnaissance and photography operations. Last but not least, Israel's "special means" included an ability to wiretap the Egyptian war room. As the war approached, then, the problem was not one of the collection of intelligence data, nor of its interpretation. The problem lay in understanding the significance of the data. On this point, Israel's intelligence community, led by Eli Zeira, head of the Intelligence Division, drew the wrong conclusion, declaring that there was only a "low probability" of war (Bar-Joseph, 2001). Why were the intelligence chiefs so reluctant to allow themselves to be swayed by the facts?

Zeira applied his "rational" logic to the Egyptian's actions. This was a rookie mistake, but no one challenged his position. Zeira's excessive self-confidence even led him to declare that until 1978 (no less) there would be no significant political change in the region (Nadal, 2006: 119). On 5 October 1973, the day before the war erupted, the chief of staff summoned his generals, not for an emergency discussion, but to raise a glass to mark the Jewish New Year. At the same time, the head of the Intelligence Division brought

the generals up to date with the latest developments. He reported that the Russian advisors and their families had left Egypt, admitting that he could not understand what this meant. No one present, including Zeira, considered the possibility that this was yet another sign that war was imminent (Nadal, 2006: 126). "To our amazement," General Sa'ad al-Din Shazali later wrote (1987: 155), "the enemy did not guess the truth."

Any attempt to understand "the Failing," as the intelligence crisis of the 1973 war came to be known, must address other areas in addition to the military arena. Culture and ideology may have played a central role. The entire general staff appears to have become trapped in a preconception that it itself had done much to create regarding the essence of both the Israelis and their enemies. This preconception defined who was more important to whom, who was more just, how strong Israel was, and how weak its enemies were. Against this background, the intelligence community simply did what was expected of it, providing assessments designed to prove predetermined political positions in the spirit of militaristic nationalism. This is part of the essence—and problem—of the nation-in-arms: an instrument that was originally intended to facilitate preparedness and mobilization for war became a vehicle for the inculcation of complacency, excessive self-confidence, and arrogance. The monster rose up against its maker, and Israel found itself enslaved to a conceptual model, believing that it was best served by a state of "neither war nor peace," as Dayan had repeatedly argued since the 1950s. The warning signs that managed to filter through this system were angrily rejected. And so the victory of militaristic nationalism in 1967 was transformed into Israel's vale of tears in 1973.

On the Syrian front, three augmented divisions were positioned, with two more in reserve. In total, the Syrians had around 1,000 tanks on the front line, with some 400 more waiting to the rear. The Syrians also installed 155 batteries of canons and heavy mortars. On the other side, Israel had positioned eleven outposts, each with 16 combat soldiers. Two armored battalions were also deployed along the front, with another battalion to the rear as a reserve force. In total, Israel had some 177 tanks and 11 artillery batteries along the Syrian front. The Egyptians brought into position five infantry divisions, two armored divisions, two mechanized divisions, and extensive commando forces. Egypt had a total of some 1,700 tanks, 2,000 canons, 600 antitank systems, and antiaircraft batteries. These forces faced fifteen Israeli outposts occupied by a few hundred soldiers. Just 24 Israeli tanks were supposed to be stationed along the 160-kilometer section of the Suez Canal at

any point, but in practice there were just 3 tanks on the ground. Close to the canal, where two-thirds of the division's tanks should have been stationed (i.e., some 300 tanks), there were just 91. Israel had 7 artillery batteries along the line. These statistics reflect an Egyptian superiority of 36:1 in manpower, 13:1 in armored capability, and 40:1 in artillery power—an area that had been neglected for years.

Bearing these figures in mind, it is hardly surprising that the Sinai Division lost some 60 percent of its tanks by the morning of 7 October. No special military expertise is needed to understand why Israel, facing an army of 1,200,000 Egyptian soldiers, including some 70,000 officers, performed so badly during the first few days of the war. The outcome of the fighting over this same period on the Golan Heights, before Israel drafted and organized its reserves, was nothing short of disastrous for the IDF. The Syrians conquered most of the Golan Heights and the IDF withdrew. Only the heroism of the small number of armored fighters who faced forces ten times their number prevented the Syrians from advancing still further. On the southern front, the "Dovecote" plan called for one division to control the Suez Canal until it was joined by two more divisions from the rear. However, Gorodish, the GCO of the Southern Command, failed to implement this plan for hours following the outbreak of war, despite an instruction from the chief of staff.[33] He had been appointed to his post only three months earlier and was unsuited to the heavy and complex responsibility it entailed, as was later confirmed by the Agranat Committee appointed to investigate the reasons for the outbreak of the war (Agranat Commission, 1975: 89). The impotence of the IDF was exposed in full when the Egyptians managed within just eighteen hours to move 90,000 troops, 850 tanks, and 11,000 vehicles onto the east bank of the canal without facing the slightest opposition. In order to do so, they had to create some seventy openings in the tall earth embankments built by the Israelis. They also constructed ten enormous bridges, five smaller bridges, and dozens of pontoons to carry infantry troops, using 35 rafts and 720 rubber dinghies. This was an enormous logistical operation, and the Egyptians implemented it with exceptional success (Shazali, 1987: 37–38). The Egyptian infantry forces were equipped with thousands of Sager antitank missiles, which devastated Israeli hardware and personnel, leading to the collapse of the armored concept that had guided the IDF. The Egyptians could attack the Israeli tanks from a great distance using the shoulder-mounted missiles without exposing their own forces, and the regular Israeli forces that were supposed to block any Egyptian offensive were

eroded to the point of inefficacy (Schiff, 1974: 87; Nadal, 2006: 262–65). The potent force of these missiles had become apparent during the War of Attrition, but no one in Israel had seen fit to draw the obvious conclusions. The Israeli Air Force, sated with glory and perceived by the IDF as the foundation of its victory, proved unable to destroy the Egyptian missile batteries, thereby failing in the main function it had been allocated in the war. As for the armored corps, Shazali (1987: 174) claimed that it stubbornly continued to sacrifice the lives of its tank crews. The tanks attacked in small doses, continuing a cavalry-like tactic. Shazali commented, "Our strategy has already tried to force the enemy to fight on our conditions, but we never expected it would cooperate in this."

The surprise prepared for the Israelis by the Egyptians and Syrians effectively marked the inversion of the cultural certainty, superiority, and complacency that were the hallmarks of the Israeli nation at this time. Let us turn now to the story of Uri, an Israeli combat soldier in the Motorized and Armored Infantry Corps. Uri and the driver Bar-Joseph found themselves alone in an armored troop carrier that was not properly prepared for war, surrounded by hundreds of Egyptian soldiers. According to Uri's later report, "We sped forward, peppering them with bullets and driving over them with the vehicle's chains. We ran over one group of soldiers. Then we realized that we'd run out of ammunition. . . . Our hearts plummeted: a crowd of Egyptians stormed around us. . . . I shouted to the driver Bar-Joseph: 'Run them over, come on, run them over!' And he did. . . . We stormed on. . . . I took out my Uzi to shoot two Egyptians who were running around in front of me. . . . Then they threw a grenade at me, which exploded on top of the vehicle. I fell onto the machine gun. I was covered in shrapnel, I felt stabbing pains in my back. . . . I began to shoot in front of me, and turning around I saw an Egyptian crouching three meters behind me. I turned to shoot him, but I was too late. He fired his Kalashnikov first. The bullet entered my back, moving from bottom to top, striking my spine, entering my lungs, and passing half a centimeter from my heart. I fell backward into the vehicle." Uri woke up that evening in the operating theater. For the first time in his life, he heard the doctors use the word *paraplegia*—paralysis of the lower half of the body (Reshef, 2013: 145–46).

Shocked and depressed, Dayan suggested to the prime minister on 9 October that Israel should withdraw from the canal. The military had failed to keep its promises: the air force had not put the Egyptian missile batteries out of operation; the armored corps had not stopped the enemy forces from crossing the canal; the Bar-Lev Line had collapsed. Dayan, desperate to a

degree that seems to have clouded his judgment, insisted that Israel must recognize that it had been defeated. He also suggested to Golda Meir that she should resign (Schiff, 1974: 81; Bartov, 2002: 420). The chief of staff, Elazar, was adamantly opposed to the idea of withdrawal and convinced Meir of his position.[34] Over the course of the war, Dayan lost the confidence of the general staff and senior officers. He was excessively pessimistic, while on the other side Gorodish was unreasonably optimistic, daily proposing that Israel cross the canal and "finish off" the Egyptians (Adan, 1979: 87), a position that was probably rooted in Gorodish's profoundly dismissive attitude toward the enemy. The general staff slowly began to understand that Gorodish had to be replaced.[35]

It was decided that the former chief of staff Bar-Lev would be sent south to replace Gorodish. The latter would not be dismissed but would be required to accept instructions from Bar-Lev. In response, Gorodish decided to abandon his position in the middle of the war. The same arrogance of those who had stood at the nation's heart and were permitted everything that had dictated the generals' behavior before the 1967 war could be seen once again among at least some of them. This time, however, it was manifested even as the battles raged. In a process that became known as the "wars of the generals," Israel's generals squabbled about mutual assistance between divisions, cooperation between forces, coordination, and even loyalty. Above all else, General Sharon, who was called back to active duty along with his assigned reserve armored division, was determined to be the first to cross the Suez Canal and reap the glory this would bring. Thrust up to the summit of a nation-in-arms and spoiled by the public, the generals were unable to overcome their egos and concentrate on the war. Some of them were surrounded by their own courts of correspondents, journalists, historians, and admirers, dictating the manner in which their exploits would be recorded in the nation's collective memory.

The easy crossing of the canal and the successful creation of a bridgehead on the "Israeli" side boosted the Egyptians' self-confidence. On 14 October, unable to control themselves, they sped forward, moving beyond the protective range of their missiles along the canal. Israel immediately exploited this error, destroying 250 tanks on a single day—more than all the tanks it had demolished up to this point. This marked the turning point in the war. The IDF realized that it would not be able to force the enemy back to the west side of the canal. It decided to balance the situation by instead crossing the canal and occupying areas inside Egypt in order to prevent a situation where

Egypt would be judged to have won the war. On 16 October, the Israelis crossed the canal in a complex and difficult operation. Even after Israeli forces moved west, it became clear that the opposing forces were too numerous, determined, and well-equipped for Israel to overcome them. On the northern front, the IDF had managed to halt the Syrian advance but found it difficult to move forward toward Damascus or even to reach a point from which its cannons could threaten the Syrian capital. Similarly, in the south, the IDF's progress west of the Canal was slow and marred by operational errors.

The Soviets threatened to intervene in the war unless Israel halted its advance, while the Americans, who had effectively saved Israel with an air convoy of supplies, did not want its protégé to secure all its goals in the campaign. Accordingly, the United States forbade Israel to destroy the encircled Egyptian Third Army. Henry Kissinger realized that refraining from doing so would open a window for peace in the future. The Israelis struggled to understand his logic but were forced to acquiesce, and so the war ended on 24 October. Within a few weeks, the Americans managed to persuade the two sides to sign an agreement for the separation of their forces, eventually leading to a peace agreement between the two countries several years later, in 1979. Thus the United States helped Israel extricate itself from the complications created by a militaristic nationalism that had sparked a disastrous war for the nation. However, this was only after Israel had sustained 2,223 fatalities and over 7,000 injuries; 294 Israeli soldiers had been captured by the Egyptians, over a hundred planes downed, and over a thousand tanks damaged.

CRACKS IN THE MODEL OF A NATION-IN-ARMS

Slowly but surely, cracks began to emerge in the ethos of the nation-in-arms. The parents of the young Israeli soldiers held captive in Egypt failed to respond according to the expected pattern: "We demand that our children not be abandoned," they shouted at a demonstration outside the Knesset, urging the government to take decisive action to bring back their children.[36] The attitude toward the enemy also began to change. The arrogance of the past vanished. In radio interviews, Israeli soldiers admitted that, contrary to the prevailing myth, they had encountered Arabs who fought well and showed considerable persistence.[37] The uncertainty sparked by the war was

evident in an article titled "An Invitation to Cry," written by the kibbutznik Arnon Lapid. "Let us cry for the dreams from which we have awoken," Lapid wrote. "For the gods who failed, for the false prophets who rose to prominence[,] . . . for the present that offers not even a single ray of light[,] . . . for the shattered illusions[,] . . . and for the sadness that will forever hover like a cloud over any joy."[38] The ethos of the nation-in-arms was so entrenched that many Israelis were quick to criticize the article. "I don't feel like crying with you," wrote the editor of the workers' newspaper, referring to the phenomenon as "the Vietnamization of some of our youth."[39] How insensitive was her response, as a representative of the establishment, toward a soldier who had returned from New York to take part in the war. Lapid mourned his friend Uriel, "a thin young man, pretty as a girl," who had also returned from abroad just two days before the war and died by Lapid's side as the two young men crouched in a trench, waiting for the order to attack. The two soldiers had planned for a party after the war at which Uriel would introduce his new friend to Iris, a charming girl. "How come you don't know each other already? You were born right next to her," Uriel had said to him.

The protest movement that emerged following the war leveled criticism at both the government and the military. Above all, it demanded the resignation of Meir and Dayan. "Our Israel" was a broad-based movement headed by officers in the military reserves. Israel had never seen a protest movement on this scale. Most of the activists were reserve duty soldiers. Almost six months after the war ended, the protestors headed to Jerusalem to demonstrate against the government instead of returning to their homes and families.[40] The protests coincided with the first sessions of the Agranat Committee, the state committee of inquiry appointed on 21 November 1973 to examine the reasons for the outbreak of the war. The committee placed all the blame on the military echelon and declined to investigate any findings concerning the political leadership. This approach fueled the protests of Our Israel still further. Such a protest was far from routine within the political culture of a nation-in-arms and a mobilized society. Yet Our Israel did not challenge Israel's basic assumptions. Moreover, the fact that it was headed by officers in the reserves made it clear that no attempt was being made to promote a civilian or antimilitaristic agenda. The movement sought to create change within the system, not to change the system itself.[41] Its main success was the pressure that led to the resignation of the government of Golda Meir and Dayan in May 1974, although the election results did not reflect any widespread public expression of dissatisfaction with the veteran leadership.

Establishment figures, including senior officers who had completed their service, subsequently joined the movement, moderating its more radical activities and effectively leading to its disappearance within a few months (Ashkenazi, 2003).

Nevertheless, the war sparked significant ideological changes—not among the public as a whole, but in religious Jewish circles. I have already discussed the religious and nationalist resurgence among the young members of the National Religious Party, and among religious-nationalist youth in general, following the 1967 war, including their desire to annex areas of what they saw as the biblical Land of Israel. They did so while depicting the victory as a miraculous event possible only because of divine intervention. Were this not a matter of faith, it might have been expected that the tragic outcomes of the 1973 war would have challenged and refuted the belief in divine intervention. But religious faith has its own logic, and the Religious-Zionist rabbis chose to portray the war as a severe test presented to the nation by God on the path to redemption.[42]

On 9 February 1974, this approach led young members of the Religious-Zionist society to form a political movement called Gush Emunim (Block of the Faithful). The movement rapidly developed into a force for Jewish settlement in areas considered part of the Land of Israel.[43] Gush Emunim was a fundamentalist movement. Like others of its kind, it chose to conceal, at least temporarily, its mystical and messianic agenda and to present a moderate, pragmatic platform that would not threaten secular Israelis. This was seen as a preparatory stage that would enable the members of the movement to gain influence in society at large.[44] Yet underneath its soft cloaks, fundamentalism is never based on compromise, neither religious nor political. Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook, the spiritual leader of the movement, explained his position in unequivocal terms. When his students asked him what lesson should be drawn from the 1973 war, he told them that it should perceived as "a positive commandment from the Torah, clear and absolute, for all Israel, that we are obliged to devote our souls to this Land and all its borders." As for the danger of an Israeli withdrawal from the territories, the rabbi explained, "It won't work, it won't happen, without war! Over our bodies and limbs! All of us!"[45]

The fundamentalist Gush Emunim movement marked the emergence of a religious nationalism in Israel that, over the following years, would intensify, challenging the secular character of the nation-state and creating a longing for a theocracy within the borders of the "Whole Land of Israel." The members of Gush Emunim applied constant pressure on the government to

approve its settlements. A famous settlement point was proposed at the biblical site of Elon Moreh, close to Nablus in Samaria. The Labor Zionist movement favored settlement in areas that were not densely populated by Arabs, based on a slightly modified form of the Alon Plan. Gush Emunim deliberately challenged this approach, calling for settlement anywhere in the territories. The Israeli government opposed settlement in Samaria, but the activists stood their ground, broke the law, and established a settlement at Elon Moreh on 5 June 1974. The government decided to evict the settlement; but after the military implemented that decision, the settlers repeatedly returned to the site.[46] It became apparent that the Israeli government found it difficult to remove them—not because a state lacks the necessary means to this end, and not because the Israeli military or police were too weak, but because the settlers were perceived as the bearers of the emblem of ethno-nationalism, a creed supported by all Israel's leaders, in varying degrees, either directly or indirectly. The government eventually "surrendered." This precedent, perhaps one of the main factors that would prevent peace in the future, led to the establishment of additional settlements in Samaria, this time with the involvement of the government and state institutions, and based on the spurious claim of "security needs," in part because this is the only justification for settlement in occupied territory in accordance with international law (Admoni, 1992: 150). It became apparent at the time that secular as well as religious Israelis shared a sensitivity to the Jewish historical and national connection to Samaria, an approach that was evident among members of the Labor movement, as well as their opponents from the Likud Party and the National Religious Party. This is the only way to explain the establishment of sixty-seven settlements beyond the Green Line between 1967 and 1977—a decade when Israel's government was dominated by the Labor Party (Gorenberg, 2007).

War, and specifically conventional war, often has broad social ramifications (Marwick, 1974), and the 1973 war was no exception. It led to the emergence of new political forces that grew from the grassroots: the protest movement Our Israel, on the one side, and Gush Emunim, on the other. Despite the traumatic nature of the war, however, most Israelis were still unwilling to challenge the basic principles on which their society was based. Israel continued to be a nation-in-arms. Its society continued to be engaged and mobilized, and its military continued—despite the shock it had sustained—to form the central focus of the nation. The national, military, and political lesson drawn from the war was that Israel had to be even stronger than

before. The military expanded enormously in its numbers and acquired a huge amount of tanks, as if inspired by the claim by the French philosopher Voltaire that "it is said that God is on the side of the big battalions."[47] By means of this essentially technical approach, the political and military leadership hoped to continue to apply the traditional assumptions of ethno-nationalism and militarism. In terms of the path dependence logic, this even led Israel to another war.

SEVEN

The Decline of the Nation-in-Arms

THE 1982 LEBANON WAR

After the end of the 1973 war, Israel and its neighbors signed separation-of-forces agreements. Perhaps in response, Fatah launched a series of attacks in Israel. On 5 March 1975, eight operatives entered Israel from the sea and took control of the Savoy Hotel in Tel Aviv. Others took over an Air France plane on its way from Paris to Israel on 4 July 1976, forcing the pilot to fly to Uganda. In a complex military operation, the IDF freed the passengers. The operation helped restore some of the prestige that the Israeli military had lost in the 1973 war (Haber, Ben Porat, and Schiff, 1991). As for the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), its leadership gradually realized that international terror was not winning support for the Palestinian cause. Israel's policy of assassinating those responsible for such attacks may also have influenced the organization's decision to turn to new forms of attack, particularly the shelling of Israeli territory from Lebanon. In the meantime, a dramatic political change occurred in Israel, and a new government was forced to confront the problem on its northern border.

The Israelis use the term "upheaval" to refer to the change of power that followed the elections of May 1977. The right-wing Likud Party secured forty-three seats in the Knesset, compared to just thirty-three for Labor. The Likud formed a coalition with the center party Dash, and with the religious parties, particularly the National Religious Party, which abandoned its long-standing support for Labor and brought its twelve seats to the government side. The 1977 election marked the end of a period of hegemony by the Labor Zionist movement that had begun in the early 1920s, and which had been a major force in the process of nation building and in establishing the state. Moreover, the election results exposed, perhaps for the first time, the existence of a stark division within the Jewish public in Israel between two camps,

conventionally referred to as "right" and "left." This rift would intensify over the years to come and would have a profound influence on Israel's future. In the meantime, President Sadat of Egypt visited Israel in November 1977 and received an enthusiastic welcome. He declared, "No more war, no more bloodshed," and Israelis rubbed their eyes in amazement. As a chance emerged to make peace with Egypt, which was the main threat to Israel, it gradually became apparent that the PLO was a problem that could no longer be ignored. During his long period in opposition, Menachem Begin had often urged the greater use of force by Israel to secure political goals. Now, as prime minister, he had an opportunity to implement his worldview.

The spark that ignited the fire was an incident in March 1978 known in Hebrew as the "Bloody Bus," when terror operatives seized control of two buses traveling on Israel's coastal highway. They moved all the passengers from one of the buses to the other and, in the packed bus, began to storm toward Tel Aviv. A security force stopped the bus, and in the ensuing gunfight thirty-seven civilians lost their lives. The attack was launched from Lebanon, where Palestinian military organizations had been strengthened by the arrival of some three thousand of their comrades who had been expelled from Jordan by King Hussein in 1970–1971. The same month, Israel responded by launching preliminary artillery attacks from the sea and air in order to cause the civilians in southern Lebanon to flee north. Almost three hundred thousand Lebanese citizens did so, an action that was designed by Israel to apply pressure on the government in Beirut to confront the problem of the Palestinian militants in the south. The action was problematic in moral terms, since it led to either death or injury for one thousand to two thousand people, only a minority of whom were combatants.[1] The Israeli forces then went on, in what that was called the "Litani Operation," to occupy southern Lebanon with little difficulty. The forces occupied approximately one-tenth of the territory of Lebanon, advancing far beyond the ten-kilometer strip that had been the initial goal. Israel withdrew from Lebanon after three months, following resolutions passed by the United Nations Security Council and under strong international pressure. Before doing so, however, it established a force in southern Lebanon based on Christian militias, under the command of Major Sa'ad Haddad. The proxy force, which later came to be known as the South Lebanon Army, allowed Israel to maintain effective control in southern Lebanon, creating a strip some ten kilometers wide along the border that was referred to as the security zone, and which was supposed to protect the Israeli-Lebanese border and the communities in the north of Israel.[2]

Under the rule of the Labor Party, the appropriation of the territories had been implemented in a subtle manner, without declarations or provocations. This reflected the traditional approach of Israel's founders, who had always believed that this was the way to enjoy freedom of action. Beginning in 1977, however, the Likud leaders, who now dominated the government, overtly and unabashedly promoted the principle of appropriation on the basis of ethno-national assumptions. For example, Menachem Begin declared that "there will be many more Elon Morehs," referring to the first settlement along the central mountain ridge, which as noted in the previous chapter, had been the subject of a protracted struggle between the settlers and the Labor government.

In order to implement this vision, however, it was necessary to confiscate Palestinian-owned land. This task was overseen by Sharon, the minister of agriculture, who was appointed chair of the Ministerial Committee for Settlement Affairs. Sharon followed the classic Zionist approach of creating facts on the ground, based on the assumption that settlements would not be evicted, and that wherever Jews were present, they would maintain control of the territory. Sharon was interested in confiscating privately owned Palestinian land, in some cases seeking to encircle large Palestinian towns and villages with Jewish settlements in order to prevent the future establishment of a Palestinian state. Begin, however, was reluctant to base the settlement drive on such confiscations. Sharon developed his response in cooperation with his faithful assistant, the attorney Plia Albeck of the Ministry of Justice, who made no attempt to hide her fervent support for the settlers. Albeck discovered that most of the land in the area, even when its ownership had been universally acknowledged for generations, had never been registered with the Jordanian authorities. Ownership was based on traditional recognition and on an Ottoman law from 1858 granting possession to anyone who farmed land close to their home. All the remaining land was defined as *mawat,* or state land that ostensibly had no owner. Exploiting the fact that the Palestinians did not farm the arid hilltops, but only fertile valleys, Israel confiscated almost 50 percent of the West Bank during this period, turning it into "state land." This action also enabled Sharon to circumvent the ruling of the Israeli Supreme Court prohibiting the confiscation of private land in the West Bank for reasons other than security.[3] Albeck, who was an observant Jew, was open about the fact that security was merely a pretext for an

ethno-nationalist ideology: "If I had disagreed with this policy, I couldn't have implemented it. I have never considered the Green Line to be sacred—I didn't find it in the Bible."[4]

The government's settlement activities led to concern that the occupation would become permanent, thereby thwarting any chance of establishing two states between the River Jordan and the Mediterranean.[5] This was one of the concerns that stood behind the formation of a peace movement in Israel, for the first time since the country's establishment. The initial impetus for the formation of the Peace Now movement in the late 1970s came during the peace negotiations between Israel and Egypt. The government of Menachem Begin found it difficult to overcome long-standing fears about "the price of peace" and to accept the new reality that had largely been shaped by the Egyptian president. Peace Now was formed to apply pressure on Begin to accept the peace initiative. As with the founding of Gush Emunim in 1974, the emergence of Peace Now was another early sign of a process of division in Israel between those who favored a continued presence in the territories and those who advocated peace in return for a territorial withdrawal. This position was highlighted in a letter sent to the prime minister on 3 July 1978: "Government policy that will lead to continuing rule over some one million Arabs is liable to damage Israel's Jewish and democratic character and will make it difficult for us to identify with its course" (Bar-On, 1985: 15).

The founders of Peace Now were convinced that the fact that many of them were officers (as they emphasized in their letter to the prime minister) added legitimacy to their actions. In a nation-in-arms, deviating from the mainstream path can easily be labeled as a form of treason, and the founders were careful to avoid such allegations (Reshef, 1996: 21). The difficulty in overcoming this republican, collectivistic assumption soon became a limiting factor for the new organization, dictating its cautious approach and preventing it from representing the full range of those opposed to the occupation and war. As part of this approach, for example, Peace Now strongly opposed any form of refusal to serve in the IDF (Bar-On, 1985: 30), and during the early years the members of the movement refrained from expressing support for the establishment of a Palestinian state (Reshef, 1996: 49–50).

Despite these limitations, Peace Now managed to present the Israeli public with an alternative to the position of militaristic nationalism, adding to the pressure on the government not to abandon its promise to seek peace with Egypt. The differences of opinion between Begin and Sadat regarding the emerging agreement were substantial. Sadat saw a peace treaty between

the two countries as a prelude to comprehensive peace in the Middle East, including the solution of the "Palestinian problem." Begin had no intention of relinquishing the "ancestral lands" of Judea and Samaria, though he agreed to grant the Palestinians autonomy in the area. Sadat viewed this autonomy as a transitional stage leading to a Palestinian state, whereas Begin was adamant that it would be the final concession in this area. After much effort, Israel and Egypt finally signed a peace treaty in March 1979. Israel agreed to withdraw from the entire Sinai Peninsula and to grant autonomy to the Palestinians in the territories. For Israel, the treaty was important in that it broke the Arab taboo of refusing to recognize Israel; for the Arabs, it ended the era of total Israeli intransigence regarding territorial withdrawal. The treaty conveyed the message that peace was preferable to war. A further achievement was that Begin recognized the "legitimate rights and just needs of the Arabs of the Land of Israel." While this was a paltry advance from the Palestinian perspective, it embodied a promise that would be implemented, albeit partially, in the Oslo Accords fifteen years later. However, Israel refused to recognize the PLO as the representative of the Palestinians, while the Palestinians accurately perceived the entire agreement, including the autonomy clause, as an instrument intended to perpetuate the Israeli occupation of the territories, with the effective approval of the largest Arab country and the United Nations (Shlaim, 2000: 358–68).

The Begin government had no intention to grant even meaningful autonomy to the Palestinians. While the peace treaty challenged the underlying principles of militaristic nationalism, the government worked hard to ensure that this ideology would continue to dominate the political arena. After a three-month freeze agreed upon during the Camp David negotiations, the government again began to confiscate land throughout the West Bank for the establishment of settlements. The Revisionist Zionist movement had always had a fondness for grandiose and declarative actions, and it now decided to embark on a legislative initiative that would provoke fierce international opposition and put Sadat in an embarrassing position in his own country and across the Arab world.

On 30 July 1980, the Knesset adopted the Jerusalem Law, declaring that the entire and united city of Jerusalem was Israel's capital. The government's goal was to annex east Jerusalem, the Arab side of the city, which was occupied in 1967, ignoring the city's national importance to the Palestinians and ignoring, too, the resolution adopted by the United Nations on 29 November 1947, according to which Jerusalem and its surroundings were to be subject

to an international regime. The United Nations reacted sharply: the Security Council immediately adopted Resolution 478, stating that the Israeli action constituted a violation of international law. Unusually, the United States refrained from using its veto to prevent the adoption of the resolution. Had Israel confined itself to declaring west Jerusalem the capital of Israel, the United Nations and the international community would almost certainly have accepted the move and refrained from relocating their embassies away from Jerusalem. However, the level of national fervor in Israel, fueled by historical and religious sentiments regarding the indivisibility of the sacred city, and the reluctance of the Begin government to appear to be advocating the return of territories, prevented any consideration of such a possibility.

The Golan Heights Law, adopted by the Knesset on 14 December 1981, effectively annexed the area of the Syrian Golan Heights occupied by Israel. Israel thus determined its new borders in a unilateral manner, based on force. The populist gesture was accompanied by a campaign initiated by the settlers on the Golan Heights, who persuaded over one million Israelis to sign a petition titled "We Mustn't Lose the North!" The law was also intended to deflect attention from the fact that Israel was in the final stages of its withdrawal from Sinai and was forced to dismantle the settlements it had established there. Some Israelis found it hard to accept this territorial compromise. Meanwhile, not a single country in the world, including the United States, recognized Israel's decision regarding the Golan Heights. The law sparked a crisis in Israel's relations with the Reagan administration, while the Security Council adopted Resolution 497, declaring that the annexation lacked any international meaning. Despite all this, Israel remained implacable (Schiffer, 1984: 70; Sheleff, 1993).

The peace treaty with Egypt was like a red flag to the religious settlers, who were afraid that it created a precedent that would later lead to an Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank. At the end of April 1982, serious clashes erupted between Jewish settlers and the military forces sent to evict residents of the city of Yamit, built on the sands of northern Sinai, and the surrounding settlements in accordance with the terms of the peace treaty (Segal, 1999). Nevertheless, Israel cooperated, evacuating all its settlements in Sinai. Compensation was considered vital for this loss, however, and Minister Yuval Ne'eman was made responsible for its implementation. We have already encountered Ne'eman's positions and actions in previous chapters. In 1979, he established a far-right party called Tehiya (Revival). The party joined Begin's second government, established after the elections in June 1981, and

Ne'eman was appointed chairman of the Ministerial Committee for Settlement Affairs. He worked vigorously in this capacity to establish dozens of new settlements. To this end, the government invested enormous sums, providing mortgages and other incentives that encouraged many Israelis to purchase apartments in the West Bank virtually for free, enjoying a standard of life they could not have afforded in Israel. Some of the settlements were established very close to the Green Line, as the copywriters boasted in the advertisements for houses there. With the help of broad new highways, these settlements effectively came to function as the outer suburbs of central Israel.[6] Such "neoliberal" encouragement was needed in order to attract to the territories Israelis motivated by material rather than ideological considerations. Those who planned this policy correctly assumed that ideology would come later. As the years passed, the number of settlers increased and the Green Line was deliberately blurred. Strange though it may sound, Israel even attempted to strengthen its hold on the territories by waging a war against Lebanon.

THE LEBANON WAR

In July 1981, while Begin was still working to form a new coalition, Palestinians based in Lebanon began to fire Katyusha rockets into the north of Israel, which responded by launching air strikes. The civilian populations on both sides of the border paid the price for the confrontation.[7] On 24 July, under the guidance of US envoy Philip Habib, the two sides signed a ceasefire agreement that lasted for almost a year, although throughout this period Israel continued its preparations to invade Lebanon. The chief of staff, General Refael Eitan, presented the basic assumptions that guided the work of the senior military echelon at the time: "It is possible to solve the problem of terror from Lebanon by means of a military operation. . . . The terrorists will be weakened only by a military operation, and not by diplomatic activity." When asked whether it was not problematic that the IDF was preparing for war in Lebanon despite the absence of a consensus on the issue in Israeli society, Eitan replied that the public did not understand such matters. He asked why "the British are allowed to fight for the Falklands, but people tell us to sit back and do nothing while we are being shelled." Eitan declared, "We shouldn't play according to the other side's rules. The United States also plays by its own rules."[8]

Meanwhile, articles appeared in the press with headlines such as "Who Wants War?" The press pointed out that "there is no sense among the general public that our backs are to the wall[,] and there is no feeling that there is no alternative [to war]."[9] Even Begin promised that Israel did not want a war, but not everyone was convinced.

On 3 June 1982, Palestinian operatives from the Abu Nidal organization tried to assassinate Shlomo Argov, the Israeli ambassador to the United Kingdom. The Israeli government decided to seize the opportunity to launch the long-planned war. "What could we do?" Begin asked in the Knesset. "Are we in this generation abandoning Jewish blood?"[10]

Begin conveniently ignored the minor detail that the assassins not only were not members of the PLO but were actually the sworn enemies of the Palestinian organization, whose leaders had imposed death sentences on them. When the head of the Shabak pointed this out at a government meeting, Begin interrupted him: "No need. . . . [T]hey're all the PLO" (Schiff and Ya'ari, 1984: 12). Begin refused to allow the facts to disturb his ethno-nationalist view of reality through a simplistic "them" and "us" prism, which he now applied in order to justify the war.

During the days preceding the assassination of Argov, the United States pressured Israel to solve the Palestinian problem. "Autonomy is one stage in the peace process," the secretary of state, Alexander Haig, explained. "This is a first and vital step toward a historic opportunity. . . . History will judge severely anyone who misses this opportunity."[11] At the same, the Egyptian leaders were discussing with representatives of the Israeli Labor Party the possibility of including Jordan in the peace talks.[12] This suggestion, too, threatened the ethno-nationalist approach of the right-wing government, which rejected any affinity between Jordan and the West Bank. Europe was also mulling the prospects of a new initiative in the Middle East to break the stalemate in the autonomy talks.[13] In addition, talks were being pursued between the United States and the PLO, through Philip Habib. All these developments raised concern in Israel that initiatives would be launched to establish a Palestinian state in the West Bank. Against this background, a war in Lebanon seemed to be vital in order to "save" Judea and Samaria. Paradoxically, the fact that the PLO had restrained itself and observed the cease-fire for a year was the greatest threat of all to Israel—after all, someone might draw the conclusion that the organization could be a partner for peace.

In response to the attempted assassination of Argov, the Israeli Air Force launched heavy raids on southern Lebanon. The PLO was unable to resist the

temptation and responded by firing five hundred rockets at Israel. On 6 June 1982 the IDF invaded Lebanon. From Begin's simplistic viewpoint, the Palestinians were a bitter and dangerous enemy—to an extent, a modern-day version of Nazi Germany. If Israel failed to deal with them, he believed, it would be destroyed. "The only alternative to war is [the extermination camp] Treblinka," he told his ministers, "and we have decided that there will not be another Treblinka" (Naor, 1986: 47–48). This is how the prime minister saw the Palestinian militia of barefoot soldiers. Begin's worldview had no room for realism, only for basic assumptions derived from the tragic history of the Jewish people. As the war dragged on, it gradually became apparent that its goals were completely different from those presented to the public and the media. What was ostensibly an operation to halt the artillery attacks by the Palestinian military organizations against northern Israel actually concealed the Oranim Plan, devised by the defense minister, Ariel Sharon, in cooperation with the chief of staff, Eitan, and the military. The actual goal was to impose a new order in Lebanon. This was the first time that Israel had made a significant attempt to dictate the form of government in another country and to determine who would stand at its head, and to do so by means of war (Shlaim, 2000, 383–89).

Israel cooperated with the Maronite Christians with the goal of expelling the Palestinians from Lebanon. Where did Sharon wish to send some three hundred thousand men, women, and children who had lived in the refugee camps in the country since 1948? It emerged that his ambitious plan was to send the expelled refugees to Jordan and establish a Palestinian state there. This would not only alleviate the pressure on Israel from the north but also prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank. In order to secure this outcome, Sharon decided to install Bachir Gemayel, the Christian-Lebanese ally of Israel, as president of Lebanon and to expel the Syrians from the country. Sharon was convinced that once this plan was implemented, Israel would be able to appoint moderate Palestinian leaders in Judea and Samaria who would be satisfied with autonomy. Thus Israel would achieve its national ambitions by use of its might, securing its hold over its ancestral homeland (Schiff and Ya'ari, 1984).

How did Sharon manage to secure support for such a megalomaniac plan? One theory, supported by, for example, Begin's secretary during the period of the war, was that the prime minister was unaware of the defense minister's plan (Naor, 1986). It is doubtful that this was the case, however. Unless Begin also had ambitions that went far beyond securing peace for Galilee, it is hard

to imagine that he would have agreed to send almost one hundred thousand soldiers and one thousand tanks to Lebanon, particularly when one bears in mind that the PLO had barely fifteen thousand combatants. An Israeli pilot astutely remarked, "They've brought an elephant to devour a fly" (Rosenthal, 1983: 75). As I will discuss, the cooperation Sharon enjoyed throughout the campaign, which eventually brought the IDF to the western suburbs of Beirut—over three months after the outbreak of war—reflected the ideology of militaristic nationalism that was shared by almost all those in the government and, indeed, by most of the Israeli public.

At the start of the war, Begin promised that it would be brief and that the Israeli forces would not advance more than forty kilometers north into Lebanon. Even Sharon declared that Beirut was off-limits. The motif of a persecuted people forced to defend itself was a constant theme in Begin's justifications of the war: "The fate of one and a half million Jewish children was different from the fate of all the children on earth throughout the generations. No more! We will protect our children. If the hand of a two-legged animal is raised against them, we will cut that hand down." As for the PLO, Begin claimed that "there has been no organization more despicable since the days of the SA, the SS, and the Gestapo. There has never been such a base and despicable armed group as this terrorist organization."[14]

Most of the government ministers supported the war; only one voted against it, while two others abstained. Did the ministers really believe that it would be possible to wage a limited war or to invade Lebanon without the Syrians becoming involved?

During the war's initial stages the public rallied round the flag and provided almost unanimous support, in the best tradition of a nation-in-arms, despite the criticism and warnings heard before the war. "Quiet! People are shooting!" ordered a well-known journalist on the first day of the war, urging everyone to withhold their criticism. "Now there is no government and opposition. Now we are all one people. In uniform. People are shooting now. Quiet!"[15] The members of the opposition Labor Party were quick to agree to a suspension of democracy and free argument, at least insofar as this related to the need for the war.[16] A few days into the war, the Knesset rejected, by ninety-four votes to three, a motion of no confidence proposed by the predominantly Arab Communist Party. Coalition and opposition leaders praised each other and shook hands.[17]

Religious figures, too, provided legitimacy for the problematic war. "This is a compulsory war," the IDF chief rabbi, Gad Navon, thundered, "for the

defense of our Land and our ancestral inheritance."[18] Rabbi Goren, as usual, visited the troops inside Lebanon, handing out books of Psalms, while the Chief Rabbinate established a yeshiva in an ancient synagogue discovered in Sidon. The Lebanese residents watched in amazement as a parade of paratroopers passed along the main street of the devastated city carrying a Torah scroll, with the military rabbi dancing at their front. The combination of ethno-national emotions and religious fervor offered meaning and purpose to the invasion, and the forces located the last Jewish family still living in the city. The rabbi reported a miracle: amazingly, while the entire neighborhood had been demolished in the Israeli air raids, the synagogue was still standing.[19] A little later, the IDF began to renovate Jewish holy places in Sidon, a process that involved evicting Palestinian families who were living in the synagogue building. The residents had protected the building and prevented its desecration, as the local Jews had asked before they left, but this did not prevent their eviction. The Jewish ritual items discovered in the city were transferred to Israel.[20]

In the Knesset, Begin was quick to declare, "This is one of our finest hours."[21] The Revisionist Zionists had never regarded war as an absolute evil to be avoided if at all possible. Certainly, it could not be evil if it permitted a display of pomp, ceremony, and heroism by eighteen-year-old lads who had been educated to give their lives to the nation, if necessary. On the first night of the war, combat soldiers from the Golani Brigade, including members of the prestigious patrol unit, were sent to conquer Beaufort Castle, which dominates its surroundings from a peak seven hundred meters above sea level, close to the Litani River. After the war, some commentators suggested that there had been no real reason to take the castle; but as so often happens, events were dictated by a desire for a symbolic gesture. The occupation of a castle perched high on a mountain conveyed a sense of ethno-nationalist superiority over the other. The battle in the trenches dug around the castle was fierce, and many soldiers were killed. The next day, as the dust settled, Begin and Sharon arrived on the scene. "You can feel the mountain air here," Begin remarked to Sharon as they got out of the helicopter that had brought them to the castle. A young officer was sent to speak to the prime minister. "Did they have shooting machines?" Begin inquired, and then proceeded to ask whether "face-to-face fighting" took place. The term "shooting machines" belonged to the vocabulary of the First World War. Begin then asked the officer whether many Palestinians had surrendered, and he appears to have been disappointed to hear that only a few had done so. Sometime later,

Begin's comments on the mountaintop, which were filmed and shown on television, would come to be seen by the public as evidence of his disconnection and insensitivity—particularly since the prime minister did not even take the time to ask the officer about the Israeli losses.[22]

Yaacov Gutterman, a bereaved father whose son was killed at Beaufort Castle, stated, "In our home, Raz grew up with the recognition that we have to reach a compromise. We have to integrate. Even when he was in the army, he used to go to Peace Now demonstrations." Gutterman added, "I despise nationalism. From the age of four[,] . . . I've suffered from Fascism and Nazism. From the Nazis who brought the Holocaust, and then from Polish nationalism, and now I'm continuing to suffer from nationalism here in Israel. . . . I thought that this people, which has experienced so much suffering and persecution for being alien, and which is considered an ancient and wise people, would have learned . . . that nationalism and Judaism don't go together."[23] This bereaved father expressed views that were shared by many, but certainly not all. The divisions in Israeli society were illustrated in a response to Gutterman's letter written by a bereaved mother: "The blood of a my daughter, who was slaughtered by terrorists, also cries out. She was burned to death in a Jewish bus in the heart of the State of Israel. . . . Unfortunately, Mr. Gutterman's letter has something of the old style of submitting to the pogroms. . . . Sitting back and accepting the pain of terror victims[,] . . . and waiting for them to fall on us once more? . . . As if killing Jews is always permissible, but rising up beforehand against the murderers is forbidden?"[24]

On 8 June, Israel dragged Syria into the war, despite Begin's promise not to do so (Rosenthal, 1983: 26). The next day, the IDF destroyed all the Syrian missile batteries positioned in the Beqaa Valley in Lebanon. This remarkable military achievement was accompanied by success in the ensuing air battles, in which the Israeli Air Force downed twenty-nine Syrian planes without losing a single Israeli plane. Encouraged, Israel pushed forward with the war.[25] By 10 June the IDF was already in the outskirts of Beirut. The forces surrounded the presidential palace at Baabda and joined up with the Christian militias to complete its encirclement of the capital, taking control of the Beirut-Damascus road (Shiloni, 1986: 35). Beirut was then subjected to artillery fire and constant bombardment from the air, leaving the city without electricity, food, and water. The IDF saw this tactic as a form of pressure that would lead to the expulsion of the Palestinian and Syrian fighters from Beirut, but the civilian population bore the brunt of the assault. During the first fifteen days of fighting, 214 Israeli soldiers were killed and 1,114 injured. Sharon

declared, "The IDF will remain in Lebanon as required."[26] Begin rejected claims that the government had been dragged along behind Sharon: "The government has had its finger on the pulse since the first day," he claimed, "and nothing has been done without a government decision." Begin praised Sharon as a "skilled craftsman" and added proudly, "Soon they will call him King of Lebanon just as they called him Arik King of Israel."[27] Many Israelis, however, took a far less positive view of Sharon.

CRITICISM DURING THE WAR

Criticism grew as the war dragged on, but there was no real opposition to Israel's moves during the first month. Israel was still in the grips of a belief in the sanctity of security, accompanied by claims that there was "no alternative" to the war, and that this was the nation's finest hour. Even Peace Now struggled to speak out clearly against the adventure in Lebanon (Reshef, 1996: 95).

However, other peace movements and intellectuals were more forthright in their opposition to the war. The renowned poet Natan Zach referred to Sharon and the chief of staff, Eitan, as "two storm troopers" and declared, "There are not and will not be any achievements, and we are approaching a policy of a 'final solution' to the Palestinian problem."[28] The Committee against the War in Lebanon openly called for soldiers to refuse orders—an exceptional step that had not been seen before in Israel, and which provoked widespread rage. Nevertheless, some twenty thousand people attended the movement's demonstration in Tel Aviv on 26 June, two days after IDF jets bombed Beirut.[29] On 6 July, Peace Now agreed to join a demonstration attended by one hundred thousand protestors, who urged the government to declare a cease-fire, begin immediate negotiations with the Palestinians, and force Sharon to resign.[30] The government responded by organizing counterdemonstrations attended by as many as two hundred thousand Israelis. As usual, Begin whipped up hatred of the Left in his speeches. He argued that the reason for the lack of consensus was that the Ma'arach was in opposition—when the Likud had been in opposition, it had maintained the national consensus.[31] This was the first time that an Israeli government had been forced to work hard to maintain public support for war. Israel was indeed changing.

Reserve soldiers established another movement called Yesh Gvul (which means both "There is a border" and "There's a limit"). The movement secured

the signatures of three thousand reserve soldiers on a petition declaring their refusal to serve in Lebanon. Another movement, Soldiers against Silence, marked the first example of a phenomenon that has continued in Israel ever since: soldiers who, after completing their service, insist on exposing aspects of their work that have been concealed from the public, including incidents during combat operations or during the routine imposition of the occupation.[32] Another group, Women against the Invasion of Lebanon, marked the inception of another new phenomenon: the connection between feminism and antiwar tendencies. Ever since, there has been a high proportion of women in all the peace movements in Israel. One of the founders of the movement wrote that in wartime the value of men as fighters rises in society's eyes, while the voices of women, as noncombatants, are silenced and considered illegitimate—particularly when these voices speak out against the war.[33] Needless to say, the leaders of the nation fiercely criticized these new trends, referring to the activists as "traitors" and thereby, in more than one instance, exposing them to violence (Gal and Hammerman, 2002: 53).

Begin continued his public appearances. "In one more year," he predicted at a rally on 18 July, "we will sign a peace treaty with Lebanon." He promised that he would then reach out to the king of Jordan to sign a treaty with Israel and establish a confederation between the "western Land of Israel" and Transjordan.[34] Indeed, Sharon was not alone in his political megalomania. On 30 July, the United Nations Security Council urged Israel to stop the siege of Beirut immediately; but instead the IDF merely tightened its grip, taking control of the city's airport two days later. The Israeli Air Force intensified its bombardment of the southern neighborhoods of Beirut. The air force enjoyed complete superiority in the skies, allowing Sharon and Eitan to divert resources to the bombing of other towns and cities as well, causing an extensive number of deaths and injuries among civilians, including children. The horrific outcomes were shown on television screens around the world, though not in Israel, leading to strong criticism even among Israel's friends.

The United States applied heavy pressure on Israel. At the beginning of August, President Ronald Reagan sent a strongly worded message to Begin demanding that he lift the siege of Beirut and end the war.[35] Begin replied that what was at stake was not the Israeli-American relationship but Israel's security.[36] The bombardments continued, but some government ministers began to express dissatisfaction, claiming that Sharon had deceived them. At a government meeting on 10 August, it became apparent for the first time that Begin was also concerned about Sharon's behavior.[37] Three days later, as

evidence of the horrors being committed in Beirut mounted, Begin withdrew Sharon's authority to activate the Israeli Air Force. The rift between the two leaders thus became overt, and Begin finally recognized that Israel was facing an inversion of systems. Most of the political goals and the objectives of the war were set by the defense minister and the chief of staff in discussions with the military echelon, while the government was asked to confine its role to approving (often retroactively) the operational and tactical steps on the ground. At the same meeting, Sharon objected strongly to the restriction of his powers. Begin put his proposal to a vote and was supported by all the members of the government, with the exception of Sharon himself and Yuval Ne'eman. Sharon continued to criticize the decision and even attempted to speak in the name of the military, but Begin showed leadership and cut him short. "Excuse me," he told Sharon, "but the government is the supreme commander of the military, and you are no more responsible for it than any other minister. . . . You are the representative of the government in the military, not the military's representative in government." Begin refused to allow Sharon to speak and asked him to lower his voice and refrain from interrupting. "You can't force me to listen to you. You aren't running things here," Begin stated.[38] The two men later made their peace, and Begin even asked the other ministers to moderate their criticism of Sharon. For his part, Sharon continued to do as he pleased, showing open disrespect for the ministers. He once told a commander in the field, "In the morning I fight terrorists, and in the evening I return to Jerusalem to fight the government" (Naor, 1986: 116).

On 19 August, an agreement was reached for the evacuation of Palestinian and Syrian combatants from Beirut. On the twenty-third of the month, Bachir Gemayel was elected president of Lebanon. His warriors, members of the Christian Phalangist militia, which was supported by Israel, brought some of the members of parliament to the vote, leaving them no choice but to support their leader. Even in the Beirut area, the IDF undertook most of the fighting, an arrangement that suited the Phalangists very well. There was growing criticism of this division of labor in Israel, and even within the IDF, owing to the impression that Israeli soldiers were dying in a war that served the Phalangists' interests.

As the war continued and the occupation of Beirut was discussed, elements within the military began to criticize the direction events were taking. Eli Geva, a decorated brigade commander from the armored corps who declared that he would refuse to enter Beirut, was immediately dismissed from the IDF.[39] His act of defiance provoked questions about individual

conscience that had never before been made public in the nation-in-arms. These questions related, for example, to the connection between personal morality and the military obligation to obey orders. Israeli society was divided on such fundamental questions.[40] But such quasi-philosophical musings were soon overshadowed by a wave of protests concerning the events in the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila.

The massacre in the refugee camps was preceded on 1 September by the evacuation from Beirut of PLO activists and Syrian soldiers, and by the installment of Israel's Christian ally Bashir Gemayel as president. On 14 September, however, Gemayel was killed after a bomb exploded in the Phalangist headquarters in the Achrafieh neighborhood of the city. Israel's plan for Lebanon collapsed like a house of cards. Begin and Sharon immediately ordered the IDF to move into west Beirut. The chief of staff and the defense minister separately visited the Phalangist headquarters, agreeing that the IDF would take control of the city, but emphasizing that the Christian forces would also have to contribute to the fighting by entering and cleansing the refugee camps. And so they did. Within two days the IDF completed its occupation of the entire city, while the Christian forces entered Sabra and Shatila. At a government meeting held on the same day, the chief of staff reported the developments to the ministers, adding that the Phalangists would employ "their own methods" as they swept through the refugee camps, which were surrounded by the IDF. The chief of staff knew that the Christian forces would exact revenge for the killing of Gemayel. It was hardly difficult to guess this, and some of the senior Christian officers had pointed out to him that this would happen. He was undisturbed by this possibility. The government ministers, too, were dispassionate; David Levy alone warned, "When I heard that the Phalangists had already entered a particular neighborhood—and I know what revenge means to them, what slaughter [means to them]—then [I realized that] no one will believe that we went in to bring order, and the blame will rest with us."[41] As usual, the government failed to pay due attention to such cautious and moderate voices.

The massacre in the camps continued until the morning of 18 September. The IDF shot flares to illuminate the area as requested by the Phalangists. IDF officers stationed in a command room on the roof of a tall building had no difficulty guessing what was happening inside the camps. They saw men, women, and children being taken out and led to a stadium, and soon after they heard shots. A commander of a tank company stationed opposite the camps stated that he and his soldiers quickly came to suspect that a massacre

was under way. They made an urgent call to the deputy division commander, but he explained "in the most arrogant, conceited, and haughty way . . . that we didn't understand. This was a problem between Arabs and Arabs, and we weren't getting involved" (Gal and Hammerman, 2002: 112).

After the IDF finally ordered the Phalangists to leave the camps, personnel from the International Red Cross entered, accompanied by journalists. The horrific sights they encountered left no room for doubt. Civilians, elderly people, women, and children had not died in combat but had been brutally murdered.[42] Photographs spread around the world, and the blame fell on the IDF, since the Phalangists had entered the camps not only in coordination with the Israeli forces but also with their cooperation. At a government meeting held on the Sunday after the massacre, the defense minister claimed that no one had imagined that the Phalangists would act in such a way. The chief of staff echoed this claim. Those who a moment before had flaunted their status as "experts" on Lebanese affairs suddenly claimed to have no knowledge of local practices. The chief of staff even tried to blame the government, complaining that ministers had repeatedly pressured the military over the preceding weeks to involve the Phalangists in the war.

The Israeli government had not ordered a massacre in the camps. However, it had had countless opportunities during the entire course of the war to stop the web of lies being told by Sharon and Eitan and to realize the extreme danger posed by their policy, which the government had adopted as its own. At least until the entry into Beirut, the government ministers had supported everything they had seen happening and accepted the ideological assumptions behind the positions of Sharon and Eitan. The massacre was essentially the logical conclusion of a phenomenon that had become glaringly obvious long before: the support for what Begin referred to as an "optional war."

The prime minister had used this term in a speech at the National Security College titled "Unavoidable War." He explained that "Operation Peace for Galilee" was not launched in the absence of any alternative. The terrorists had not threatened the existence of the State of Israel. But Begin nevertheless praised the concept of an "optional war." He argued that such a war reduced the number of soldiers injured. Moreover, he promised that the war would create "a historic era of peace[:] . . . many years of peace treaties and peaceful relations with the various Arab states."[43]

Needless to say, international law does not recognize the type of war advocated by Begin.[44] However, his comments at least removed the mask from "optional war," which had been practiced by Israel in the past as well, albeit

under different names.[45] In considering the causes of the 1982 war, it is impossible to ignore the cultural dimension, which began to emerge immediately after the territorial accomplishments of 1948. As mentioned earlier, the Israeli experience supports the "path dependence" argument that a war is often the product of its predecessor. No wonder that Begin in his speech claimed that Israel's 1956 and 1967 wars were no different in their causes than the 1982 war.[46]

A conventional distinction between types of wars that has been applied for centuries distinguishes between just and unjust wars. Begin did not accept this distinction. A just war cannot be one that a country launches without having first been attacked; neither can it be one that impairs the political or territorial integrity of another country. If one country is threatened by another, there must be a reasonable proportion between the benefit that will come from war and its accompanying evils. Furthermore, war must always be the last resort. None of these parameters applied to the Lebanon War.[47] It was Begin's long-standing perception of war as a tool for solving political problems, and as the first choice rather than a reluctant last option, that led Israel into this war.[48]

The massacre in the refugee camps led to an unprecedented outburst of public criticism in Israel. The largest demonstration in Israeli history, held on 25 September in Kings of Israel Square in Tel Aviv (later renamed Rabin Square), drew a crowd of four hundred thousand. The demonstration was organized by Peace Now in cooperation with two political parties—the Ma'arach and Shinui (Change). The public demanded the formation of a commission of inquiry to investigate the massacre and, possibly, the circumstances behind the war as whole. There were also calls for Begin and Sharon to resign. Many citizens commented that this was the first time that they had ever attended a demonstration. The protestors carried signs, some of which declared, "Begin is a murderer." The demonstration clarified a fact that had not always been clear to many Israelis—namely, that there is not one single Israel but, rather, a sharply divided society.[49] The public reaction to the Lebanon War marked a decline in the power of statism and, to an extent, a shift in politics from the state level to the level of society, accompanied by signs of a rift between society and government, and even between society and the state.

In the face of persistent public criticism, the government agreed on 28 September to establish a committee of inquiry. The Cohen Committee conducted sixty sessions, heard fifty-eight witnesses, viewed documentary footage, and even visited Beirut. The committee assigned indirect responsibility

for the massacre not only to the military but also to the political echelon. In a society driven by the principles of a nation-in-arms, as Israeli society still was at this point, it would have been highly problematic to separate these two echelons. Sharon had acted as a de facto superior chief of staff, frequently issuing instructions to the military commanders. Conversely, the chief of staff was more than willing to make political statements, as we have seen. The committee's conclusions focused primarily on Sharon, whom the committee recommended be removed from his position. The committee found serious errors and omissions in the actions of the chief of staff, but since he was in any case about to end his period of service, it confined itself to imposing liability, without any further recommendations.[50] The committee found, however, that there had been no intention on the Israeli side that a massacre should occur; accordingly, Israel's liability was solely indirect. Was this an accurate conclusion, and are legal tools the only way to examine this question?

Legal committees generally confine themselves to questions of liability and guilt and do not always investigate the background of the actions committed. Even if we base our understanding solely on the reports and statements of those directly involved in the massacre, it seems relatively clear that the events in Sabra and Shatila occurred under the influence of an ethnonationalist and militaristic approach that dismissed the human worth of the "others" against whom Israel was fighting. It was convenient for Israel that others did the IDF's work, employing what the chief of staff had euphemistically termed "their own methods." No one was particularly interested in the scale of the revenge and the killings that would be committed by the Phalangists. As in many previous instances, actions were not always taken under the direct or close supervision of the government. Military figures (including the defense minister, in this instance) found various ways to implement their desired policy while circumventing the government, which often could do no more than place its post-factum rubber stamp on actions it had never ordered. Just as the Israeli forces in the 1967 war had reached the Suez Canal without any prior decision or order, so the IDF had now "crept" into Beirut, stage by stage, without any such decision. The members of government could have stopped this process but did not wish to do so.

Following the massacre, Israel was forced to leave Beirut. The war led to the expulsion of the PLO command to Tunis and to the destruction of most of the armed forces of the Palestinian organizations. However, Israel did not achieve its goal of expelling Syria from Lebanon. The war also led to the establishment of Hizbullah, a Shi'ite organization that filled the vacuum

created in southern Lebanon by the departure of the Palestinian forces and launched attacks on the IDF forces that remained in this part of the country. In total, 654 IDF soldiers were killed during the Lebanon War and 3,887 injured. The number of fatalities and injuries on the Palestinian side was many times greater. Estimates suggest that over 17,000 Palestinians were killed and some 30,000 injured. During the siege of Beirut alone, at the end of August 1982, almost 7,000 people were killed in the Israeli bombings and mortar attacks, 80 percent of them civilians.[51]

At a government meeting on 28 August 1983, Begin announced his decision to retire, declaring, "I can't do it anymore." Israel managed to impose a bilateral peace agreement with Lebanon, signed on 18 May 1983, but it was not worth the paper on which it was written (Schiffer, 1984: 150–51). Embarrassingly, Lebanon announced the nullification of the agreement less than a year later, on 5 March 1984. Approximately one year after the end of the war, the IDF retreated from the Shouf Mountains, but not before entangling itself in the complex ethnic mosaic of Lebanon. The majority of the IDF forces did not withdraw from Lebanon until 1985. Faithful to its militaristic approach, the Likud found it hard to extricate Israel from the Lebanese quagmire, and the withdrawal became possible only under a government of national unity. Moreover, the full and final withdrawal of all Israeli forces came only in May 2000, eighteen years after the beginning of this military adventure. During the years following the war, a further 1,216 Israeli soldiers would die in Lebanon, mainly in clashes with Hizbullah, which sought to expel the IDF from the country.

To sum up, the Lebanon War illustrated once again how ostensibly rational goals—such as defending the communities of northern Israel from artillery attacks—concealed other objectives based on ideological assumptions, such as Begin's view of the Palestinians as a the most dangerous enemy of the Jews since the days of Hitler, or the notion that Israel had to wage war in Lebanon in order to defend Judea and Samaria (whose importance is due mainly to their sacred status). Above all, rational pretexts served as a cloak for the idea that it would be possible, through the use of force, for Israel to have its cake and eat it too: to withstand American pressure, avoid complying with the United Nations resolutions, belittle Europe's political importance, and create a new order in the Middle East, including installing its desired leader in Lebanon. All this in a nation whose objective power—even if we confine ourselves solely to considering military force—is finite, but whose leaders' faith in power knew almost no bounds. Yet ambitious though these pretensions were,

they could not hide the fact that Israel had become a divided society, a significant part of which did not accept the leadership's approach, as seen even during the war. Over the years to come, the declining force of the hegemonic narrative of militaristic nationalism, with the nation-in-arms at its center, would become apparent among diverse sections of Israeli society, with an inevitable and dramatic impact in terms of questions of war and peace.

EIGHT

The Emergence of Liberal Nationalism

FROM THE FIRST INTIFADA TO THE 1993 OSLO ACCORDS

The Lebanon War led to the intensification of the conflict within Israeli society on questions of war and peace. One of the most serious manifestations of this conflict occurred on 10 February 1983. Peace Now organized a procession and demonstration in Jerusalem calling on the government to implement the recommendations of the Cohen Committee. Throughout the procession, the demonstrators encountered not only verbal but also physical violence from counterprotestors on either side of their route (Reshef, 1996: 111–12). The violence reached its peak when a fragmentation grenade was thrown at the demonstrators toward the end of the rally. Emil Grunzweig, an activist in Peace Now, was killed, and nine other demonstrators were injured. His murder marked a watershed, after which Israeli society would never be the same. The era of hegemony and consensus, of nation building and state formation, had come to an end, and Israeli society was now becoming visibly divided and conflicted, particularly on questions of peace and compromise.

The early 1980s in Israel saw, on the one hand, the presence of peace movements that had a significant influence on the decision to withdraw the IDF from most of Lebanon (excluding the security zone) and, on the other, the rise of a racist party, led by Rabbi Meir Kahane, that overtly advocated the transfer of Arabs and whose leader was elected to the Knesset (Kotler, 1985). A Jewish underground movement was also exposed during this period: its members killed innocent Arabs, injured three Palestinian mayors, and also caused the injuring of an IDF bomb disposal expert who failed to neutralize explosives planted by the group (Ben-Sasson, 2012). The court imposed severe penalties on the members of the underground, but a lobby of settlers established to support them managed to secure not only exceptional privileges for them while they were in prison but also their prompt release. This sequence

of affairs conveyed a clear message to Israeli society that the “ethnos” was superior to the “demos” and to the basic principles of the rule of law.[1]

The elections held on 23 July 1984 for the Eleventh Knesset reflected growing social fragmentation. The left-wing and right-wing blocks each received fifty seats. Both of the main parties reluctantly decided to work together, establishing a government of national unity based less on cooperation and more on paralysis. This became clear in 1987, in the affair surrounding the “London Agreement.” The foreign minister, Shimon Peres, decided to promote a peace agreement in which Jordan was to play a key role. He met with King Hussein in London, and the two men agreed that Jordan would resume its control of the West Bank. In return, Jordan and Israel would sign a peace treaty. This was the first time that it became apparent that Peres had changed his ideological approach. On returning to Israel, however, he realized that the prime minister, Yitzhak Shamir, had thwarted the agreement and blocked the action of the majority in the government, who supported the initiative. Hussein accordingly abandoned the idea, realizing that he had no real partner in Israel (Peres, 1995). Had an agreement of this type been signed, it is very possible that the First Intifada would not have erupted in December 1987.

THE FIRST INTIFADA

For the first time since 1967, a large-scale uprising broke out among the Palestinians throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The intifada featured mass protests by the general public: women as well as men, young and old, villagers and urbanites, secular and religious individuals from all classes. The modus operandi included nonviolent protest, protracted strikes—including commercial strikes—refusal to pay taxes, the blocking of arterial roads, and throwing stones at IDF soldiers (Shalev, 1990: 98–99). At least at first, the rioters refrained from using firearms, adding weight to their protest and winning considerable international support.

The IDF found it difficult to cope with this type of struggle, as its experience was confined to conventional war and thwarting terror attacks. The military was surprised by the Palestinians’ determination, their willingness to sustain losses and suffering, and their ability to persevere in their struggle despite the heavy economic price this entailed. It might well be asked why Israel was so taken aback by this development. The answer would seem to lie in the same complacent tendency, based on the tenets of ethno-nationalist

ideology, to simply ignore the "other." Israel had become used to collectively denying the existence of a "Palestinian problem"—a denial that, as we have seen, was present from the earliest stages of the Zionist movement. The general assessment was that the Palestinians might riot and protest a little, but that the next day they would all go off to work again in Israel as usual. The failure of IDF intelligence to anticipate the intifada is reminiscent, in some respects, of the dramatic failure before the 1973 war. In both cases, a stereotypical belief in Israel's military superiority and the inferiority of the other led to the conviction that the weak, occupied enemy would not dare to rise up against the strong. And if it did so, the IDF would respond accordingly, since Israel was not willing to pay the price of peace. Indeed, the fear of this price was so severe that in August 5, 1986, the Knesset passed a law prohibiting meetings with members of the PLO.[2]

After the Israelis realized that they could not suppress the riots, they flooded the territories with soldiers, and the IDF intensified its response. The defense minister, Yitzhak Rabin, insisted on a hard-line policy. He reportedly declared, "Break their arms and legs," and though he never admitted to making this statement, it became engraved in the public conscience as a symbol of Israel's undeclared policy in responding to the intifada. Thousands of Palestinians were beaten in what became a routine policy tool. They were beaten in their own homes, on the street, and in detention centers and camps. In many cases, the attacks were completely arbitrary, serving only to externalize Israel's anger at the Palestinians for having dared to raise their heads. The increasingly brutal behavior of IDF soldiers only enraged the Palestinians still further, creating a cycle of violence. The IDF lost much of its deterrent force after it became clear that it was unable to disperse demonstrations and suppress riots that were sometimes led by women and children. In most cases, the IDF soldiers did not open fire on the demonstrators, and accordingly young Palestinians ceased to be afraid and willingly engaged in confrontations (Nir, 1993).

However, as the first year of the intifada came to an end, the Palestinians counted over 300 fatalities, almost 4,000 injuries, and some 6,000 detainees, including 2,300 held without trial under administrative detention, without Israel even attempting to prove their guilt. The wheels of justice did not turn slowly, but nevertheless justice was not done. Of 4,500 Palestinians who faced rapid trials, only 120 were acquitted.[3] Since the protests mainly took the form of nonviolent protest and stone-throwing, only eight Israelis were killed—two soldiers and six civilians. The low number of injuries was also

due to the decision to install protective devices on all military vehicles, vehicles belonging to the settlers, and public transportation used in the territories.[4]

The settlers and their supporters demanded that the IDF take more aggressive action.[5] The former chief of staff Refael Eitan also advocated a hard-line policy, suggesting, for example, that rather than chasing after Arabs with truncheons, the soldiers should shoot them in the head.[6] In 1990, Moshe-Zvi Neria, the leading educator of the Religious-Zionist community, wrote a document that was read to a hundred rabbis and was accepted as a religious ruling: "This is not the time to thin, but the time to shoot left and right, as long as you expel the murderers who have come to attack you."[7] The ruling essentially authorized murder; and indeed, during this period there were instances when settlers shot Arabs who threw stones at them. In most cases, they received light punishments.[8]

However, other voices could also be heard within Israeli society. During the most violent period of the uprising, some nine hundred reserve officers, up to the rank of brigadier general, sent a letter to Shamir declaring that peace was preferable to the Whole Land of Israel. The signatories included many veterans of elite IDF units, some of whom had been decorated for their military service. The letter highlights the extent to which Israeli society had become divided on the question of its fundamental identity—a division that was all the more stark as it became visible within the military.[9] Some reserve soldiers refused to report for duty; and the peace movements continued their activities, with a particular emphasis on the voice of women, as for example, in the Women in Black movement (Helman and Rapoport, 1997; Helman, 1999; Hermann, 2009: 98–105). During the intifada, the nation's leaders faced criticism from both the left and the right sides of the political map—and it was powerful evidence that the era of statism had come to an end.

In isolated instances, IDF soldiers were prosecuted for the serious abuse of Palestinians. These trials raised complex issues: to what extent were arbitrary beatings, breaking the bones of thousands, the product of official policy? How credible were the defense minister's declarations that there was no such policy, when confronted with the claims by defendants and witnesses in the trials that this was the "oral law" applied in suppressing the riots? As one commander in Gaza had stated, "Get right into the demonstrators, break their bones, and make them bleed."[10] One military advocate, General Amnon Straschnov, was proud of the trials held by the IDF, seeing himself as someone who was halting a flood of such trials by putting his finger in the dyke.

But even his own book (Straschnov, 1994) shows that he was not always successful, particularly when it came to protecting senior officers against prosecution and accusations of violence during the intifada.

When violent behavior by the IDF was exposed—usually in the reports of foreign television crews equipped with telescopic lenses—the military claimed that these were isolated and exceptional incidents. The trials were also presented as proof of the proper conduct of other soldiers not put on trial, though it is highly unlikely that this was an accurate conclusion. Between December 1987 and June 1991, some 120,000 Palestinians were injured. According to one calculation, in the Gaza Strip alone between 1988 and 1993, some 60,000 Palestinians were injured by plastic and rubber bullets or were beaten. During the entire intifada, some 20,000 Palestinian children and youths required some form of medical treatment for injuries caused by the Israeli military. It has been estimated that approximately 7,500 minors were shot and otherwise injured by soldiers during the first two years of the intifada alone (Nasrallah, 2013: 56). This high number of injuries cannot be the result solely of the suppression of demonstrations and riots but, rather, reflects an ongoing and systematic policy of causing physical harm that was intended to restore the relationship between the two peoples to the hierarchical paradigm of rulers and ruled—the same paradigm that the intifada sought to undermine.

The IDF also adopted a policy of collective punishment, including the imposition of sweeping curfews; the blocking off of entire neighborhoods, whose residents were not allowed to leave; the closure of key traffic arteries; mass detentions; the disconnection of water and electricity supplies; the closure of schools and universities; and the detention of individuals not accused or suspected of any offense (Glavanis, 1992: 45). One of the harshest forms of punishment adopted was the demolition or sealing of homes. Approximately 150 homes were demolished in 1988. This was an unbearable penalty that left numerous innocent people homeless, punishing them for the actions of one of their family members. Opinions continued to be divided on the question of whether this punishment serves as an effective deterrent or actually motivates additional people to join the circle of those involved in actions against Israel.[11]

Voices of protest within Israeli society were one of the factors behind the ending of the intifada. The protests exposed Israelis for the first time to the hardship faced by Palestinians and the price of the occupation (Shalev, 1990: 142). The high number of casualties, too, had an impact. Over the First Intifada as a whole, Palestinian fatalities totaled 1,491, while 164 Israelis were

killed. Exhausted by the conflict, and after neither side managed to secure a clear advantage, both sides began to search for a solution.

IDENTITY POLITICS

The change in the perception of reality was connected in part to the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, leading to the loss of a major source of military and diplomatic support for the Arab countries and the Palestinians. The Middle East ceased to be a training ground for the superpowers, and the psychosis of the Cold War, with its constant suspicion, invention of enemies, and threat of war, became a thing of the past. The United States, following the "new world order," now functioned as the world's policeman, and in this capacity it forced Israel to come to an international conference in Madrid with the goal of making peace in the Middle East on the basis of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. The Israeli delegation did everything possible to thwart the American peace plan, and the talks, as a result, ended in failure.[12] Nevertheless, Shamir paid a political price for even daring to attend the event, and his right-wing partners brought down the government on 16 January 1992.

At the same time, a dramatic change was taking place in the attitude of the PLO leadership toward Israel. Although the organization had been founded with the goal of liberating all of Palestine by military means, it reached the conclusion in the late 1980s that it might be possible to negotiate with Israel and even come to an agreement based on compromise. On 12 November, the Palestinian National Council met in Algiers and decided to amend the PLO Covenant to reflect UN Resolutions 242 and 338 (253 delegates supported the change, with 46 voting against, 10 abstaining, and 29 absenting themselves from the vote). This was a dramatic decision: for the first time, the PLO recognized Israel's right to exist (Schiff and Ya'ari, 1990: 286–94).

The leaders of the Israeli Labor Party noted the developments on the Palestinian side. Rabin and Peres began to adopt a globalist and neoliberal approach toward the conflict in the Middle East, arguing that everyone would "benefit" from the "liberal peace," a peace agreement based on compromise.[13] The division between two camps within Israeli society—or perhaps even between two distinct societies—was revealed in its full intensity. The division was between what we may term civil society, on the one hand, and uncivil, or militaristic-religious, society, on the other. This rift was

translated into a politics of identities that was remarkably similar to the polarization that emerged in other parts of the world in the post–Cold War, reflexive modernization era.[14]

After the end of the Cold War, a dichotomy between the two types of society, the civil and the uncivil, became prominent in various parts of the world. The dividing line was drawn between advocates of democracy, openness, liberalism, and peace, who saw globalism as a means for securing these goals, and opponents who saw globalization as a threat to their distinct, separatist, and superior identity. In more than one instance, this approach included the justification of war in the name of God, the racial or ethnic group, or the nation (Scholte, 2005).

One of the most prominent manifestations of uncivil society in recent years has been the phenomenon of fundamentalism, reflected in the religious revival movements that began to emerge in the 1980s in various parts of the world. These movements struggle, often violently, to reinstate normative boundaries within their societies and to disseminate an ideology that may be termed "religious nationalism."[15] In his study of the clash between these movements and the secular state, Mark Juergensmeyer (2000) claims that the question of whether the state should be religious or secular has become the main focus of political conflict in many countries. He emphasizes that this phenomenon is much broader than religious fanaticism and represents a form of political activism that seeks to change the very language of modern politics and to provide a new foundation for the nation-state.

As mentioned earlier, this phenomenon of religious nationalism has been seen in Israel with the formation of Gush Emunim, the movement motivated by the aspiration to establish a Jewish state governed by religious law in the entire Land of Israel. Since the question "Who are you?" is often defined to a large extent by declaring "who you are not," religious movements are often drawn into violence in the name of their faith or God. Indeed, these movements engage simultaneously in both an external and an internal struggle, albeit with very different characteristics. On the external plane, religious nationalism emphasizes the sharp distinction between those who belong to the "right" faith and all others. Internally, however, the movements adopt a tactical approach of including nonbelievers, seeking to draw them in through persuasion, while concealing their true intentions. This is one of the reasons why these movements do not isolate themselves completely and do not reject out of hand the state, the military, and even modernity in general (Keddie, 1998; Almond, Appleby, and Sivan, 2003).

When civil and uncivil society compete, a key milestone is the point at which either one becomes powerful and influential enough to neutralize its opponent. In the context of the politics of identity (Cerulo, 1997; Bernstein, 2005) and the era of reflexive modernity, the two societies do not merely seek to defend themselves from each other and from the state, in a pattern described by the British philosopher Isaiah Berlin as "negative liberty." Rather, they organize in an attempt to challenge the status quo and to secure social change on the basis of their own values, beliefs, and ideologies. Within the Israeli society, by the late 1980s, both societies—the civil society and the militaristic and religious society—challenged the basic assumptions of statism while also confronting each other. The struggle took place along an axis of national identity whose midpoint was the "silent majority" of Israelis who veered slightly to the right or left under the influence of various events and, in particular, as the result of the way in which these events were interpreted.[16]

Civil society had a liberal character and placed a strong emphasis on the free market, individuality, and personal rights, accompanied by a critical and even suspicious attitude toward the state and its institutions. Liberalism had never had strong roots in Israel before the mid-1980s, when a process of significant change occurred through the emergence of what Yael Tamir (1993), following Hans Kohn, terms "liberal nationalism."[17] This type of liberalism was embodied in the economic reforms of 1985, which drew Israel out of recession, opened its economy to the international markets, encouraged privatization, and led to a reduction in state intervention in the economy and the liberalization of the capital market (Peled and Shafir, 2005: 273–96; Filc and Ram, 2004; Ram, 2008). In the same year, the government decided to withdraw from Lebanon (with the exception of the security zone), thereby combining—perhaps for the first time in Israel—questions of peace and economics.[18]

New forces began to emerge in Israeli politics, including social movements and nongovernmental organizations, that shaped and reflected the emerging civil society. This process was accompanied by a decline in the strength of mass political parties, which had come to be seen as outmoded both in their organizational forms and in their ideologies (Koren, 1998). These nongovernmental organizations emphasized issues relating to individual needs, desires, identities, and choices in the context of the local and ecological environment. This was an "associational revolution" that mirrored the political changes that occurred around the world in the global era (Salamon, Sokolowski, and List, 1999). The result was that Israel became a more open and multicultural society than in the past. At the same time, everyday life came to be influenced

by the politics of identities, as different groups struggled to shape the organizing principles of a society in flux (Ben-Eliezer, 1999).

The proponents of liberal civil society were not always preoccupied by questions of war and peace and did not always attach particular importance to the future of the territories. They had other priorities, as illustrated by one of the most significant associations active during this period: Constitution for Israel. As it campaigned for the adoption of a written constitution, the association completely ignored the raging intifada—a significant phenomenon given that, at the same time, the militaristic-religious society in Israel was organizing effectively and powerfully on this very issue. This opposing camp included not only religious Israelis but also secular Jews who supported Israel's continued presence in the territories on security and nationalist grounds. It included political parties such as Tehiya, founded, as mentioned in the previous chapter, by Yuval Ne'eman; Moledet (Homeland), established by former Major General Rehavam Ze'evi; and the Tzomet Party, which broke away from Tehiya and was headed by the former chief of staff Refael Eitan. All three parties advocated the transfer of Arabs, though some did so more openly than others. They acted as an opposition to the national unity government that ruled Israel in the late 1980s. Unsurprisingly, the settlers were the dominant force behind these parties. Following the emergence of a civil society in Israel, the settlers even argued that Israel faced a cultural threat, as well as a threat to security, because of the growing attraction to hedonistic Western culture and the excessive emphasis on individual rights (Raanan, 1980).

The contradictions between the two societies in terms of lifestyle and collective identity also had an impact on the military. During the period of the nation-in-arms, the question of personal motivation did not constitute a social or political problem. Military service was perceived as a privilege and an obligation, and Israelis were expected to see their mobilization and devoted service as a contribution to the nation-state. The posthegemonic era of reflexive modernity led to a dramatic change. On the one side, many young members of religious society, including soldiers, prided themselves on their total commitment to active combat service. On the other, the phenomenon of "draft dodgers" began to emerge.[19]

The politics of identity was also reflected in the relations between the IDF and the parents of soldiers. While many parents were supportive, others showed signs of criticism, suspicion, and even opposition to military service

or to certain tasks imposed on their children (Herzog, 2006: 202–3). Even among parents who had lost children in active service, a division became apparent between "mobilized bereavement" and "critical bereavement." Those who followed the latter pattern blamed the government or the military for the deaths of their sons. Their struggle assumed various forms, one of which concerned the epitaphs engraved on military tombstones. During the period of the nation-in-arms, standard phraseology had been applied to all fallen soldiers; now, however, some parents sought to change the wording to reflect personal beliefs and preferences. Another form of criticism was to engage in political action supporting an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon.[20] At the other end of the spectrum, other parents saw their sons' deaths as a sad but unavoidable risk in a nation struggling to defend itself. As one settler who lost his son explained, "They sacrifice their lives above all for the sake of one of the most basic of human needs—nationhood. . . . A human being needs to belong to a nation, because nationhood provides the eternal dimension for his life. His nation lives forever[,] . . . and the routine need to defend the nation entails many victims."[21]

The struggle over national identity focused on the question of who was "entitled" to speak on the nation's behalf and who was silenced or marginalized. Above all, though, this was a battle of values. The settlers and their supporters preached ethno-nationalism and religious insularity. As one of them explained, they saw Zionism as the realization of "an ancient, miraculous plan—the plan of redemption as detailed in ancient scriptures."[22] The opposing view saw Israel as a refuge for the Jewish people and acknowledged that the Jewish right of return had its roots in the distance past; but proponents of this view also argued that the main function of the state is to maximize its residents' happiness and security by, among other things, establishing peaceful relations with its neighbors. As a young activist in the Labor Party explained, "Over fifteen years [in power], the Likud has turned us into xenophobes, imposing mental isolation on us under the slogan 'Everyone is against us' and promoting [the idea] that we must fend for ourselves, while delegitimizing our neighbors. . . . Don't you understand the meaning of peace beyond the question of [territorial] concessions? . . . Zionism does not mean controlling another people or a quest for more territory."[23] In the elections held on 23 June 1992, the Labor Party, headed by Rabin and Peres, won the largest number of votes, in part thanks to their promise to reach a peace agreement with the Palestinians within one year.

Presenting his government to the Knesset, Rabin declared, "In the last decade of the twentieth century, atlases and history and geography textbooks no longer show the world as it now is. The walls of hatred have come down, borders have been eliminated, superpowers and ideologies have collapsed, new countries have [been] born and others have ceased to exist. . . . The government will propose to the Arab countries and the Palestinians to continue discussions about peace . . . and create the proper atmosphere for positive partnership." The Likud representatives presented a very different interpretation of reality: "The majority who voted for Mr. Rabin," Sharon explained, "range from conditional loyalty to hostility regarding the Jewish state and the denial of its right to exist." Sharon also promised that "we will struggle against the alliance between the Jewish left wing and Arab nationalism" (Knesset Proceedings, 13 July 1992). The Likud would continue to develop this theme of the "alliance" between the "left wing" and the "Arabs," attempting to delineate the boundaries of the collective in a way that excluded both these sectors. Rabin did not feel threatened, however. He had just won an election and his attention was focused on a possible agreement with the PLO, rather than on the fundamentalist elements in Palestinian society, represented mainly by Hamas and Islamic jihad. At the end of 1992, after Hamas operatives kidnapped and murdered a border-guard police officer, Rabin even expelled 415 members of Hamas to Lebanon.[24]

The revelation on 20 August 1993 that Israel and the PLO, represented by Shimon Peres and Mahmud Abbas, had signed a secret agreement in Oslo led to a political earthquake. The chance of an agreement suddenly seemed tangible and imminent, and this agreement was as promising to one section of the public as it was threatening to the other. The business community was quick to recognize the advantages of regional peace in the global arena. Israel's business leaders began to imagine a "New Middle East" along the lines of the European Union (Peled and Shafir, 2005). The foreign minister, Peres, was "their man" in the government, as a fervent exponent of neoliberalism. He spoke of a modern economy and way of life, competitive commercial relations, open borders, and an emphasis on science and technology, underscoring the enormous cost of war (Peres, 1993). He struggled to change the basic assumptions of Israelis, who for decades had been used to militaristic and ethno-nationalistic discourse and who saw reality through the prism of conflict and war.[25]

In the letters exchanged between the two sides, Israel recognized the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and ceased to regard this body as a terror organization. At the same time, the PLO recognized the right of the State of Israel to exist in peace and security, and it undertook to abolish the clauses in the Palestinian Covenant negating the existence of Israel, accept Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, announce its rejection of terror and violence, and resolve the conflict by peaceful means.[26]

The debates in the Knesset revealed deep ideological differences between militaristic-religious society and civil society (Knesset Proceedings, 19 July 1993, 30 August 1993). The research literature has often emphasized the importance of mutual fear as a factor that can lead to war between ethnonational entities (Horowitz, 1985: 175–80; Kaufman, 2001: 31). Such a fear arose among many people in Israel. Some examined the agreements rationally, attempting to evaluate the extent to which they embodied a security threat or the degree to which it was possible to "believe in Arafat." However, the religious settlers and their supporters attempted to guide the Israeli public in a different direction. They argued that the agreements were dangerous not only in political terms but also culturally, since they were intended to do no less than eliminate the very existence of the Jewish people.[27] The settlers interpreted the longing of Palestinians for an agreement and for peace as no more than a plot. Yitzhak Levy of the National Religious Party warned, "We will be unable to prevent the [Palestinian] right of return once there is a Palestinian state. . . . And when there will be five million Palestinians there[,] . . . and they organize an army[,] . . . who will prevent them from coming along and swallowing up the State of Israel? Does anyone imagine that this dream has been set aside, that this dream does not exist?" (Knesset Proceedings, 10 May 1993).

Naturally, the members of militaristic and religious society were also guided by material interests. It was colonialism at its best. After all, the settlers had built expensive homes in the territories, with the help of cheap Arab labor. They had received free land and subsidized water—why should they give all this up, even for peace? They had long become used to their role as occupiers, with all the advantages and privileges this status offered. However, such arguments were based on the underlying ethno-nationalist and religious belief in the sanctity of the Land. Peace meant relinquishing parts of this Land. What, then, was the solution? Rehavam Ze'evi, a member of the Knesset (MK), had no doubts: "Only transfer will bring security and peace" (Knesset Proceedings, 15 May 1995).

The supporters of the agreement were encouraged by the rapid and widespread international legitimization of the agreement, which reached its symbolic and practical peak on 13 September 1993, when the two sides signed a mutual agreement at a formal ceremony on the lawns outside the White House. The agreement promised a significant shift in the relations between the sides, although it did not include such key issues as the status of Jerusalem, the refugee problem, the settlements, and the future permanent borders. More serious still, however, this was an agreement between leaders only. Although the general public on both the Israeli and the Palestinian sides supported the deal, and enthusiastically so, significant circles remained implacably opposed. Opinion polls reflected a majority in favor but also found a substantial level of opposition. The Knesset eventually approved the agreement, after two days of exhausting debates, by sixty-one to fifty, with eight abstentions and one absentee. Benjamin Netanyahu, leader of the Likud opposition, was quick to respond: "This is a close and small majority, based on the supporters of the PLO." Rabin, by contrast, gave a formal speech highlighting the chance for good neighborly relations and an end to war and bereavement.[28]

The supporters of the agreement were premature in their enthusiasm. Arafat found it difficult to convince his own constituency, particularly supporters of Hamas and Islamic jihad, of the importance of the agreement. In some respects, Israel did not seem to do much to assist him in this task. Despite the clear rationale behind the agreements, Rabin refused to declare that he would support the establishment of a Palestinian state in the future. His government continued to approve the construction of thousands of new housing units in the territories, based on the spurious argument that this was necessary in order to respond to "natural growth" in the population in the area. As a result, the number of settlers in the West Bank (excluding east Jerusalem) almost doubled between 1993 and 2000. The settlement system—that is, the settlements, the bypass roads, and the system of laws and military regulations that created a matrix of control over Palestinians' movements and their ability to use their land—was well entrenched at that time, according to LeVine (2009), who indicated that this was hardly a recipe for building trust and making peace.

Indeed, some observers saw the Oslo process as nothing more than a new tool for maintaining Israeli control based on the disconnection of the direct relationship between occupier and occupied that Israel had found so difficult to manage during the intifada.[29] Nevertheless, the fierce opposition to the agreement within ethno-national and militaristic Jewish society would seem

to suggest that it marked a turning point. The Israeli public understood that the Oslo process was intended to lead to the eventual creation of a Palestinian state and peace on the basis of a territorial compromise. Even the upper echelons within the army supported the idea, and Rabin was wise enough to allow them to participate in the talks and to be involved in the agreement itself, thus preventing them from opposing what was agreed upon. Given a real chance for peace, even generals can sometimes adopt a view that differs from their "natural" tendency to prefer war over peace. In any case, for the first time, the civil and liberal component of Israel's national identity overruled its ethno-national component, when, on 10 December 1994, Rabin, Peres, and Arafat were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts in reaching the agreement. Israel was seen to be acting in accordance with global cultural principles and was welcomed as a legitimate member of the "family of nations."

A PRIME MINISTER IS ASSASSINATED

When the moment of truth comes, and when fundamentalist movements realize that they are failing to impose their will on civil society, violence is often turned inward to perceived domestic enemies. In many cases, the politics of identities serves only to sharpen these contrasts. As the philosopher Aviezer Ravitzky noted (1997: 257): "We all knew, whether overtly or in our hearts, that a large group among us was about to lose many of its hopes and dreams: that its members would feel beaten and defeated—and moreover, beaten and defeated by their brothers and their compatriots. If the peace process proved successful, one faction of Israeli society would feel betrayed; if it failed and ended, another faction would feel betrayed. . . . Over time, two completely different dreams developed among us, and the two could not simultaneously be realized in full."

The possibility of civil war or of the assassination of the prime minister was taken into account and discussed on more than one occasion over the years. Meanwhile, the Oslo process continued. Two years after the first agreement, the Oslo B Accord was signed in Cairo. This agreement divided the West Bank into three sections, referred to as Areas A, B, and C. The six main Palestinian cities, as well as many villages, were transferred to the Palestinian Authority, which thereby received power in dozens of disconnected enclaves, which included the majority of the Palestinian population. These enclaves (Areas A and B together) accounted for some 40 percent of the total area of

the West Bank. In Area B, the Palestinian Authority received administrative power only, while Israel continued to exercise security control. The rest of the West Bank (Area C) remained under full Israeli control, including the main highways, the settlements, and the crossing points between the West Bank, Israel, and Jordan. The agreement left 73 percent of the West Bank, including all 140 settlements, under Israeli control.

The Knesset approved the Oslo B Accord by the smallest of margins. However, the campaign against the agreements was pursued mainly on the streets, including widespread disturbances and instances of violence and civil disobedience that had not previously been seen in Israel.[30] The fierce determination of militaristic and religious society and the weakness of civil society were clearly evident during this period. The appeal to sentimental ethnonationalist motifs made it difficult for many Israelis to support the agreements. The prime minister was forced to appeal overtly for support—at a meeting of his own party, he criticized the lack of response to the right-wing demonstrations. The Labor Party had virtually no presence on the street, he complained, urging activists to come to their senses and struggle to win the minds and hearts of the general public.[31] However, Rabin was still rooted in the old world and failed to recognize that party politics had lost much of its force. He may also have failed to understand that the liberal civil society in Israel, which supports peace because of the economic benefits it offers, does not provide a sufficiently stable foundation for such a process. Conversely, Rabin himself did not wish to receive the support of the more radical wing of civil society and the peace movements that were willing to campaign actively for peace—a fact that his opponents exploited ruthlessly.

An incident that provided significant fuel to militaristic-religious society in its struggle against the peace agreements was the massacre committed by Baruch Goldstein at the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron on 25 February 1994. Goldstein, an American-born physician and settler, murdered 29 Muslim worshippers and injured 125 others in an overt display of Jewish fundamentalism. Rabin's advisors suggested that he should order the eviction of the small Jewish settlement inside the large Palestinian city of Hebron—a few hundred Jews living among some two hundred thousand Arabs in conditions of mutual isolation and hostility. Had Rabin listened to this advice, the civil approach would have been validated and legitimized, and the revenge attacks by Palestinians might have been avoided. However, the reaction appeared to be dominated by historical memories, the sentimental attachment to the

"City of the Patriarchs," and threats by the settlers. As a result, Rabin rejected the proposal to evict the settlers (Huberman, 2008: 269–70).

A wave of serious terror attacks then erupted throughout Israel. Until this point, there had not been any terror attacks during the period of the Rabin government.[32] Immediately after the traditional forty-day period of mourning for those killed by Goldstein, Hamas launched a painful and bloody campaign of revenge. On April 6, it carried out a car bomb attack in the city of Afula, the first suicide-bombing attack in a series of attacks that brought about the deaths of thirty-eight Israelis. Reality was influenced not only by the attacks themselves but also—and no less importantly—by the manner in which they were interpreted. The prevailing interpretation in Israel was that the entire Palestinian population—and not only the attackers themselves or Hamas—did not want peace, since if it did, it would prevent such attacks. President Ezer Weizmann called for the suspension of the peace talks: "It may be that Yasser Arafat is not the right person to sign agreements with." He also urged the government to include the opposition in a discussion of ways to confront terror and "to reassess the situation."[33] Weizmann's proposal was irrational. Hamas itself wished to halt the peace talks, and this was the motivation behind its attacks. Why, then, play into Hamas's hands? It is also difficult to imagine that Weizmann failed to understand that only peace would prevent such attacks.

The demonstrations against the agreements were the most violent in Israel's history, including some attempts to hurt Rabin himself.[34] The most extreme example came on 5 October 1995, as the Knesset was about to vote on the Oslo B Accord. Tens of thousands of protestors flooded Zion Square in Jerusalem, blowing ram's horns, screaming "Death to Rabin!" and burning images of the prime minister, some modified to depict him in a German SS uniform. The leaders of militaristic-religious society stood above the demonstration on the balcony of Hotel Ron. They included Ariel Sharon, Benjamin Netanyahu, and many other politicians. None of them attempted to silence the calls against Rabin or to urge restraint. On the contrary, the speakers fueled the crowd's rage, claiming that a government based on the votes of PLO-supporting Arabs was illegitimate.[35]

A question began to be discussed in religious circles that would previously have been unthinkable. Is it permissible, in accordance with Jewish religious law, to kill the prime minister of Israel? The question was discussed in depth in yeshivas and settlements, in synagogues, and at demonstrations, both

overtly and covertly. Rabbis imposed religious boycotts of Rabin, drawing on abstruse religious terms dating back to the completely different reality of Jews as persecuted minority communities. Others staged a Kabbalistic cursing ceremony called Pulsa Dinura, which calls for the death of the object of the curse. On 4 November 1995, Rabin was assassinated by Yigal Amir, a young religious Jew who acted under the influence of fundamentalist messages and the insistence by rabbis and politicians that those who "hand over territory" are "illegitimate." In his testimony some two months after the assassination, Amir explained, "When I shot Rabin, I felt as if I was shooting a terrorist."[36] The assassination of the prime minister was, of course, an exceptional event. Nevertheless, it formed part of a new trend in Jewish fundamentalism in Israel directed against the state and against the democratic principles of the rule of law, and against those who act in the name of these principles. Just as Hamas was opposed both to the Oslo Accords and to the Palestinian Authority, so Jewish fundamentalists, represented in their extreme form by Yigal Amir, saw not only external but also internal enemies. Among both Palestinians and Israelis, social forces emerged that demanded in God's name not peace but unbridled war.

The assassination of Rabin was followed by widespread mourning in Israel and by an outpouring of international support for the course he had adopted. Leaders of many nations attended his funeral. However, this support failed to move the peace process forward. Most of the religious public in Israel disagreed with Amir's action, but they also refused to accept that they bore any collective responsibility or that they had been wrong to reject the decisions made by a sovereign government in a democracy.

The members of civil society, meanwhile, might have been expected to act to preserve Rabin's memory and to struggle for the continuation of the peace process. In the immediate aftermath of the assassination, some Israelis indeed expressed remorse for failing to support Rabin and the peace process as a whole.[37] A phenomenon of "candle children" developed in the square where Rabin was killed as young Israelis gathered to light candles and express their pain in conversations, songs, and tears. They wrote graffiti on the walls of city hall, by the square, and addressed Rabin as if he were still alive. This was an unusual form of protest, quiet and personal. Some observers suggested that the mourning youths represented a new sociological generation, particularly since they quickly organized themselves into a protest movement. Stickers disseminated after the assassination declared, "We will not forgive or forget." Israelis asked themselves whether the Oslo process would now continue

under the leadership of civil society. They also asked whether Israel might be descending toward civil war. In reality, however, the opposite was the case. Perhaps surprisingly, the assassination marked the end of the internal conflict. Posters began to appear calling for reconciliation between religious and secular Jews. Shimon Peres, who was appointed acting prime minister on the night of the assassination, decided during his brief period in office to emphasize a common ethno-national identity. He declared that the assassination would not end the peace process; but rather than using the event to ensure that the process moved forward, he chose a policy based on domestic compromise. Was Peres's conciliatory approach based on his desire to win votes among religious Israelis in the upcoming elections? Or was it the product of his conviction that the ethno-national common denominator was stronger than any other factor? In all probability, both motives were combined. The atmosphere that developed even allowed representatives of militaristic and religious society to claim that while the assassination was certainly wrong, Rabin had brought his fate on himself by disrespecting the settlers and refusing to meet with them, thereby dividing the nation (Sprinzak, 1999: 244–85; Peri, 2000; Grinberg, 2000: 78–96).

Opponents of the agreement were also strengthened when, during a single week at the end of February and beginning of March 1996, Hamas carried out further terror attacks in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, leading to the deaths of fifty-nine people. The attacks were launched in revenge for Israel's assassination of Yahya Ayash, also known as "the Engineer," the leader of the organization's armed wing. The timing was also chosen to mark the second anniversary of Goldstein's massacre in Hebron. Most Israelis came to feel that Israel did not have any real partner for peace negotiations. The conviction that they lacked a partner was based not only on disillusionment with the peace process but also on active and repeated demands for war by parts of Israeli society.

Israeli politicians tend to argue that terror attacks have played a crucial role in determining the results of Knesset elections. Ahead of the 1996 elections, the Labor Party decided to depict Shimon Peres not as the architect of the Oslo Accords but as "Mr. Security." Peres cooperated with this approach, in what was probably the gravest mistake of his long political career. The Israeli public was bombarded with images of Peres visiting military bases and observing exercises, wearing a blue battle dress uniform rather than a suit and tie (Neubach, 1996: 170–71). But if the message was that Israel must use force to return the Palestinians to their subdued status, and if Oslo meant no more

than separation, then why bother voting for the more moderate of the two main parties?

In April 1996, about six weeks before the elections, Israel launched an operation against Hizbullah in southern Lebanon in a further attempt to bolster Peres's security credentials. Operation Grapes of Wrath began on 11 April, and like Operation Accountability in 1993, it was launched in large part because of pressure from the cadre of professional military officers to take firm action against the Lebanese organization. Both operations were dominated by Ehud Barak, who was chief of staff in 1993 but, by 1996, was a minister in Peres's government. As in the past, the operation began by bombarding the Shi'ite villages in the south with tens of thousands of mortars, causing hundreds of thousands of villagers to flee to Beirut. The erroneous Israeli assumption was that this would put pressure on the Lebanese government to curtail the actions of Hizbullah.[38] As in the past, Israel was forced to halt the operation after international criticism and pressure from the superpowers, particularly because of the large number of civilians killed in the attacks. The remarkable similarity between the two operations highlighted the irrational nature of war, as well as the failure of leaders to learn anything from past experience. It also demonstrated that in Israel a new professional and instrumental militarism was being created that encouraged military solutions based on Israel's technological superiority. (On instrumental militarism as a late-modern phenomenon based on high technology, see Shaw [2013]).

As the 1996 elections drew closer, even the assassination of Rabin was largely obscured—not only by the Likud, which feared that this could cause electoral damage, but even by the Labor Party, which was afraid to be seen as "dividing the people" (Arian and Shamir, 1998: 16). Netanyahu confounded the polls (not for the last time) and won the direct election for prime minister with slogans such as "Peres will divide Jerusalem" and "Netanyahu is good for the Jews."

In Palestinian society, the reaction to the terror attacks by Hamas was the opposite. In the first democratic elections to the Palestinian National Council, held in January 1996, which were boycotted by Hamas, Fatah won sixty-six of the eighty-eight seats, while Islamist groups secured just seven seats. The result was a strong expression of support by Palestinian society for the peace process and its leader, which implied that Palestinians hoped that the process would continue following Rabin's assassination. However, terror attacks persisted and the neoliberal economic benefits of the "New Middle East" faded away, leading to the end of pressure from Israeli industrialists to

pursue a peace process that could help their businesses (Ben-Porat, 2005; Yadgar, 2006; LeVine, 2009: ch. 4). The candles of the "peace generation" had long since blown out and disappeared from the political landscape. Meanwhile, expressions of approval of the assassination of Rabin and sympathy for the assassin were frequently spotted around the country. Memorials to Rabin were daubed with slogans attacking him, and songs were written praising Amir and Goldstein.[39] But while Israel was still a divided country in cultural terms, a shift was becoming apparent. Civil society was in retreat, while ethno-nationalism, combined with religion, was playing an increasingly prominent role in collective identity. If anyone doubted this process, the new prime minister was careful to make it abundantly clear.

"THE ROCK OF OUR EXISTENCE"

Although Netanyahu had promised during the election campaign not to renege on the Oslo Accords, he was in no rush to implement them, using various excuses to refrain from proceeding with Israel's undertaking (Hess, 1996; Pundak, 2001: 4–5; Rabinowitz, 2004: 90–91). In September 1996, Netanyahu decided to open the Western Wall Tunnels in the Old City of Jerusalem, despite the extremely sensitive political nature of the site. Arafat begged the prime minister not to go ahead, and Palestinians warned that it would be seen as evidence of Israel's determination to Judaize east Jerusalem. Netanyahu went ahead and the tunnels opened. As predicted, riots erupted in Jerusalem and Ramallah, spreading throughout the West Bank. For the first time since the Oslo Accords, gunfights occurred between Palestinian police officers and the Israeli security forces, as the Palestinian Authority effectively lost control of the situation on the ground.[40] Israel found it difficult to tolerate the sight of Palestinian police officers shooting at Israeli soldiers and police, using guns they had received from Israel. Dozens of people were killed during the riots, including sixteen members of the Israeli security forces. Netanyahu declared that the Western Wall Tunnels constituted "the rock of our existence," underscoring the return of ethno-nationalism to the center stage of Israeli politics. A particularly serious situation developed at a site in Nablus known as Joseph's Tomb. Observant Jews consider this to be the burial place of the biblical Joseph, while Muslims claim that it is actually the tomb of a prominent sheikh and dates back no more than two hundred years. The settlers declared the tomb a holy place (for Jews only) in 1982, in an act that provides an example of

the retroactive reshaping of Jewish history in order to serve the settlers' interests. Moreover, Judaism has not traditionally sanctified burial sites. Leaving aside the argument over its history, the site is situated on the east side of Nablus, a city with a population of some 120,000 Palestinians. For the settlers, this was precisely the reason why it was so important to flaunt their presence at the site. They opened a yeshiva by the tomb under military auspices, and the students of the yeshiva lived in a settlement adjacent to the city. Their spiritual leader, Rabbi Yitzhak Ginsburg, was known for his racist attitudes toward Arabs, openly declaring that he hoped that they would be transferred and a Jewish theocracy established in the West Bank.[41] Six Israeli soldiers were killed in the clashes at the site, but the IDF did not withdraw, and a few weeks later studies resumed at the site. The events exemplified how close ethno-nationalism and religion can be. "We will turn Nablus into a Jewish city," one of the yeshiva students promised. "We are a legitimate part of this people. We are in a state of cultural war. The Left and the media are waging a campaign against us, but we will emerge triumphant."[42]

Following the events surrounding the Western Wall Tunnels, Netanyahu convened a press conference and blamed Arafat for the clashes. He claimed that "this is a war for our lives"—an exaggerated argument that was popular among members of militaristic-religious society. The list of speakers at the press conference was particularly revealing. Apart from Netanyahu, the chief of the IDF Intelligence Division, Moshe Ya'alon, also spoke. He claimed that the events were a "deliberate, considered, and preplanned escalation. . . . The tunnel is merely a good enough fuel to light the fire, when a religious tone is added." It almost seemed for a moment that Ya'alon was describing Israel's actions, but he was of course referring to Arafat. "Arafat decided to light the fire, and it is Arafat who can extinguish it. . . . Arafat is walking on the edge of a precipice." Thus the senior officer provided an ostensibly military- and intelligence-based justification for an overtly ethno-nationalist action and for a problematic political judgment.[43]

In the meantime, Netanyahu, under pressure by the United States, surprised his supporters by meeting with Arafat and continuing the Oslo process. On 15 January 1997 the Hebron Agreement was signed, and the IDF subsequently withdrew from most of the city. The settlers' leaders were shocked by Netanyahu's actions, and he also faced criticism from within his own party.[44] Netanyahu paid a heavy political price for the agreement. His right-wing supporters abandoned him during the next election, while he was of course unable to gain support among civil society. As a result, he was

resoundingly beaten by Ehud Barak in the personal election for prime minister in May 1999. Barak, the former chief of staff who now headed the Labor Party, was merely the latest example of the tradition of "parachuting" Israeli generals straight into political life after they completed their service. With an impressive dose of self-confidence, Barak declared that he would bring the IDF out of Lebanon and reach peace agreements with the Syrians and Palestinians. The political center of the neoliberal civil society, which had supported the Oslo Accords only to be disillusioned, once again gave an opportunity to a leader who promised to bring peace and security.

NINE

The Return of Militaristic Nationalism

THE 2000–2005 AL-AQSA INTIFADA

The newly elected prime minister, Ehud Barak, portrayed himself as the successor of Yitzhak Rabin (to the displeasure of Rabin's family). On election night, he promised "the dawn of a new day." In reality, however, his priority from the outset was to reverse what was seen by many Israelis, and particularly by militaristic-religious society, as Rabin's greatest error: his failure to pay sufficient attention to the settlers' needs and feelings. Barak reached the "Outposts Agreement" with the settlers, leaving intact most of the illegal outposts that both the Americans and the Israeli peace movements had demanded be evicted. He attached great importance to this agreement, which reflected his proud claim to be "the prime minister of ALL Israelis." Of forty-two outposts in dispute at the time, thirty-two remained intact.[1] The settlers reacted positively to such gestures; but needless to say, their support was conditional on Barak continuing to follow their course, rather than adopting the basic assumptions of civil society.

One of Barak's first actions was to pull the IDF out of Lebanon. He took this position against the opinion of the senior echelon of the IDF, which consistently demanded a more aggressive approach to Hizbullah. Barak imposed his will on the officers, who were forced to accept the plan, even when it emerged that it entailed the abandonment of the South Lebanon Army.[2] His decision was consistent with widespread public criticism of Israel's ongoing presence in Lebanon, particularly from the Four Mothers movement, which highlighted the high number of soldiers killed as a result of the IDF's engagement in the country.[3] After Israel completed its unilateral withdrawal from southern Lebanon, Barak declared that he would reach a peace agreement with Syria. However, Uri Sagi, former head of the IDF Intelligence Division and a partner in the talks between Israel and Syria at Shepherdstown, West

Virginia, commented later that Barak's "hand froze." Sagi, who had until then been a close friend and ally of Barak, was surprised that he thwarted an agreement between Israel and Syria at the last moment, without even informing the other members of the delegation: "[He] got cold feet, made a U-turn, and became evasive. . . . He was afraid of how the Israeli public would react to Israeli concessions regarding the border as of 4 June 1967. But that was the most important point to the Syrians—to talk about that border. If we weren't talking about that, why had we met?" (Sagi, 2011; Drucker, 2002: 66, 100).

After preventing an agreement with Syria, Barak turned his attention to the Palestinians. Again, he promised to reach a permanent agreement, thereby attempting to overcome the main flaw of the Oslo Accords, which were based on a gradual approach. The members of militaristic-religious society saw his willingness to talk to the Palestinians as nothing less than a national disaster. An example was Benny Begin, the son of the late prime minister Menachem Begin, a scientist who was becoming increasingly involved in politics. Benny Begin had already gained a reputation for being even more hawkish than his father. Along with other representatives of the militaristic-religious viewpoint, Benny Begin was convinced that the Palestinian Authority was actually a "Trojan horse" intended to lead to the destruction of Israel "from within" (Knesset Proceedings, 10 July 2000). Barak was adamant, however, even at the cost of seeing the disintegration of his government coalition. Talks began at Camp David in July 2000 without proper preparation. Different versions have since been published concerning the course of the discussions. The Palestinians claimed that Israel agreed to only minor concessions on all the key issues—refugees, Jerusalem, the settlements, water, border crossings, and marking the border.[4] The Palestinians were suspicious of Barak, who had not even supported the Oslo B Accords. He also refused to relinquish even part of Jerusalem to the Palestinians, despite the fact that they considered the city their future capital. Like his predecessors, Barak did nothing to stop the building of settlements and even allowed the confiscation of Palestinian land to this end. From the Palestinian perspective, which of course reflects a distinct ethno-national worldview that has nothing to do with security considerations, Israel was doing everything possible to prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state on the 22 percent of historical Palestine (between the River Jordan and the Mediterranean) that was not taken by the State of Israel. The Palestinians also attempted to persuade Barak to release prisoners, explaining that this would create support for the process among their public, but in vain.

The Israeli representatives interpreted the talks very differently and felt that the Palestinians were not interested in reaching an agreement. There appears to be some justification for this claim. After all, both President Bill Clinton and Ambassador Martin Indyk, who were present at Camp David and were involved in the talks, confirmed that Barak eventually offered to withdraw from 92 percent of the West Bank, divide Jerusalem, and evacuate the Jewish settlers from the Gaza Strip (Indyk, 2009: 329; Drucker, 2002: 13). In Israeli terms, this was a far-reaching offer. Dennis Ross, Clinton's envoy to the Middle East, also blamed the Palestinians for the failure of the talks, claiming that they failed to present any proposal of their own, despite repeated requests. Instead, he reported, they simply rejected out of hand every proposal raised by the Israelis or the Americans (Ross, 2004). The gap between the two sides was relatively narrow on several issues, including borders, security, and even refugees. However, the Palestinians insisted that Israel relinquish its sovereignty over the sacred hilltop in Jerusalem that is known to Jews as the "Temple Mount" and to Muslims as Al-Haram a-Sharif, or the "Noble Sanctuary." Barak rejected this demand, and this was apparently the main reason for the collapse of the talks (Indyk, 2009: 313, 330). The central role of national and religious sentiments in the conflict was once again exposed and, as in many other places, appeared to be an obstacle to possible peace (Hassner, 2009; Toft, 2003). For the purposes of our discussion, it is particularly important to note that there was no activist civil society in Israel at this point that could have pressured the prime minister to make peace. Although Israel is often regarded as a secular, modern, and Western society, it has not produced a leadership that is willing to reach a permanent peace agreement with the Palestinians if this requires relinquishing control over a small area in Jerusalem that has no strategic economic importance and is of purely symbolic and emotional value. As common sense gave way to emotion in both societies, the path to violence and war was short. Again we must conclude that war is a far less rational phenomenon than is usually assumed.

THE AL-AQSA INTIFADA

Following the failure of the Camp David talks, Barak repeatedly claimed that there had been "no one to talk to" on the other side. The Israeli public accepted this position virtually without question, in a classic example of the manner in which elites shape public opinion through the creation of media

spins that are immediately accepted as absolute truth because they are planted in the fertile soil of historical memories and myths (Rahamim, 2005; Bar-Tal and Halperin, 2008).

The fact that it was Barak who claimed that Arafat had thwarted the chance for peace proved to be a fatal development. After all, the Labor Party had for years claimed that it would be able to recruit suitable Arab partners for negotiations. Now a leader of this party declared that there was no such partner. For years after Barak's brief period in office, his declaration came to serve as a mantra reinforcing the perceived gulf between the two peoples and the belief that the Palestinians were interested only in destroying Israel. In 2004, however, records were released regarding the discussions within the Israeli leadership at the time concerning the intentions of the Palestinians during the intifada. As Amos Malka, the former head of the IDF Intelligence Division, later confirmed, it was not possible to find even a single document provided by the division's research department suggesting that Arafat saw the Oslo Accords as a way of securing the elimination of Israel step-by-step. More alarmingly, it emerged that despite the absence of any such professional evaluation, some of the heads of intelligence nevertheless presented this argument, without any corroboration, in their desire to fall in line with the worldviews of the military and political leadership.[5]

Meanwhile, on 28 September 2000, Ariel Sharon visited the Temple Mount / Haram al-Sharif. Sharon announced his planned visit in advance and was not deterred by warnings that it was liable to incite violence throughout the region. Indeed, he chose quite deliberately to visit the site that not long before had proved to be a key stumbling block in the peace talks. "This is the very heart of the Jewish people," he declared, "and the very heart of Jerusalem. We will not submit to Palestinian threats."[6] Thus Sharon's actions reflected the ethno-nationalist approach that focuses solely on the sentiments and sensitivities of one side. Barak allowed Sharon to visit the Temple Mount with an entourage of over one hundred people, accompanied by one thousand Israeli police officers, ignoring Palestinian warnings.

The reaction was as swift as it was predictable. Riots erupted and quickly spread across the West Bank and Gaza Strip.[7] The IDF activated its contingency plans, responding harshly to the riots. On the first day, two members of the Israeli Border Police were killed and dozens were injured, mainly lightly. The Palestinians sustained twenty-nine fatalities and over one thousand injuries. The gap between these figures highlighted the fact that the Palestinians were responding spontaneously to Sharon's visit, mainly by

means of popular demonstrations and other nonviolent methods, whereas the IDF was implementing a trap it had set in advance.[8] Its heads were simply not interested in allowing a new version of the First Intifada, in which nonviolent methods of action proved to be politically effective from the Palestinian perspective. The military responded fiercely in order to avoid such a scenario. Many times, faced with stones, Molotov cocktails, and occasional sporadic shooting from light weapons, the Israeli soldiers immediately brought into play the full arsenal of modern technologies at their disposal.

By the second day, the number of Palestinians killed rose to forty-two, with some sixteen hundred injuries. The high number of injuries clarified that Israel's military politics sought not merely to suppress the riots by violent means, but to impose a reality in which no one would be permitted to challenge ethno-nationalist superiority and Israel's right to the whole Land of Israel. As this approach set the tone, the Al-Aqsa Intifada soon evolved into an example of a "new war," one that cost thousands of lives but had a character completely different from that of previous, conventional wars that had erupted as part of the Israeli-Arab conflict.

"New wars" have several characteristics that form part of the phenomenon, such as the fact that these conflicts are no longer wars between two state parties: at least one of the sides is an ethnic, ethno-national, or religious group. As a consequence, these groups are often motivated less by rational politics and more by identity politics (though some leaders and groups may exploit these identities for rational or interest-based purposes). Their purpose is not to eliminate contradictions between rivals or resolve disputes but, on the contrary, to accentuate and manifest these contradictions. In this regard, new wars use violence to perpetuate conflict. The sides involved in a new war use guerrilla or terrorist methods. The result is that these wars no longer take place within a confined and clearly delineated theater, where a single decisive battle can determine the fate of the entire conflict. Moreover, the goals of new wars are not always defined in clear and formal terms as in the past. One argument that has been raised in this respect is that, in the past, the occupation of territory and expropriation of resources were perceived as central goals in war. This is no longer the case in most new wars. Another characteristic of new wars is that they often do not entail clear declarations of either their commencements or their ends. As a result, new wars are often extremely protracted. Traditional binary distinctions between war and peace, the front line and the home front, soldiers and civilians, legal and illegal, domestic and external, and local and global—dichotomies that the French philosopher

Jacques Derrida saw as central to modern thought—have been blurred and obscured. One of the consequences of this is the use of extreme violence toward civilians as a tool for manifesting the differences between groups and for translating these differences into hierarchical categories of rulers and ruled, occupiers and occupied.[9]

To return to Sharon's fateful visit to the Temple Mount, the settlers and their supporters had no doubts regarding the significance of the event as an attempt to define Israel's ethno-national borders. As a journalist for the religious newspaper *Hatzofeh* explained, "After the creative proposals [raised by Barak] regarding the division of sovereignty in Jerusalem and the Temple Mount replaced rational thought and sovereign nationhood, Sharon sought to delineate with his own feet the borders of Israeli sovereignty. . . . The Arabs showed us that they indeed already control the Temple Mount[,] . . . and that our sovereignty over the site is meaningless. The leftists would rather not know: they don't care about sovereignty or borders. They just want peace and quiet. And so Sharon's desire to test the true borders of our sovereignty . . . exposed the fact . . . that we are not even sovereign in the Galilee."[10] This last comment was a reference to the riots that erupted inside the State of Israel, in which Palestinian citizens protested furiously and sometimes violently against Sharon's visit to the holy site. Demonstrators blocked roads and threw stones. The police responded aggressively, killing thirteen young protestors, in a development that brought the ethno-national conflict firmly inside Israel's borders (Rabinowitz and Abu Baker, 2002; Drucker, 2002: 299).

In response to the Palestinian protests in the territories, the settlers and their supporters immediately demanded that the Palestinian Authority be seen as an enemy, and that Israel end all contacts with the organization.[11] They felt that the eruption of violence had created a window of opportunity to realize their ambitions to annex the territories—ambitions that had been blocked by the Oslo Accords. As in previous instances, they once again found allies within the military. The deputy chief of staff, Moshe Ya'alon, claimed the Palestinian Authority was responsible for the events. When asked about the impact of Sharon's visit to the Temple Mount, Ya'alon replied that the Palestinians had merely been waiting for a pretext to escalate the situation. Thus he inverted the actual situation: rather than Sharon deliberately causing the explosion of violence, the Palestinians were responsible, and Sharon had merely given them the excuse they needed. Ya'alon had shown the same inversion of reality a few years earlier, when he blamed the Palestinians for a similar round of violence following the opening of the Western Wall Tunnels. In

both cases, Ya'alon sought to push Israel back to the era when the "other" bore exclusive responsibility for every war or conflict. And the guilt assigned to the "other" is always multiplied by the perception that it forces the Israelis to become something they do not wish to be.

From the start of the clashes, Joseph's Tomb in Nablus emerged as a key flash point where ethno-national and religious sentiments led to extensive loss of life, as had occurred during the clashes following the opening of the Western Wall Tunnel. Now, on the first day of what would become known as the Al-Aqsa Intifada, young Palestinians stormed the site in the center of Nablus. The IDF wanted to evacuate the site, but the settlers who were present announced that, even if the soldiers withdrew, they would find their way back and defend the tomb with their lives. Thus religious and messianic motives dictated the operational decisions of the IDF.[12] The soldiers on guard at the site were eventually extricated from the site in a complicated operation. Several were wounded and one was killed. They were rescued by forces from the Palestinian Authority, which was still cooperating with the IDF.[13] Senior IDF commanders were quick to declare that "the IDF will return to the tomb," as if they were referring to some strategically important point that must not be abandoned. In the meantime, the Palestinian Authority decided to return the site to its former status as a mosque. The dome covering the tomb was painted green in a symbolic gesture that illustrated the religious dimension of the conflict.[14]

As the crisis at Joseph's Tomb continued, and ostensibly in response to the events, the IDF decided unilaterally to end its cooperation and contacts with the Palestinian Authority and its police force.[15] It is doubtful whether this decision really constituted a rational response to the situation from a military perspective, as signaled by the fact that Israel relied on the Palestinian Authority to extricate its soldiers trapped at the tomb. In a new war, however, the need of ethno-national and religious peoples to mark borders and to sharpen the distinction between "us" and "them" is so pronounced that it dictates reality. It is possible that were it not for the disruption of the contacts with the Palestinians, two Israeli soldiers would not have died. The two reserve soldiers entered Ramallah by mistake, and on October 12 the two men were killed in an exceptionally brutal lynching.[16] The incident underscored the virulence of the growing hatred between the two sides, and naturally it also reinforced the perception that all Palestinians, and not only those who participated in the lynching, were "monsters," "two-legged beasts," "humanity at its ugliest," or "subhumans"—to quote just some of the com-

ments made following the incident. The politics of delineation sought to claim that such incidents carried a message regarding the generic character of Palestinians, reinforcing the old argument of a clash of civilizations.[17] The demonization of Arafat in this period was also consistent and deliberate, seeking to emphasize that Israel no longer saw him as a partner. In reality, however, it is doubtful whether the Palestinian Authority or its head were responsible for the events or could have halted the riots. In his interrogation, Marwan Barghouti, the head of the armed wing of Fatah, stated that he had never received explicit orders from Arafat to stage terror attacks.[18] Could it be that Barghouti did not need an explicit order but understood that this was the boss's intention?

Just ten days after Sharon visited the Temple Mount / Al-Haram a-Sharif, the situation had changed beyond recognition. Particularly following the soldiers' lynching in Ramallah, the IDF adopted a policy of counterreaction and counter-counterreaction. For the first time, the Israeli Air Force bombed Palestinian Authority installations in Gaza and Ramallah. Significantly, the prime minister, Barak, raised the level of Israel's responses without consulting the cabinet. The Palestinians saw the bombardments as a grave development, as did the Egyptians, who withdrew their ambassador (Drucker, 2002: 310). Some figures in the Israeli leadership still hoped to put the relations between the two sides back on the diplomatic track. The deputy defense minister, Ephraim Sneh, a Labor Party veteran and a former senior officer, was given the task of arranging special conditions for the Palestinian civilian population during the conflict. Sneh believed that the military echelon's policy of collective punishment would prevent any chance of compromise between the sides. He explained his position to Barak, but to no avail. The former chief of staff Amnon Lipkin-Shahak, who coordinated attempts to secure a cease-fire during the early stage of the clashes, realized that when he made agreements with senior Palestinian figures, the orders did not filter down to the lower ranks of the IDF—and even when they did, they were not implemented. The two men soon ceased to play a role in the Israeli response (Drucker and Shelach, 2005: 36). Barak followed the traditional pattern of Israeli leadership, tacitly encouraging the IDF to continue its harsh response while waxing lyrical about his desire to move forward to negotiations and peace (Ben-Ami, 2006: 320).

It was the IDF that transformed the Al-Aqsa Intifada into a war. During the demonstrations, Israeli soldiers gradually began to use live ammunition even when there was no danger to their lives. During the first three months

of the intifada, 272 Palestinians were killed by IDF soldiers, and 6 others were killed by settlers. The use of live fire against youths throwing stones or burning tires was not unusual. Almost one-third of the fatalities were minors under the age of eighteen.[19] The difference between the number of fatalities in this three-month period and during the preceding years was stark. During the nine months of 2000 before the outbreak of the Al-Aqsa Intifada, just 12 Palestinians were killed; in all of 1999 there were 8 fatalities, and so forth.[20]

The high number of injuries, too, reflects the IDF decision to transform the riots into a war. According to figures from the Palestinian Red Crescent, the number of Palestinians injured during the first three months of the conflict was 10,603, including 2,168 (approximately 20 percent) who were injured by live ammunition and 4,167 by rubber bullets.[21] The rubber bullets used against Palestinians were often removed from their outer casing, thereby intensifying their impact. The IDF made widespread use of snipers, who would wait for the demonstrators to approach and then shoot at those whom they felt were leading the demonstration.[22] The number of fatalities and injuries among Israelis during the first three months of the conflict was much lower: 18 civilians and 19 members of the security forces were killed—a total of 37, mainly in incidents in the territories. Only 4 Israelis were killed inside Israel during this period.[23]

Amos Malka, the head of the IDF Intelligence Division, claimed that during the first few days of the Al-Aqsa Intifada, the IDF fired seven hundred thousand bullets in the West Bank and three hundred thousand in the Gaza Strip. Every shot fired from a Palestinian gun was met by volleys of shots fired by IDF soldiers. The symbolic meaning of this response was clear. According to the combat theory of new wars and the "consciousness and attrition" doctrine that the IDF had developed several years earlier in anticipation of future conflicts, the IDF acted like the "village lunatic," creating a "wall" intended to "scorch in the minds" of Palestinians. Ya'alon, the deputy chief of staff, declared that they would pay a heavy military, economic, political, and diplomatic price if they continued their uprising (Ya'alon, 2008: 109).

The IDF also dragged the Palestinians from riots to war because the declaration of an armed conflict allowed the military to operate according to the rules of war, rather than the rules applying in peacetime, including the ability to target civilians without triggering comprehensive and careful investigations. It was also at this point that the IDF began to implement a policy of assassinations, which it referred to by the euphemism "targeted prevention."

Barak was convinced that this tactic could be beneficial. However, attacks conducted from above by helicopters proved problematic—not only because they were executed without any judicial process, but also because they almost always led to the death or injury of innocent bystanders who were unlucky enough to be close to the scene at the time of an attack.[24] The Israeli court supported the practice, but international human rights organizations sharply condemned it. In February 2009, Amnesty International referred to the killings as "state assassinations."[25]

As part of the "new war" approach, and with the goal of reinstating ethno-national boundaries and "putting the Palestinians in their place," the IDF began to attack Palestinian society in general, including its economy, infrastructures, daily routines, security, liberties, and freedom of movement. In particular, the IDF made frequent use of the "exposure" method, which included the systematic demolition of homes and orchards along the main roads. The declared purpose of this practice was to distance Palestinian sniper units from the range within which they could launch effective attacks on Israeli drivers and passengers. On the undeclared level, however, the policy sought to punish all Palestinians (Harel and Issacharoff, 2005: 93–94). Yet extreme though they were, the methods employed by the IDF to suppress the uprising were not always effective, and they certainly did not go far enough to satisfy sections of Israeli society who demanded a further escalation, thereby providing support for the war.

"LET THE IDF WIN"

The Palestinian violence had a real impact on the settlers. Many settlements were exposed to nightly shooting attacks, and traveling on the roads became a dangerous activity. However, the settlers were not concerned solely for their personal security. They perceived the Oslo Accords as such a serious threat that the subsequent failure of the Camp David talks and the outbreak of the intifada were welcomed as an historic opportunity to restore the pre-1993 boundaries and hierarchical relationships between Jews and Arabs. After all, they saw reality in historical religious and ethno-national terms, as one of their rabbis explained: "The conflict is not a political or a geographical conflict, but a religious one. Islam, which is an imitation of Judaism, persecuted us because of its Oedipal complex. . . . The time has come for all the Jewish people to understand the root of the problem and to deepen its own roots

that were planted in this soil before Ishmael even appeared in the world. . . . The State of Israel faces a danger in the form of the blurring of its identity and its transformation from the State of Israel to the 'State of Ishmael' of all its citizens. We can and must turn our fate into a destiny."[26]

As the military failed to suppress the Palestinian uprising, the settlers and their supporters used criticism, billboards, demonstrations, and even threats in an attempt to force the commanders to adopt harsher tactics. They argued that the Israeli senior military echelon was suffering from confusion and hesitation, refused to define the Palestinians as enemies, and had not ordered soldiers to fire at Palestinians before they were fired at.[27] They also applied pressure on the government. "Who are you kidding, my dear ministers?" MK Benny Elon asked. "How can you pretend that the IDF is allowed to act freely and can do what it wants. . . . You aren't giving the IDF a free hand. . . . Let the IDF win, and don't fool us and tell us that you're giving them everything they want" (Knesset Proceedings, 20 November 2000).

"Let the IDF win" became a pithy and powerful slogan that appealed to many settlers and supporters. It indicated a new Israeli militarism that was emerging side by side with the professional and instrumental one, based on the idea of "holy wars," and "wars of commandments." As used by military and religious society, it echoed and challenged the slogan "Let the sun rise"—the opening words of the "Song of Peace," the unofficial anthem of civil society, particularly when Rabin was assassinated just a few minutes after joining the crowd singing the song at the peace rally. A bloodstained page bearing the words of the song was found on Rabin after his assassination. The influence of military-religious society was also apparent in the silence of civil society, whose leaders and supporters lost their voices against the background of the terror attacks and the way in which the leaders of the government, primarily Barak, the prime minister, but also Shlomo Ben-Ami, the foreign minister, interpreted the failure of the talks with the Palestinians. The result was that there was no opposing center of gravity that could compensate for the increasing pressure applied by the settlers to the military and the government.

Because of this pressure, the military constantly demanded that the political echelon grant it greater freedom of action.[28] The Americans, for their part, persisted in their attempts to bring the two sides to the negotiating table, and President Clinton proposed an outline for an agreement, which was accepted by Israel.[29] However, the proposal was thwarted—by Barghouti and his associates on the Palestinian side, and by Israeli military leaders on the other. In his memoirs, Ben-Ami recalled, "The rebelliousness reached its

peak in the response of the chief of staff . . . to the Clinton Plan. He [Shaul Mofaz] saw it as his duty not only to undermine the plan at the government meeting, but even to appear before the media and the nation to express his opinion against an agreement that the political echelon had pursued and ultimately adopted. He did all this as if he were an elected representative who must account for his actions to the public and the nation, rather than an appointed functionary accountable solely to the political echelon above him" (Ben-Ami, 2006: 320). In the resulting public atmosphere, Barak gradually lost his coalition, and on 9 December 2001 he called for new elections.[30] He was confident that he would receive a renewed mandate, but his expectations proved greater than his capabilities, and his period in office came to an end. He resigned in the hope that the public would clamor for his return, but the electorate actually preferred Sharon, who promised a more vigorous approach to eliminating the Palestinian uprising and to halting terrorism.

Both the military and religious society claimed credit for winning the elections. They were confident that Sharon would suppress the Palestinian uprising and terminate the Oslo Accords.[31] Faithful to his lifelong military background, Sharon indeed acted immediately to introduce new methods and tactics. The IDF entered a period of frenetic activity, reflected in the high number of Palestinians killed and injured in the period February through May 2001.[32]

The Palestinian struggle also intensified; and beginning in March 2001, suicide attacks became the main strategic weapon used to this end. The attacks had a particularly strong public impact when they were conducted inside Israel itself, targeting innocent civilians and causing a considerable number of fatalities and injuries (Shai, 2003: 94–95). The willingness of some young Palestinians to commit suicide in this manner probably reflected a loss of hope and a desire to give their lives for the national cause. A martyr is a person whose willingness to suffer, and in this case even to die, attests to his faith. The Palestinian national struggle has highlighted the character of the martyr, or *shahid* in Arabic. Some observers have attempted to reduce the phenomenon to its religious and beneficial motives (the seventy-two virgins that await the *shahid* in paradise, according to folk tradition), or to purely utilitarian motives (the family of the *shahid* receives money from the Palestinian Authority). Researchers have also studied the psychological characteristics of the phenomenon, claiming that the *shahids* had suicidal tendencies and were often encouraged by social pressure and group dynamics (Merari, 2010). However, the principal motivation of these Palestinians was religious and national zeal.[33] Naturally, the phenomenon has aroused a great deal of anger among Israelis

because of the heavy toll it took. Moreover, Israelis are educated to believe that only they manifest national determination, whereas the Palestinians are unwilling to sacrifice themselves for a national or religious cause. Be that as it may, the phenomenon of suicide attacks illustrated the ineffectiveness of the Israeli combat doctrine of "consciousness and attrition" as a means of solving problems. The harsher Israel's response to the Palestinians, the more militant the Palestinians became and the more they volunteered to be *shahids*.[34]

At the same time, a new global discourse was created in international politics that some Israelis tried to make relevant to the local conflict in Israel. The attacks on 9/11 added a new dimension to global and Israeli politics. It was much easier than in the past to "sell" the argument that the Palestinian struggle for independence was no more than an annex of the global war of terror against the free world.

A few days after the attacks, Sharon declared in the Knesset that Israel had been subject for 120 years to Arab, Palestinian, and Muslim terror and had paid a high price, with thousands of fatalities, widows, and orphans. Terrorist acts against Israeli citizens were no different than the terror directed against American citizens by Bin Laden, he claimed: this was the same horror, the same evil, and the same inhumanity (Knesset Proceedings, 16 September 2001). Sharon extracted the phenomenon of terrorism from any context and imbued it with transcendental significance, a type of deus ex machina against whom the forces of good must unite. This analysis ignored the Israeli occupation, the violent suppression of the intifada, and the conservative and fundamentalist forces within Israeli-Jewish society. Sharon's view of reality ignored all these elements. He expected the United States to accept his equation of the terror it faced to that directed against Israel. He welcomed President George W. Bush's decision to establish a coalition against terror, expressing his hope that the coalition would join Israel in combating Arafat's organization. The Americans, however, were in no rush to adopt Israel's approach. They presumably did not wish to weaken the Palestinian Authority under Arafat, which they still saw as a partner, and accordingly Bush decided that Israel would not be part of the international coalition formed "to strike a military blow against terror."[35]

It was Benjamin Netanyahu, however, who turned the word *terror* into a key component of the lexicon used to describe Israel's enemies. The former prime minister had gained a global reputation as an expert on terror. Immediately after 9/11, he was invited to offer his opinion on the issue before the Reform Committee in the House of Representatives. He highlighted

what he saw as the similarity between Israel and the United States: "The soldiers of Islam do not hate the West because of Israel—they hate Israel because of the West, because they see it as an island of democratic Western values in a Muslim-Arab sea of tyranny."[36]

A turning point in the connection between the local and the global came on 3 January 2002, when Israel seized the weapons ship MV *Karine A* on the high seas, after a lengthy monitoring operation. The seizure of the ship was a major coup for Israel. Its commandos stormed the ship at a point some five hundred kilometers from Eilat and took control of the vessel with little opposition. The *Karine A* was carrying fifty tons of weapons—an enormous quantity by any standards. The arms and the ship's voyage had been funded by Iran, thereby enabling Israel to display a "smoking gun" proving the connection between the Palestinian struggle and global terror. The Americans were convinced, and Arafat lost the little standing he still enjoyed. Israel was now co-opted to the "global war on terror."[37] As a result, the IDF became even less restrained in its actions against the Palestinian uprising; yet this only led to a parallel increase in the intensity of the Palestinian terror attacks. Some eighteen months after the outbreak of the uprising, and after almost three hundred Israelis and one thousand Palestinians had died, it became apparent, by March 2002, that the Israeli government was unable to provide its citizens with security. Much of the Israeli public showed an increasingly extreme reaction to the situation, including manifestations of racism. A popular car bumper sticker declared, "No Arabs—no terror attacks." A rabbi named Yisrael Rosen suggested that Israel should punish the nuclear and extended families of those responsible for the attacks by confiscating their property, expelling them, and "eliminating" the villages from which they came.[38] While this is an extreme example, it underscores the direction that public opinion can take in a crisis when it is whipped up by identity politics based on ethno-nationalist and military assumptions.

OPERATION DEFENSIVE SHIELD

After 35 Israelis were killed in December 2001, the situation deteriorated still further. February was a devastating month, with 155 Israelis killed and hundreds injured in attacks around the country. It became clear that Israel would be forced to escalate its response. In the meantime, an important development took place in the diplomatic sphere. Many of Israel's Arab neighbors

feared that the Palestinian uprising could destabilize their own regimes. In mid-February, during a conversation with the prominent American journalist Thomas Friedman, the Saudi crown prince announced an initiative to reach a diplomatic agreement between the Arab nations and Israel.[39] The initiative was formally launched on 29 March 2002 at an Arab League summit in Beirut. It called for a full Israeli withdrawal from the Occupied Territories, including east Jerusalem, in accordance with the United Nations resolution calling for the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel. The decision also proposed a "just solution" to the refugee problem. In return, the Arab nations would fully normalize their relations "in a context of peace." The Arab League adopted the initiative, which thus became the formal position of the Arab world.

This was the first time that the Arab nations had officially and jointly recognized Israel as a sovereign state in the heart of the Arab world and had acknowledged the vital need for peace. The proposal was not without its problems from the Israeli perspective—for example, regarding the ongoing refusal of Hamas to recognize Israel. But Israel did not request clarifications or propose changes to the agreement; neither did it use the proposal as a basis for diplomatic discussions. Its leaders preferred simply to ignore the initiative; and accordingly, reality continued to be shaped on the ground through violence and war.[40]

Was it a coincidence that Israel launched a major military operation to retake direct control of the entire West Bank the day after the Arab world accepted the Saudi peace initiative? Whatever the case, a particularly devastating attack on the first night of Passover (March 27) at the Park Hotel in Netanya, which killed 29 people and injured 140, led to the decision to reoccupy the areas transferred to the Palestinian Authority, which had already been defined by the military and the government as a "terrorist authority." The chief of staff, Mofaz, one of the most political military leaders in Israel's history, adhered to an openly deterministic worldview. When asked whether he believed that the Palestinians still wanted to drive Israelis out of the country, he replied, "Even if there is some kind of agreement with the Palestinians, they won't see it as the end of the conflict. They do not recognize the State of Israel and its right to exist in the Land of Israel."[41]

Four divisions of reserve soldiers were charged with the task of retaking the West Bank—a force similar to that which fought along the Suez Canal in the 1973 war. The response rate among reserve soldiers was higher than expected. The disagreements within Israeli society appeared to have disap-

peared in the face of the threat of terror, the heavy price it had exacted, and the resulting anger at the path taken by the Palestinians. The IDF quickly reoccupied the six main cities in the West Bank. The battle in Jenin, a city in the northwest of the West Bank with a refugee camp in its center, exhibited some of the main features of a new war, particularly in terms of tightening up the symbolic and physical boundaries and the shaping of identity and sovereignty. The IDF brought in D-13 bulldozers and armored troop carriers to blaze a path through the refugee camp and reach the shooters, resulting in the destruction of 314 homes—approximately 7 percent of the total number of homes in the camp.[42] After its soldiers became entangled in the dense alleyways and thirteen were killed in an ambush, the IDF continued to destroy houses in the camp as an act of revenge. It is difficult to see the destruction as an example of classic wars, following which soldiers are decorated for their bravery. Rather, it seems to testify to ethno-national sentiments of hatred and revenge, translated into systematic destruction. By the end of the fighting, the bulldozers had left a razed site of one hundred square meters in the center of the camp.[43]

Operation Defensive Shield led to the massive destruction of private and public Palestinian infrastructures. The IDF used bulldozers, tank mortars, and rockets, often fired from helicopters. It has been estimated that 2,800 homes were damaged during the operation, 878 of which were completely destroyed.[44] The nine weeks of fighting ended with 497 fatalities and 1,447 injuries on the Palestinian side. On the Israeli side, 30 soldiers were killed and over 100 civilians were injured. As had been seen in the past, the eruption of violence led to renewed protests within Israeli society.

The Courage to Refuse movement was established in January 2002, and within a year over 500 reserve soldiers and officers had declared that they would refuse to respond to orders to report for duty.[45] As in the case of Peace Now and Yesh Gvul, the members of the movement emphasized their identity as Zionists and combat soldiers who had not shirked from participating in Israel's wars in the past. Now, they argued, they were taking a stance against what they saw as war crimes committed by the IDF against the civilian population, and a stance against the use of the military to advance the narrow interests of the settlers. The movement focused mainly on collecting and publishing testimonies, and these were plentiful and often shocking.[46] Civil society in Israel awoke once again, staging a demonstration attended by some 20,000 people, the largest since Sharon was elected prime minister. The protestors offered an alternative perspective for considering the endangerment

of soldiers' lives and the harming of Palestinian civilians, highlighting the futility of war. Palestinians from the territories also attended the demonstration, including the veteran public figure Sari Nusseibeh, who attempted to illustrate the presence of an alternative to the endless cycle of violence and blood.[47]

Alongside the revival of civil society, there was also a heightened tendency toward intolerance, verging on political persecution, of anyone who refused to fall in line with the consensus position. Yafa Yarkoni, a veteran and much-admired popular singer who had once been dubbed the "war songstress" owing to her patriotic appearances on the front line, expressed her opposition to the war, saying, "We are a people that experienced the Holocaust, how can we do such things?" Her performances were boycotted, she received hate mail and threats, and a planned ceremony in her honor was cancelled. Even President Moshe Katzav joined in the chorus of protest.[48]

Following the appointment of Moshe Ya'alon as chief of staff on 9 July 2002, the IDF increasingly embodied an approach of instrumental rationalism, which characterized the new professional militarism and was based on camouflaged ethno-national assumptions. The architect of the "consciousness and attrition" doctrine now became its chief executor, assisted by Major General Dan Halutz, commander of the Israeli Air Force, who was a strong believer in the ability to win military campaigns from a distance using airpower. On July 22, just two weeks after assuming his office, Ya'alon ordered the assassination of Salah Shehadeh, the dominant figure in the armed wing of Hamas, who was accused by Israel of planning or approving numerous terror attacks. Shehadeh was killed by means of a one-ton bomb dropped from an F-16 fighter jet onto a residential building in Gaza City. Shehadeh was hiding in an apartment in the building and was killed along with fifteen others present in the building, including six children; some seventy people were injured. Shehadeh's wife and three children were among those killed.[49] After some Israelis criticized the action, Halutz appeared on television. Ostensibly addressing his pilots, he declared, "Guys, sleep well at night. . . . You don't choose the objectives and you didn't choose the target in this instance. You aren't responsible for the content of the target. Your execution was perfect." The interviewer retorted, "A pilot drops a bomb, and without intending to do so kills children. Isn't it legitimate to ask the pilot how he feels about it?" Halutz's answer was unequivocal: "If you really want to know how I feel when I let a bomb drop, I'll tell you: I feel a slight bump in the airplane due to the release of the bomb. It passes after a second and that's all. That's what I feel."[50] Halutz's comments clarified that in the IDF of

the twenty-first century, soldiers should not let their feelings guide their actions. Executing the task—not discretion or morality—was their obligation.

Field commanders, too, expressed their opposition to the activities of the peace movements. This is hardly surprising given the growing proportion of settlers and their supporters within the military, and the rising influence they enjoyed (Levy, 2007, 2015). Lieutenant Colonel Erez Weiner, commander of the Duchifat infantry battalion, is a good example. Weiner wore a *kippa* and was a settler from a settler family. In an interview marking his retirement from his position, he mentioned the "good Jews" who bothered him and his comrades in the territories. He claimed that they would come to "hold the bad guys' hands" and to curse the soldiers. "If there's something that really bugs me, it's them. Arafat and his men are Arabs. . . . But when a member of your own people does it, it's much harder." These comments are a classic manifestation of ethno-nationalism, and they highlight the politicization the IDF had undergone under the settlers' influence. Weiner was also forthright when it came to those who refused to serve: "They're scum. Plain and simple. You can quote me and name me on that."[51]

A milestone in the phenomenon of refusal to serve in the IDF came toward the end of 2003, when the *Haaretz* newspaper published what became known as the "Pilots' Letter." Signed by twenty-seven pilots and addressed to Israeli Air Force commander Halutz, the letter declared the signatories' refusal to participate in bombing attacks on civilian population centers. The pilots also expressed their opposition to the occupation. One pilot later withdrew his support, while another joined. The signatories included four trainers from the flight school, considered Israel's best military pilots. One of these, Colonel (Ret.) Yiftah Spector, participated in the bombing of the Iraqi nuclear reactor in 1981 and was once a candidate to head the air force.[52]

Some individuals within Israeli society had already shown a willingness to challenge exclusive ethno-nationalism. In June 2003, for example, Ami Ayalon, a former commander of the Israeli Navy and former head of the Shabak, launched the National Census project together with Sari Nusseibeh, president of Al-Quds University in Jerusalem. The goal of the initiative was to apply public pressure on the leaderships of both sides to pursue a negotiated resolution of the conflict. By July 2004, the campaign managed to secure 340,000 signatures from Israelis and Palestinians.[53] Another initiative was the Geneva Initiative, signed at the beginning of October 2003 by Yossi Beilin, head of the Meretz Party and a former senior minister in the Israeli government, and Yasser Abd Rabbo, a member of the Palestinian Executive Committee and holder of

the information portfolio in the Palestinian Authority. The Geneva Initiative sought to complete the progress achieved during the Camp David Summit and the following January 2001 Taba Summit between Israelis and Palestinians, and to highlight the real potential for compromise and peace among Israelis and Palestinians. It also sought to refute the perennial claim that "there is no one to talk to."[54] A poll in an Israeli newspaper found that approximately one-third of Israelis supported the initiative.[55] Later, thirteen reserve soldiers from the elite Sayeret Matkal unit declared that they would refuse to serve in the Occupied Territories. The chief of staff quickly discharged them from the IDF.[56] The public debate was further fueled when four former heads of the Shabak broke their traditional silence and published, on 1 November 2003, a stark warning that "if we don't start to understand the other side, we won't get anywhere. We need to admit for once and for all that there is another side that has emotions and suffers, and that we are behaving shamefully."[57] These were piercing and clear words from the very heart of the Israeli establishment, and they created a dramatic response. Such criticism from military professionals and security chiefs must certainly have had an impact on Sharon.

THE ROAD MAP

International leaders, too, were searching for a way to end the intifada, and the United States launched the "Road Map" with this goal in mind. The Road Map called for the creation of two states within secure borders, and for an end to the occupation. The Road Map document adopted a practical tone, providing a timetable and clear milestones based on reciprocal steps by both sides.[58] The Americans forced both the Palestinians and the Israelis to accept the plan, and Sharon surprised the Israeli public by declaring in the Knesset that the occupation was bad and that the conflict had to be ended. As "one of their own," stalwarts of military and religious society had expected Sharon to stall the Road Map and were stunned by his declaration.[59] Sharon's behavior was reminiscent of that of Charles de Gaulle, another former general, who had been elected president of France with the goal of keeping Algeria in French hands, but who ultimately returned it to its Arab inhabitants. On 4 June 2003, a summit was held in Aqaba, Jordan, to approve and advance the plan. The summit was attended by Palestinian Authority leader Abu Mazen, Sharon, King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, and George W. Bush. The sides reached understandings, and the government of Abu Mazen subsequently

managed to secure a *hudna,* or cease-fire, by the Palestinian armed organizations. Even Hamas promised not to thwart the process.[60]

However, the *hudna* lasted just two months, and a new wave of terror attacks rose. On 4 October 2003, for example, a young Palestinian woman entered the Maxim Restaurant in Haifa. After eating, she walked up to the counter and blew herself up, killing twenty people and injuring dozens more, including entire families who had been sitting and enjoying their meals.[61] The IDF responded increasingly fiercely to the attacks, and collective punishment became a routine matter. Meanwhile, Sharon announced that Israel would withdraw from the Gaza Strip. Contrary to popular opinion, the move was not intended as a gesture of compromise with the Palestinians. Sharon had never trusted the Palestinians and never reached any agreement with them regarding the withdrawal. This was a unilateral decision, reminiscent of Barak's decision to withdraw from Lebanon a few years earlier, which had also been implemented without any agreement with Arab bodies. In colorful language, Sharon's close adviser Dov Weissglass commented, "You deal the cards by yourself. Solitaire."[62]

The settlers were furious at the decision to withdraw from the Gaza Strip, and Weissglass was taken aback at their rage. In a revealing interview, he explained, "The concept of a peace process is a collection of concepts and undertakings. A peace process means establishing a Palestinian state, with all the security risks this entails. A peace process means evicting settlements, bringing back refugees, and dividing Jerusalem. And all this has been frozen." He continued, "What I have basically agreed with the Americans is that we won't discuss some of the settlements at all, and we won't discuss the other settlements until the Palestinians become Finns. That's the significance of what we've done. . . . All this with the president's blessings and the approval of both houses of Congress. What more could we want? What more could we have brought the settlers?"[63] And so, at the price of removing a handful of settlements from the Gaza Strip, Israel froze the possibility of a peace agreement centering on the establishment of a Palestinian state. It maintained its position that "there is no partner," and the withdrawal from Gaza finally ended the Oslo process. Sometime later, Israel issued an official statement: "Israel has reached the conclusion that there is currently no Palestinian partner with whom a bilateral peace process might be advanced. In light of this, a plan has been formulated for unilateral disengagement."[64]

The Americans were so pleased by the Disengagement Plan that they made two significant changes to their long-standing position. "It is unrealistic,"

Bush wrote, "that the final outcome of the negotiations will be a full and complete return to the armistice lines of 1949." Bush was effectively implying that the large settlement blocs close to the Green Line would in the future be annexed to Israel. As for the Palestinian right of return, he wrote, "It seems clear that an agreed, just, fair, and realistic framework for solving the issue of the Palestinian refugees . . . will be found through the establishment of a state and the settlement of the Palestinians there, and not in Israel."[65]

Meanwhile, as the intifada dragged on, opposition to the conflict grew among the Israeli public. Demobilized soldiers formed a protest movement, and in the spirit of the reflexive global era, these focused in particular on creating and disseminating knowledge. The movement, called Breaking the Silence, was an organization of veterans who collected testimonies about IDF actions against the civilian population in the Occupied Territories. It began its activities in June 2004 with an exhibition that provoked widespread interest. The picture portrayed by the organization contradicted the usual claims that violent soldiers were "bad apples" whose actions were exceptional, as the defense minister, Mofaz, had argued when asked to explain the phenomenon. Instead, it suggested that institutionalized violence had become the norm in the IDF.[66]

The basic assumptions underlying such norms were clarified in a newspaper interview with Colonel Pinchas Zuaretz, commander of the Southern Brigade in the Gaza Strip. Commenting on the destruction of homes in the city of Rafah, Zuaretz remarked that he would be willing to obliterate hundreds of homes in order to protect his soldiers. He also expressed a clear position regarding the killing of Palestinians, explaining that he would rather sacrifice ten Palestinian civilians than lose a single Israeli soldier. He addressed his interviewer, mocking the bleeding hearts on the home front who insisted on asking questions and the worried mothers who demanded answers. "You've gotten confused—we're at war," he told them. As for the five-year-old Palestinian girl who was killed, Zuaretz responded that he regretted the fact that children die, but that this was a war zone: "She didn't live in [the prosperous town] Savyon, but in Rafah.[67] Zuaretz, too, paid a personal price for war: less than a month after the interview, his foot was torn off by a powerful incendiary device. His comments provide a powerful illustration of the exclusivist and profoundly anticivil ethno-national approach, which was encouraged by various elements within Israeli society. At the beginning of September 2014, for example, fourteen heads of Hesder yeshivas and city rabbis signed a statement declaring that "in the war with the Palestinians it is impossible to

distinguish between the [civilian] population and the terrorists," and accordingly "it is also permissible to harm civilians."[68]

The four-year intifada ended with 1,117 Israeli fatalities and 8,022 injuries—in both cases, 70 percent of the victims were civilians. The losses on the Palestinian side were several times higher: some 3,980 Palestinians were killed and 32,000 injured. Approximately half the Palestinian victims were civilians.[69] The statistics paint a depressing picture of the destructive potential of ethno-nationalism resulting from its inability to compromise and its insistence on war as the instrument for marking boundaries and excluding the other. Thousands of innocent people who were not involved in the decision to go to war, who did not execute it, and—in most cases—who were not mentally or physically equipped to cope with it, became the victims of this ideology.[70]

As the intifada waned, Sharon turned to his plan to evacuate the Israeli settlements from the Gaza Strip. At the same time, he made another unilateral decision that has had a profound impact on the reality in the area ever since: the construction of the Separation Barrier between Israel and the West Bank.[71]

THE SEPARATION BARRIER AND THE WITHDRAWAL FROM GAZA

The intifada may be seen as an attempt by the Palestinians to force Israelis to accept their existence, their needs, and their desires. The length and height of Israel's Separation Barrier may be seen not only as an attempt to emphasize which side determines reality in the region but also as an instrument for rendering the Palestinians invisible. The barrier was conceived in response to grassroots pressure to create some form of separation between Israelis and Palestinians in the West Bank. It was argued that the divide would bring security, and accordingly it is often referred to in Israel as the "Security Barrier." However, the barrier was not constructed along the Green Line—for most of its length, it runs somewhat east of the line, inside the West Bank itself. This route emphasizes that the barrier forms part of the new war in the area, and that it is not—as its advocates claimed—a means intended to end war. The route of the barrier also clarified beyond any possible doubt Israel's aspiration to annex parts of the West Bank.

Public criticism around the world and in Israel concerned both the construction of the barrier and the chosen route. The barrier followed a twisting

and convoluted course on the ground, crossing hills and valleys, surrounding Palestinian towns and villages, and disconnecting homes from their land and water sources. The area to the west of the barrier included not only settlements but also hundreds of thousands of Palestinian residents. These Palestinians now became subject to the so-called Seam Zone regime, which required them to obtain endless permits in order to move from place to place, and to wait for soldiers to open gates so that they could reach their land, workplace, or school. The settler lobby played a key role in determining the course of the barrier and benefited considerably from the process. Settlers who were now to the west of the barrier were essentially brought inside Israel. Those to the east were separated by the barrier, but—unlike the Palestinians—they crossed the gates and checkpoints without hindrance. Accordingly, the barrier highlighted the privileged status of those who belonged to the "right" ethno-national group.

In some instances, the Israeli court obliged the government to change the course of the barrier in order to reduce the damage to Palestinians.[72] Many Israelis saw such rulings as manifestations of the remnants of a civil perception that still lingered on in Israel. Indeed, in June 2006 the court sharply criticized the state for claiming that the barrier was intended solely for security purposes, establishing that it was clearly also determined by the interests of the settlers and the desire to expand Jewish settlements at the expense of Palestinians. The court, however, did not reject the justification for constructing a barrier, even though the amended course was still well east of the Green Line in many areas and its construction required the confiscation of large areas of Palestinian land. It as well did not challenge the informal purpose of the barrier: the desire to expropriate part of the West Bank and to ensure that 75 percent of the settlers could be annexed to Israel without having to move an inch.[73]

In December 2005, the Israeli human rights organizations B'Tselem and Bimkom published a lengthy report, accompanied by maps and diagrams, explaining the cynical exploitation of security as a pretext for expropriating land in accordance with the narrow interests of the settlers.[74] The process of establishing the barrier not only provided powerful testimony to the settlers' influence in Israel but also substantiated the claim that the essential objective was to establish an "ethnic boundary" (Gambash, 2010). Palestinians demonstrated widely against the construction of the barrier, in some cases in cooperation with Israeli sympathizers. Had the barrier been constructed along the armistice lines accepted by Israel in the Rhodes agreements of 1949, rather than on confiscated Palestinian land, it might have become a symbol of

agreement, rather than a physical emblem of conflict hinting at the next round of violence to come.[75]

In the meantime, on 11 November 2004, Arafat died in circumstances that remain unclear to this day. Israel had claimed for years that "Arafat was the problem" preventing progress toward peace. Had this been the case, there should now have been an opportunity to end the war. The Americans took this approach and began to encourage efforts to promote an agreement following Israel's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip. Abu Mazen, who replaced Arafat as head of the Palestinian Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority, managed to persuade the various armed groups to agree to a cease-fire. The Arabic term used this time was *tahdiya,* a more restrained concept that can be translated as "calming." An atmosphere of cautious optimism developed both in Israel and in the Palestinian Authority areas. In an interview for the *New York Times,* Abu Mazen commented that "the war with Israel has effectively ended, and the Israeli prime minister is speaking to the Palestinians in a different language."[76]

The spirit of *tahdiya* was hardly in evidence in Sharon's own party—the Likud. A group dubbed the Rebels emerged to oppose the prime minister's initiatives. Sharon was forced to agree to an internal poll in the party, and suffered a major blow: 59.5 percent of Likud members voted against his Disengagement Plan, with only 39.7 percent offering their support. Sharon persisted with his plan despite the result.[77]

On 20 April 2005, the Knesset approved the withdrawal from Gaza. The settlers repeatedly threatened to resist the eviction by force. Rabbis urged soldiers to go AWOL rather than participate in the eviction.[78] A majority of Israelis supported Sharon's plan, comprising not only civil society but also the "silent majority" in the middle of the spectrum, who tended to share the view that the Gaza Strip had brought Israel nothing but problems, and that there was no justification for maintaining a small number of settlements among a huge and hostile Palestinian population. The preparations to evict some eighty-six hundred Jewish settlers took many months. After many years of cooperating with the settlers, the IDF found it was far from easy to undertake the task of removing them from their homes. Sharon was determined, however, and even took the unprecedented decision not to extend the period of office of the chief of staff, Moshe Ya'alon, owing to his comments against the planned withdrawal.[79]

The opponents of the withdrawal staged large demonstrations. In their desperation, many were convinced that divine intervention would prevent

the eviction of the settlers. One of the settler rabbis calmly suggested that Israel should go to war with the Palestinians rather than proceed with the plan.[80] The elite units of the IDF now included a high proportion of religious soldiers, who faced a sharp dilemma, particularly when the settler rabbis urged them to disobey their orders.[81]

The evacuation began on August 17, under the symbolic operation name A Hand for the Brothers. The eviction was accompanied by hugs and tears on all sides, to the point that it seemed as if all those involved were experiencing a shared tragedy. Here and there violent clashes emerged between the forces and the young protestors, but the process continued and was even completed ahead of schedule. In Neve Dekalim, the largest settlement in the Gaza Strip, some fifteen hundred people holed up in the synagogue—men in one hall and women in the other. Military and police representatives engaged in lengthy and exhausting negotiations. But when these ended in failure, the security forces began to slowly remove the protestors. The men were dragged out first, some of them taking the opportunity to burn Israeli flags on camera. The women then agreed to leave, emerging exhausted and broken. In scenes that were both moving and fascinating, young girls sang psalms in the synagogue sanctuary, begging God to save them and prevent the evil decree from being enacted. "O Lord, hear my prayer, and let my cry come unto Thee; / Hide not Thy face from me in the day of my distress," they cried, reciting the words of Psalm 102.[82] God did not come to aid of the desperate girls, but the painful images underscored the fatal error made by those who sought to reduce the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to rational politics and cool calculations.

Though the settlers were enraged, Sharon and his advisors were convinced that they had found a formula that would enable the majority of them to remain in the West Bank on occupied Palestinian land. Sharon thus attempted—and for a while, perhaps, succeeded—to follow a third way, one that differed both from the approach of religious-militaristic society and from civil society, thereby balancing the conflicting streams in Israeli society. This move came at a price, however. The construction of the Separation Barrier inside the West Bank, effectively annexing land and settlements, and the withdrawal from Gaza without an agreement, led the Palestinians to conclude that while the occupation might change its form and evolve into a more indirect model of control, the conflict and the war were destined to continue along the ethno-national, religious, and militaristic line.

TEN

Religious and Militaristic Nationalism

ISRAEL'S NEW WARS

On 4 January 2006, Ariel Sharon, the prime minister, suffered a stroke and went into a coma that proved protracted and irreversible. Ehud Olmert of Sharon's Kadima Party formed a new government, and Amir Peretz from the Labor Party was appointed defense minister in that government. Since both Olmert and Peretz were civilians rather than retired generals, some observers suggested that the civilian component of Israeli society would again gain the upper hand, and that Israel would be more inclined to seek compromise and peace. However, Israel has a strong tradition of what Alfred Vagts ([1937] 1959) called "civilian militarism," in which the military perspective penetrates civilian thinking and takes over crucial political issues. Given this tradition and the logic of "path dependence," in which the past in such matters is seen as relevant to the present, leaders find it difficult not to choose military methods as the means to solve political problems. Moreover, it has not yet been proved that civilians are necessarily greater advocates of peace than military leaders are.[1]

Among the Palestinians, too, a measure of optimism arose after prisoners from Hamas and Fatah reached a joint agreement on their goals and discussed a possible unification between the two movements to struggle for a Palestinian state limited to the territories occupied by Israel in 1967. The idea was that Palestinian "resistance" would be confined solely to these areas. On 10 May 2006, the two Palestinian groups signed the National Document, which became known in Israel as the "Prisoners' Document." The special status enjoyed by prisoners in Palestinian society enhanced the importance of the document. Informed observers predicted that the document would lead to the signing of a peace agreement with Israel. However, events that occurred at the end of the same month prevented any possibility that the Palestinians might adopt a uniform and relatively moderate position.[2]

On 24 June 2006, the IDF entered the Gaza Strip and kidnapped two members of Hamas. The next day, Palestinian combatants attacked an IDF outpost on the Israeli side of the border around the Gaza Strip. The combatants used a tunnel that had been under construction for many months, killing two IDF soldiers and kidnapping a third soldier, Gilad Shalit.[3] The kidnappers demanded that Israel release all Palestinian prisoners under the age of eighteen, but the prime minister, Ehud Olmert, refused to negotiate with those he termed "terrorists"—a word that in Israeli rhetoric is applied even to Palestinian combatants who attack a military post.

The kidnapping of Gilad Shalit and the killing of two members of his tank crew embarrassed the IDF, and particularly the Southern Command, which responded by launching a series of raids on the Gaza Strip involving large numbers of troops, causing serious damage to the operational infrastructures of Hamas. Operation Summer Rains began at the end of June 2006 and was defined as a "rolling" operation. In other words, while the starting date was known, the end of the operation was deliberately kept vague—a typical feature of new wars. The operation dragged on for several months and became a prolonged act of vengeance against the Palestinians for daring to penetrate Israel and kidnap and kill soldiers, showing technical resourcefulness, courage, and operational capability. Hamas had even held a press conference immediately after the incident, bragging about its achievement and, subsequently, refusing Israeli proposals concerning the "price" to be paid for the return of the soldier.[4]

On 7 July, Ismail Haniya, the Hamas prime minister in the Gaza Strip, offered Israel a mutual cease-fire accompanied by efforts to return Gilad Shalit to Israel by diplomatic rather than military means. The Israeli government refused to halt its fire or to withdraw its forces from the Gaza Strip unless Shalit was released unconditionally (Eldar, 2012: 218–27). Once again, the desire on the part of Israel's leaders to emphasize the unequal balance of power between Israel and Hamas dictated the course of events and ultimately the fate of the soldier. Various components of civil society, such as the Meretz party and Peace Now, urged Olmert to accept Haniya's cease-fire offer, but even relatively moderate ministers from the Labor Party preferred to continue the campaign of vengeance.[5] Although new hands had taken over the Israeli leadership, the ethno-national and militaristic ideology remained unchanged.

The number of Palestinians killed and injured in the IDF's rolling campaigns grew daily. For example, in a single week (1–7 November 2006), sixty-eight Palestinians were killed.[6] On 26 November, Ehud Olmert and Abu

Mazen finally reached agreement on a cease-fire. By this time, however, the Palestinians had already sustained four hundred fatalities and over a thousand injuries. In keeping with the typical profile of a new war, almost half of the victims were civilians. The lack of symmetry between the two sides was underscored by that fact that just five Israelis were killed, three of whom were soldiers (including one killed by "friendly fire"). Some sixty Israelis were injured.[7] The relatively low number of injuries on the Israeli side reflected the inaccuracy of the Qassam rockets used by Hamas, as well as Israel's increasing ability to defend its civilians with bomb shelters and other protective means. Nevertheless, a ratio of four hundred to five also suggests an element of vengeance and a desire to put the "others" in their place through the disproportionate use of firepower. The ambitious theory that harming the Palestinians would change their consciousness thus proved to be mistaken, and not for the first time, unless the purpose was different—namely, to raise the walls of hatred and hostility between the sides. According to the cease-fire agreement, the Palestinian organizations were supposed to end their rocket attacks on Israeli communities in return for the withdrawal of the IDF forces from Gaza. However, no one had any illusions that the cease-fire would last any longer than its many predecessors. In the meantime, attention shifted to the northern front, where the Hizbullah leader Hassan Nasrallah decided to launch a series of attacks against Israel.

THE SECOND LEBANON WAR

The declared objective of the campaign of violence launched by Hizbullah in 2006 was to secure the release of Samir Quntar, who had been held in Israeli jails for many years. In 1979, Quntar had headed a terror cell that crossed the border into northern Israel and committed shocking murders. Israel broke a promise to free Quntar, or at least Nasrallah claimed that this was the case, turning it into a symbol of resistance to Israel. On 12 July 2006, after its fighters failed twice to kidnap Israeli soldiers, Hizbullah attacked an IDF patrol moving inside Israeli territory, killing several reserve soldiers and kidnapping two others.

As Nasrallah himself later admitted, he did not anticipate Israel's reaction to the kidnapping and did not foresee the war that would erupt. In Israel, Dan Halutz, the chief of staff, announced that he would "exact a price" from Hizbullah. He was determined to prove that the "Kosovo theory"—which

argues that a war can be won by aerial bombardments—also applied in the Israeli context. Halutz was convinced that Israel could exploit its technological superiority and its total control of the skies in order to determine the outcome of the war by "remote control," using massive bombardments and "surgical" attacks by fighter planes.[8] The Israeli response was also influenced by the desire of Olmert and Peretz to prove that a "civilian" government is no less hawkish and determined than those headed by former generals. Accordingly, the two leaders decided with exceptional speed to go to war, disregarding any realistic approach that would see war as a last resort, used only when diplomatic efforts to find a solution have failed. Their militant declarations at the beginning of the operation, and the overwhelming support for the war among the Israeli public (Ben-Meir, 2007: 87), highlight the way in which Israel was swept unthinkingly into war.

Olmert and Peretz essentially repeated in Lebanon the same mistake they had made in the Gaza Strip: attempting to impose an ultimatum on the basis of military might by dealing a severe blow to the other side. As in so many new wars, the "weaker" side managed to adopt surprising methods that the "stronger" side found difficult to overcome. Over a period of thirty-three days of fighting, Israel was unable to secure a clear victory over Hizbullah, whose fighters numbered no more than a few thousand. Throughout this period, Hizbullah continued to fire rockets into the north of Israel, striking targets in various locations, including the city of Haifa. Meanwhile, in Lebanon, the Hizbullah fighters managed to outmaneuver the Israeli soldiers, hiding in caves and carefully concealed areas that the IDF was reluctant to enter.

Some Israeli military experts questioned the tactics adopted during the war. Major General (Ret.) Uri Sagi, a former head of the IDF Intelligence Division who was well acquainted with Lebanon, suggested that Israel should not be tempted by the claim that the air force alone could eliminate Hizbullah. At the same time, he opposed the use of infantry forces inside Lebanon. Instead, he suggested that Israel enter into negotiations with Syria, which might even open a channel for dialogue with Iran. Sagi explained that the world would soon forget that the war started with the kidnapping of Israeli soldiers by Hizbullah and would remember only Israel's attacks on the civilians of a neighboring country.[9] Indeed, even in Israel, a militaristic perspective on reality has not been adopted by all generals, at all times. The Kosovo theory used by Israel led to the devastation of Lebanon yet failed to achieve its objective. Israel managed to neutralize Hizbullah's long-range missiles, winning credit for a remarkable intelligence and military success,

but shorter-range rockets and missiles continued to strike the north of Israel, and the attacks only intensified as the war dragged on. In a new war the home front becomes part of the front line: Israeli civilians suffered during the war, while the nation's leaders urged them to be patient and to support the military operation. This reversal of functions is not unusual in a new war, when the home front encourages the military, rather than the military ensuring the well-being of civilians.

A review of the minutes of meetings held during the war shows that the chief of staff, Halutz, in a classic form of instrumental militarism, consistently advocated the destruction of infrastructures in Lebanon. At a meeting of the security cabinet on 9 August 2006, he complained, "We said that we would hold Lebanon responsible as a state. But what's going on? We haven't even touched their infrastructures. The electricity is working, oil is flowing, the phones work, they have water."[10]

Predictably, the United Nations and the United States forced Israel to accept a cease-fire. A last-minute attempt by the IDF to beat the clock served only to increase Israel's losses, leaving thirty-five soldiers dead and over four hundred wounded. In some respects, this final operation was reminiscent of Israel's attempt to occupy the city of Suez in the 1973 Yom Kippur War after the cease-fire had gone into effect. Israel also failed in its attempt to secure a "victory photograph" in the town of Bint Jabail, where Nasrallah had made his famous "spider's web" speech on 26 May 2006, in which he compared Israel to a spider's web that could easily be brushed aside.

The Israeli public, which had enthusiastically supported the war in its early stages, saw the final outcome as a failure. Public criticism focused on the ineffectiveness of the IDF's strategy and the inexperience of the political leadership. In the aftermath of the war, the claim that it would be possible to free the two kidnapped soldiers by means of a military operation—the same ambition that had proved futile in the case of Gilad Shalit—now seemed to reflect a quasi-magical belief in the IDF's capabilities. The severest criticism, however, was reserved for the IDF's failure to halt the rocket attacks that paralyzed life in half of Israel during the war. The IDF was perceived as having lingered along the border for weeks without securing any meaningful achievements.

Public pressure in Israel led to the formation of a committee of inquiry, headed by retired Justice Eliahu Vinograd, to investigate the war. The committee criticized the prime minister, defense minister, and chief of staff for their rash decision to launch the war "without proper examination," without properly training the military forces, and without defining clear goals and

operational plans for their implementation.[11] Needless to say, the committee confined its examination to the specific war that formed its mandate and did not address the broader problem—particularly in the era of new wars—created by the presence of ethno-nationalist and militaristic assumptions that are almost unthinkingly translated into militaristic politics and nonessential war. These lack any rational basis, even if various rational excuses are sometimes offered by those waging them.

As usual, the main conclusion drawn from the unsuccessful war was that the IDF must improve its preparations for the next round—a typical instrumental militaristic deduction. A further lesson was that whoever is appointed defense minister must have an extensive military background and be thoroughly familiar with the military institution. This conclusion was implemented immediately. Amir Peretz, who resigned instead of waiting to be dismissed, was replaced by the former chief of staff Ehud Barak. Halutz's unimpressive stint as chief of staff also came to an end, and he was replaced by army veteran Gabi Ashkenazi, who immediately began to prepare the IDF for a future conflict.[12] One detail that went unmentioned in the discourse following the Second Lebanon War was the mistake made by the prime minister and his cabinet in granting military leaders, and particularly the chief of staff, such a prominent voice in the decision-making process. In the meantime, calm returned to the north, and attention again focused on Israel's southern border.

CAST LEAD OR MOLTEN IRON?

In the summer of 2007, Hamas seized control of the Gaza Strip after fierce clashes with Fatah, during which dozens of people were killed. Qassam rockets were fired constantly into Israel, which responded with air attacks. The siege of the Gaza Strip continued throughout this period, preventing people and products from entering or leaving the area. On 19 September, on the initiative of the new defense minister, Ehud Barak, Israel declared the Gaza Strip a "hostile entity," a formal move that allowed Israel to restrict the supply of electricity and fuel to the area and to isolate it completely from the West Bank.

The new balance of forces that emerged following the seizure of control by Hamas in the Gaza Strip once again convinced the Americans that it would be possible to find a formula that could lead to an agreement between the Palestinian Authority and Israel. The Annapolis Conference, which began on 27 November 2007, was a show of American might orchestrated by the secre-

tary of state, Condoleezza Rice. In addition to the prime minister, Ehud Olmert, and the president of the Palestinian Authority, Abu Mazen, conference attendees included diplomats from the Quartet on the Middle East, the European Union, the United Nations, the Arab League, and representatives of almost fifty nations, including some that did not have diplomatic relations with Israel, such as Saudi Arabia and Lebanon. Even Syria sent representatives. This was the first significant Middle East conference since Camp David in 2000, and its chief objective was to reinforce the Road Map and express support for the Palestinian Authority in its confrontation with Hamas.[13] President Bush promised that the negotiations for a permanent agreement would begin immediately after the conference and would be completed by the end of 2008. Abu Mazen vowed to establish a single Palestinian Authority in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, with its capital in east Jerusalem. Olmert, faithful to Sharon's "third way," promised that Israel would make painful and dangerous compromises. He earnestly declared that "there is no path other than peace, no just solution other than two nation-states for two peoples." This was certainly an impressive attempt to pursue talks in which both Israel and the Palestinian Authority, under American auspices, might seek to formulate a permanent agreement and advance the two-state solution.[14]

If only the declarations could have matured into action. In Israel, the Peace Now movement organized demonstrations in favor of the solution proposed at the conference, while representatives of military and religious society staged counterdemonstrations and falsely stated that that Ehud Olmert was about to give up "everything."[15] The Annapolis process eventually failed to produce a permanent agreement. Olmert declined to discuss the division of sovereignty in Jerusalem, and he retracted positions Israel had presented during the Taba talks on the refugee issue, yet continued to demand that the Palestinians declare the end of the conflict and the resolution of all their claims against Israel. He effectively asked the Palestinians to sign, not an agreement, but a map—a demand that failed to meet their desires. Omer Tzanani (2015: 129–30) has written the only serious analysis to date of the Annapolis talks. He argues that the problem was not a personal one relating to Olmert, but a much broader set of obstacles, some of which were created by the Israeli side—and more specifically by the Israeli security establishment, which prevented Olmert from pursuing his goal of a meaningful agreement.

In Gaza, citizens protested against the siege imposed on them. Over thirty thousand Palestinians created a human chain across the territory, highlighting the price paid by innocent civilians in conflicts.[16] Needless to say, the

outcome of the Annapolis Conference did nothing to moderate Hamas's desire to confront Israel or the IDF's motivation to strike at the organization. On the contrary, Qassam rockets continued to fall in Israel, and the IDF responded with the usual tactics, but to no avail. From the summer of 2006 through the summer of 2007—the year following Operation Summer Rains—over a thousand Qassam rockets landed in Israel. The IDF exposed twenty-five tunnels, some of them booby-trapped; killed some 450 Palestinians; and injured over 800. The Qassam rockets did not cause significant fatalities on the Israeli side but took a heavy emotional toll in terms of the disruption of everyday life in the areas around the Gaza Strip. It was clear that the government could not allow the situation to continue.[17] In February 2008, the IDF launched Operation Hot Winter, killing five Hamas activists who had just returned from training in Iran. In response, Hamas fired more than forty rockets into Israel, and large IDF forces then crossed the border, killing over one hundred Palestinians, half of whom were civilians.[18]

On 27 February 2008, the IDF launched Operation Cast Lead, which was bigger and more ambitious than the preceding military operations in Gaza. On the first day, Israeli fighter planes launched a surprise raid, striking Hamas targets and killing some four hundred people, including eighty-nine police cadets attending their graduation ceremony. This attack sparked a debate in Israel—the new police officers were not combat fighters (five of them were members of the police orchestra), and many of them were probably not supporters of Hamas but young men looking for work in an area with chronic unemployment. However, Israel was determined to surprise its enemy, and it was certainly successful in this respect. Such tactics form part of the "shock and awe" doctrine developed by the United States military with the goal of demoralizing the enemy. It could be argued that such attacks actually have the opposite effect. In any case, such tactics highlight the fact that military doctrines are based on normative assumptions. In Israel's case, these assumptions led to a blurring of the distinction between different Palestinians, so that all were lumped together as the "other." From this position, the distinction between a Hamas fighter and a police officer playing a bass trombone indeed came to seem petty.[19]

Hamas continued to fire rockets into Israel and managed to increase their range dramatically. Once again, half of Israel (the southern half, this time) was forced into bomb shelters. After several days of mutual bombardments and fierce attacks against the Palestinians, using airplanes and artillery batteries, the IDF began the ground operation. In contrast to the Second

Lebanon War, the campaign began without delays. Dan Halutz had long since left the general staff, and the senior officers, headed by Southern Command GOC Yoav Galant, were firm supporters of ground combat.[20] One of their goals was to restore the IDF's prestige, which had been badly tarnished in Lebanon, or—to use the IDF's own language—"to rehabilitate Israel's deterrent capability." Accordingly, the IDF soldiers began to advance through the neighborhoods of the Gaza Strip, demolishing homes and targeting Hamas operatives. IDF soldiers were also killed, sometimes in "friendly fire" incidents. Most of the Israeli public supported the operation, but questions were nevertheless raised. Neither the political nor the military leadership appeared able to offer clear answers: Did the operation have specific objectives? Is it possible to eliminate Hamas by military means? Will the IDF not suffer heavy losses if it enters the most densely populated area in the world? Will the suffering of Palestinian civilians have any positive impact? Won't an invasion turn the world against us?

As the scale of destruction and killing reached a level that even Israel's friends found impossible to understand, international initiatives began to secure a cease-fire. The French president, Nicolas Sarkozy, called for a humanitarian cease-fire, but Israel rejected his plea. Olmert explained that even Arab leaders were urging him to continue to strike at Hamas.[21] Was Israel actually harming Hamas, however, or merely innocent civilians? At an Egyptian hospital, the civilian Ghada Abu Halima from Beit Lahiya in the Gaza Strip managed, before she passed away, to provide shocking testimony revealing the fate of civilians in a new war. Abu Halima's family made a living from agriculture and lived in a two-story home. On the evening of Saturday, 3 January, Israeli airplanes dropped leaflets urging the residents to leave their homes. The occupants of the house decided not to leave, since they had ignored similar leaflets in the past without any consequences. The next day, at 4 p.m., the house was struck in a mortar attack. The fire spread through the house, killing several members of the family, including children. Ghada sustained burns across her body from white phosphorus, as did her baby girl, whom she was holding in her hands. "I was left naked in front of everyone in the house. My body was burning and I was in terrible pain. I could smell my own flesh burning. I was in a really bad state. I looked for something to cover myself and the whole time I was shouting." Those in the house who survived the attack, as well as cousins who came from next door, took a tractor and set out for the hospital. IDF soldiers stationed nearby opened fire on the tractor, killing Muhammad Hikmat, one of the cousins. The soldiers ordered the

injured woman and her husband to continue to the hospital on foot. A local resident drove them to Shefa Hospital in Gaza City. Ghada Abu Halima sustained third-degree burns, and the hospital referred her to Egypt for treatment. An ambulance took her to Rafah but came under fire from Israeli soldiers. The ambulance driver was slightly injured in the face and turned back. Ghada was later taken to Egypt, where she died in a hospital two months after sustaining her injuries.[22]

Throughout the operation, Israel denied using white phosphorus. However, reports continued to be received and photographs emerged contradicting the claim. A damning report by the organization Human Rights Watch claimed that Israel had used phosphorus bombs despite knowing its lethal consequences. The organization found canisters of phosphorus shells on roofs, in schools, and on the street.[23] The IDF was eventually forced to admit that phosphorus had been used, but it claimed that the use had been lawful and was intended to create smoke screens for operations. This explanation failed to account for the injuries to civilians, and ultimately the IDF punished soldiers responsible for ordering the use of the chemical.[24]

Hamas, too, had no qualms about targeting civilians, turning the Israeli home front into the front line in the war. For the first time, the organization's rockets managed to reach cities such as Beersheva, Ashdod, and Yavne, causing damage, injuries, and even deaths. On 6 January 2009, four IDF mortar shells "fired at a military target" fell on a busy street in Gaza City, killing dozens of passersby, including numerous women and children. Following the incident, it was clear that the operation would not be able to continue much longer. Video footage was immediately disseminated around the world showing appalling sights of children's bodies and helpless injured civilians shouting for help as people ran around in hysteria. The IDF claimed that it had been firing at a school that had been used as a base for firing mortars at its forces. The Israeli media accepted this claim, but television newscasts around the world described the incident as a "massacre" and "genocide." Once again it became clear that the IDF did not always maintain a balance between the desire to secure a military objective and the need to avoid injury to the civilian population.[25]

One of the many tragedies of Operation Cast Lead concerned the fate of the family of Dr. 'Iz a-Din Abu al-Ayash, a Palestinian physician who lost three daughters in IDF attacks. The incident attracted an unusual amount of attention in Israel because Dr. al-Ayash was employed at an Israeli hospital. Moreover, he was in the middle of an interview for Channel 10 television at

the precise moment the IDF mortars struck his home in Jabaliya. His wife had died of cancer some three months before the military operation began, and he was raising his eight children by himself. In interviews after the attack, Dr. al-Ayash claimed resolutely that no actions had been launched against the IDF from his home. Some circles in Israel doubted his version of events. He held a press conference the next day at Tel Hashomer Hospital in which he emphasized messages of reconciliation and peace. A woman interrupted him: "What's wrong with you all, have you gone mad?! . . . My son is in the paratroopers! Who knows what you had in your home! No one's mentioning that!" The woman was implying that Hamas had stored weapons and explosives in Dr. al-Ayash's home. It was a groundless accusation, but in the public atmosphere created during an ethno-national conflict, people find it difficult even to listen to the tragedies of the other side. On 4 February 2009, the IDF spokesperson confirmed that IDF mortars had led to the deaths of Dr. al-Ayash's daughters.[26]

The United Nations Security Council called for an immediate cease-fire, and the United States did not veto the resolution. Israel duly withdrew on 18 January 2009. During twenty days of fighting, the IDF killed 1,387 Palestinians, including 773 civilians and 248 police officers. The Palestinians killed nine Israelis, including three civilians killed in Qassam and Grad rocket attacks. Four additional IDF soldiers were killed by "friendly fire."[27] The asymmetry in the number of fatalities and the balance between civilians and combatants could not have been clearer.

RELIGIOUS NATIONALISM IN THE ARMY

The influence of religious nationalism on the IDF was revealed during the war in the activities of the IDF chief rabbi, Brigadier General Avichai Rontzky, the former head of the premilitary program at Beitar in the West Bank. Under Rontzky's leadership, the IDF rabbinate moved far beyond its traditional functions, sending its staff to the front line to accompany the forces with religious proselytizing that was tacitly accepted by the senior commanders. *Bamachaneh* reported that the fighters in one unit of an Israeli brigade called Givati gathered just before entering the Gaza Strip. The brigade rabbi passed among them, holding a Torah scroll and touching their heads as he passed. This incident illustrates the change that had occurred in the IDF: a military rabbi was no longer a functionary responsible for

providing religious services, but had become a modern-day version of the biblical "priest anointed for war." The soldiers received written sermons from rabbis, which featured such concepts as "holy war" and "commanded war," alluding to a conflict that is determined by God and is not open to human choice.[28] Rontzky's actions as the IDF chief rabbi were controversial, not least because of the emphasis he placed on extending the rabbinate's function into the field of "Jewish awareness," which began to replace the secular educational themes promoted by the IDF's Education Corps.[29] Soldiers reported that IDF rabbis had handed them booklets including such statements as: "We are the Jewish people, we arrived here by a miracle, God brought us back to the Land—and now we must fight and expel the gentiles who are interfering in our conquest of the Holy Land." The booklets also included nationalistic and political propaganda, again highlighting the change that had occurred in the IDF alongside the changes in Israeli society: "The Torah prohibits us from relinquishing even one millimeter [of the Land of Israel] through all kinds of impure and foolish distortions, such as autonomy, enclaves, and other national weaknesses. We will not place it in the hands of another people—not even one finger of it, not even a piece of one fingernail."[30] Another booklet declared, "Can we compare today's Palestinians to the Philistines of the past? If so, can we draw conclusions for today from the military tactics adopted by Samson and David?" Rabbi Shlomo Aviner, one of the most popular rabbis among the settlers and the founder of Ateret Cohanim Yeshiva in the Muslim Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem, responded, "We can compare, because the Philistines back then were not indigenous, but had invaded a foreign land. . . . They invaded the Land of Israel, a land that was not theirs, and claimed political ownership of our Land. . . . Today's problem is identical. The Palestinians claim that they deserve a state here, but the truth is that there was never a Palestinian or Arab state within the borders of our country. Moreover, most of them are newcomers who arrived shortly before the War of Liberation [i.e., before 1948]."[31]

Rabbi Aviner was an electrical and electronic engineer by training and could not be accused of ignorance or a lack of historical knowledge. His statements more likely represent the selective dissemination of knowledge in order to serve a specific goal. According to Aviner's remarks, the IDF rabbinate presented its code of conduct in the field in the following way: "When we take pity on a cruel enemy, we thereby act cruelly toward innocent and decent soldiers. This is a terrible and dreadful immorality. . . . We are taking here of a war against murderers. And war is war." Some of the publications produced

by the IDF's Education Corps were authored by two rabbis from the Jewish awareness desk of the IDF rabbinate. They declared that, as in the ancient past of the Jewish people, so too now "our enemies have exploited the merciful and kind Israeli heart." The lesson should be clear: "We must not take pity on those who are cruel."[32]

Since most of the Jewish population had stopped believing in peace, or at least no longer believed in the sincerity of Palestinians who advocated compromise as the basis for peace, the young soldiers readily accepted the IDF publications. Together with activities organized by the IDF rabbinate, these booklets reflect the disappearance of doubts and questions and the emergence of a full identification with Israel's biblical roots.[33] Nevertheless, there were those who spoke out against the new phenomenon of religious-nationalist indoctrination. MK Avshalom Vilan of the Meretz Party demanded an investigation into the distribution of the booklets in the IDF. The chief of staff indeed investigated the matter, meeting with Rabbi Rontzky, who claimed that these were isolated incidents involving a small number of rabbis—and so the investigation ended. The chief of staff was probably aware that these were not isolated incidents. But he also knew that the days when Israel's wars were defined as a last resort were long gone. Many Israelis—including more than 50 percent of religious officers, and certainly many soldiers in the combat units of the IDF, which featured the strong presence of religious youths—now perceived Israel to be fighting a holy war.[34]

After the military operation ended, soldiers began to report atrocities committed during the fighting, including the killing of innocent people, indiscriminate shooting at homes, and casual damage to property.[35] It is difficult not to draw the conclusion that the soldiers had been influenced by the new rhetoric of religious nationalism. As usual, the IDF was quick to deny that crimes had been committed against civilians, and its spokesperson repeated the familiar mantra that the IDF is the most moral army in the world. Later, however, the Goldstone Report painted a picture that revealed less-than-moral behavior. In this 547-page report, a committee headed by the South African Jewish judge Richard Goldstone presented its findings concerning Operation Cast Lead. The report accused both sides of violating the rules of war established in international law, and even suggested that crimes against humanity might have been committed. According to the report, the IDF's actions included attacking both education and health facilities and other infrastructure, indiscriminate killing, and the excessive use of force. The report did not exonerate Hamas, either, referring to such actions as

rocket attacks on Israeli communities and attempts to target innocent civilians. Over the course of its work, the committee interviewed 188 people and examined three hundred reports. The authors concluded by recommending that both sides engage in an honest and credible investigation of the events. They also suggested that the findings be forwarded to the International Court of Justice in The Hague or, failing this, to the Security Council.[36]

The report generated great fury in Israel, which was turned on Goldstone, and it was possibly exacerbated by the fact that he is Jewish. The judge was taken aback by the criticism and certainly did not anticipate the character assassination to which he was subjected. Knesset speaker Reuven Rivlin (who later went on to become the state president) claimed that as someone who had condemned black South Africans to death, Goldstone had no right to preach to anyone.[37] Israelis declined to ask themselves whether someone who called himself a Zionist, had a daughter who spent many years in Israel, and had visited the country regularly would choose to lie on this subject. The European Union supported the findings of the report. The European Union member states—which are among Israel's closest friends—also criticized Israel. Goldstone noted his concern that Israel was isolating itself and risking a global boycott. He expressed his hope that the report would help promote peace by opening the eyes of the Israeli leadership. The Israelis, however, did not accept his perspective.[38] Israel maintained that the war had been directed solely against Hamas, a terror organization, and that there had been no intention to harm civilians or civilian infrastructures. It insisted on a distinction between those who deliberately commit war crimes and those who harm civilians by mistake.[39] Israel was, of course, right to emphasize that Hamas launched rockets from inside mosques, schools, and hospitals, and that it effectively used the civilians in the Gaza Strip as human shields. But this does not negate the possibility that ethno-nationalist and religious assumptions influenced IDF soldiers and Israeli conduct during wars, encouraging a trigger-happy attitude and a tendency to observe reality as a whole through the sights of the rifles. This approach had led to a high rate of civilian fatalities and to the destruction of large parts of Gaza City: the United Nations reported that Israel had destroyed over thirty-five hundred homes, leaving some twenty thousand people homeless.

Back home, the representatives of militaristic and religious society embarked on a hunt for "traitors." They found their prey in the form of the New Israel Fund—which channels funding to civil society and human rights organizations—and its president at the time, Professor Naomi Chazan. An

organization called Im Tirtzu ("If You Will"—quoted from a saying attributed to Theodor Herzl) was particularly active in this campaign by militaristic and religious organizations, complementing their ongoing opposition to the content of various courses at Israeli universities. Im Tirtzu launched a verbal assault on the New Israel Fund, including personal attacks against Chazan and demonstrations outside her home. It argued that organizations supported by the fund had supplied information used in the Goldstone Report. The members of Im Tirtzu named sixteen such organizations.[40] Thus publication of the Goldstone Report escalated the domestic struggle in Israel between the representatives of the civil approach and those who embody the militaristic and religious ethos. As the director of the New Israel Fund, Rachel Liel, explained, "This is a struggle for the character of the state we want to live in. . . . A struggle for the shape of society and its guiding values. Is this an Israel that remains faithful to the values of the Declaration of Independence, or an extremist nation that delegitimizes freedom of speech. . . . We [human rights organizations] are being depicted as anti-Zionists attempting to aid Israel's enemies."[41]

Against the background of the violation of human rights, as manifested in part in the siege imposed on the Gaza Strip, the Gaza Flotilla affair erupted in May 2010. The flotilla was organized by European activists with the goal of breaking the Israeli siege and drawing global attention to the suffering it caused to the population in the Gaza Strip. Several boats participated in the flotilla, carrying a large number of peace activists and volunteers, some motivated by a commitment to human rights and others by their devotion to the Palestinian cause. Israel attempted to use diplomatic means to halt the flotilla, but after its efforts failed, the Israeli navy stormed the boats. On one boat, the MV *Mavi Marmara,* a violent confrontation developed between IDF soldiers, who boarded the vessel from helicopters, and activists waiting with crowbars and knives. During the clashes, IDF soldiers killed nine of the activists, all of whom were Turkish citizens. Several soldiers and dozens of other passengers on the boat were injured. The flotilla did not reach its destination, but Israel's seizure of the vessels in international waters and the grave outcome of its operation created a storm of anti-Israel protest around the world, particularly in Turkey.

Israel's operation against the flotilla, which was based on the belief that using military force would solve "the problem," was problematic in several respects. First, the IDF used firearms against peace activists whose declared aim was humanitarian—though it is important to note that among the

activists were Islamic fundamentalists committed to jihad who were opposed to Israel's existence, and who responded rapidly with violence after the soldiers boarded the boat. Second, the operation took place outside Israel's territorial waters, showing disregard for international law. Third, despite intensive preparations, Israel failed in one of the most important components of any new war: "the war about the war." While *Al-Jazeera* immediately began live reports from the scene, it was hours before Israel began to present its version of the events. Thus Israel abandoned the media arena to its enemies and critics, whose propaganda shaped the global narrative of the incident. In some instances, Israel's justifications and explanations had an absurd character. By way of example, the deputy foreign minister, Danny Ayalon, convened a press conference at which he claimed, "If we had let the boats pass, the result would have been the opening of a corridor allowing terrorists to enter the Gaza Strip."[42] A fourth problematic aspect was the fact that the Israeli leadership failed to even consider simpler and more practical alternatives—including allowing the boats to enter Gaza Port without hindrance. Israeli officials were quick to respond that such a course of action would have damaged Israeli sovereignty. But since when does Israel enjoy sovereignty over the Gaza Strip? And Israel certainly did not have sovereign rights in the international waters where it chose to halt the flotilla.[43]

The siege of the Gaza Strip continued, and the lull in the conflict following Operation Cast Lead proved predictably short-lived. Both Hamas and Israel invested their efforts in enhancing their ability to harm the enemy. From Israel's perspective, violence—which had now taken the form of a new war—was an indirect tool for perpetuating the occupation. For the Palestinians, violence was an instrument for overcoming occupation. The Palestinians acquired upgraded Grad rockets with a range of up to forty kilometers, enabling them to reach the city of Beersheva. In response, Israel developed its Iron Dome defense system for intercepting and downing missiles. On 12 November 2012, the Palestinians fired over a hundred rockets at Israel. Two days later, Israel responded by launching Operation Pillar of Defense. The operation included a series of air raids on the warehouses used by the Palestinians to store rockets. Israel also killed Ahmad Ja'abri, the head of the armed wing of Hamas. In response, Hamas fired thousands of rockets into Israel; most of them were intercepted by the Iron Dome, but some caused destruction and death. Israel refrained from entering the Gaza Strip during the operation, despite the massive mobilization of reserve forces. One reason for the decision was the fear that a ground invasion would lead Egypt,

which during this period was controlled by the Muslim Brotherhood, to break off diplomatic relations with Israel. Another factor was Israel's reluctance to assume responsibility for a population of 1.5 million Palestinians. The operation ended with six Israeli fatalities—four civilians and two soldiers. On the Palestinian side, 120 combatants and 57 civilians were killed.[44]

The two sides reached a cease-fire agreement with American mediation, leading to a reduction in the number of rockets fired into Israel. In January 2012, following a reconciliation meeting with Abu Mazen, Hamas leader Khaled Mash'al declared that his movement was adopting a new strategy toward Israel. The armed struggle would be replaced by a popular struggle—an unarmed intifada, based on mass demonstrations rather than suicide attacks (Eldar, 2012: 337). The leaders of Hamas in the Gaza Strip were enraged by Mash'al's announcement, but nevertheless a Palestinian unity government was formed on 2 June 2014 and included figures from both Fatah and Hamas. Hamas did not recognize Israel, but the unity government offered the potential to moderate its positions. The Israeli leadership remained unconvinced. Netanyahu, who undertook no significant diplomatic initiatives during his period in office, saw the unity government as a threat to Israel and immediately announced the suspension of all talks with the Palestinians. This was not the first time that Netanyahu had chosen to interpret any agreement between Fatah and Hamas as a threat; his concern was not that a potential security danger existed for Israel but that such an agreement might lead to a moderation in Hamas's position, potentially creating a chance for peace. Indeed, Israeli journalist Shlomi Eldar (2012) analyzed Hamas's strategic position, which Israel had refused to take seriously, arguing that the organization had decided to shift away from the armed struggle, at least according to its leaders' declarations. However, it is doubtful that Hamas's moderation was perceived in Israel as a positive step. On 12 June 2014, three Israeli youths from a yeshiva in the Gush Etzion area of the West Bank were kidnapped by a Hamas cell, leading to a dramatic deterioration in the situation. Israel launched Operation Brother's Keeper, and the attempt to locate the three youths was accompanied by attacks on the Hamas infrastructure throughout the West Bank. Four hundred Palestinians, most of whom were Hamas operatives, were detained. The idea behind the Israeli operation was that the detainees would serve as bargaining chips, enabling the return of the youths. However, Israel exploited the situation created by the kidnapping in order to not only to strike out at Hamas but also to prevent any possibility that the Palestinian unity government might become a partner for talks with Israel.

The bodies of the three youths were eventually found, and the settlers established several outposts in the West Bank in response to the incident—a classic ethno-nationalist reaction that exploited an appalling crime in order to promote the ethos of the "Whole Land of Israel."

The kidnapping also provided an opportunity to inflame hatred and to sharpen still further the distinction between "us" and "them." After the bodies of the youths were found, the global general secretary of the Religious-Zionist Bnai Akiva youth movement, Rabbi Noam Perel, called on the government "to transform the army of searchers into an army of avengers." He wrote a Facebook post declaring that "an entire nation and thousands of years of history demand revenge. . . . The disgrace will be atoned for through the enemy's blood and not through our tears." Perel deleted the post after his comments were criticized, but he did not retract his philosophy of revenge. On the contrary, he claimed that since the pre-state period, Israel had always implemented a policy of exacting revenge for attacks against Jews, and that it should return to this approach.[45] On 2 July, the day after the funeral of the three youths, Israeli Jews kidnapped Muhammad Abu Khdeir, a sixteen-year-old Palestinian boy from the Shuafat neighborhood of Jerusalem. They beat him and burned him to death to avenge the deaths of the three youths. The murderers later explained that they "looked for an Arab kid, kidnapped and burnt him, and fled."[46] In an ethno-national conflict, each side maintains its own score sheet and nurtures the collective memory of the atrocities committed against it, which are used to justify the hatred of the other.[47] And as if in a predetermined scenario, it was obvious that the IDF's forceful response to the murder of the three youths would lead to renewed rocket attacks by Hamas on Israel, to which Israel would quickly respond with yet another military operation.

OPERATION PROTECTIVE EDGE

On 7 July 2014, some eighty rockets were fired into Israel. The next day, Israel launched Operation Protective Edge, the latest in the series of operations in the Gaza Strip that constituted the local manifestation of the phenomenon of the new war, as Israel attempted to perpetuate the indirect occupation in Gaza and the dichotomy of rulers and ruled in accordance with the yardsticks of its prevailing ethno-nationalist and religious worldview. The operation lasted seven weeks and included two main stages. The first stage was

dominated by aerial bombardments of Gaza City, to which Hamas responded with massive rocket attacks and attempts to infiltrate Israel. In the second stage, IDF ground forces entered the town of Beit Hanun in the Gaza Strip and several neighborhoods of Gaza City. One of their objectives was to destroy tunnels, some of which reached under Israeli territory. Of the nearly five thousand rockets fired into Israel, approximately one-sixth were intercepted by the Iron Dome batteries. Meanwhile, the IDF attacked over six thousand targets in the Gaza Strip, damaging more than ten thousand buildings, almost half of which were completely destroyed.

As we have seen time after time, international leaders—including ones considered close friends of Israel—began to express their reservations as the war dragged on and the number of Palestinian fatalities and injuries soared. The French foreign minister, Laurent Fabian, noted that Israel's right to security could not justify its actions in the Gaza Strip. The British and Spanish governments announced that they were freezing arms deliveries to Israel.[48] For its part, Israel argued that Hamas alone was responsible for the outcomes of the operation. It is certainly true that Hamas consistently violated international law by firing rockets at Israel with the intention of striking areas densely populated by civilians. However, it is not impossible that Israel's virulent response also constituted a violation of international law.[49]

Only two political parties opposed the operation: Meretz, led by Zehava Gal-On, which is the only Jewish party in Israel that unreservedly promotes a civil and pro-peace agenda, and the Arab party Balad (National Democratic Assembly), which organized demonstrations against the war, particularly in Haifa and Jerusalem. The police often responded violently to such protests, arbitrarily arresting demonstrators who had not broken any law. The public, too, was reluctant to tolerate demonstrations in wartime. MK Avigdor Lieberman called for Israeli Jews to boycott the businesses of Arab citizens who participated in a protest strike against the military operation, while others suggested that they should be dismissed from their jobs.[50]

By mid-August, the police had arrested some 1,500 demonstrators, 350 of whom were indicted. The majority of those arrested were Israeli Arab citizens, not coincidentally.[51] On 9 August, approximately one month after the war began, thousands of Israeli Jews attended a demonstration in Rabin Square in Tel Aviv, including the famous author David Grossman, whose son had been killed in the Second Lebanon War. After the demonstration ended, the participants were attacked by groups of civilians reminiscent of Fascist right-wing groups active in Europe. The attackers created a lynch-mob atmosphere,

shouting at the opponents of the war, "Go to Gaza!" The assailants threw stones and bottles, sprayed pepper gas, and even launched physical attacks on demonstrators. "We need to make the leftist demonstrators afraid to go out and protest," the thugs explained to journalists. "We have to go and shut them up, give them our iron first." One of these groups dubbed itself "Al-Yahud" ("The Jews" in Arabic). Another, Lehava (officially called the "Movement to Prevent Assimilation in the Holy Land"), devoted its activities to promoting ethnic purity. These groups reflected a mood that had developed among some segments of the Israeli public. A Facebook group named "The Jewish People Demand Revenge," which was set up following the murder of the three youths, gained over 30,000 followers. Another, "The Lord's Army—the IDF," had 22,000 followers, while "Take Away the Citizenship of Extreme Leftists" gained some 10,000 followers and "We All Support Death to Terrorists" had no fewer than 73,000. A journalist interviewed one demonstrator, a border police officer, who revealed, "I feel inside that we need to destroy, shoot, burn, and kill every leftist."[52]

The public atmosphere against opponents of the war was so virulent that public figures, including artists and singers, were forced to retract comments expressing opposition to the war, in the type of self-condemnation usually seen only in totalitarian regimes. This was the only way they could regain the sympathy—and patronage—of their audiences. The comedian Orna Banai was quoted as saying, "'Let the IDF win?' I can't say something like that." She was forced to "correct" her remark, after fierce public pressure, and duly declared, "More than in the past, I understand today that we are not confronting the Palestinian people, but we are in a just war against a cruel terrorist organization that treats its own people in the same inhuman manner in which it treats its enemy."[53] The idea that the Palestinians alone were to blame for their own people's suffering was not new, and Banai was quick to take advantage of the old mantra.

Despite this volatile public atmosphere, some organizations, such as Fighters for Peace, continued to work to promote peace with Palestinians, based on their conviction regarding the need to establish two states between the River Jordan and the Mediterranean. On 21 July 2014, ten human rights organizations (including B'Tselem, the Association for Civil Rights in Israel, Yesh Din, Adalah, Machsomwatch, Rabbis for Human Rights, Physicians for Human Rights—Israel, and others) wrote to the attorney general to express their concern that serious violations of international humanitarian law might have occurred during the IDF operations in the Gaza Strip. The

organizations claimed that the proportion of civilians among fatalities in the area was 70 percent, and that the Israeli forces failed to maintain the distinction between combatants and civilians. The authors of the letter emphasized that providing a warning to residents does not make them or their homes a legitimate military target, particularly in cases when they have no alternative place to which they can safely proceed. The letter specified several instances of attacks on clearly civilian targets, such as the shelling of a café that killed nine civilians; the shelling of a beach that killed four children; and the shelling of a home for people with disabilities in which two women residents were killed. Even if, as the IDF spokesperson claimed, these facilities were housing legitimate military targets, the outcomes raised concern that inadequate attention was paid to avoiding civilian casualties. The letter also reviewed several attacks by the IDF on homes that it claimed were occupied by Hamas or Islamic jihad operatives. Dozens of innocent children and civilians were killed in these operations. The organizations argued that it is unlawful to attack a residential home merely because it is the place of residence of an activist in a hostile organization. They also noted that, in accordance with the rules of law, violations of these rules by the other side cannot justify or legitimize similar actions by Israel.[54]

Some Israeli human rights organizations had cooperated with the IDF for many years, recognizing that both sides shared an underlying desire to prevent harm to innocent people. However, following Operation Protective Edge, two organizations (B'Tselem and Yesh Din) announced that they were suspending this cooperation, since Israel was not genuinely interested in investigating the violation of the human rights of Palestinians by the security forces. B'Tselem dubbed the IDF's approach "the whitewashing procedure," not without justification: of fifty-two investigations opened by the Military Police Investigations Unit following Operation Cast Lead, only three led to indictments. The most serious penalty in these three cases was imposed on a soldier who stole a credit card.[55]

Some ministers felt that Israel should adopt the broader objective of entering, occupying, and remaining in the Gaza Strip. The disagreements between the foreign minister, Lieberman, and Netanyahu on this subject were so fierce that on 7 July Lieberman convened a press conference and announced the dissolution of the partnership between his party and the Likud. Lieberman later declared that he was opposed to any cease-fire. Minister Naftali Bennett attempted to persuade Netanyahu to use more extreme measures during the operation in order to gain a clear victory over Hamas.[56]

The fundamentalist hallmark of religious nationalism was manifested during the operation in the so-called Winter affair. Ofer Winter, the commander of the Givati Brigade at the time, was a graduate of a religious-military residential school and of the Bnai David premilitary program, which is based in the settlement of Eli and is considered the most prestigious of its kind. Both of the institutions he attended are committed to instilling a religious ethos in the IDF and to promoting the conviction that Israel's wars are religious imperatives that bring closer the arrival of the messiah. Before his soldiers set out for war, Winter issued a "commander's letter," including the following remarks: "History has chosen us to be at the vanguard in fighting the Gazan terrorist enemy, who curses, reviles, and impugns the God of the battles of Israel. . . . I raise my eyes to the heavens and call out with you, 'Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.' Lord God of Israel—make our way successful as we set out to fight for Your people against the enemy that reviles Your name. . . . Let us fulfill the verse 'For the Lord your God is the one who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies to give you victory'—and let us say: Amen."[57]

The senior command echelon of the IDF responded calmly to the letter. Winter was considered a vital officer thanks to his intimate knowledge of the situation in the Gaza Strip. Others, however, were more critical. One professor, Avi Sagi, explained that the problem with the document lay in the officer's failure to understand the source of his authority and the fact that he was an agent and representative of the State of Israel, and not of God.[58] Winter's comments again raised the question that had been asked since settlers and their supporters became prominent in the IDF: are they subject to the laws of the State of Israel, or do they accept this system only as long as it does not clash with their religious beliefs and their conviction that God gave all of Judea and Samaria to the Jews, including the areas where the Palestinians seek to establish their state?

However, there were also many who supported Winter. One of them, Brigadier General (Ret.) Rabbi Avichai Rontzky, the former chief rabbi of the IDF, explained, "He just expressed in writing his feelings, which are connected with Jewish tradition. . . . So what's the problem? The fighters should know that our sources are Jewish belief, Jewish resilience, and the heritage. This isn't a religious matter, but a historical connection that strengthens their resolve as they set out for battle."[59]

Winter and his ilk indeed see Israel's wars as ones they are mandated to wage in accordance with Jewish religious law: wars in which they fight for

God's glory against an enemy who defiles his name. Needless to say, such an approach readily accepts injury to innocent civilians, who are categorized as "heathens" who do not belong to the proper ethnos or religion. Israeli sociologist Yagil Levy explains that "war crimes are not necessarily motivated by religious commandments, but the obstacles to such crimes are more easily removed when fighting is perceived as a religious war."[60] The presence of religious nationalism raised a further problem: concern that Israel is liable to disintegrate into "tribes," and that the IDF could fragment into a collection of militias in which commanders impose their values and approach on different units. This is a particularly realistic concern when the commanders in question are motivated by their conviction that God has chosen them to fight against those who disrespect his name—the Arabs and the Palestinians, of course, but perhaps also secular Jews perceived as "traitors" to their people.[61]

The public criticism seen in response to Winter's remarks was repeated in another incident during Operation Protective Edge, one that involved an officer by the name of Hadar Goldin and the so-called Hannibal Procedure. This procedure was adopted with the goal of preventing the Palestinians from kidnapping soldiers for use as bargaining chips in order to free their own prisoners. The protocol states that when there is concern that an attempt is being made to kidnap a soldier, intensive firepower should be used against the kidnappers, even if this endangers the kidnapped soldier. On 1 August 2014—a day that became known as "Black Friday"—soldiers from Winter's brigade used intense firepower with the weapons at its disposal in response to a suspected kidnapping attempt. Their response was totally disproportionate, leading to the deaths of 150 Palestinians and the injury of hundreds more, most of them civilians. It later emerged that Goldin had not been kidnapped but had been killed.[62] The incident highlights the shifting moral code of the IDF, which increasingly argues that it is permissible to harm civilians not involved in combat as long as they are not members of your own people.

A total of 67 Israeli soldiers died during the 2014 war, as well as 5 Israeli civilians. Some 1,620 Israelis were injured, 837 of them civilians. The Palestinians sustained some 2,200 deaths, half of whom were civilians, including approximately 350 children and 284 women. As many as 11,000 Palestinians were injured, half of them civilians. Hundreds of thousands of people were forced out of their homes during the war, and over eighteen thousand homes were destroyed or badly damaged.[63] Already in 2009, Roni Burt of the Institute for National Security Studies in Israel had concluded that, according to his impression, the "most moral army in the world" had at

times not acted proportionately, failed to curtail its soldiers, and instead conveyed the message that everything was permissible and they must not take any risks.

In January 2015, B'Tselem published a report claiming that the policy of attacking residential homes in the Gaza Strip was blatantly illegal and had led to the deaths of over 500 Palestinians. The report highlights the fact that in a new war, states do not always adopt "statelike" behavior when confronted with "nonstate" entities.[64] B'Tselem's arguments were reinforced by the testimonies of Israeli soldiers, such as those included in a booklet published by the organization Breaking the Silence. Soldiers reported that during the 2014 war the emphasis had been on minimizing the risk to the Israeli forces, even at the cost of harming innocent Palestinians, referred to by the military euphemism "uninvolved persons." The policy of harming innocent civilians, which the IDF refers to as "collateral damage," was already apparent during the briefing of the forces before they set out to fight, which included the vague and lax open-fire instructions.[65] The soldiers added that the general tone was nationalistic and racist. Many soldiers mentioned that they had seen stickers declaring, "Torah morality states: The lives of our soldiers take precedence over the lives of enemy civilians." This was a stark example of the growing influence of religious nationalism in the IDF and in Israeli society in general, and of the waning of the civil and universal worldview, with its accompanying moral standards.

On 22 June 2015, the United Nations in Geneva published the conclusions of an independent committee of inquiry established to examine the events surrounding the conflict in the Gaza Strip in 2014. The conclusions were similar to those included in both the B'Tselem report and the soldiers' testimonies and suggested that both Israel and the armed Palestinian groups could have committed war crimes. The committee, headed by a retired American judge, acknowledged the intolerable suffering of residents of southern Israel owing to the firing of thousands of rockets, and noted that Palestinian militants had constructed tunnels from the Gaza Strip to Israel with the intention of smuggling in fighters to kill civilians. At the same time, however, it sharply criticized the scope of destruction and human suffering caused in the Gaza Strip. The committee found it difficult to accept the claim that Israel had acted proportionately and cautiously, given the fact that the operation had included over six thousand aerial sorties and the firing of over fifty thousand tank and artillery mortars by the IDF.[66]

Unsurprisingly, the prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, rejected the United Nations report completely, questioning the credibility of its authors.

He did so despite the fact that the report was relatively moderate and was careful to apportion blame to both sides. Netanyahu also received a copy of a report prepared by Israel as a counterweight to the United Nations report.[67] As usual, the IDF had investigated some exceptional incidents that occurred during the operation in order to prevent the forwarding of the United Nations report to global bodies such as the International Court of Justice in The Hague and to deflect claims of war crimes. The military advocate general, Major General Danny Efroni, commented, "You will never hear me say that the IDF is the most moral army in the world. I do believe that our military is based on values," he emphasized, "but part of this quality lies in the fact that it investigates and examines suspected offenses in a professional manner. If we fail to do that, there will be a big question mark over our values." This was an important statement, but as usual the system Efroni commanded prosecuted very few acts committed during the operation.[68]

Israel ended the operation without securing its objectives and without any sign of a solution in the foreseeable future. No one asked how many homes had to be destroyed in the Gaza Strip in order to reach this conclusion, since the destruction was perceived as collective punishment and as a symbolic illustration of the power relationship. Israelis refused to acknowledge that Hamas is not just a movement that encourages the killing of innocent Israelis but a social, religious, and political movement that enjoys broad-based support for its struggle for national independence (Mishal and Sela, 2000; Roy, 2011). Furthermore, Hamas represents a society under siege, where desperate civilians are willing to do anything to oppose the Israeli occupation. From the Israeli standpoint, the Palestinians had to simply accept their fate and blame themselves for the destruction and death they brought upon themselves. Meanwhile, however, the Israelis remain convinced that the use of force is the only effective option. Israeli discourse centers on such concepts as the "destruction of rockets," the "elimination of terror," the "rehabilitation of our deterrence," and the "picture of victory," which deflect attention from the underlying political problem and the nonmilitary path to its resolution. Naturally, such a view often has pathological consequences.

PRICE TAG

Throughout this period, various elements within the Israeli establishment tacitly accepted the activities of the "Youth of the Hills," or "Hilltop Youth."

As early as 2006, Shabak chief Yuval Diskin informed that Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee that he was aware of the names of the youths involved in felling Palestinian olive trees. He specified that they came from the settlements of Yitzhar and Itamar. Despite this, he admitted that the IDF and the police were not taking any action against those responsible. The Shabak had called for the youths to be placed in administrative detention, but the advice was not implemented. The uprooting of olive trees is an annual phenomenon during the harvest season, but those responsible are virtually never apprehended or punished.[69]

The violence of the Hilltop Youth was illustrated in the settlement of Homesh in northern Samaria, which had been evacuated by the Sharon government alongside the withdrawal from the Gaza Strip. Although the IDF declared the area a closed military zone following the evacuation, the Hilltop Youth nevertheless settled in the area. They enjoyed the encouragement of militaristic and religious society, which held an annual rally on the ruins of the settlement. In 2013, for example, ministers, such as the agriculture minister, Yair Shamir, and the deputy defense minister, Danny Danon, attended the rally together with ten thousand others. The event ended with a speech by Rabbi Yitzhak Ginzburg.[70] Ginzburg, the head of the yeshiva in the settlement of Yitzhar, advocated the establishment of a "Jewish dominion"—a theocracy governed in accordance with Jewish religious law. He openly called for the transfer of Arabs in order to secure this goal. The Palestinian owners of the land struggled to resume farming activities and petitioned the Supreme Court through the Yesh Din organization. However, the legal system failed to provide effective assistance, and the Hilltop Youth continued to terrorize the landowners.[71]

Individuals within Religious-Zionist society have often condemned the actions of the Hilltop Youth, but the disagreements are merely tactical. There is no disagreement between the Hilltop Youth and the other settlers regarding the ethno-nationalist and religious criteria by which this reality is evaluated. The Jewish Home Party, established on the ruins of the National Religious Party and headed by Naftali Bennett, won eight seats in the 2015 elections. The party devotes considerable energy to denying the fact that there is an occupation. At a meeting of the Yesha Council (the representative body of the Jewish settlements in the West Bank), Bennett declared, "We need to switch the disk and declare that we are here because this is our home. . . . Those who dare to say that the occupation corrupts and are busy all day with the occupation, occupation, occupation—what occupation?

How can someone be an occupier in their own home? This is our home."[72] Indeed, the settlers and their supporters consistently strive to change the discourse in Israel from one based on security to one rooted in faith, justifying Jewish ownership of the Land of Israel through texts written over two thousand years ago.

Between 2011 and 2014, nine mosques were torched in Israel and the West Bank, but not a single indictment was served. The mosques were daubed with graffiti, including the slogans "Price tag," "Revenge," "The war has begun," and "Arabs out!" In several cases, sacred books were damaged. The attackers sought to protest against the demolition by the government of illegally constructed homes in the settlements, introducing an equation whereby any such action against Jews would be "balanced" by a revenge attack against Palestinians, as if according to a distorted price list. Indeed, the settlers who committed these attacks referred to them as "Price Tag" actions, though in reality, of course, they were simply hate crimes. Some Israelis spoke out firmly against the new phenomenon. "A generation has grown up for which racism is part of its worldview," commented the state prosecutor Shai Nitzan.[73] Author Amos Oz referred to the Hilltop Youth as "Hebrew neo-Nazis," adding that "it is time for us to look this monster in the eye."[74] Naftali Bennett was quick to condemn Oz's remark, declaring that those involved daubed graffiti and punctured tires but were not engaged in murder. However, the journalist Niva Lanir warned that "they will murder, too"—and she was right.[75]

On 31 July 2015, Molotov cocktails were thrown at two homes in the Palestinian town of Duma, to the south of Nablus. The resulting fire killed the couple Sa'ad and Riham Dawabsheh, together with their eighteen-month-old son Ali. Ali's four-year-old brother was injured in the attack. Hate slogans were daubed on the house in Hebrew. After considerable effort, the Shabak investigators managed to solve the case, arresting four members of the Hilltop Youth circle for committing the attack. It emerged that the attackers, or at least some of them, had been influenced by the philosophy of Rabbi Yitzhak Ginsburg.[76] Even so, there were still mainstream settlers who found mitigating circumstances for their appalling actions and criticized the Shabak and the police for alleged violations of the suspects' rights.[77]

The Temple Mount, or Al-Haram a-Sharif, once again became a focal point of the conflict. Jewish tradition prohibits Jews from ascending the mount, but in recent years a number of settler rabbis have encouraged such visits. As a result, a new phenomenon emerged during 2015 whereby settler youths made provocative visits to the site, sparking confrontations with

Muslim worshippers. The Jordanian information minister condemned the damage to the sanctity of the site and the aggression shown by the settlers toward the Palestinian guards and Muslim worshippers. He explained that such actions "offend the sentiments of the Arab and Muslim world in general, and lead to an escalation and the intensification of hatred." The minister urged the Israeli government to intervene, but to no avail.[78] The so-called Intifada of Knives in 2015–16 was caused in part by the tension surrounding the mount. Young Palestinians, most of them still in high school, took kitchen knives and attacked Jewish civilians, soldiers, and police officers. Hundreds of such attacks followed, resulting (as of the time of this writing) in the deaths of over thirty-five Israelis and the injury of several hundred. In most cases, the attackers were immediately shot and killed by IDF soldiers, who did not hesitate to pull the trigger, even when the attackers (who included girls as well as boys) could have been stopped by other means. And so a further cycle of violence and horror was added to the annals of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Many Israelis were shocked by leaked footage from the "Hate Wedding," in which settlers at a wedding danced holding knives, Molotov cocktails, and other weapons while songs of hatred and revenge played in the background. The revelers raised a photograph of the baby Ali Dawabsheh, who had been murdered in the attack in Duma, and stabbed the image.[79] Member of Knesset Yair Lapid declared that those involved "are not Jews."[80] Was the parliamentarian right to make such a claim? Indeed, the youths' actions, undoubtedly, were exceptional by any Israeli standard; however, one may wonder whether they were affected by the exclusivist ethno-national history of the conflict, by the militaristic approach, and by religious nationalism, all of which view reality through the prism of a religion-mandated war. Can Israel truly comfort itself by claiming that the Hilltop Youth—who come from "legal" and "illegal" settlements, all established with the explicit or tacit support of the state—were solely responsible and no one else had anything to do with it?

Conclusion

In August 2010, the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz* interviewed Israeli farmers living under fire a few kilometers from the Gaza Strip. In the past, the farmers had employed Palestinians in their fields; these had since been replaced by Thai workers. What did these farmers think about the situation? One of them commented, "I grew up with Palestinians, and until two years ago I would send money to my workers that live there [in Gaza] as a humanitarian issue. But the truth is that they understand only force, and if we have a choice, we have to hit them hard."[1] This sentence summarizes the central argument of this book regarding the power of the prevailing ideology over all possible relations between Israelis and Palestinians.

Zionism arose as a Jewish national movement rooted firmly in historical justice. What could be the problem with the idea of reviving an ancient nation whose members had been exiled from their land and scattered around the globe to live as a persecuted and marginalized minority? This minority had maintained its distinct collective identity and now, in the modern era, sought to regain control of its own fate. Since the ethnic character of the movement drew on the nation's past—partly real, partly imagined—the Zionist conclusion that its national aspirations could be met only in its historical homeland also seemed to rest on solid foundations. After all, most national movements have been created on the basis of a primordial affinity to an ancient past and to territory defined as the "natural" hearth of the nation because of its connection with its past. Had the Zionist ideal not been consistent with the Zeitgeist, and had it not sought to address a tangible problem, it would surely have been tossed onto the garbage heap of history, to survive only as a transient anecdote. The problem, however, was not with the national ideal of Zionism, the desire of the Jews to give expression to their

uniqueness and preferences through national liberation, but with the manner in which this was implemented.

As nationalists, the Zionists sought not only to return to their country but also to found there an exclusivist political framework of domination that would manifest their ownership and exclusive control over the territory. The land in question, however, was not empty, and accordingly the Zionist ideal clashed starkly with the desires of the indigenous Arab or Palestinian inhabitants of the land, who had lived there for many centuries. The Palestinians, gradually developing their own collective identity and national aspirations, regarded the Zionists as alien invaders and argued that historical changes that had occurred over a period of centuries could not be overturned. This contradiction provided fertile ground for the emergence of the phenomenon examined in this book.

According to the theoretical basic assumptions presented earlier in this book, even if the realization of a national idea provokes opposition in its surroundings, this will still not necessarily lead to such a bloody and protracted conflict as in our instance. National movements have found various ways to interpret the national idea in order to permit coexistence with or alongside others. But this has not been the case in Israel/Palestine. Concentrating on Israel, I have presented the gradual emergence of an inward-looking and exclusive form of ethno-nationalist ideology that left only one national entity with the right to control the territory and to realize its national aspirations there. This approach became an ideology in the sense that it presented a worldview based on specific interests, and in the sense that it shaped reality by force and, for the most part—given the objections of the others—through military means, including war. I have used the term "militaristic nationalism" to refer to this ideology.[2]

Nationalism is not a form of manipulation used by rulers to incite the masses in order to advance their own narrow interests and personal benefit. Its strength lies in the fact that it constitutes a type of institutionalized interpretation of reality, structured over many years and shared by both the leaders and the led. Even if it is imaginary and its sources are invented in one form or another, as some scholars of nationalism have claimed, its outcomes are genuine.

Accordingly, in this study I aimed to expose the central role ethno-nationalism has played in the Jewish-Arab conflict and its importance to any understanding of Israel's wars. This approach places the nation at the center and defines its territorial affinity through what it regards as a historical right. Its

definition does not leave much room for the attachment of any other people to the same territory, since the struggle is for the land with all that it entails—not merely ownership, but sovereignty and control—in a manner that continues to influence the fates of millions of humans. This exclusive ethno-nationalist approach, which began with the realization of the Zionist project, and which has continued through Israel's actions, is not the only cause for the protracted conflict and wars between Israel and its neighbors—but it is one of the most important causes.

As I have shown, Israel's founding fathers understood that they were engaged in an ethno-nationalist struggle that would ultimately lead to war, even if they did not always acknowledge this explicitly, for tactical reasons. Some of them felt that the time for a "combative Zionism" would come only after the movement had consolidated its position and acquired sufficient strength through Jewish immigration, reducing the numerical imbalance between Jews and Palestinians, and after it had built a society capable of withstanding war. There was also a preference to avoid war as long as other players, such as the British, the Palestinians, and the other Arab nations, did not pose any real obstacle for the Zionists' gradual development. As we have seen, ethno-nationalism served as a common denominator for all the Zionist circles in the pre-state Yishuv period. The assumption that the conflict would be resolved by military means was also widely accepted; and from the mid-1940s, demands for a military solution to the conflict rested on the claim that there was no alternative to this approach. From this point forward, ethno-nationalism and militarism played a critical role in Israel's future.

The 1948 war constituted a moment of truth regarding the question of who would control the territory known as Palestine. The question was resolved by military means: the Jews won the war and were therefore able to reject the United Nations resolution calling for partition and to prevent the return of Palestinian refugees constituting over two-thirds of the Arab population of the territory that came under Israel's control. The fact that some sections of the "historical Land of Israel" were not conquered in 1948 was described by the ruling party of the day as "the weeping of the generations." The combination of ethno-nationalist ideology and the conviction that military strength is the solution to Israel's security challenges was manifested again in 1956 and 1967. In both cases, the military played a central role in advocating war. Parts of the territories gained in these wars were defined as ancestral land that Israel must never again leave. The conviction that these areas were sacred in ethno-nationalist and religious terms became a key factor

that continues to impede the return of these territories, thereby perpetuating the conflict between Israel and its surroundings. Subsequent wars, such as the War of Attrition in 1969, the Yom Kippur War of 1973, and the First Lebanon War that began in 1982, have shown beyond all doubt that Israel is not omnipotent and that the reliance on military strength leads to problematic outcomes. Yet militaristic nationalism was such a powerful force that these obstacles did not challenge the dominant ideology. Change came only during the period of the Oslo Accords, which to a large extent were a product of changes in the world and of the emergence of a civil and liberal society in Israel that viewed reality through a new prism. Many Israelis were excited, at that time, by the possibility of peace; however, this alternative perspective failed to put down deep roots. Militaristic nationalism, reinforced by a stronger religious and messianic component than before, gradually regained a central place in Israeli consciousness and in the actions of the nation's leaders. This transformation was among the causes that led to a series of "new wars," including the Second Intifada and the wars in Gaza, in which innocent civilians were the main victims. These new wars were not claimed to resolve problems, but instead were designed to manage or even to exacerbate the conflict and to sharpen the distinctions between the rival sides.

It is important to note some reservations regarding this process. War is a complex phenomenon that has many causes, and accordingly I have not aimed to present the full range of reasons that have led to Israel's involvement in multiple wars since its establishment. Nor will I claim that a single factor is responsible for such a protracted conflict. Moreover, I have not in any way overlooked or belittled the part played by the Arab countries in general, and the Palestinians in particular, in this ongoing national conflict. But the emphasis in the book is on an Israeli phenomenon, the tendency to interpret reality in ethno-national, militaristic, and even religious terms.

The chapters of the book highlight several important aspects of ethnonational conflicts and wars, whose meaning goes beyond the Israeli case. As it is presented here, war is a cultural phenomenon whose causes relate not only to international politics and to external agents but also to an internal social dynamic. This dynamic is shaped by different groups within society and is not confined to the decisions made by the nation's leaders. Moreover, as shown throughout the book, even when the national leadership has influenced the decision to go to war, its decisions have been based many times not on objective consideration of the circumstances but on an a priori cultural interpretation. In other words, what emerges from this analysis is that war is

less the continuation of politics, as Clausewitz proposed, and more the continuation of culture. In fact, militaristic nationalism had many bearers over the history of the Zionist movement and the State of Israel, some of them secular, some religious. As presented in this book, the IDF, as well, often played a crucial role in Israel's history as a cultural bearer of the idea that Israel's problems must be solved militarily.

Against the modernist conceptual background, I have attempted to show that although nationalism is a modern phenomenon, as most sociologists argue, its modern components (which may also be found in the Zionist enterprise) are set over a traditional, ethnic, atavistic, and primordial foundation—and, in recent years, increasingly over a religious foundation as well. This foundation includes elements such as suspicion, separatism, insularity, and a sense of superiority over others, and all have played a crucial part in questions of war and peace owing to their manifestation in the political realm.

As I've demonstrated, Israeli militarism has changed through the years, moving from the omnipotent and omnipresent statist militarism of the nation-in-arms, which was based on the mobilization of the entire (Jewish) population, to a professional and instrumental militarism on the one hand, and a religious and ethnic militarism on the other. This sort of religious and ethnic militarism, which was partial and societal, also had its opponents in the form of peace movements and peace activism. In the end, however, it was this militarism that set Israeli policy.

Had the Zionists and, later, the Israelis any alternative to the domineering ethno-nationalism that embraced military power and war? This question has been examined throughout our discussion. As I have shown, the political history of Israel included the voices of many who were convinced that an alternative to militaristic nationalism could indeed be found, and the opportunities to pursue such an alternative were available. This alternative was proposed by intellectuals, peace movements, political parties, men at the head of the security establishment, and national leaders, including some of Israel's prime ministers. These voices argued that Israel can never be truly independent if its independence comes at the price of the independence of another people; it will never enjoy its full rights if these require the denial of the rights of others; and it will never ensure its own well-being unless it reaches peace with its neighbors. In many cases, this alternative took the form of a variant of nationalism that reduced the political importance attached to the ethnic and religious factors and offered an interpretation of

reality that emphasized the civil, liberal, and antimilitaristic dimension of nationalism. Ultimately, however, it is a militaristic and religious nationalism that has become the dominant and influential ideology in Israel, repeatedly repelling the alternative approach from the stage of history.

In politics, reality is not always determined according to the balance of power between majority and minority. In some cases, a minority manages to impose its will, particularly when it has a strong sense of self-awareness and practical capability. It is not impossible that such a situation has existed in Israel, particularly since the early 1990s. Situated between a strong, zealous, and determined militaristic and religious society, on the one hand, and a weak, defensive, and apologetic civil society, on the other, most members of the Israeli public have adopted an intermediate position that may be defined as political fence-sitting.[3] Indeed, polls showed that the public supported Rabin and Peres when they embarked on the path that led to the Oslo Accords in the early 1990s. The polls also showed popular support for Ehud Barak when he went to Camp David in 2000. More recent polls suggest that many Israelis support the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel, and even many of those who are not enthusiastic about it support a separation between Israelis and Palestinians—that is, partition.[4] However, reality is shaped by actions, not by polls. Although Israel has acquired a neoliberal character, it seems that the mainstream, though it adopted the "third way," readily identifies with ethno-national and security-based messages. The so-called security considerations were and remain a convenient refuge for all who are hesitant and undecided. No wonder that, in 2009, the French foreign minister, Bernard Louchner, suggested that Israel is no longer interested in peace. A year later, a lead article in *Time* magazine was titled "Why Israel Doesn't Care about Peace."[5]

The international rules of war distinguish between the justifications for launching a war *(jus ad bellum)* and the accepted rules of conduct during a war *(jus in bello).* In this book, I have not examined the legal legitimacy of war; nor have I sought to determine whether Israel's behavior in wartime has always been consistent with these international rules or whether Israel might be accused of war crimes, as some of its adversaries claim. I leave this question to jurists and other conscientious people. My intention has been confined to highlighting the cultural and political phenomenon that oils the wheels of war and prevents peace. However, this phenomenon also colors public discourse in Israel, as in the case of the recent debate among philosophers and legal experts regarding the morality and legality of war—a debate that was

particularly prominent in the wake of Operation Protective Edge. During the course of this debate, the philosopher and scholar Asa Kasher joined forces with the retired general Amos Yadlin to provide a moral justification for Israel's preference for the lives of its soldiers over those of enemy civilians. Their argument, which is not recognized in international law, was countered by the position of two acclaimed philosophers, Avishay Margalit and Michael Walzer, who argued that "this is not the way to conduct a just war."[6] From my perspective, this debate is not simply about morality; rather, morality forms part of a cultural, ethno-national, militaristic, and increasingly religious approach that has formulated a clear and virtually unchanging approach to the "other." This approach shows total disregard for the problems, desires, and very existence of the Palestinians, based on the assumption that such disregard serves Israel's interests. In this context, it is worth recalling the comments made by the information minister Israel Galili at the council of HaKibbutz HaMeuchad after the 1967 war: "We do not consider the Arabs of the Land of Israel to constitute an ethnic category that is collective and has a distinct national identity in this country." Ya'akov Talmon, a well-known historian from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, responded strongly to this claim. In return, Galili declared, "The movement to realize the Zionist ideal has never made any moral undertaking to restrict the scope of this realization or to condition it on prior agreement by the Arabs of the Land or the Arab countries."[7] It is difficult not to see this line of thinking as one of the causes of the ongoing conflict and the wars in which Israel has been embroiled.

As I have shown, in recent years, this approach to the "other," and often to the other's very life, has received religious legitimacy. Scholars of Religious-Zionism note that large sections of this society have undergone a significant transformation. Their rabbis and leaders no longer issue unequivocal condemnations when innocent Arabs are the victims of attacks.[8] Perhaps unsurprisingly, the debate in Israeli society in 2017 concerning Elor Azaria—a soldier who on 24 March 2016 shot and killed an injured Palestinian in Hebron who no longer presented any threat—has included the argument that it is time for the IDF to admit that this is the standard and not the deviation. The army did not respond to the vox populi, and Azaria was sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment, twelve months' probation, and demotion. In practice, however, he was released from prison after just nine months. Indeed, many Israelis continued to assert that "this is how things go in war," and that there was no reason to conceal or camouflage this reality.[9]

As we have seen, Israel exists in a state of perpetual conflict and war. It may be that Israel on its own cannot end this situation. Nevertheless, it is worth recalling the words of Martin Buber, who said after the establishment of the State of Israel that a solution to the problem will come when Israel's leaders realize that the "Arab question"—that is, the question of the conflict, its essence, and its end—is a quintessentially Jewish question.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. This is the more literal translation of this passage from Remarque's book, which was published in English as *All Quiet on the Western Front*.

2. Ron Ben-Yishai, "Iranian Air Wing in Syria Exposed," *Ynet,* 17 April 2018; Tal Shalev, "Lieberman on IDF Attack: We Hit Almost All the Iranian Infrastructure in Syria," *Walla News,* 10 May 2018.

3. "More Than 300 Public Figures from around the World: Forcible Transfer of the Khan al-Ahmar Community Is a War Crime," B'Tselem, press release, 11 June 2018.

4. "Netanyahu: Khan Al Ahmar Will Be Destroyed 'Very Soon,'" *Times of Israel,* 19 November 2018.

5. "'Massacre' and 'Bloodbath': World Press Reports on the Riots in Gaza," *Ynet,* 15 May 2018.

6. Tal Shalev and Amir Buhbut, "Demand to Investigate the Killing of Demonstrators," *Walla News,* 31 March 2018.

7. "Gabai Opposes Cabel's Political Plan," *Haaretz,* 27 May 2018.

1. MILITARISTIC NATIONALISM AND WAR

1. The Balfour Declaration was a statement made on 2 November 1917 by the British government declaring its support for the establishment of a "national home" for the Jewish people in Palestine. The declaration is discussed in detail in the next chapter.

2. On the Zionist's ambivalent attitude toward religion and on the negative attitude of Orthodox Judaism to Zionism at the beginning of the twentieth century, see Shalmon, 1996: 115–40.

3. For a background on Jewish thought in the nineteenth century before Herzl, see Herzberg, 1966; Avineri, 1981.

4. The booklet *Auto-Emancipation* was written in German and enjoyed immediate success. It was soon translated into twenty-two languages.

5. The "disturbances in the Negev" is a term for the pogroms that took place from April 1881 to May 1882 in the southwestern part of the Russian empire (*Negev* in Hebrew has the general sense of "south," as well as referring to a specific area in the south of Israel). The pogroms created a tremor among Russian Jews and sparked an immediate wave of emigration to the United States.

6. The crisis was exacerbated by the April 1903 Kishinev pogroms, which led to the deaths of forty-nine Jews, the injuring of ninety-two, and the destruction of seven hundred Jewish homes and workplaces.

7. Interestingly, Zangwill himself did not believe in the saying. When the Seventh Zionist Congress rejected the Uganda Plan, he left the Zionist movement and established a territorial organization that sought a solution for the Jews in Canada and Australia.

8. Faithful representatives of this approach include S. N. Eisenstadt (1967) and Dan Horowitz and Moshe Lissak (1978), whose works on Israeli society almost completely ignore the conflict and the Arabs.

9. Different research boundaries and a different focus, one not limited to the Israeli perception of the conflict, would require reference to different empirical material. For example, a book examining the conflict as a whole, or the Israeli/Arab wars in general, would naturally also rely on Arab sources.

10. See, for example, "Why War?—Albert Einstein and Sigmund Freud from *The Einstein-Freud Correspondence (1931–1932)*," website of Stephane Chabrieres, last updated March 29, 2010, http://chabrieres.pagesperso-orange.fr/texts/whywar.html. Thanks to Oren Barak for referring me to this source.

11. See also the objections raised by Hutchinson (2017: 3) to the idea of a linkage between military service and citizenship.

12. The same utilitarian perspective is also manifested in the so-called bargaining theory. See Fearon, 1995; Toft, 2006.

13. See, for example, Kaufman, 2005.

14. In his highly regarded article, Fearon (1995) claimed that rational bargaining explains why violent conflict is relatively rare. One may wonder, however, how much organized violence, including ethnic violence, has diminished, and how much less brutal and bloody it has been in the last 120 years (see, e.g., Wimmer, Cederman, and Min, 2009).

15. For further discussion of the social constructivist perspective and its relevance for sociology, see Finnemore, 1996; Checkel, 1998.

16. The concept of ideology has many interpretations, some mutually exclusive. The position summarized here is close to that presented by Eagleton, 1991.

17. On "path dependence," see, for example, Mahoney, 2000.

18. On the political meaning of sacred places and the sacredness of territory, see Toft, 2003; Hassner, 2009; Goddard, 2006. All three, however, emphasize the importance of sacredness as a political strategy, more than its cultural value for both leaders and led.

19. The critics argued that ethnic nationalism was found among the Arabs (Suleiman, 2002) or among different Asiatic nations (Tonnesson and Antlov, 1996). Such a contention would surely be accepted by Kohn, who was among the first to claim that nationalism does not exist in Europe alone.

20. Nielsen, 1999. On the differences between nation and state, and between patriotism to the state (e.g., the British state) and ethno-national loyalty (Welsh or Scottish), see Connor, 1994: 102; Smith, 2010.

21. A cursory review of the works of two of the prominent modernists who write about nationalism, Ernest Gellner (1983) and Benedict Anderson (1991), is sufficient to realize that war does not play any role in their writing.

22. See Gagnon, 1994; Spohn, 2003; Fox, 2004. More recently, Hutchinson (2017) has made an important contribution to the examination of this field.

23. Interestingly, Eisenstadt (1999) devoted considerable attention to the possibility of multiple modernisms, regarding the Western model as only one of many that preserve religion and ethnicity. However, in his writing on Israel he acknowledged the dichotomy between tradition and modernity, proposing an evolutionist transition from the one to the other.

24. On this aspect, see the discussion in Delanty et al. (2008) regarding the controversies surrounding Hutchinson's (2005) concept of "nations as zones of conflict."

25. This national interpretation of reality is presented, for example, by Van Evera (1994), who mentions nationalist self-images and images of others as factors that can lead to war.

26. On the relations between state-making and nation-building, see Smith, 1986. On the connection between nations and wars, see Hutchinson, 2005, 2017; Schrock-Jackson, 2012.

27. Extensive literature on Israeli militarism developed as well (e.g., Kimmerling, 1993; Ben-Eliezer, 1998; Lomski-Feder and Ben-Ari, 1999; Levy, 2007; Sheffer and Barak, 2010). The connection between ethnic nationalism and militarism, however, as two organizing principles or ideologies was seldom made (Ben-Eliezer, 2017).

2. THE BIRTH OF MILITARISTIC NATIONALISM IN PRE-STATE ISRAEL

1. Yehudit Hararit (Eisenberg), "A Work to Conquer," *Hapoel Hatzair,* 20 December 1907.

2. Yitzhak Epstein, "The Invisible Question," *Hashiloach* 17 (July–December 1907).

3. Heruti (Moshe Smilanski), "The Yishuv's Affairs," *Hapoel Hatzair,* January 1908.

4. Ahad Ha'am, "The Wrong Way," 1889, and "Truth from Eretz Israel," 1891, in Ahad Ha'am, 1950.

5. The slogan was taken from the poem "Shir Habiryonim," or "Song of the Thugs," written in Russia by an anonymous Jewish poet, Yaacov Cohen, under the

influence of the 1903 Kishinev Riots. It continued for many years to be the slogan of Jewish militants.

6. "Our Hashomer's Worldview," in *Guide for the Hashomer's Instructors, Vienna,* 1917, taken from Ophaz, 1988.

7. David Frishman, "Did You Know the Land? Impressions for Journeys in Palestine," *Hatzfira* 126 (3–16 June 1911).

8. Itzhak Ben-Zvi, "About the Jewish Brigade," *Doar Hayom,* 20 February 1934.

9. For more on the importance of the Balfour Declaration, see Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "The Balfour Declaration," 2 November 1917, www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/foreignpolicy/peace/guide/pages/the%20balfour%20declaration.aspx.

10. On the return of Zionism to the Bible, see Shapira, 1977: 27; 1998: 156. On the negation of Jewish life in the Diaspora, see Malz-Ginsburg, 2008: 70.

11. Ben-Gurion, "Achdut Ha'avodah's Third Convention," *Contras* 119 (1923): 48–49. The Achdut Ha'avodah Party, headed by Ben-Gurion, was founded in Palestine in March 1919 and was made up of members of the former Poalei Zion Party (but excluded the latter party's more internationalist and Marxist members). The new party also included the nonpartisan workers led by Berl Katznelson.

12. This was, for example, the opinion of the journalist Robert Weltsch (1951), who believed that Weizmann was the leader of a humanistic Zionism that gradually lost its influence.

13. Zeev Zabotinski, "On the Iron Wall," in Nedava, 1980: 233–39. The original version appeared on 4 November 1923.

14. Zeev Zabotinski, "The Ethics of the Iron Wall," in Nedava, 1980: 239–42. The original version appeared on 11 November 1923.

15. Zeev Zabotinski, "On the Fireplace, the New Alpha-Betic," in Nedava, 1980: 138–45. The original version appeared on 16 October 1931.

16. On the German Jews at that time, and on the intellectual background that led to the formation of the movement, see Lavsky, 1988, 1990.

17. Martin Buber, "Dear Stephan Zweig," in Buber, 1988: 43.

18. Martin Buber, "Dear Stephan Zweig," in Buber, 1988: 43–44.

19. Buber in the 1921 Zionist Congress, in Buber, 1963: 286–87.

20. Martin Buber, "Truth and Salvation," *Problems,* 5–6 July 1947.

21. David Ben-Gurion, "Within a Debate," comments at a Brit Shalom Meeting, Fall, 1925. See Ben-Gurion, the Ben-Yehuda Project Site, https://benyehuda.org/.

22. David Ben-Gurion, "Within a Debate," comments at a Brit Shalom Meeting, Fall, 1925. See Ben-Gurion, the Ben-Yehuda Project Site, https://benyehuda.org/

23. On the 1929 riots, see Cohen, 2013. On the good relations between Jews and Arabs in Hebron and the four Jewish holy cities, see Elyashar, 1975.

24. Zeev Zabotinski, "Good!" *Doar Hayom,* 7 January 1930.

25. Lavsky, 1990: 239–40; Weltsch, 1951. Judah Leon Magnes was a prominent Reform rabbi in both the United States and Palestine, the president of the Hebrew University, and a pacifist who supported a binational Jewish-Arab state.

26. Weltsch, 1951. For further details about Hans Kohn in Palestine, see Reuveni, 1992; Lavsky, 2002.

27. "A Letter to Mahatma Gandhi (1939)," in Buber, 1963: 169–73.

28. Mapai, the "Workers' Party of the Land of Israel," was founded on 5 January 1930 by the merger of the Hapoel Hatzair and Achdut Ha'avodah (founded in 1919). It became the dominant party in Israel until 1977.

29. Miron, 2002: 127–43. For more on the political writing of Greenberg, see Huffert, 2006. On the Hebrew fascism in Palestine at that time, see Tamir, 2018.

30. "'Jerusalem, a City of Peace,' in the Court," *Doar Hayom,* 3 May 1932.

31. The first article was published on 21 September 1928 and the last on 19 November 1928.

32. Uri Keisari, "Notes from the Investigation in the Arlozorov Trial," *Doar Hayom,* 28 August 1933.

33. On their sporadic activities, see Ahimeir and Shatsky, 1978: 179–216; *Brit Habiryonim,* 1953; Feuer, 2000: 43–74.

34. Zeev Zabotinski, "The Yishuv's Restraints, Until?" 12 July 1936, quoted in Shavit, 1983: 71–73.

35. Avidan, "With the Sword," 1939, quoted in Heller, 1989: 68.

36. See Alon, 1980, and Teveth, 1972, for portrayals of the two leaders' childhoods. See also the testimony of Yosef Tabenkin, testimony no. 4650, Haganah Archive.

37. Protocol of the Fosh Members' Gathering, Galili Files, no. 5, Haganah Archive. See also "Report on the Fosh Situation," March 15, 1938, 16IV, file no. 21, Haganah Archive; Avigur, 1955: 948.

38. "Mapai Center," 15 December 1940, 9 January 1941, Mapai Archive.

39. Discussion in the Hamachanot Ha-olim Council, 6 December 1940, 8/1/7, HaKibbutz HaMeuchad Archive.

40. For example, *Bama'aleh*]Hanoar Ha-oved Bulletin], 17 April 1939, 19 May 1939; *Sadot* [Hamachanot Ha-olim Bulletin], 26 May 1936.

41. Habacharut Hasotzialistit Committee, 19 June 1939, N934/32, Labor Archive.

42. For examples of the debates surrounding the recruitment of the Yishuv's youth to the British military, see "Mapai Center," 14 April 1941, Mapai Archive. On the significance of this mobilization, see Ben Zion Israeli's letter to the Mapai secretary, "What Are We Waiting For?" 30 June 1941, File 1101, Mapai Archive.

43. *Palmach Bulletin,* no. 40 (March 1946).

44. HaKibbutz HaMeuchad Secretary, 3–4 May 1941, HaKibbutz HaMeuchad Archive.

45. Yitzhak Tabenkin, "The School and the War," in Tabenkin, 1967: 105.

46. "Youth in Face of the Exilic Holocaust," 15 January 1943, HaKibbutz HaMeuchad Archive.

47. The Zionist General Council Meeting, 15 December 1942, S25/293; 10 November 1942, S25/294, Zionist Archive.

48. Moshe Smilanski, "From the Past," *Ner,* 4 March 1953.

49. "Our Alliance with the Country," *Bamivhan,* September 1944.

50. On the agreement, see "Actions," October 1945, Galili Archive. See also Ben-Gurion diary, 22 November 1945, Ben-Gurion Archive.

51. Y. Noded (Sadeh), "Discipline in Inaction?" *Le'achdut Ha'avodah,* 8 October 1946.

52. Raanan Weiz, "Yosef Weiz's Perspective," *Institute for the Research of the Jewish National Fund,* no. 16, April 1995.

53. Mapai Sixth Convention, 5–8 June 1946, Mapai Archive.

54. Hamachanot Ha-olim Secretariat, 24 January 1947, 9/3/1/7a, HaKibbutz HaMeuchad Archive.

3. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A DOMINANT NATION-STATE

1. United Nations, General Assembly, *Official Records of the General Assembly, Second Session, Supplement No. 11* (A/364), 3 September 1947; United Nations, General Assembly, Special Committee on Palestine, *Report to the General Assembly,* vol. 1 (Lake Success, NY: United Nations 1947).

2. Ben-Gurion speech to the Jewish Agency Committee in the United States, 13 May 1947, quoted in Avizohar, 1993: 116–17.

3. Ben-Gurion speech to the Assembly of Representatives, 22 May 1947, quoted in Avizohar, 1993: 127. See also his words in Mapai Secretariat, 11 June 1947, Mapai Archive.

4. Mapai Secretariat, 29 November 1947, Mapai Archive.

5. Mapai Bureau, 17 September 1947, Mapai Archive. For further discussion on the idea of transfer within the Zionist leadership, see Morris, 2000: 53–54.

6. Central Committee of Mapai, 3 December 1947, quoted in Avizohar and Bareli, 1989: 236–37.

7. Histadrut Executive, 3 December 1947, Labor Archive.

8. "The Haganah for the Following," 18 June 1947, cited in Ben-Gurion, 1951: 13–18.

9. Ben-Gurion to Ben-Arzi, 6 October 1947, Haganah Archive. See also E. Oren, 2004: 38.

10. Rivlin and Oren, 1982: 58 (19 December 1947).

11. Rivlin and Oren, 1982: 37 (11 December 1947); 105 (2 January 1948). See also Carmel, 1989: 43; Radai, 2016: 134.

12. Protocol of the Meeting of the Shem (Arabs) Affairs Committee, 1–2 January 1948: 97–106, Ben-Gurion Archive.

13. Protocol of the Meeting of the Shem (Arabs) Affairs Committee, 1–2 January 1948: 97–106, Ben-Gurion Archive. See also Rivlin and Oren, 1982: 101–2; Ben-Pazi, 2007: 167; Gelber, 2004: 65, 69.

14. Ben-Gurion diary, 1 January 1948, Ben-Gurion Archive; Denin, 1987: 221.

15. Danin to Sasson, 23 December 1947, S25–4057, Zionist Archive, cited in Morris, 2010: 124.

16. Morris, 2000: 76, 87. For further discussion on the Arabists in 1948, see Eyal, 1993.

17. Khalidi, 1961; Ostfeld, 1994: 289–320; Morris, 2010: 139–47; Shteftel, 2008.

18. Morris, 2010: 317. See also Gelber (2004: 248), who attributes Alon's scorched-earth policy to the influence of Tabenkin.

19. Eshel, 1973: 91, 173, 179; Nazzal, 1974; Eilam, 1990: 31–52; Ostfeld, 1994: 292. See also G. Erlich, "Not Only in Dir Yassin," *Ha'ir,* 6 May 1992.

20. Carmel, 1949: 274–77. See also Pappe, 1992: 82.

21. For example, see Ben-Gurion, Mapai Council, 2 February 1948, Mapai Archive.

22. In Jaffa, for example, out of seventy thousand Arabs who lived there before the war, fewer than four thousand remained after May 1948. Many buildings were ruined, while others were transferred to military officers or populated by new immigrants.

23. *Director of the People,* Protocol, 12 May 1948, State Archive.

24. Rivlin and Oren, 1982: 36 (10 December 1947); 195–96 (31 January 1948). See also Mapai Council, 6–7 February 1948, Mapai Archive; Ben-Gurion in the Histadrut Executive Committee, 15 October 1948, Histadrut Archive; Uri Brenner's testimony, no. 4348, Haganah Archive; Ostfeld, 1994: 98–99.

25. Rivlin and Oren, 1982: 392 (6 May 1948); 465 (28 May 1948). See also Ostfeld, 1994: 235; Shapira, 1985: 105, 114; Kimchi and Kimchi, 1973: 191–216. Additionally, see a letter written by Israel Galili describing the conflict with Ben-Gurion, in Aharon Zizling's private archive, 6/4, HaKibbutz HaMeuchad Archive.

26. Rivlin and Oren, 1982: 43 (12 December 1947); 47 (15 December 1947); 81 (29 December 1947); 103 (1 January 1948); 522–23 (16 June 1948).

27. Rivlin and Oren, 1982: 535–36 (19 June 1948). See also Ben-Gurion, 1969: 179–81.

28. Ben-Gurion, "To Conquer the Whole Country," cited in Avigur, 1955: 1330–31; Golani, 1990: 305–9.

29. Rivlin and Oren, 1982: 567–70 (29 June 1948); Bar-Zohar, 1975: 805. See also the discussion in the Mapam Political Committee, 3 July 1948, HaKibbutz HaMeuchad Archive.

30. Yitzhak Rabin (1979) wrote of Ben-Gurion's approval in his biographical book. The reference was censored but was later published in the *New York Times.* See also Bar-Zohar, 1975: 775.

31. Yair Oron, "Our Men Can Reach This Level of Barbarism," *Haaretz,* 5 February 2016.

32. Rivlin and Oren, 1982: 524–26 (16 June 1948). For further details about the government decision, see Ben-Gurion, 1969: 165. Regarding Sharett's opinion on this question, see Sharett, 1964: 265–79. On dominant nation-states, see Smith, 1986.

33. Rivlin and Oren, 1982: 603 (19 July 1948); Weitz, 1965, entry dated 28 September 1948.

34. See Moshe Aram and Haim Hazan, in the Histadrut Executive Committee, 14 July 1948, Histadrut Archive.

35. R. Benyamin, "The Double Participation," *Ner,* no. 6 (28 April 1950): 4–5.

36. Eric Sven Soder, "Back to Count Bernadotte," *Haaretz,* 9 November 2015.

37. Slater, 1977: 80–81; Rabin, 1979: 73; Cohen, 1969: 250–51; Morris, 2010: 392. Regarding pressure from other generals, see, for example, Rivlin and Oren, 1982: 760–61 (22 October 1948).

38. *Bamachaneh,* 17 July 1948.

39. Rivlin and Oren, 1982: 816–17; Ostfeld, 1994: 774–77.

4. A NATION-IN-ARMS

1. This was determined by data presented in the Knesset by the minister of security. See Knesset Proceedings, 16 December 1953. See also Drori, 1987: 31; 2006.

2. On statism as a system of domination, see Scholte, 2005. On the Israeli manifestation of statism, see Troen and Lucas, 1995; Levy, 1997.

3. These were members of Mapam, the party of the Artzi kibbutz movement and the Palmach that Ben-Gurion did not include in his coalition government.

4. From Ben-Gurion's remarks to the Knesset, addressing the new government and its program. Knesset Proceedings, 3 November 1955.

5. On the nation-in-arms model in general, see Ben-Eliezer, 1998: 193–222.

6. On military rule in the 1950s and early 1960s, see Lustick, 1980; Osazcky-Lazar, 1990; Amitai, 1998; Cohen, 2010.

7. "From a Day to a Week," *Bamachaneh,* 24 February 1954.

8. Dr. Sasson Ashriki, "The Card of Deceit," *Bamachaneh,* 5 October 1955.

9. Yigal Yadin, "The Army and the School," *Davar,* 12 April 1950. On the professors' objections to Yadin's ideas, see Nathan Rotenstreich, "Objection Regarding the Military Orientation," *Davar,* 2 May 1952.

10. *Ner,* no. 6 (28 April 1950): 14; "Ten Years of Ichud," *Ner,* no. 4 (March 1953): 7–8. See also Hermann, 2010.

11. On the different ways Sharett and Ben-Gurion perceived the reality of the Israeli-Arab conflict, see Shlaim, 1983; Pappe, 1986; Sheffer, 1996a, 1996b; Bar-On, 2008.

12. Sharett, 1978: 37 (14 October 1953).

13. Rosenthal, 1996: 799, 1844. See also Amir Oren, "Arye Shalev Is Dead," *Haaretz,* 2 August 2011; Ilil Bloom, "The Big Spirit of Father," *Yediot Yerushalayim,* 1 May 2009.

14. Sharett, 1978: 41–45 (16–17 October 1953).

15. Sharett, 1978: 81 (26 October 1953).

16. Herzl Rosenblum, "Well, Qibya Is Not Enough," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 9 November 1953; Moshe Zack, "Qibya," *Maariv,* 25 November 1953; H. Yustus, "The Ears Remained Sealed," *Maariv,* 25 November 1953; "Indecent Condemnation," *Maariv,* 27 November 1953. Regarding the lack of controversy around the affair, see Gerda Luft, "Why Is There No Debate about Qibya?" *Haaretz,* 13 December 1953. Concerning the attitude to the affair in the press as a whole, see Morris, 1998. For discussion of the perception of Israel as a victim, see Malz-Ginsburg, 2008: 160, 170–75.

17. Begin addressing the Knesset, as reported in *Herut,* 25 March 1954.

18. See, for example, the remarks of Zalman Aran, one of the leaders of Mapai, in Mapai Political Committee, 15 April 1954, Mapai Archive.

19. Moshe Zak, "A Maginot Line along the Borders of Israel," *Maariv,* 6 April 1954. See also Malz-Ginsburg, 2008: 186–87.

20. Sharett, 1978: 419 (29 March 1954).

21. On the "Bad Business" affair, see Eshed, 1979; Teveth, 1992, 1994.

22. See, for example, Benyamin Amadi, "Security versus 'Securitism,'" *Etgar* 3 (1): 18 May 1963. See also the claim by Bar-On (1999) that securitism, and not militarism, was the dominant ideology in the 1950s, and Ben-Eliezer's response (2017) to that claim.

23. Shmuel Shnizer, "A Country of Robbery," *Maariv,* 21 January 1955.

24. Azriel Karlibach, "The Day after Gaza," *Maariv,* 2 March 1955. For further discussion of Operation Black Arrow, see Milstein, 1985: 284–314; Golani, 1994.

25. Shmuel Svislutzki, "Israel's Heroes," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 4 March 1955.

26. Roi Mendel, "Black Arrow, Hole in the Heart," *Ynet,* 17 February 2012.

27. See Sharett's account of the 4 April 1955 government meeting: Sharett, 1978: 897–99. See also Dayan, 1976: 143.

28. Sharett, 1978: 996 (16 May 1955).

29. Sharett, 1978: 1021 (26 May 1955).

30. Moshe Dayan, "Not from the Arabs but from Ourselves We Will Seek Roi's Blood," *Davar,* 2 May 1956.

31. Sharett, 1978: 1048 (7 June 1955).

32. See *Maariv,* 1 January 1956, for a report on Alon's opinion on the debate in the Knesset. See also the remarks by Begin and Alon in Knesset Proceedings, 2 January 1956.

33. Speeches File, 19 January 1952, Ben-Gurion Archive, cited in Shalom, 1998: 125.

34. Ben-Gurion's Diaries, 10 February 1957, Ben-Gurion Archives, cited in Shalom, 1998: 137.

35. Sharett, 1978: 1316 (27 December 1955).

36. See "On Earth," *Bamachaneh,* 26 October 1955. See also the remarks by Ben-Gurion in the Knesset: Knesset Proceedings, 2 January 1956. Also see Laron, 2013.

37. Sharett, 1978: 1307 (10 December 1955); Kafkafi, 1994: 47–52.

38. Bar-On (1992) claims that the decision was made only after the arms deal, while Golani (1997) asserts that it was made earlier. See also the debate around this issue between David Tal and Moti Golani, "Discussion," *Cathedra* 81 (1996): 109–32.

39. Sharett, 1978: 1385 (3 April 1956).

40. "At a Meeting of the Younger Generation," Sharett, 1978: 1506 (28 June 1956).

41. For discussion of the way the dismissal was reported in the press, see Aryeh Dissentshik, "Everything Was Ready," *Maariv,* 8 June 1956; Moshe Zack, "Two People, Two Perspectives," *Maariv,* 22 June 1956. On the political process that led to the dismissal, see Golani, 1997: 141–56.

42. Dayan, 1976: 250. See also Military Reporter, "Qalqiliya's Police Building Was Destroyed," *Haaretz,* 11 October 1956.

43. Knesset Proceedings, 16 October 1956. See also Menachem Begin, "Reprisal Methods Are a Sodom Bed," *Haaretz,* 16 October 1956.

44. "Ben-Gurion, 'Tiran for Israel,'" *Haaretz, 7* November 1956.

45. "Important Archeological Discoveries," *Haaretz,* 7 December 1956.

46. Anonymous, letter to the editor, *Haaretz,* 3 December 1956.

47. See the remarks by geographer Avraham Braver, letter to the editor, *Haaretz,* 7 December 1956, and an opposing opinion by D. Peles, "On the Sanctity of Mount Sinai," *Haaretz,* 3 May 1957.

48. Yehuda Elitzur, letter to the editor, *Haaretz,* 25 December 1956.

49. Sharett, 1978: 1836 (7 November 1956).

50. Menachem Begin, "Do Not Panic about the Russian Threat," *Haaretz,* 18 November 1956; Refael Bashan, "The IDF Must Stay in Sinai," *Haaretz,* 12 December 1956. See also Menachem Begin, "Ben-Gurion Should Resign," *Haaretz,* 1 January 1957; Meridor's comments in the Knesset: Knesset Proceedings, 22 February 1957.

51. "U.N. Decisions Do Not Exist for Us," *Hatzofeh,* 28 April 1955.

5. MILITARISTIC NATIONALISM AND OCCUPATION

1. Gluska, 2004: 49–56.

2. See, for example, the statements on this issue by the transport minister, Moshe Carmel, an ex-IDF general and one of the leaders of HaKibbutz HaMeuchad, in Shlomo Nakdimon, "Minister of Transport: "We Will Drive Further across the Border," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 23 March 1967.

3. For details of the meeting, see Gluska, 2004: 49–56. See also Weizmann, 1975: 208–9, 243–44. For further discussion of the generals' political opinions, see Peri, 2006: 249–50.

4. In the covenant, which appears in Genesis, chapter 15, God grants Abraham the whole land of Canaan and control of all peoples between "the river of Egypt and the Euphrates." Later this land came to be referred to as the Promised Land or the Land of Israel.

5. For details of the meeting, see Gluska, 2004: 49–56; Weizmann, 1975: 208–9, 243–44. For further discussion of the generals' political opinions, see Peri, 2006: 249–50.

6. Gilboa, 1968: 36. Some of Eshkol's comments also appeared in the newspapers; see "PM Gives a Serious Warning to the Syrians," *Davar,* 13 August 1963.

7. On the incidents during this period, see Haber, 1987: 67; Gluska, 2004: 27.

8. See the discussion in the IDF General Staff, 4 October 1967, IDF Archive.

9. Discussions in the IDF General Staff, 5 December 1966, 13 December 1966, IDF Archive.

10. *Bamachaneh,* 12 September 1966; Haber, 1987: 146–47; Shemesh, 2000: 169.

11. Nakdimon, 1968: 30; Weizmann, 1975: 254; Dayan, 1976: 391.

12. Avraham Shwitzer, "Generals and Bluffs," *Haaretz,* 12 March 1972.

13. "A National Leadership Is Needed," *Haaretz,* 29 May 1967; Yosef Harif, "A Tendency to Support Dayan's Nomination Is Crystallizing in Labor," *Maariv,* 31 May 1967.

14. Discussion in the general staff with the defense minister, Eshkol, 28 May 1967, IDF Archive. See also Haber, 1987: 195–99; Gluska, 2004: 333–34.

15. Discussion in the general staff with, Eshkol, the defense minister, 28 May 1967, IDF Archive. See also Haber, 1987: 195–99; Gluska, 2004: 333–34.

16. According to M. Oren (2004: 171), Eshkol's wife, Miriam, remarked, "There was a real putsch there: they were all worried and did not even think it works by the democratic procedure."

17. David Ben-Gurion, "The Only Consideration," *Davar,* 30 May 1967.

18. Meir Ariel, "Jerusalem of Iron," Mako TV, shironet.mako.co.il/artist?type=lyricsandlang=1andprfid=605.

19. On the significance of the occupations immediately after 1967, see Efrat, 2002.

20. Regarding the glorification of Dayan, see Aviezer Golan, "Moshe Dayan," in *Seven Days,* supplement to *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 16 June 1967; "This Man, Moshe Dayan," *Davar,* 16 June 1967. On Rabin, see Eitan Haber, "Yitzhak Rabin," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 13 June 1967; "Yitzhak Rabin, the Road to June 5th," *Davar,* 16 June 1967.

21. Yosef Bar Yosef, "Paratroopers Cry Near the Wall," *Bamachaneh,* 12 June 1967. See also *The Victory, 1967: The Six-Day War,* 1967: 5–6.

22. Eliyahu Amikam, "The People Return to Their Mount-Home," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 8 June 1967.

23. Moshe Ishon, "War of Command," *Hatzofeh,* 9 June 1967.

24. Menachem Barash, "Jews, Jews," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 11 June 1967.

25. For further discussion of the messianic eruption immediately after 1967, see Hadari, 2002.

26. Gabriel Zifroni, "The Messiah, Riding on a Tank," *Maariv,* 7 June 1967.

27. Simcha Bones Orbach, "The Miraculous National Unity," *Hatzofeh,* 9 June 1967.

6. THE PRICE

1. About the experience of the abandonment, see Avital-Epstein, 2013: 333–34.

2. See the "Story of Dov Katzir" (undated) on the website Association of Awake at Night, www.erim-pow.co.il/article.php?id=271.

3. On the controversies concerning the outposts, see Adan, 1979: 44–52.

4. Yohanan Lahav, "We Will Give Peace," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 8 June 1967.

5. For example, "Moshe Karmel Is Calling," *Davar,* 5 September 1967.

6. Elie Landau, "Training and Exercise Bases of the IDF," *Maariv,* 7 August 1967.

7. David Elazar, "The Boundary Line with Syria," *Davar,* 2 August 1967.

8. "Moshe Dayan in an Interview for a German Newspaper," *Maariv,* 9 July 1967.

9. Eliezer Livne, "On the Spiritual Meaning of the Six-Day War," quoted in Ben-Ami et al., 1977. See Alterman's remarks in the same volume.

10. Dov Goldstein, "We Won't Give Up," *Maariv,* 31 August 1967.

11. "A Founding Conference of the Movement for the Whole Land of Israel," *Davar,* 3 November 1967. See also "We Have to Settle Immediately," *Maariv,* 27 November 1967.

12. See Shlomo Zalman Shragai, "A Policy of Peace Will Be Yours," *Hatzofeh,* 6 October 1968; Rabbi Shaul Israeli, "War of Commandment and War of Permission," *Hatzofeh,* 13 October 1968.

13. See Israel Eldad, quoted in Sesser, 1997: 20. Zvi Shiloach, one of the leaders of the Movement for the Whole Land of Israel, also expressed support for transfer. See Shiloach, "It Is Important What the Jews Will Do," *Davar,* 3 July 1967.

14. His ideas appeared in an interview for *Der Spiegel* and later in *Davar,* 10 July 1967.

15. Israel Cohen, "Back to Hebron after 39 Years," *Davar,* 26 April 1968.

16. On Naomi Shemer's visit and the song she wrote, "At the Nachal Settlement in Sinai," see Moti Zeira, "Naomi Shemer Is Exposed," *Maariv Online,* 23 September 2017.

17. Yehoshua Tira, "Slowly, We Settle in the Territories; Alon Plan Is Accomplished," *Haaretz,* 4 July 1967. See also Admoni, 1992: 45–46.

18. For a reflection on the mood during this period, see Gan, 2008.

19. Efrat Newman, "Women Claim . . . ," *The Marker,* 8 April 2016.

20. Amon Barzilai, "That Was the Story of Major-General Eli Zeira," *Haaretz,* 21 August 1974.

21. Testimony of Yitzhak Hofi before the Agranat Committee, sessions 28, 52, 100, IDF Archive. See also the speech by Brigadier General Mordechai Zippori at a commanders' conference, quoted in Bergman and Meltzer, 2003: 347.

22. "Dayan Is Digging in the Gaza Strip," *Haaretz,* 7 December 1969.

23. Dayan's speech at the Histadrut assembly in Haifa, 20 July 1968. See Dayan, 1969: 40–41.

24. UN Security Council, S/RES/242, November 1967.

25. Eitan Haber, "Why Did the IDF Operate the Way It Did?" *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 24 March 1968; Aviezer Golan, "An Interview with the Chief of Staff, *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 29 May 1968.

26. "The Letter from the 12th Grade," *Haaretz,* 29 April 1970; Uzi Benziman, "Peace Must Be Seen," *Haaretz,* 30 April 1970, 1 May 1970.

27. Eitan Levenstein, "The Queen of Bath Stopped Again," *Haaretz,* 4 May 1970; Hava Novak, "The Storm in the Bath," *Davar,* 8 May 1970; "Controversies," *Maariv,* 15 May 1970.

28. On the military arrogance of the commander of the air force, see "Hod: We Always Won," *Haaretz,* 17 July 1969; and regarding the commander of the armored

corps, General Kuti Adam, see Moshe Shai, "IDF Personal Armored Carriers," *Haaretz,* 18 July 1969.

29. Zeev Schiff, "IDF Hits Deep in Egypt," *Haaretz,* 17 April 1970. See also Naor, 1973: 80–87, 100–103.

30. "Menachem Begin Calls for a Resistance Movement," *Maariv,* 3 August 1980.

31. Amnon Kapeliuk, "The Folly of Rejecting the Jarring Initiative," *Ynet,* 21 April 1971.

32. Dayan, "Settlements That Were Established," *Davar,* 26 August 1973. The Jewish warriors who were besieged at Masada by the Romans in the year 70 AD decided to commit suicide rather than be taken into captivity.

33. See Shazali, 1987: 162–63, for his scornful dismissal of this approach. For a critique of the IDF war program, see Adan, 1979: 70–71.

34. Chief of staff, "We Will Go on Attacking," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 9 October 1973.

35. Bergman and Meltzer, 2003: 121; Guy, 1998: 231–501; Ofer Shelach, "Blindness," *Maariv,* 21 September 2012.

36. "We Demand," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 31 October 1973. See also Uri Avineri, "The Failed Idol," *Haaretz,* 15 October 1973.

37. Yaacov Agmon, "Soldiers' Discourse across the Canal," *Haaretz,* 7 November 1973.

38. Arnon Lapid, "An Invitation to Cry," *Shdemot* 53 (January 1974): 50–51.

39. Hana Zemer, "I Don't Feel Like Crying with You," *Davar,* 29 March 1974.

40. See Reuven Ben-Zvi, "Moti Ashkenazi Acts," *Davar,* 20 March 1974.

41. For a profile of one of the movement's members reflecting this position, see Yadin Dudai, "I Decided That It Is a Must," *Bamachaneh,* 14 August 1974.

42. See the words of Rabbi Haim-David Halevi in his article "God Will Give Strength to His People," *Hatzofeh,* 17 October 1973. Also Shin, "We Are Slaves of God and [We Are] His People, Israel," *Hatzofeh,* 7 December 1973; Itzhak Deutsch, "The Soul-Searching Following the Yom Kippur War: A Conversation with Chief Rabbi Goren," *Hatzofeh,* 9 November 1973.

43. See a discussion of the founding conference of Gush Emunim in "Every Move in the Golan," *Hatzofeh,* 6 February 1974; "War in the Land of Israel Suspends the Saving of Life," *Hatzofeh,* 6 February 1974.

44. On the religious and ideological beliefs behind Gush Emunim, see Ravitzky, 1993; Raanan, 1980; Eldar and Zertal, 2007. On the fundamentalist movement in general, see Marty and Appleby, 1991; Almond, Appleby, and Sivan, 2003.

45. "'The People of Israel, Stand Up and Live!' Things Recorded by the Mercaz Harav Yeshiva," *Maariv,* 6 May 1974.

46. Yehuda Litani, "Settlement with a Cane," *Haaretz,* 15 October 1974; A. Pripaz, "At a Solidarity Rally at Sebastia," *Davar,* 1 April 1975.

47. It should be emphasized that Voltaire did not agree with the position he quoted. Regarding the organizational change in the IDF, see "Thousands of Exemptions from Recruitment," *Bamachaneh,* July 1974. See also Eilam, 2013: 122.

7. THE DECLINE OF THE NATION-IN-ARMS

1. On the moral problem, see Yaacov Erez, "The Litani Operation: Morality within the War," *Maariv,* 12 April 1978.

2. Ran Edelist, "To Strike the Terrorists," *Maariv,* 4 April 1978. On the Security Zone, from a Lebanese perspective, see Beydoun, 1992.

3. On the issue of confiscating Palestinian land in the West Bank, see Dror Atkas and Hagit Ofran, "An Offense Leads to an Offense: Settlements on Private Palestinian Land," *Peace Now Report,* March 2007, www.peacenow.org.il. Also see "Land Grab and Settlement Policy in the West Bank," B'Tselem, May 2002, www.btselem.org/hebrew/publications. See also Weizmann, 2007.

4. Aluf Ben, "In the Settlements, There Is an Element of Impermanence," *Haaretz,* 4 April 2004.

5. The question of how irreversible the situation was, following the settlement activities, became the focus of public debate by the Israeli Left at the beginning of the 1980s. See Benvenisti, 1988.

6. Shlomo Man, "Judea and Samaria, Building Only," *Bamachaneh,* 2 March 1983.

7. Yosef Priel, "This Is One of the Hard Moments," *Davar,* 23 July 1981.

8. Yeshayahu Porat and Eitan Haber, "Chief of Staff: Through Military Action," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 14 May 1982.

9. Eitan Haber, "Who Wants War?" *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 14 May 1982. The remark of Rabin in those days, that "no Israeli goal in Lebanon will be achieved by military action," also testifies to the lack of consensus at the time. See K. M . Rabin, "No Israeli Goal," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 14 May 1982.

10. Begin's speech, Knesset Proceedings, 8 June 1982.

11. Alexander Haig, "The Autonomy Is Only a Stage," *Davar,* 27 May 1982.

12. Dan Avidan, "Halil: We Discussed the Possibility," *Davar,* 31 May 1982.

13. Daniel Bloch, "Europe Considers," *Davar,* 31 May 1982.

14. Begin's speech, Knesset Proceedings, 8 June 1982.

15. Amiram Nir, "Quiet! People Are Shooting," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 6 June 1982.

16. Daniel Bloch, "There Is No Choice," *Davar,* 7 June 1982.

17. "Peace for the Galilee," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 10 June 1982. On the lack of opposition to the war, see also Gadi Yatziv, "The War That Did Not Have to Start," in Rosenthal, 1983: 103–6.

18. Yechezkel Hameiri and Yossi Bar, "IDF Chief Rabbi to the Warriors," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 7 June 1982.

19. "The Chief Rabbinate Is Already Building," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 13 June 1982; "Only the Synagogue in Zidon Remained Standing," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 14 June 1982.

20. Arye Meir, "The IDF Will Renovate Holy Places in Zidon," *Haaretz,* 18 July 1982.

21. Begin, "This Is One of Our Finest Hours," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 9 June 1982.

22. Bili Moscona-Lerman, "The Father of the Four Mothers," *Maariv,* 8 June 2000.

23. Bili Moskuna-Lerman, "The Father of the Four Mothers," *Maariv,* 8 June 2000. See also Yehoshua Zamir, "My Son Yaron Fell in the Beaufort," 4 July 1982.

24. Chana Elichai, letter to the editor, *Haaretz,* 14 July 1982.

25. Yaacov Caroz, "The Destination Is Not Only . . . ," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 10 June 1982.

26. Ariel Sharon, "The IDF Will Remain in Lebanon," *Davar,* 13 June 1982; David Mushayof, "During the 10th Day of Fighting," *Davar,* 18 June 1982.

27. A. Kinarti, "Begin: Ready to Meet Sarkis," *Davar,* 16 June 1982.

28. "A Group of Intellectuals," *Davar,* 21 June 1982.

29. Eitan Shchori, "Thousands Demonstrated in Tel Aviv," *Haaretz,* 27 June 1982.

30. Reshef, 1996: 99. On Peace Now's hesitations at the time, see Lili Galili, "What's Going On in Peace Now," *Haaretz,* 8 July 1982.

31. Chaim Bior, "Sharon Stole the Show from Begin," *Maariv,* 18 July 1982.

32. On conscientious objection and antimilitaristic sentiments in Israel at that time, see Linn, 1986; Helman, 1999.

33. Aviva Ein-Gil, "Women against the Invasion of Lebanon," *Matzpen,* July 10, 1983.

34. Chaim Bior, "Sharon Stole the Show from Begin," *Maariv,* 18 July 1982.

35. Yosef Priel, "A Sharp Message," *Davar,* 5 August 1982.

36. Yosef Harif and Raphael Mann, "Begin, at Stake," *Maariv,* 6 August 1982; Yosef Priel, "The White House Decided," *Davar,* 13 August 1982.

37. Tuvia Mendelson, "Ministers Criticized," *Davar,* 11 August 1982.

38. Naor, 1986: 138; "Begin Confiscated . . . ," *Davar,* 13 August 1982.

39. Avi Leib, "The Eli Geva Affair," *Talpiot B,* n.d. See also "Brigade Commander Eli Geva Will Be Dismissed from the IDF," *Davar,* 27 July 1982.

40. Amiram Nir, "A Letter to Brigade Commander Eli Geva," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 27 July 1982; Yaacov Caroz, "Wistful Reflections," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 27 July 1982; Zeev Schiff, "What Is Happening to the IDF?" *Haaretz,* 29 September 1982.

41. *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Events at the Refugee Camps in Beirut,* vol. 8 (8 February 1983), www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/foreignpolicy/mfadocuments/yearbook6/pages/104%20report%20of%20the%20commission%20of%20inquiry%2.

42. See the harsh testimonies about the IDF operations in Lebanon in general, the IDF's bombardments in particular, and the massacre in Sabra and Shatila, in Lamb, 1984.

43. Menachem Begin, "Unavoidable War or an Avoidable War?" *Maariv,* 20 August 1982.

44. Professor Nathan Feinberg, "An Avoidable War Is Not Self-Defense," *Haaretz,* 6 September 1982.

45. Rani Talmor, "The Big Lie," *Davar,* 17 June 1982.

46. Menachem Begin, "Unavoidable War or an Avoidable War?" *Maariv,* 20 August 1982.

47. See Waltzer, 1977, 1985; Linn, 1985.

48. For some of the criticisms raised against Begin's perception, see Baruch Kimmerling, "The Most Important War," *Haaretz,* 1 August 1982; Zeev Sternhal, "The Cult of Power," *Haaretz,* 20 August 1982. See also Leibovitz and Katriel, 2010; Gavrieli Nuri, 2012: 39–42.

49. Danka Harnish, "400,000 Participated," *Davar,* 25 September 1982; "Under Public Pressure," *Davar,* 29 September 1982.

50. *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Events at the Refugee Camps in Beirut,* vol. 8 (8 February 1983): 122, www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/foreignpolicy/mfadocuments/yearbook6/pages/104%20report%20of%20the%20commission%20of%20inquiry%2.

51. See "1982 Lebanon War," Wikipedia, last updated 25 September 2018, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1982_Lebanon_War. See also *The Lebanon War* (1983).

8. THE EMERGENCE OF LIBERAL NATIONALISM

1. Gal-Or, 1990. See also Yehoshua Bitzur, "The Appeal of the Easy Punishment to the Underground," *Maariv,* 30 August 1985; Yehuda Goren, "It Is Forbidden to Pardon Whoever Made Me Blind," *Maariv,* 23 July 1985.

2. The law was known as the "Law of Encounters" and prohibited meetings of Israelis with representatives of the PLO. It was canceled in 2016. See the Antiterrorism Law, no. 2556, and 5766–2016 at the Knesset website.

3. Dan Sagir, "Justice Is Seen within Five to Ten Minutes," *Haaretz,* 20 September 1988.

4. "An Interview with Ehud Barak, Deputy Chief of Staff, at the End of the First Year of the Intifada," *Bamachaneh,* 7 December 1988.

5. For example, see Shmuel Shnizer, "And What Is Next?" *Maariv,* 12 January 1988; Shmuel Shnizer, "The New Heroes of Israel," *Maariv,* 19 January 1988.

6. Ilan Shchori, "Criticism from the Right," *Haaretz,* 29 February 1988.

7. Dan Margalit, "Their Blood Was Allowed," *Haaretz,* 13 May 1990.

8. "Law Enforcement on Israeli Civilians in the Occupied Territories," B'Tselem, March 1994, p. 24, www.btselem.org/hebrew/.../199403_law_enforcement.

9. Lili Galili, "About 900 Officers on Reserve," *Haaretz,* 9 March 1988; Amir Rozenblit, "It Was Not Threatening to My Life but to My Soul," *Davar,* 29 June 1990.

10. Emanuel Rozen et al., "Commanders' Testimonies," *Maariv,* 28 January 1982.

11. Amichai Dagan, "Here Is the Stick, Where Is the Carrot?" *Haaretz,* 21 October 1988.

12. Yareach Tal, "Shamir: 'We Have to Learn How to Live Together,'" *Haaretz,* 31 October 1991; Akiva Eldar, "Shamir: Probably President Bush Meant the Arabs," *Haaretz,* 31 October 1991; Moshe Arens, "Shamir Was Grim and Stubborn," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 13 January 1995.

13. On the term "liberal peace," see MacMillan, 1998; Doyle, 2005.

14. The term "reflexive modernization" is used as a substitute for the concept of postmodernism, which was perceived as unsuitable for a reality in which modernity did not completely disappear but only changed its meaning. See Beck, Bonss, and Lau, 2003.

15. On religious nationalism, see Armstrong, 1997. On the relations between religion and violence, see Rennie and Tite, 2008.

16. On the uncivil society in Israel and its influence on war, see Ben-Eliezer, 2015. On the rise of the uncivil right in Israel, see Del Sarto, 2017.

17. On liberal nationalism, see also Day and Thompson, 2004: 149–68.

18. Nehemia Shtrasler, "The End of Socialism," *Haaretz,* 29 April 1998.

19. See, on the one hand, Yuval Niv, "Little Gefen and His War in the World," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 28 February 1992. On the other hand, see Rechavam Zeevi, "Oh My Country, My Homeland," *Maariv,* 9 August 1996.

20. Neri Livne, "The Sacred Cows of Bereavement," *Haaretz,* 11 July 1998; Manuela Dviri, "We Will Not Stand at Attention," *Maariv,* 19 April 1999.

21. H. Segal, "Back to Trumpeldor," *Maariv,* 8 March 1998. For a general background regarding the bereaved parents' protest, see Naveh, 1998; Doron and Lebel, 2005; Rosenthal, 1989, 2001.

22. Daniel Shalit, "Face Talk," *Nekuda,* October 1993.

23. Moshe Reuven, "We Already Tried Wars," *Davar,* 11 November 1993.

24. On the petition filed on this matter by the Association for Civil Rights in Israel, HaMoked et al., on January 28, 1992, see HCJ 5973/92. The lack of wisdom in the act is confirmed by the fact that Rabin eventually returned the deportees to Israel.

25. Sever Plotzker, "Growth Instead of Hatred," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 22 September 1993; Sever Plotzker, "The Palestinian Authority Turns to an Economic Success: An interview with Shimon Peres," 8 October 1993; Gideon Koch and Amnon Atad, "They Meet Next Week in Paris," *Davar,* 17 November 1993.

26. As I have already discussed, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 242 after the 1967 war, on 22 November 1967, in accordance with a British proposal. Resolution 338 was approved by the United Nations Security Council during the Yom Kippur War on October 22, 1973, in accordance with a joint proposal by the United States and the Soviet Union.

27. Daniel Shalit, "Face Talk," *Nekuda,* October 1993. See also Karpin and Friedman, 1998; Grinberg, 2000.

28. Knesset Proceedings, 21–23 September 1993. See also Alon Pinka and Menachem Rahat, "This Is the Victory of the Blocking Block," *Maariv,* 24 September 1993. On the fission within Israeli society surrounding the agreements, see Ram, 1999; Herman and Yuchtman-Yaar, 2002.

29. Ron, 2003; N. Gordon, 2008; LeVine, 2009. LeVine, for example, claimed that the agreements collapsed not only because of the difficulty of living up to those agreements signed by the leaders of the two peoples but also because of the underlying ideologies and histories of the two sides.

30. Nadav Haetzni, "Breaking Battles," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 3 July 1974; David Haneshka, "The Eternity of Israel Is Not Dependent on the Eternity of Zionism," *Nekuda,* September 1995. On the difficulties associated with Oslo B, see Rabinowitz, 2004: 68.

31. Yerach Tal, "Rabin Attacked the Revisionist Lie and the Insults of the Right," *Haaretz,* 4 July 1997.

32. With the exception of one terrorist attack in the Jordan Valley, in which one person was killed, on 16 April 1993.

33. Ezer Weitzmann, "Maybe Arafat Is Not the Right Person," *Maariv,* 12 January 1995.

34. For example, on 5 October 1995, during the annual memorial service for the fallen of the Yom Kippur War on Mount Herzl, someone shouted, "Killer, traitor!" at Rabin and was stopped by the security guards. During a lecture at the Wingate Institute in Netanya, Rabin was also subjected to insults and an attempt to physically harm him. See Karpin and Friedman, 1998: 90.

35. Ilana Baum, "Anger at a Poster Showing Rabin in Nazi Uniform," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 15 May 1997; Nechama Duek, "Rabin: They Inflame the Passion," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 8 October 1995.

36. Yehonatan Lis, "When I Shot Rabin, I Felt as If I Had Shot a Terrorist," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 15 May 1997.

37. Yael Gvirtz, "He Has a Mandate," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 9 November 1995.

38. Shimon Shiffer et al., "The IDF Is Gaining Strength; Fleeing Lebanese Villagers," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 11 April 1996.

39. Shlomo Zezna, "Ayalon: Anyone Who Sees Yigal Amir as a Passing Phenomenon Is Evading Reality," *Maariv,* 20 April 2000. On the admiration of Amir, see Shmuel Meiri, "Ministry of Education to Investigate the Extent of Admiration for Yigal Amir at the Gross High School in Kiryat Gat," *Haaretz,* 11 August 1996.

40. "Fire in the Territories," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 25 September 1996; Roni Shaked, "Fire in the Territories: The Battle for the Checkpoint," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 26 September 1996.

41. Ginsburg also wrote the booklet *Baruch the Man,* in memory of Baruch Goldstein (Ben-Horin, 1995). In his book *The Order of the Day—Root Treatment,* he defines the Israeli Left as a partner in the murder of dozens of Jews, recommends an economic boycott of Arabs, and encourages transfer. See Gidi Weitz, "We Read and Have Fun," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 18 October 2002: supplement.

42. Rami Hazut, "We Will Turn Nablus into a Jewish City," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 27 October 1996.

43. Benjamin Netanyahu, "This Is a War for Our Life," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 29 September 1996; Aluf Ben, "The Government Expressed Confidence in Netanyahu," *Haaretz,* 29 September 1996.

44. Zvi Zinger, "The Settlers: A Hundred Days of Disappointment," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 6 September 1996.

1. Zvi Singer, "The Battle over the Settlements," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 13 October 1999; Zvi Zinger and Yuval Karni, "The Council of Yesha Agreed," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 14 October 1999. See also Talia Sasson, *Opinion Concerning Unauthorized Outposts,* Prime Minister's Office, 12 March 2005, www.pmo.gov.il/SiteCollection Documents/PMO/Communication/.../sason2.pdf.

2. Sharon Gal, "Demand in IDF and SLA to Use More Drastic Measures toward Hizbullah," *Haaretz,* 31 January 2000; Sharon Gal, "Chief of Staff Calls for a Firm Response in Lebanon," *Haaretz,* 2 February 2000; "Ministers: Chief of Staff Tries to Turn Pressure on Us," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 2 February 2000. See also Gilboa, 2015: 59–90.

3. Danny Rabinowitz, "Women in Military Discourse," *Haaretz,* 30 November 1998. See also Sela, 2007.

4. "Camp David Projection, July 2000," www.passia.org/maps/view/37. On the Israeli version, see Rubinstein, 2003; Ben-Ami, 2006. On the Palestinian version, see Malley and Agha, 2001. See also Ari Shavit, "The Day Peace Died," *Haaretz,* 14 September 2001, and Kacowicz, 2005.

5. Akiva Eldar, "Former IDF Intelligence Division Head Malka: General Amos Giladi Distorted the Situation," *Haaretz,* 10 June 2004; Yoav Stern, "A Groundless Conception," *Haaretz,* 17 June 2003; Shelach, 2006; Ben-Eliezer, 2012: 145–49.

6. Ariel Sharon, "What Led to the Fire," *Haaretz,* 3 October 2000.

7. The Mitchell Report, published by a committee headed by the American senator, saw Sharon's visit to the Temple Mount and the behavior of the Israel police as major factors in the outbreak of the intifada. See George J. Mitchell et al., 2001, *Sharm El-Sheikh Fact-Finding Committee Report* (Washington, DC: US Department of State).

8. On the Palestinians' attempt to use nonviolent methods in the Second Intifada, see Halward and Norman, 2012 .

9. In addition to Kaldor's famous work on new wars (2007), see also Munkler, 2005. Regarding civilian casualties in new wars, see Rothbart, Korostelina, and Cherkaoui, 2012. For a discussion of Israel's new wars, see Ben-Eliezer, 2012.

10. Yehudit Desberg, "Sharon's Provocation," *Hatzofeh,* 4 October 2000.

11. Dani Shalim, "The Palestinian Authority Is Responsible," *Hatzofeh,* 3 October 2000; Tuli Fikarsh, "The Right-Wing Urges Barak to Increase the Strong Hand Policy," *Hatzofeh,* 4 October 2000.

12. Baruch Kra, "Like a Police Force in the Wild West," *Haaretz,* 16 August 2000; Yoav Limor et al., "IDF Snipers Surround Nablus," *Maariv,* 3 October 2000.

13. Shosh Mula, "We Do Not Get Out from the Grave," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 16 July 2004; Yoav Limor, "Death Trap in Joseph's Tomb," *Maariv,* 2 October 2000.

14. Shlomo Zezna et al., "They Built a Mosque in Joseph's Tomb," *Maariv,* 11 October 2000.

15. Yoav Limor et al., "With Hindsight, We Could Have Acted Differently," *Maariv,* 3 October 2000; Amos Harel, "Trust between IDF and Palestinian Authority Is Lost," *Haaretz,* 2 October 2000.

16. Eyal Ben, "Red October," *Ynet,* 25 August 2003.

17. Yoav Limor et al., "I Just Killed Your Husband," *Maariv,* 13 October 2000; Ron Meiberg, "We Won't Forget, We Won't Forgive," *Maariv,* 13 October 2000.

18. Amos Harel and Avi Issacharoff, "The Secrets from Marwan Barghouti's Interrogation Room Are Revealed," *Haaretz,* 20 April 2012.

19. See B'Tselem data, "Fatalities in the Intifada," www.btzelem.org/Hebrew/statistics/Al_Aqsa_Fatalities_Tables.asp. The Palestinian Red Crescent reports that, at the time, 264 people were killed, a very small number of whom were killed by other Palestinians.

20. B'Tselem data, www.btselem.org/Hebrew.statistics/Total_Casualties.asp.

21. Palestinian Red Crescent, www.palestinerrcs.org/crisistables/table_of-figures.htm.

22. Ben Caspit, "Israel Is Not a Country That Has an Army, but an Army That Has a State," *Maariv,* 6 September 2002.

23. B'Tselem data, www.btselem.org/Hebrew/Statistics/Total_Casualties.asp.

24. Capelo, 2002; Yoav Limor, "Prevention and Revenge," *Maariv,* 2 August 2001.

25. "Amnesty: The Assassinations Are State Murders," *Haaretz,* 21 February 2001. See also Kremnitzer, 2005. Regarding the general attitude of the Israeli courts, both the civil and the military, to the territories and to the Palestinians who live there, see Shamir, 1990; Kretzmer, 2002; Hajjar, 2005.

26. Rabbi Yaacov Ariel, "Fire under Fire," *Nekuda,* 2000.

27. Shlomo Zezana, "Settlers: There Is Frustration and Lack of Control," *Maariv,* 27 October 2000.

28. Shimon Shiffer, Alex Fishman, and Itamar Eichner, "The Army Will Demand That the Cabinet Approves Demolition of Palestinian Homes and 'Neutralization' of Terror Operatives," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 17 November 2000.

29. On Clinton's agreement outline, see a background document written at the request of MK Orit Noked and presented to the Israeli-Palestinian negotiating teams on 23 December 2000 in Washington, DC, https://main.knesset.gov.il/Activity/Info/mmm/Pages/document.aspx?docId=b20fc.

30. Yossi Verter, Gideon Alon, and Mazal Mualem, "Barak Resigns, Elections for Prime Minister within Two Months," *Haaretz,* 10 December 2001.

31. Shlomo Filber, "Cherry Blossom," *Nekuda,* March 2001.

32. In January 2001, the number of Palestinian fatalities was 20 and the number of injuries was 471. In the following four months, the fatalities numbered 23, 39, 40, and 57, respectively, while the number of injuries also rose: 598, 927, 715, and 932. See Palestinian Red Crescent, www.palestinerrcs.org/crisistables/table_of-figures.htm.

33. On the motives of the Palestinian suicide bombers, see Brym and Bader (2012), who reject Merari's thesis.

34. On the tendency of the Palestinians to become more militant and to support more radical factions as a reaction to Israel's oppressive methods, see Gaeger et al., 2008.

35. Orli Azulai-Katz, "We Are Getting Out," *Yedioth Ahronoth,* 14 September 2001.

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10. RELIGIOUS AND MILITARISTIC NATIONALISM

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CONCLUSION

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