

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

THE DIVINE VICTORY OF HEZBOLLAH 2006

by
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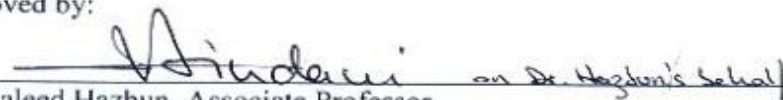
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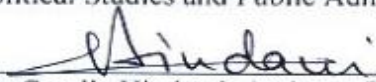
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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to dedicate this thesis to Sayyed Hasan Nasrollah the Secretary-General of Hezbollah.

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Zeinab Mohammad Araj for Master of Arts
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The Arab-Israeli conflict has seen the use of different military strategies to address the struggle. Whereas Israel's military strategy in much of the conflict was based on hard balancing of power, in the sense of constructing a classical army, the Arabs' military strategy was subject to modification. In the early stage of the conflict, the military strategy of the Arabs was essentially a hard balancing strategy, soon to turn into an asymmetric balancing of power, with the rise of Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), HAMAS, and Hezbollah.

The asymmetric balancing of power proved to be the most effective strategy in addressing the superiority of the Israeli army in military affairs. In this regard, Hezbollah was the most successful in the use of asymmetric balancing of power as a military strategy. The Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon after 18 years of occupation was the demonstration of the success of this military strategy; on the other hand, it was also the failure of the Israeli army in using hard balancing of power as a military strategy to destroy an asymmetric adversary. The basic reason behind Hezbollah's success was the constant development of its military strategy, which takes into account the deep knowledge of the Israeli army and society.

The July war of 2006 was the most recent round of conflict between Israel and Hezbollah. On July 12, 2006 Hezbollah launched "*Operation Truthful Promise*" to abduct Israeli soldiers, in order to exchange them for Lebanese prisoners. Israel's response was a 34 day war. In this war, Israel's military strategy was based again on hard balancing of power, but with a special focus on air power using Effects Based Operations (EBO) as a concept of operation, which calls for the use of physical and/or psychological effects to produce a cognitive perception of defeat in the side of the enemy. In fact, Israel viewed the new military strategy as an innovative way to address threats coming from an asymmetric adversary, and as a solution to the casualty aversion syndrome that the Israeli army and society suffers from. On the other side, Hezbollah's military strategy was based again on asymmetric balancing of power, but with a development that involves the combination of guerrilla and classical tactics, turning Hezbollah into a semi-state military organization.

This study aims at examining the Israeli military strategy in the war, as a way to identify whose military strategy has prevailed, focusing on the "*Operation Web of Steel*" as a case study. The aim of the operation was to occupy the town of Bint-Jubayl, a symbol of Hezbollah, and from which its Secretary-General Hasan Nasrollah described Israel as "weaker than a Spider Web". The operation was launched to produce a psychological victory for Israel and a consciousness of defeat for Hezbollah. The failure of the operation in light of the fierce "*Karbala'y fighting*" of Hezbollah's combat forces, represented a failure to the Israeli military strategy and the prevailing of Hezbollah's military strategy, a fact that was further elaborated in the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee report on the Second Lebanon war.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The July war of 2006 was a remarkable event in the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict. I personally lived through the moments of this war. When this war started, we were forced to leave our home in *Dahiyah* (Beirut southern-suburb) because of the heavy Israeli bombardment. Leaving was a difficult moment; however, I knew that I would return back soon. The motivation behind writing about this war is mixed, in the first place; the July war of 2006 is a unique event in the Arab-Israeli conflict that must be documented and written about. Second, I have had a special interest in the Arab-Israeli conflict in general and about Hezbollah in particular. Third, I have a desire to write about moments that I experienced first-hand.

The July war began on July 12, 2006; however, its roots go back to the outset of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The dismantling of the Ottoman Empire, and the British mandate of Palestine in the aftermath of World War I, paved the way for the Zionists to usurp a large portion of the historical land of Palestine, and declare their independent state in 1948. The declaration of the state of Israel marked the development of what is known as the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Arab-Israeli conflict has embraced many conventional wars and wars of attrition between Israel and the Arabs. The last major one was the July war of 2006.

From the outset of the conflict, Israel has constructed a military strategy against its neighbors that is based on hard balancing of power, in the form of building a high-tech conventional army. On the other side, the military strategy of the Arabs has differed

according to the actors involved in the conflict. Whereas Arab countries like Egypt and Syria adopted a hard balancing military strategy, non-state resistance organizations like the PLO, HAMAS, and Hezbollah turned to what can be called “an asymmetric balance of power” military strategy, which is based on dragging the enemy into a disliked attrition war, in contrast to a favored conventional encountering of hard balancing.

Hezbollah’s military strategy that evolved from its early days in 1982, proved to be the most efficient in countering the Israeli army, and the Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon in the year 2000 was the mere result of the success of Hezbollah’s military strategy.

In the July war of 2006, both Israel and Hezbollah followed certain conventional and asymmetric military strategies, which they developed to especially defeat one another in an anticipated upcoming war. On the eve of the war, the Israeli military strategy remained focused on the use of a conventional army but with a new approach on how to defeat an asymmetric foe. The new strategy, with an aim to accommodate Israel’s “casualty aversion syndromes,” which is the unwillingness to suffer casualties, and in light of the revolution in military affairs (RMA) that enabled the air power to attack precise targets, adhered to a strong belief in the air power capabilities using Effects Based Operations (EBO) as a concept of operation, which calls for the use of physical and/ or psychological effects to produce a cognitive perception of defeat in the side of the adversary. In plain terms, the Israeli army wanted to address threats coming from an asymmetric adversary by fighting a luxury war with zero casualties, in which the Air power was perceived as the optimal tool to bring the attained victory using EBO approach. On the other side, Hezbollah developed a military strategy that was essentially

based on a combination of guerrilla and classical tactics on the operational level, turning the party into a semi-state military organization.

A. Research Question

The research questions that will be addressed in this thesis are the following:

What was the basis of the Israeli military strategy during the July war of 2006? What about the military strategy of Hezbollah? Whose strategy has prevailed? How? Why?

On July 12, 2006, Hezbollah launched "*Operation Truthful Promise.*" Israel's reaction expanded into a 34-day war, in which the Israeli army launched three military operations. The general aim of these three military operations was to "smash" Hezbollah as an organization, and enhance the deterrence power of Israel. However, the war resulted in the empowerment of Hezbollah, and in a further deterioration of the overall power status of Israel.

The military strategy of the Israeli army in much of the war depended on the use of air power as a decisive weapon to eliminate Hezbollah, using EBO platform, which calls for creating effects and attack symbols that cause a consciousness of defeat in the side of the adversary.

The Israeli operation "*Adequate Pay,*" embodied essentially the use of standoff fire, which is the fire of air power, artillery power, and navy power, in order to destroy the rocket arsenal and the command, control and communication system of Hezbollah, as a means to produce a perception of defeat, with no Israeli casualties. The failure of the operation led the Israeli army to launch another one dubbed "*Operation Web of Steel.*"

The new operation was in line with the Israeli military strategy, which also calls for the use of small force formations when necessary. The basic aim of the operation was to occupy the town of Bint-Jubayl, a symbol of Hezbollah, in which the expected outcome was to give Israel a psychological victory, and cause Hezbollah to sense a consciousness of defeat. The failure of the operation led to an unofficial abandonment of the new military strategy, and has driven the Israeli army to launch a third operation that was classical in nature. “*Operation Change of Direction*” was a classical ground military operation, which aimed to occupy southern Lebanon using large army formations. The failure of the operation forced Israel to conclude the war without achieving its original aims.

Studying the course of the war in its various aspects (such as its political implications and humanitarian impacts) is an interesting matter; however, the military aspect remains an essential dimension in the process of the war. In this respect, the military strategies adopted by Israel and Hezbollah during the war gain a special importance for understanding the process and the outcome of the war. Israel’s special use of air power accompanied by an EBO platform, and Hezbollah’s combination of guerrilla and conventional tactics, denoted the presence of two military strategies that are far apart in nature and composition. And by many accounts, the outcome of the war marked the prevailing of one strategy at the expense of the other.

This study is significant for it analyzes the Israeli military strategy during the July war of 2006, in relation to the strategy adopted by Hezbollah. In contrast, most studies tend to study them separately. For example, “*The 2006 Lebanon Campaign and*

the Future of Warfare: Implications for Army and Defense Policy,”¹ by Stephen Biddle and Jeffrey Friedman, focuses on the military strategy of Hezbollah. In this study there is an elaboration on the Battle of Bint-Jubayl, by discussing the operation from a theoretical and operational perspective. Several other studies provide general discussion of the ground operations such as, Alastair Crooke and Mark Perry’s study “*How Hezbollah Defeated Israel: Winning the ground War,*”² which provide the operational details without providing a comprehensive theoretical introductory. Furthermore, the importance of this study lies in examining the military strategy of Hezbollah from a strategic perspective as a semi-state military organization that combines guerrilla and conventional tactics and how it has prevailed. While there are limited studies that discuss the war from a strategic perspective, Ron Tira’s book “*The Nature of War: Conflicting Paradigms and Israeli Military Effectiveness,*”³ remains a source book on analyzing the war from a strategic glance, however, it presents Hezbollah as a guerrilla organization that was able to stand against the Israeli army.

The thesis begins in Chapter I, which is a general introduction of the thesis argument. In Chapter II, I elaborate on the balance of power types with a special focus on the asymmetric balance of power, in which I discuss the prevailing qualities of the

¹ Stephen, Biddle, and Jeffrey, Friedman, “The 2006 Lebanon Campaign and the Future of Warfare: Implications for Army and Defense Policy,” *Strategic Studies Institute*, (September, 2008), 1-90, accessed March 19, 2014, <http://www.StrategicStudiesInstitute.army.mil/>.

² Alastair, Crooke and Mark, Perry, “How Hezbollah Defeated Israel PART 2: Winning the Ground War, *Asia Times Online*, October13, 2006, accessed November 28, 2012, <http://www.atimes.com>.

³ Ron, Tira, *The Nature of War: Conflicting Paradigms and Israeli Military Effectiveness*, (Brighton [England]: Sussex Academic Press, 2010).

asymmetric power and the qualities that leads the invader to concede and withdraw. Chapter III provides a historical overview of the Arab-Israeli wars and the asymmetric resistance organizations mainly the PLO, HAMAS, and Hezbollah, in relation to the kind of balancing strategy that was adopted by the different actors of the conflict. Chapter IV elaborates on the “*Truthful Promise Operation*,” and how the Israeli reaction to it has developed into 34 days of war, which encompassed three Israeli military operations “*Adequate Pay*” operation, “*Web of Steel Operation*,” and “*Change of Direction Operation*.” This chapter provides a historical account of the July war of 2006, and provides the context for analyzing the military strategy of Israel and Hezbollah. Chapter V examines the Israeli military strategy during the war from a theoretical perspective that is essentially a hard balancing strategy, which indicates an excessive belief in the decisiveness of the air power to address threats coming from an asymmetric adversary, using EBO as an operational concept that calls for the use of any kind of physical and/or psychological effects to produce a cognitive perception of defeat in the side of the enemy. This strategy was perceived by the different theoreticians and military personnel that advocated it, as a remediation to the casualty aversion syndrome that the Israeli army and society suffers from, as it was expected to ensure a luxury war with zero casualties. Chapter VI presents the Israeli military strategy in a case study that is how the core theory of the strategy was applied in the “*Operation Web of Steel*,” whose aim was to occupy the town of Bint-Jubayl, and deliver a blow to Hezbollah’s morale and prestige. The failure of the operation represented a failure of Israel’s military strategy and the prevailing of Hezbollah’s military strategy that is discussed in the following chapter. Chapter VII is an analytical chapter of the outcome of the war from a strategic

perspective, and in relation to the military strategies of Israel and Hezbollah. The chapter analyzes the power elements of Hezbollah, which were the reason behind his prevalence, and discusses how Israel has failed as a conventional power, while Hezbollah has prevailed as a semi-state military organization, which combines guerrilla and conventional tactics. In Chapter VIII, a conclusion of the thesis argument will be provided.

The July war of 2006 was an attractive topic for many books, research studies, TV documentaries, and newspaper articles. In investigating the topic, one finds a plenty of primary and secondary literary sources, media productions, in addition to numerous online sources that are very rich with materials. My main focus was the use of secondary sources, since interviewing military personnel was out of my reach. In this regard, one can classify the sources according to their origin. The English sources are more related to technical issues, specifically the media warfare in July war, the psychological warfare like "*The 33-Day War: an Example of Psychological Warfare in the Information Age*,"⁴ the hybrid tactics of Hezbollah like "*The 2006 Lebanon Campaign and the Future of Warfare: Implications for Army and Defense Policy*"⁵, the military operations of the Israeli army inside Lebanon, in addition to many other related detailed topics. The Arabic sources, which I covered, tended to discuss the war from a political point of view like Ali

⁴ Vincent, Curtis, "Commentary on the 33-Day War: An Example of Psychological Warfare in the Information Age," *Canadian Army Journal*, Vol. 10.4 (Winter, 2008), 133-136, accessed March 19, 2014, www.publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2008/.../D12-11-10-4E.pdf.

⁵ Ibid.

el-Kalyl's book, "*Safhaat Majhoolah mn Harb Tammooz*,"⁶ in addition to making a comparison between July war and the previous Arab-Israeli wars. Moreover, the Islamic cultural dimension of the resistance and the war is also discussed in the Arabic literature and could be found in "*Al-Antisar Al-Moqaawm: Hawyat Al-Antisar wa Tada'yatiha Al-Astratyjyah*."⁷ Still, there is a particularity within the Arabic literature, which is related to the speeches and media interviews of the Secretary-General of Hezbollah Hasan Nasrollah, for they represent an important source on the course of the war and its different perspectives, especially his quotations on the strategic analysis of the war. Moreover, the media productions of the Al-Manar T.V. station, document the events of the war, and are also considered a reference, especially with the selections they include from the Israeli media and documentaries. Finally, the Israeli sources that I covered and which are translated into English and Arabic, tend to deal primary with the failure outcome of the war, and include a harsh sense of self-criticism on the misconducts of both the Israeli military and political echelon like the Winograd Report and the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee report on the Second Lebanon War.

Concerning my topic, there are plenty of articles and journals that discussed EBO, however, Edward Smith's book, "*Effects Based Operations: Applying Network Centric Warfare in Peace, Crisis, and War*,"⁸ remains a primary source, which elaborates

⁶ Ali Hasan, Kalyl, *Safahaat Majhoolah mn Harb Tammooz*, (Beirut: Dar Bilal, 2012).

⁷ Mohammad Hosyn, Fadlallah, Na'ym, Qassem, Haashm, Safy el-Dyn, and others, *Al-Antisaar Al-Moqaawm: Hawyat Al-Antisaar wa Tadaa'yaatih Al-Astraatyjyah*, (Beirut: The Islamic Center for Intellectual Studies, 2007).

⁸ Edward Smith, "Effects Based Operations: Applying Network Centric Warfare in Peace, Crisis, and War," (United States: CCRE Publication Series, 2004), accessed March 19, 2014. www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/ccrp/ebo_smith.pdf.

on the theory construction and paradigm. On the other hand, the interviews of Secretary-General Hasan Nasrollah with media figure Ghassan Ben-Jido, were a primary source that I generally used in the paper and in particular the battle of Bint-Jubayl. As for the events of the July war, I have used T.V. documentaries like “*Al-Mofaja’at*,” “*Ryah el-Shamal*,” which elaborates on the war and contain testimonies from Israeli soldiers, experts, and political figures that participated in the war. Meanwhile, Amir Rapaport’s book, “*How We Failed Ourselves in the Second Lebanon War*”⁹ provides the minutes meetings of the “*Operation Web of Steel*” inside the Israeli army institute. Finally, the Winograd report and the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee report on the Second Lebanon war, represent an official Israeli record that elaborate on the outcome of the war.

⁹ Amir Rapaport, “Fire on Our Forces,” in *How We Failed Ourselves in the Second Lebanon War* (Sifriya Ma'ariv, 2007), edited by Yoav Keren, chap.15, accessed December 26, 2013, <http://www.israeldefense.com/?CategoryID=484&ArticleID=510>.

CHAPTER II

ASYMMETRIC WARFARE

The military strategy that was used in the Arab-Israeli conflict included primarily the use of hard balancing of power by Israel, and a combination of hard balancing, soft balancing, and asymmetric balancing of power by the different Arab actors that participated in the conflict. Asymmetric balance of power was the overwhelming military strategy used by resistance organizations, this strategy succeeded against Israel for the various merits that the resistance and its community obtain, in contrast to the vulnerable situation that the occupier and its community underwent. This chapter introduces the concepts of hard balancing of power, soft balancing of power, and asymmetric balancing of power. In doing so, it paves the way for understanding the adopted military strategies of Israel and Hezbollah during the July war of 2006.

A. Types Of Balance of Power

1. Hard Balance of Power

Hard balancing of power is the classical traditional approach of balancing and conducting wars. Hard balancing traditionally presumes the involvement in arms racing and alliances in order to deter the adversary, whereas in wars, hard balancing means the use of classical armies in fighting. In other words, hard balancing is when states “adopt strategies to build and update their military capabilities, as well as create and maintain

formal alliances and counter alliances, to match the capabilities of their key opponents.”¹⁰
In the meantime, hard balancing includes the possibility of escaping war out of fear of massive destruction. The early phase of the Arab-Israeli conflict was mainly a hard mode balancing of power.

2. *Soft Balance of power*

Soft balance of power model involves the use of resources and energies in a manner that is different from hard power. Soft balancing includes the formation of coalitions and blocks that use international institutions, cultural, economic, educational, and civil means in order to balance or undermine an aspirant hegemonic power. Soft balancing is assumed to exist in the absence of or in parallel with hard balancing. Some states might fear or lack the hard balancing strategies, so they resort to soft balancing policies as an affordable alternative. The Arab-Israeli conflict includes the use of soft balancing of power, in which Israel was boycotted in civil and international fields including the economic, educational, cultural, mass media, and institutional arenas.

¹⁰ T.V., Paul, “Introduction: The Enduring Axioms of Balance of Power Theory and Their Contemporary Relevance.” in *Balance of Power: theory and practice in the 21st century*, ed. T.V. Paul, James J. Wirtz, Michel Fortmann, (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2004), 3.

3. *Asymmetric Balance of Power*

Asymmetric balance of power is the existence of relative power parity in the overall military capabilities between the contending actors, in the sense that a conventional power tends to have supremacy in military capabilities when compared to that of asymmetric power, while the asymmetric power tends to have a supremacy in the “will” to suffer when compared to that of a conventional power. This balancing usually leads to an asymmetric conflict, or asymmetric warfare. The combatant sides in an asymmetric conflict differ in terms of their military capabilities and merits. In the Arab-Israeli conflict, Israel as a hard balancing power was balanced asymmetrically by non-state actors like Hezbollah.

Types of asymmetric balancing:

a. State-Asymmetric Balancing:

State-Asymmetric balancing is the state versus non-state actor balancing in which “efforts [are taking] by nation-states to balance and contain [direct and] indirect threats posed by subnational actors that have the ability to challenge key states using conventional capabilities or strategies.”¹¹ Israel’s continuous attempts to balance non-state actors like Hezbollah is an example of this type of balancing.

b. Non-State Asymmetric Balancing:

Non-state Asymmetric balancing is the non-state versus state actor balancing in which the “efforts [are carried out] by subnational actors and their state sponsors to

¹¹ Paul, “The Enduring” 3.

challenge an antagonistic states using asymmetric means.”¹² Hezbollah is an example of a non-state resistance actor that turns to asymmetric balancing in deterring Israel.

B. The Resistance in an Asymmetric Warfare

The resistance against occupation in an asymmetric warfare usually tends to undermine “not the capacity but the will”¹³ of the imperialist invader, and it doesn’t seek to “obtain a quick, decisive defeat of [the] invading or occupying forces.”¹⁴ Therefore, the resistances’ basic argument is that they do not look to counter-weight the invader physically but rather use asymmetric military means to undermine the invaders’ will to continue fighting a war.

The resistance usually seeks to break the ‘will’ of the imperialist invader by causing the enemy direct physical and psychological costs including “the loss of soldiers, supplies, infrastructure, peace of mind, and most important, time.”¹⁵ These costs accumulate over time and turn into a military decision in which the invader’s costs become unbearable, forcing him to withdraw at the end to the resistance favor.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Andrew Mack, “Why Big Nations Lose Small Wars: The Politics of Asymmetric Conflict,” *World Politics*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (January, 1975): 181, accessed March 19, 2014, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2009880>.

¹⁴ Ibid, 104.

¹⁵ Ivan Arreguin-Toft. “How the Weak Win Wars: A Theory of Asymmetric Conflict,” *International Security*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (Summer, 2001): 103, accessed March 19, 2014, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3092079>.

The common belief is that weak powers should avoid confrontation with a “metropolitan”¹⁶ power, for the weak “cannot realistically expect to win.”¹⁷ However, in striving for freedom winning is a matter of time. Furthermore, although the traditional nature of resistance is defense, and that it “can pose no direct threat to the survival of the external power because [it] lack an invasion capability,”¹⁸ the transformation in the policy of the resistance into attacking the enemy inside his territories is becoming a fact.

Moreover, the resistance tends to be supported by a community that possesses specific psychological merits which surpass that of the invader community. The community under occupation tends to reveal a steadfastness to alter the status-quo.¹⁹ The unfairness and oppression of the invaders generate a sense of rebellion among local population. They feel that they are deprived from freedom, that their condition is not universal, and that others possess what they lack drives them to alter the existing status-quo using available military and political means.²⁰ In such conflicts, the “values, beliefs, and expectations”²¹ of the resistance and “the social and psychological bonds”²² are the

¹⁶ Ibid, 183.

¹⁷ James Wirtz, “The Balance of Power Paradox,” in *Balance of Power: theory and Practice in the 21st century*, ed. T.V. Paul, James J. Wirtz, Michel Fortmann, 127-149, (Stanford Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2004), 128.

¹⁸ Mack, “Why Big,” 181.

¹⁹ T.V Paul and Thazha Varkey, *Asymmetric Conflicts: War Initiation by Weaker Powers*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 3.

²⁰ Adam Lowther, *Americans and Asymmetric conflict: Lebanon, Somalia, and Afghanistan*. (Westport, Conn: Praeger Security International, 2007), 58.

²¹ Paul and Varkey, *Asymmetric*, 16.

merits that bring freedom. Moreover, “the willingness to suffer,”²³ value that stems from their awareness of the zero-sum nature of the occupation provides the “incentive to fight harder,”²⁴ “take greater risks, and pay a higher cost than [the invader] who regards the stakes as less than vital to its own security interests.”²⁵

Meanwhile, the resistance’s political and military leaderships are vital elements that enable the resistance to “survive, expand and eventually succeed.”²⁶ The importance of the leadership lies mainly in its ability to transform operational military achievements into political facts.

Time is a central factor in favor of the resistance. The fact that the resistance is striving to achieve its objectives no matter what it takes, and the fact that the invader is looking for victory in the shortest amount of time and a minimum number of casualties is a constraint for the invader.

The elements of surprise and secrecy are also basics in resistance. The resistance tends to operate in a low-signature status, thus, decisive victory against it without the possibility of its recovery is almost unattainable.

²² Mack, “Why Big,” 182.

²³ Paul and Varkey, *Asymmetric* , 17.

²⁴ *Ibid*, 17.

²⁵ Christopher Layne, “The War on Terrorism and the Balance of Power: The Paradoxes of American Hegemony,” in *Balance of Power: theory and practice in the 21st century*, ed. T.V. Paul, James J. Wirtz, and Michel Fortmann (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2004), 116.

²⁶ Lowther, *Americans* , 59.

The victory of the resistance is a joint effort of military, political, and popular discourses. The military rank looks to the support of the political system to turn its achievements into political facts; in turn the political-military success is unattainable without the popular backing of the resistance activities.

C. How the Weak defeat the Strong in an Asymmetric Warfare

In an asymmetric warfare, the defeat of the invader originates out of two basic conditions: The unwillingness of the political-military-civilian system to continue fighting, usually due to the unbearable costs in casualties, in addition to the length of the conflict, which forces it to search for a run out.

“Casualty aversion” symptom tends to be the basic drive for opposing the continuation of the occupation on the civilian front. The war of attrition that is a traditional attribute in fighting an asymmetric warfare increases the number of casualties in the invader army, thus, creating a state of rebelliousness against continuing the occupation within the army and the civilian community that provides the psychological backing, which plays in favor of the resistance. At the end, the political-military rank finds itself embarrassed in light of the absence of a military solution and chooses to withdraw to calm down the inside opposition. The withdrawal brings a victory to the resistance and a defeat to the metropolitan state.

On the other hand, time is a “resource in politics,”²⁷ however; it retains a special importance when fighting in an asymmetric warfare. For occupied forces, ‘time’ usually leads to an unbearable cost in casualties and an exhaustion of combating

²⁷ Mack, “Why Big”, 195.

capabilities, which produce an internal “political vulnerability”²⁸ that in turn leads to concessions and eventually withdrawing for the benefit of the resistance. In such a situation, withdrawing represents a solution for the economic, political and military bleeding; however, it declines the overall power of the occupying state.

In sum, the military strategy adopted by Israel remained constant in much of the Arab-Israeli conflict, while that of the Arabs was subject to modification in accordance to the altered Arab actors that participated in the conflict. In fact, the Arab-Israeli conflict has involved the use of hard balancing of power, soft balancing of power and the asymmetric balancing of power. The conventional wars that have taken place between the Israeli army and the Arab armies are an example of the hard balancing of power, whereas boycotting Israel on the various cultural, economic, and political levels is an example of the soft balancing of power. Still, Asymmetric balancing of power, whether used in the form of guerrilla warfare, low-intensity warfare, or semi-state asymmetric balancing, was the most applicable military strategy that was able to bring fruits against Israel.

The Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), the Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS), and Hezbollah, were the main asymmetric resistance organizations that have played a key role in the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict. In this regard, Hezbollah confronted the Israeli occupation of the Lebanese territories for 18 years by dragging Israel into a disliked war of attrition. Meanwhile, Hezbollah’s leadership and management uniqueness has succeeded to accumulate the resistance experience, and managed to develop its guerrilla asymmetric balancing into a semi-state

²⁸ Arreguin-Toft, “How the Weak,” 97.

asymmetric balancing. Such development has surprised Israel in the July war 2006, and was an essential factor in determining the identity of the winner in the war.

CHAPTER III

THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT IN CONTEXT

The declaration of the state of Israel in 1948 demarcated the evolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Besides its being one of the longest conflicts in modern history, it exists in a continuous state of fire, in which wars and military violence marks much of the conflict. Meanwhile, the conflict was the cause of the rise of regimes and organizations with different affiliations and the fall of others. For instance, in Egypt the defeat of the Arab armies has erupted the “Free Officers Revolution” headed by Jamal ‘Abd el-Nassir, and the falling of the monarchy ruling regime.

In the meantime, Israel adhered in this conflict to a military paradigm that is based on a conventional army, while the Arabs’ turned basically from the outset of the conflict to a hard balancing form of power using alliances and classical armies, however, the disappointed outcome of the classical wars that took place between the Arabs and Israel, paved the way for the rise of resistance factions with different affiliations adhering to asymmetric mode of balancing as a military strategy, the most significant of which was the PLO, HAMAS, and Hezbollah.

A. The Arab-Israeli Hard Balancing of Power

1. The Arab-Israeli Wars

The Middle East is an area that historically enjoys a geographical, political, economic, strategic and religious uniqueness that also renders the region the center of

world conflicts. In the modern history, the break out of the World War I in 1914 led to the victory of the allies, that is Britain, France, and the United States, and the defeat and dismantle of the Ottoman Empire. Thus, a new world order emerged in which Britain and France inherited the domination over the Middle East from the Ottomans.

In the meantime, the idea of establishing a Jewish state was brewing. Theodor Herzl (1860-1904), a Hungarian Jew later to become the founder and the head of the Zionist movement, was the designer of the idea of creating a Jewish state, in response to the harsh treatments that the Europeans were exercising against the Jews. The Zionist organization looked for support from a super power to start building Jewish settlements in Palestine, at the expense of the local Arab population, in addition to mobilizing as many Jews as possible from all around the world to settle in Palestine.

On November 29, 1947, the United Nations General assembly voted resolution 181. The resolution called for the end of the British mandate in Palestine, and the partition of Palestine into an Arab state and a Jewish state, except for Jerusalem that would be placed under international patronage. The partition plan offered the Jews 55% of Palestine at a time when the Jews owned less than seven percent of the land²⁹. The Arabs rejected the resolution for the Palestinian homeland has been offered to the Jewish settlers by the international community without the consent and against the will of its holders.

On May 14, 1948 at midnight the British ended their mandate to Palestine. On the same day, Ben Gurion, announced the establishment of the state of Israel with no

²⁹ Facts and Figures about the Palestinians, Published by The Center for Policy Analysis on Palestine, 1992, reprinted April 1993, 10.

defined boundaries. Even though the fathers of the Zionists “sought [of] a greater Israel that includes most of Transjordan and parts of Lebanon and the Sinai,³⁰” Ben Gurion simply left the issue open-ended. The announcement marked the evolution of what has been known as the Arab-Israeli conflict.

One day after the declaration, on May 15, 1948, the Arab armies of Egypt, Syria, Transjordan, Lebanon, and Iraq responded with the aim to eliminate the emerging state and return it back to the Palestinians. The first conventional type of war between Israel and the Arabs ended in what has been known as the Catastrophe or ‘*al-Nakba*’ to the Arabs. Indeed, the adopted military strategy of the Arab monarchies failed to eliminate the emerging state.

On October 29, 1956, Israel in collaboration with France and Britain launched what is known as the tripartite aggression against Egypt. Although Israel succeeded in achieving its military objective of occupying the Sinai, still, it failed to invest this achievement politically. The war aimed at removing Jamal Abdel el Nasser’s communist regime and regain control over the Suez Canal. However, the international community represented by the United States and the Soviet Union forced France and Britain to stop their military operations in Egypt and pushed Israel into withdrawing from the Sinai peninsula. In this war, the political discourse overwhelmed the military apparatus in deciding the outcome of the war.

On June 5, 1967, the Arab-Israeli conflict began its third round, *The Six-Day War* or *al-Naksa*. In this war, the Israeli army managed to overcome the Egyptian, Syrian, and the Jordanian army and succeeded to occupy east Jerusalem, West Jordan, Gaza

³⁰ Yehoshafat Harkabi, *Israel's Fateful Decisions*, trans., Lenn Schramm (London: Tauris & Co Ltd. 1988), 40.

Strip, Sinai Peninsula, and the Golan Height. The devastating failure of the Arab armies in this war paved the way for a strategic change in the military strategy from a hard balancing into an asymmetric balance of power without the complete abandonment of the former.

On October 6, 1973, a joint Egyptian-Syrian surprise attack was launched against Israel, with an aim to liberate the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula and the Syrian Golan Heights that were occupied by the Israeli army during the 1967 war. The outcome was mixed; the surprise attack brought the Arabs an initial victory that soon turned into a military defeat. The course of this war revealed that a hard balancing of power against Israel could succeed if the political will was available.

The *Ramadan War* or the *Yom Kippur War* has damaged the image of the Israeli army as an “invincible army,” whereas the Arabs retained their self-confidence as a power capable of defeating Israel. On the other hand, the war produced a shift in the Arab-Israeli balance of power. The Camp David Accord, which was one of the war outcomes, has neutralized the military and political power of Egypt in the conflict.

“*Al-Ijtiyah Al-Isra'yly*” or the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 was Israel new war in the region. The invasion intended to transform the image of the Middle East, in which Israel would be its dominant power. The operation was supposed to take 48 hours, while the army was to stay in Lebanon for just one week. The fact that the Israeli army has thought of overcoming a classical army, and has not taken into account the evolution of a new form of fighting, has caused Israel a military and political catastrophe, as “the principle damage was not the number of casualties, but rather the deterioration of

Israel strategic situation”³¹. In plain terms, Israel in launching this war had slipped in what is called later the ‘*Lebanese Quagmire*’ that unleashed a new phase in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

A. The Arab-Israeli Asymmetric Balancing of Power

In its early stages, the Arab-Israeli balance of power was primarily hard balancing and was combined with soft balancing of power. Gradually, the effectiveness of hard balancing declined in favor of asymmetric balancing of power, thus, taking the conflict into a new phase. The Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), the Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS), and the Islamic Resistance in Lebanon were the main influential factions that used asymmetric balancing of power in confronting Israel.

1. The Palestinian Liberation Organization

The PLO in its confrontation with the Israeli occupation succeeded to drive Israel into a war of attrition inside the Palestinian territories, and inflicted painful attacks to Israeli targets all over the world. The asymmetric balancing that the PLO created against Israel was significant, as Israel failed to achieve military decision against the PLO. The neutralization of the PLO as an asymmetric power was primarily the outcome of its political and not military acquiesces with Israel. All in all, the PLO role, as an asymmetric resistance organization of the Israeli occupation, succeeded to drag Israel into a war of attrition that eroded its deterrence power, and the PLO’s role has been largely

³¹ Ibid, 164.

weakened due to its participation in the peace process that was launched in Madrid in 1991.

2. *The Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS)*

In December 1987, in the middle of the first *Intifada*, a new asymmetric resistance organization faction was introduced known as HAMAS. The Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS) is an offspring of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. The organization succeeded to drag Israel into a war of attrition against its will. Once again Israel has not succeeded to defeat HAMAS, in the sense of addressing its mere presence as a threat; however, Israel has succeeded in diminishing the military power of HAMAS from time to time. The war of attrition that is traced to the asymmetric type of balancing has weakened the deterrence power of Israel, and degraded the general efficiency of the Israeli army forces.

3. *Hezbollah*

The Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 paved the way for the predominance of the asymmetric form of balancing as a military strategy against the Israeli occupation. The invasion laid out the ground for the rise of Hezbollah or '*the Party of God.*' One of Hezbollah's core beliefs in relation to the Arab-Israeli conflict is that the mere existence of Israel is illegitimate, and the conflict ends only with its elimination.

Hezbollah's military strategy has been basically asymmetric type of balancing as a mean to address the Israeli conventional supremacy. In fact, Hezbollah's asymmetric

balancing against Israel succeeded to create a strategic shift in the Arab-Israeli deterrence power.

In its early days, Hezbollah's asymmetric balancing against Israel was primarily popular in nature, with the use of ambushes, direct confrontations, light missiles, raiding the Israeli military basements inside Lebanese territories, in addition to using self-bomber operations against Israeli military targets. The asymmetric popular balancing of Hezbollah in the early eighties dragged Israel into a war of attrition, which forced Israel to withdraw to a limited security zone inside Lebanon. In the late eighties and early nineties, Hezbollah's military development succeeded to inflict pain and casualties among the Israeli army inside the occupied southern Lebanon.

In 1993 Israel launched *Operation Accountability* also known as *the Seven Days war*. The war revealed the development of Hezbollah into an asymmetric guerrilla organization capable of enduring war, for its performance during the war transcended that of a popular guerrilla organization. The Israeli war aimed to end Hezbollah as an organization. However, by the end of the operation Hezbollah was able to survive militarily as well as regain a growing internal legitimacy.

On April 1996, Israel launched a new operation against Hezbollah known as *Operation Grapes of Wrath* or *April war*. Israel's recurrent objective in this war was to eliminate Hezbollah and destroy its arsenal of rockets. However, the war revealed Hezbollah's steadfastness in massive warfare depending militarily on asymmetric warfare tactics. The April agreement that ended the war aggrandized the status of Hezbollah as it recognized the right of the resistance to operate against the Israeli occupation.

In summer 2000, Israel withdrew from southern Lebanon, an unprecedented step in the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict; in which Israel withdrew from an Arab land without any prior negotiations or security arrangements. The withdrawal represented a success for a military strategy whose cornerstone was an asymmetric mode of balancing power.

The military history of the Arab-Israeli conflict designated a long history of conventional and attrition wars. The outcome of classical wars devoted the Israeli army to preserve on a hard balancing mode of preparations, while it devoted the Arabs to search for a different mode of balancing. Asymmetric mode of warfare created a kind of counter balancing with Israel, in which Hezbollah succeeded to a large extent and was able to drive Israel out of south Lebanon.

CHAPTER IV

THE JULY WAR of 2006

The July war of 2006 or the Second Lebanon war revealed a new development in terms of the military strategy of Israel and Hezbollah. The war that lasted for 34 days has been recalled by the Al-Jazyra T.V. station as the '*Al-Harb el-Sadissah*' or the sixth war of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The war was launched in response to the "*Operation Truthful Promise*," in which Hezbollah aimed to abduct Israeli soldiers and exchange them with Lebanese prisoners. In this war, Israel launched three military operations, "*Adequate Pay Operation*," "*Operation Web of Steel*," and "*Operation Change of Direction*." The discourse of the war was tense for the high toll of civilian casualties and the level of destruction. However, the war ended with United Nations Security Council resolution 1701, without Israel achieving its aim of "smashing" Hezbollah.

A. Operation Truthful Promise

Israel withdrew from Lebanon in May 2000; however, it maintained on a number of Lebanese detainees in its prisons. Hezbollah, who pledged to release all Lebanese prisoners, conducted on October 2000 a new abduction operation out of which all the remaining Lebanese detainees were released from Israeli prisons except for Samir el Quntar, Nasym Nsr, Yahya Skaf and Mohammad el Farran. Again, in response Hezbollah expressed its willingness to launch a new abduction operation to release the remaining prisoners.

July 12, 2006, was the day for Hezbollah to fulfill his promise. On that day, Hezbollah launched “*Operation Truthful Promise.*” The operation took place at 9:05 am in Ayta el Sha’b cross border security zone. The direct outcome of the operation was the death of three Israeli soldiers, the injury of two others, and the abduction of another two. After about an hour and a quarter from the incident, Israel sent an armored tank accompanied by an infantry force to follow Hezbollah fighters and return the kidnapped soldiers. The tank soon exploded in an ambush after crossing into the Lebanese territories, leading to the death of another four soldiers, while an additional soldier was also killed in a friendly fire.³² On the other side, Hezbollah declared that one of its fighters was killed in the operation.

B. The Days of the War

Israel’s response to the operation was a full-scale military attack that was to last for 34 days of war. Those 34 days uncovered Israel’s and Hezbollah’s war capabilities and power. Meanwhile, the intensity of the battlefields was exceptional, as both sides perceived the war as decisive to their fate.

Following “*Operation Truthful Promise,*” Israel PM Ehud Olmert in a press statement considered that the abduction operation “an act of war,”³³ adding that,

³² Abu ‘Amer, ‘Adnan, ed. *Lessons Derived from the Second Lebanon War on Lebanon* (July 2006): Report of the Committee of Security and Foreign Affairs in the Israeli Knesset (Issued in December 2007). Beirut: Al-Zaytouna Studies and Consulting Center, 2008, 18.

³³ Mfa, “PM Olmert: Lebanon is Responsible and will Bear the Consequences,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs, last modified July 12, 2006, accessed March 23, 2014, <http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/pressroom/2006>.

“Lebanon is responsible and Lebanon will bear the consequences of its actions.”³⁴
Olmert, lacking political and military experience seemed to drive Israel to slip again in the ‘Lebanese Quagmire.’

On the other hand, Secretary-General of Hezbollah Hasan Nasrollah stated in a press conference about the operation that, abduction is the only available mean to retrieve the Lebanese detainees and that the kidnapped Israeli soldiers could be returned back only through indirect negotiations and an exchange deal, warning that no Israeli military action can bring them back. “In plain terms, this is our natural right. This is the only logical way that is available. Neither the international community, international organizations, regional organizations, governments, regimes-with due respect to them- nor political negotiations with empty hands will release the detainees. This is the natural option. Let the one who has another way to secure the release of detainees from the Israeli prisons tell us about it. If he has another way, why he has not done so for 20 years? Therefore, what we did today was first our natural right. Second, it is the only available way to release the prisoners held in Israeli jails,”³⁵ adding that, “these prisoners that we hold will never go home except in one way: Indirect negotiations and exchange. That is it. No one in this world can return them home, except through indirect negotiations and an exchange. If the Israelis ponder any military action to regain the two prisoners, they will be disappointed [he repeats the preceding word four times], Israel will not be able to return these two prisoners home- or rather the usurped land- even if the

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Secretary-General of Hezbollah Hasan Nasrollah in a press conference, July 12, 2006, accessed April 2, 2014, http://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/cmkp_pk/conversations/topics/5873.

whole world supports it. Accordingly, military action will be useless if it is aimed at recovering them. Let the Israelis do what they want. In any case, no military operation will result in rescuing these prisoners. This is certain.”³⁶

On the same day of the operation, the Israeli government convened a meeting and declared that it will respond aggressively and harshly to those who carried out the operation and called for the returning back of the kidnapped soldiers in addition to the implementation of the United Nation Resolution 1559³⁷, which hints at the disarmament of Hezbollah.

The response began with the “*Adequate Pay*” operation, in which the Israeli Air power, naval power, and artillery power enforced a complete blockade over Lebanon. The civilian infrastructure was destroyed. More importantly, human tragedies were indescribable due to the large number of massacres and the large number of refugee people. Moreover, within the context of the “*Adequate Pay*” operation, the Israeli Air power attacked preplanned alleged targets of Hezbollah centers and armaments depositories, with the aim of destroying Hezbollah’s communication, command and control system, and the middle-long range arsenal of rockets. “*Adequate Pay*” operation was anticipated to bring the easy crystal clear victory to Israel in a limited amount of time.

Israel was soon to discover that it had not won the war, as Hezbollah’s rocket capabilities were unaffected by the first strike, which is later on Hezbollah traced back to intelligence data manipulation, and Hezbollah succeeded to attack distant cities like al-

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Mfa, “Special Cabinet Communique-Hizbullah attack,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs, last modified July 12, 2006, accessed October 10, 2013. <http://archive.is/jw5v>.

Khodayrah and Hyfa, in response to the heavy Israeli bombardment of *Dahiyah*, the southern suburb of Beirut. Moreover, the “*Adequate Pay*” operation failed to destroy the communication, command and control system of Hezbollah, as the daily number of fired rockets sustained on a constant pattern throughout the war.

Meanwhile, Israel political-military leaders insisted on continuing the war, Olmert declared from the Knesset his conditions to stop the war, that included the “return of the kidnapped soldiers; a comprehensive ceasefire, and the deployment of the Lebanese army in all south Lebanon.”³⁸ Moreover, the army Chief of Staff Dan Halutz asserted that “we will continue doing this as long as it takes until we achieve our goals”³⁹

On July 17, in light of the minimal achievements of the “*Adequate Pay*” operation, Israel began ground incursions in the border village of Maroun-el-Ras. The small village was the place of the fiercest war battles between Hezbollah combat forces and the Israeli army elite units of Maglan, Egoz, Engineer, and Paratrooper Battalions.

On 24 July, the ground incursions developed into a new war operation. The stated goal of the “*Operation Web of Steel*” was to occupy the town of Bint-Jubayl, the ‘capital of Hizbullah’ as designated by the Israeli army, and from which the Secretary-General of Hezbollah described Israel as “weaker than a spider web.” The operation looked to achieve a symbolic victory and remedy the hitherto political-military Israeli failure. The intensity of the battles was tough, as fighting took place from the moment the Israeli elite units stepped into the Lebanese territories, with Hezbollah preserving the

³⁸ Ehud Olmert talking in the Knesset July 17, 2006 in *Ryah el-Shamal*, directed by Nasir Bahmad, aired (July 22, 2011), on (Al-Manar T.V. Station, 2007), DVD.

³⁹ Dan Halutz the chief staff of the Israeli army talking to the Israeli television, in *Ryah el-Shamal*, *ibid*.

upper hand according to Israeli soldiers' confessions in the battles. As an outcome, the "*Operation Web of Steel*" failed to deliver a "consciousness of victory" to Israel and a "cognitive perception of defeat" to Hezbollah.

On August 11, 2006, Israel launched "*Operation Change of Direction.*" The operation aimed to achieve what Israel failed in for three weeks. The Israeli army launched, within the context of this operation, a classical ground operation that aimed to occupy South Lebanon till the Litani River in about 60 hours. The campaign that looked to "chang[e] the picture of the war"⁴⁰ ended in more Israeli casualties and in further military deterioration.

On August 14, 2006, the 34 days of war was ended by a Security Council resolution of 1701, and in rare times not by an Israeli military conclusion.

The course of the war embodied a difference in the use of a military strategy by the Israeli army and Hezbollah, which is worth studying to understand whose military strategy has prevailed.

⁴⁰ The Commission for the Investigation of the Events of the Campaign in Lebanon 2006, The Winograd Commission, The English Summary of the Second Lebanon War Final Report, (January 2008).

CHAPTER V

EFFECTS BASED OPERATIONS

Almost three months before the war, the Israeli army adopted a new military doctrine, which embodied new strategies on how to overcome an asymmetric adversary. The introduced strategy remained within the hard balancing paradigm, but with an excessive belief in the use of air power as a decisive power to defeat the enemy, using Effects Based Operations as a concept of operation. Whereas Effects Based Operations, which calls for the creation of effects that stimulate a defeat reaction in the side of the enemy, it does not depend solely on the use of air power, but calls also for the use of ground formations when necessary, and limits to dragging the army forces in an attrition war.

A. The New Doctrine Principles

The wars on Kosovo and Iraq have aggrandized the status of the air power as a decisive arm power. The outcome of the two wars in addition to the revolution in the military affairs (RMA) boosted the belief that the Air power has the capability to fight and win a “luxury-war-without-casualties,”⁴¹ using Effects Based Operations as its mode of operation. The Israeli army which suffers from casualty aversion syndromes found in

⁴¹ David Hirst, *Beware of Small States: Lebanon, Battleground of the Middle East* (London: Faber and Faber Ltd, 2010), 354.

the new mode the optimal solution for dealing with the security threats coming from asymmetric enemies.

1. Effects Based Operations (EBO)

EBO concept is the use of effects “to better link higher-level objectives to tactical actions,”⁴² for higher objectives like defeating an enemy require a road map that enables to decide on the optimal operational actions to achieve such objective, and this is what EBO actually do.

According to Edward Smith the classical strategic deterrence in the sense of classical state powers fighting each other, has collapsed with the demise of the Soviet Union. In retrospect, a new threat comes to challenge the security environment of the United States that is military organizations that have no identified homeland and no apparent existence. Thus, building a new strategic deterrence becomes a necessity that should be built on prevention rather than retaliation.⁴³ In consistence with the new strategic deterrence, military power in any asymmetric warfare should according to Smith: “achieve our military objectives without the protracted conflict and massive casualties that have marked the great attrition wars.”⁴⁴ This can be done with the increase dependence on the Air power using Effects Based Operations (EBO) as its mode of operations in any future war.

⁴²-----, “Army Doctrine Update,” *Army Doctrine Update #1*, (February, 2007): 4, accessed March 25, 2014, www.smallwarsjournal.com/documents/armydoctrineupdate.pdf.

⁴³ Smith, *Effects Based Operations*, xiii.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 47.

Effects Based Operations, quoting Smith, is “to focus on shaping the adversary’s thinking and behavior rather than on simply defeating his forces,”⁴⁵ providing that the use of physical and/or psychological effects is desired to achieve the ultimate objective of defeating the adversary, therefore he emphasizes “the need to think in terms of the kinds of potential physical and psychological effects (e.g. destruction, physical attrition, chaos, foreclosure, shock, and psychological attrition).”⁴⁶ Those effects cause the adversary to alter his behavior and feel the loss mentally and/or materially. Therefore, in such effect based context, the psychological and cognitive effects, which could achieve the objective of breaking the will of the adversary, or shape his behavior (whereby he would no longer wishes to continue the struggle), or simply succeed in disorienting him (so that he can no longer fight or react coherently), are considered as the ultimate aim of EBO.⁴⁷

Moreover, EBO has not excluded physical destruction from its core theory; however, it was treated as a mere factor within the context of producing psychological and cognitive effect of defeat. In this regard, Smith continues, “If the disruption of a military operation is particularly sudden or severe, or if there are no good alternatives, then the psychological impact of the physical destruction may be to shock the opponent. It may also induce an incapacitating despair either immediately or as a result of repeated stimuli over some period of time. Physical destruction can cascade into psychological effects, which in turn can cascade into a series of further effects far beyond the immediate

⁴⁵ Ibid, 103.

⁴⁶ Ibid, xvi.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 105-106.

tactical impact of the targets destroyed.”⁴⁸ In sum, physical destruction plays a tactical role in creating a cognitive effect of defeat.

Moreover, in an asymmetric warfare, EBO calls for the combination of all kinds of national efforts including political, economic, and diplomatic efforts among others as described by Smith “so as to create a single overall effect at the geo-strategic level of operations in which each action of each element reinforces the actions of the other elements in driving observers toward a desired behavior.”⁴⁹ He considers that the failure in coordinating available efforts to produce a single overall effect will disturb the relationship among the different aspects of actions, which will tend those actions either to cancel each other out or lose all its effect or even produce an opposite effect to what was desired or intended.⁵⁰

On the other hand, EBO calls for the knowledge of the self, the enemy and the situation. Such understanding is essential in knowledge mobilization,⁵¹ situational awareness, collaboration, understanding of command intent, and self-synchronization,⁵² which in turn pave the way for “decision makers to tailor the right action at the right place at the right time to create a desired effect.”⁵³

⁴⁸ Ibid, 307.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 282.

⁵⁰ Ibid, 296.

⁵¹ Ibid, 538.

⁵² Ibid, 531.

⁵³ Ibid, 533.

In conclusion, the main theme of EBO is the production of the right “effects” that ensures the stimulation of a consciousness of defeat inside the enemy system.

2. EBO Approach Inside the Israeli Army

The influence of the EBO inside the Israeli army was remarkable, as Halutz, an enthusiast of the new approach, was quoted saying in a session at the National Security College in January 2001, “a ground force should not be used so long as there is an aerial alternative, this requires us to abandon some anachronistic assumptions: first of all, that victory equals territory. Victory means achieving the strategic objective and not necessarily territory, victory is a matter of consciousness. Air power significantly influences the consciousness of the enemy.”⁵⁴

Furthermore, the deputy of the Israeli army Moshe Kaplinsky affirmed on such perception of victory by saying that, “A General Staff that is all-forces and not 80 percent ground forces. Based on effects and not on tanks.”⁵⁵

The July war has revealed the Israeli army endorsement of air power as a decisive power using Effects Based Operations, as a concept of operation, in much of the war process. In fact, the war Israel launched in 2006 is composed of three military Operations, “*Adequate Pay*” “*Operation Web of Steel*” and “*Operation Change of Direction.*” Whereas “*Adequate Pay*” represented the initial test of this strategy, “*Operation Web of Steel*” was the second test, in which elite ground units were used, and

⁵⁴ Amir Rapaport, “The IDF and the Lessons of the Second Lebanon War.” *Mideast Security and Policy Studies* No. 85. (December, 2010): 5, accessed March 19, 2014. <http://www.besacenter.org>.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 40.

the outcome of the operation has reflected the failure of the Israeli military strategy to defeat Hezbollah.

CHAPTER VI

THE BATTLE OF BINT-JUBAYL

In line with the Israeli military strategy of using air power accompanied by EBO approach, Israel started its war by launching “*Adequate Pay*” operation, in which the air power was used to destroy preplanned targets that would presumably lead to the defeat of Hezbollah. The failure of the operation depending solely on air power has driven the Israeli army to launch another operation in Bint-Jubayl dubbed “*Operation Web of Steel*,” using ground formation forces. The new operation that started on July 24, 2006, reflected EBO spirit with the kind of chosen target, and the use of elite formations in contrast to classical large formations, while abandoning the belief of the air power as a decisive power in defeating Hezbollah. In this sense, the failure of the air power to defeat Hezbollah in operation “*Adequate Pay*,” represented a major failure of the Israeli military strategy that was adopted on the eve of the war. However, “*Operation Web of Steel*” was in line with the general belief in EBO, which focused on occupying a symbol target of Hezbollah, in which the outcome would produce a psychological effect of victory for Israel and a consciousness of defeat for Hezbollah.

On the eve of the operation, Secretary-General of Hezbollah Hasan Nasrallah declared a so far victory stating that, “our survival and steadfastness until now means

victory. Our absorbance of the [first] strike is victory, and our continuation with the confrontation is victory”⁵⁶

On the other side, the Israeli army on the eve of the campaign was failing for the heavy price of every inch trying to occupy⁵⁷ in Maroun-el-Ras. Moreover, the political-military rank was suffering from a state of disharmony, and this is what the media leaks talked about. In short, Israel’s so far inferior military status was apparent after two weeks of war, as it failed to achieve any of its declared war goals.

The reflection of the EBO approach in the “*Operation Web of Steel*” was apparent, for Bint-Jubayl is a symbol of Hezbollah, a town form which Secretary-General of Hezbollah Hasan Nasrollah described Israel as weaker than a spider web in the victory speech of the year 2000, which was held in the aftermath of Israel withdrawal from southern Lebanon. Thus, Israel’s choice of Bint-Jubayl was in line with the spirit of EBO approach.

In the victory speech, Secretary-General of Hezbollah Hasan Nasrollah referred to Israel as follows, “I tell you that this Israel, which possesses nuclear weapons and the most powerful air force in the region, by God, it is weaker than a spider web.”⁵⁸ This

⁵⁶ Secretary General of Hezbollah Hasan Nasrollah, interview by Ghassan Bn Jidow, *Al-Jazeera T.V. station*, July 21, 2006, accessed January 1, 2014, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/interview-with-hezbollah-secretary-general-hasan-nasrallah/2790>.

⁵⁷ Andrew Exum, “Hizballah at War: A Military Assessment.” *Policy Focus #63*, (December 2006), 10, accessed March 19, 2014. www.washingtoninstitute.org.

⁵⁸ Secretary General of Hezbollah Hasan Nasrollah in a live speech in Bint-Jubayl, May 26, 2000, accessed April 3, 2014, www.camera.org/index.asp?x_context=7&x_issue=11&x_accessed.

statement “seared into [the] Israeli consciousness,”⁵⁹ and this was evident in Halutz remark about the operation, “Bint-Jbail is a symbol of Hezbollah. Remember that Hassan Nasrallah's famous speech was in Bint-Jbail.”⁶⁰ According to Amir Rapaport, at a time capturing the town was not expected to decrease the rate of the rockets fired,⁶¹ nevertheless, it was the “effect” of “the cobwebs speech of May 2000 [that] had infuriated the GHQ [General Head Quarters]. The generals were itching to expunge the humiliation.”⁶²

Meanwhile, the idea of launching a military operation that is symbolic in essence was subject to intense controversies and discussions inside the military institute, while Udi Adam the head of the northern command questioned its mere validity, the GHQ represented by Halutz insisted on it.

The minutes of the Israeli GHQ meetings were written in Amir Rapaport’s book “*Fire on Our Forces*,” an exemplification of the details of the operation was set in chapter 15, under the title “*How we Failed Ourselves in the Second Lebanon War*.”

In the book, Rapaport mentions that Bint-Jubayl had been chosen as the next target for its symbolic status and recalls Gadi Eisencott, the head of Israeli operations directorate during the war, statement on the logic of the operation, “what's important is

⁵⁹ Hirst, *Beware of Small States*, 354.

⁶⁰ The Free library, “Soldiers die as Israeli Forces Move Deeper into Lebanon,” *Questia*, July 25, 2006, accessed March 14, 2014, <http://www.thefreelibrary.com/INTERNATIONAL%3A+Soldiers+die+as+Israeli+forces+move+deeper+into...-a0148594057>.

⁶¹ Rapaport, *Fire on Our Forces*, 1.

⁶² *Ibid.*

the symbol. The ability to carry out an operation and break the myth.”⁶³ Likewise, Halutz asserted that, “modern wars are wars of symbols. Bint-Jbil was a symbol. Nasrallah made his cobwebs speech in Bint-Jbil. These are symbols that they [Nasrallah and Hezbollah] defended and still defend, and it's our job to show them that we can strike them there.”⁶⁴ In fact, the name of the operation “*Web of Steel*” was chosen in response to and with the purpose of refuting the “Spider Web” rhetoric.

Rappaport illustrates that in Bint-Jubayl, “the ‘dream’ was to bring the prime minister and defense minister to the spot where Nasrallah made his speech and let them deliver their own victory oration.”⁶⁵ Moreover, the anticipated celebration scenario included the hoisting of the Israeli flag inside the stadium, as a sign of predominance and victory.

Major General Benny Gantz, land forces commander during the war in comment of the occupation scenario added, “I'd consider a limited ground operation in the area that included [Hezbollah] . . . I'd call in a TV camera crew to record the move and its results. In other words, have it tell the whole story.”⁶⁶ Meanwhile, Gantz used a musical metaphor to describe the occupation plan: “I propose a 'piano attack' that focuses on one particular area at a time where we go in and get the job done. Each time another area. Never the same place,”⁶⁷ and that “the campaign has to be very spread out. I think that we

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

should concentrate on ground raids. Then cross back to our side, and not stay in Lebanon. Each time a focused effort somewhere else. When you withdraw at night, have the guys come out singing.”⁶⁸

Rapaport comments that, “Gantz's idea was to use nighttime sing-alongs to refute Hezbollah's expected charges that it had driven the Israeli troops out of Lebanon, and demonstrate that the IDF had no intention of maintaining a prolonged presence in the country.”⁶⁹

Accordingly, the head of the northern command Udi Adam prepared for an operation that would take “forty-eight hours,”⁷⁰ using Israel’s elite units including the Golani Brigade, the Paratrooper Brigade, the 7th Armor Brigade, and the Engineering Brigade, in order to fulfill the “dream”⁷¹ and destroy ‘the myth of Bint-Jubayl.’

On Monday July 24, after heavy aerial and artillery preparatory bombardment, the Israeli advance towards Bint-Jubayl began. In the initial step, the Golani brigade along with the Paratrooper Brigade was decided to create a “pincer movement” from the east and from the west, so as to occupy the outer space of the town. According to Udi Adam the head of the Northern Command, this step would set the land for the Israelis to penetrate inside the town, kill some Hezbollah fighters and get out, that’s it⁷².

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

Despite the unprecedented aerial and artillery bombardment of Bint-Jubayl, to kill Hezbollah's fighting forces inside the town, and destroy their inside communication, command and control system, and clear out the road for the invading troops, the intensity of the battles between Golani elite forces and Hezbollah fighters was high. The Golani elite forces, which were supported by the armor brigade, were divided into three groups to control the outer city from the east, north and provide a backup support to the Paratroopers coming from the west. However, the Golani units were intruded in Maroun el-Ras by Hezbollah fighters, in which the intensity of battles led, according to Israeli sources, to the injury of seven Israeli soldiers.⁷³ As an outcome, the Golani units had to stop their advancement towards the town of Bint-Jubayl, due to the number of casualties and the destruction of three Merkava tanks.⁷⁴ In fact, this is what happened with Company C, one of the three Golani groups, in an attempt to penetrate the city they moved towards the outskirts of the Bint-Jubayl, as they were detected by Hezbollah forces. The force continued moving, untouched by Hezbollah fighters, until they arrived into an olive grove; an open area full of olive trees, and walled, in which it looked a trap for the Israeli soldiers. At this moment, Hezbollah fighters opened fire and besieged the Israeli army force in an open area with no place to hide in. The Hezbollah combatants surprised the Golani troops, with grenades, machine guns, rocket-propelled grenades, in addition to snipping operations.

⁷³ The Israeli Television in *Bint- Jbyl Qahirato el-Ghozaat*, Part II, directed by Mahdy Qaansow, aired (August 14, 2013), on (Al-Manar T.V. station, 2013).

⁷⁴ "*Mofaja 'at el-Harb*", directed by Mahdy Qaansow, aired (July8, 2011), on (Al-Manar T.V. station, 2011).

In the middle of fire, Gal Hirsch, the commander of the division 91 declared that, “we have achieved full control over Bint-Jbeil”⁷⁵

However, the real story of what was happening on the ground was reiterated by the Israeli army soldiers that participated in the battle of Bint-Jubayl, in which they denied such achievement. According to Alon Hakima an Israeli captain, the fighting was intense and face to face in which the total forces of his companion cell were killed or injured adding, “the battle shifted to a lower zone area, which is considered the worst circumstance on the battle field. [When] you discover [that] you are in a bad situation in the fighting, [and] you don’t know the magnitude of the force of your enemy and the circumstance of the battle field you are entering, in addition [to] the exact number of the terrorists.”⁷⁶ Hakima added that all the members of his company group were either injured or dead.⁷⁷

On the western edge, the Paratrooper Brigade waited for the support of the Golani Brigade, which never came, in order to protect the advancement from the west and provide a cover for the Israeli forces to occupy the town and hoist the Israeli flag inside the Bint-Jubayl stadium. The paratroopers were again detected by Hezbollah fighters in the western edge at the Talet Masoud hill top, which overlooks the stadium that Secretary- General of Hezbollah Hasan Nasrollah delivered the Spider Web speech.

⁷⁵ Ynet Reporters, “IDF: Control of Bint Jbeil to Provide Security,” *Yedioth Ahronoth*, July 25, 2006, accessed March 25, 2014. <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3281356,00.html>.

⁷⁶ An Israeli Captain participated in the Bint-Jubayl battles talking to the Israeli television in *Fy al-Maydan*, “Aintizar el-Wahm”, directed by Rida Qashmar, aired (unkown), on (Al-Manar T.V. Station, 2008), DVD.

⁷⁷ *Fy al-Maydan*, Ibid.

The intensity of the clashes forced the Israeli troops to abandon the hill top and the “pincer movement” plan. Consequently, the dream of making a victory festival inside the Bint-Jbiel stadium had to be abandoned too.

The Israeli television report, on the Hezbollah-Golani clashes in Bint-Jubayl, was as follows: “Tens of terrorists were fortified in the town and waited for the soldiers to come and attacked them accurately. The echo of the shelling and the gunfire echoed immensely until noon and according to the primary investigation this is what happened: from the early morning when the soldiers were in the near houses of the town, suddenly tens of Hezbollah terrorists attacked them from a lateral alley and from a house, [so] they started to fire upon the soldiers (the majority of whom became injured from the first attack), and then the incident developed into a face to face engagement with the terrorists. The Golani’s soldiers had spent long hours attempting to save their injured friends from the battlefield. The Golani’s soldiers transported their injured on carriers for almost 2 kilometres inside hostile Lebanese territories, and in the end the injured were transported by helicopters to the Ram bam Hospital.”⁷⁸

On 26 July, that is after three days of intense battles, 23 Israeli soldiers were killed⁷⁹ and 13 injured⁸⁰ in the “capturing of Bint-Jbil as if it were the capture of

⁷⁸ The Israeli television in *Bint- Jbyl Qahirato el-Ghozaat*, Part II, Ibid

⁷⁹ Ynet Reporters, “13 IDF casualties reported in Bint Jbeil,” *Yedioth Ahronoth*, July 26, 2006, accessed March 25, 2014, <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3281480,00.html>.

⁸⁰ Israel INN, “13 IDF Soldiers Injured in Battle at Bint Jbeil, Condition Unknown,” *Israel National News*, last modified July 26, 2006, accessed January 9, 2014. <http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/Flash.aspx/108404>.

Berlin,”⁸¹ in the words of Udi Adam, the head of Israeli northern command. On the other hand, Hezbollah had declared victory in Bint-Jubayl, by preventing the Israeli army from occupying the town, and had not publicized the number of fighters killed in the defense operation.

As an outcome of the operation, the Israeli ceremony failed to materialize inside Bint-Jubayl, or “the capital of Hizbullah,” and the image of hoisting an Israeli flag on the roof of a building on the edge side of the town has not brought Israel even an apparent victory. In this respect, Riyal Balouh, the Israeli soldier that was sent to raise the flag inside the town as a gesture of the Israeli predominance, told the Israeli television, “the goal of the mission was to obtain a victory image that refutes the spider web rhetoric and demonstrates that we succeeded. The goal was specific and at the end it did not succeed, I am not a general and I have a feeling that if we prevailed they will see this, and if we only hoisted a flag without winning it would not have an effect.”⁸²

In fact, it was Hezbollah who commenced a second victory ceremony in the same place from which Secretary-General of Hezbollah Hasan Nasrollah described Israel as ‘weaker than a spider web.’ This time the stadium hosted the Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadi Nejad as its orator, a strong indicator of the winner identity and a new emphasis of the “Spider Web” ethos.

Moreover, Hezbollah commenced a victory ceremony inside Ayta el-Sha’b from which the “*Operation Truthful Promise*” was launched. In the held ceremony, Secretary-

⁸¹ Rapaport, *How we Failed*, 1.

⁸² *Fy al-Maaydaan*, Ibid.

General of Hezbollah addressed the audience in a televised speech in which he emphasized on the historic victory of the war, and considered that the rallying of the people in Ayta el-Sha'b to celebrate is an assurance of the Israeli failure in this war.⁸³

A. On the “Operation Web of Steel”

In fact, Hezbollah's tactical military strategy during the war consisted of two plans, either to disrupt the advancement of the Israeli forces inside the Lebanese villages and towns that is to fight a kind of guerrilla attrition war, or to defend fiercely against any Israeli encroachment, that is to fight a kind of classical warfare. In Bint-Jubayl, the strategy was to defend the town fiercely, that is to follow a *Karbala'y*⁸⁴ mode of fighting, and that explains the high level intensity of the battles.

Meanwhile, the fall of Bint-Jubayl for Hezbollah, would have meant the definite end of the victory that the resistance achieved in the year 2000 with Israel withdrawing from southern Lebanon. Moreover, the loss of Bint-Jubayl, which is located only 2 km from the border in the central sector, would have consequently provided the Israeli army the ability to control central strategic main roads and crossings points, in addition to disconnecting the eastern sector from the western one, this is to add also, that occupying the town would have also facilitated the way to reach the Lytany River, which was one of Israel's major goal during the war. However, it is noteworthy to mention that even if Israel had succeeded in occupying the town, an attrition war scenario was to come with

⁸³ Secretary-General of Hezbollah Hasan Nasrollah in a live Speech, August 17, 2014, accessed January 1, 2014, www.axisoflogic.com/artman/publish/Article_65930.shtml.

⁸⁴ Karbala'y fighting refers to the fighting spirit of Imam Housyn and his companions in Karbala, Ashura in 61 AH, in which the ultimate aim was either victory or martyrdom.

the end of military operations. In the meantime, Bint-Jubayl was not the optimal road for reaching the Litani River; again it is the symbolic status of the town that was the target of the Israeli army, whereas for Hezbollah it was partially the reason behind the fierce defense.

Indeed, the intensity of the battles in Bint-Jubayl caused Dan Halutz, who resigned after the war for his weak performance, to enter hospital on July 28 suffering abdominal pains and tension. In this regard, Miri Regev, Dan Halutz's spokeswoman during the war, admitted in the aftermath of the war, "we tried to minimize damages. I knew how to get out the response in time and how to cause reporters to busy themselves with other things. How can I tell them something like that – that the chief of staff stopped functioning in the middle of a war? In fact, there was no chief of staff for three days during the war,"⁸⁵ she added, "He was not at situation assessments. He was at hospital."⁸⁶

The battle in Bint-Jubayl ended in failure, therefore, someone had to be blamed and held responsible. Gail Hirsh, the commander of Galilee Division and the responsible of the operations in Bent-Jbyl, and its neighboring areas, was the scapegoat and the first to be removed from office by the Israeli High Command after the war; Hirsh attacked the leadership considering that the essential failure of the war was a 'value failure,' which covers senior Israeli leaders.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Gil Ronen, "MK Regev: IDF had No Chief in Lebanon War," *Israel National News*, November 5, 2013, accessed February 27, 2014, <http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/167926>.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ *Fy al-Maaydaan*, Ibid.

Uri Bar-Joseph on comment of the Bint-Jubayl operation considered that, Halutz has “pushed for ineffectual military initiatives with a high casualty toll”⁸⁸ to create “a spectacle of victory.”⁸⁹ This spectacle of victory aimed to play on the consciousness of the enemy mind. However, in Rapaport words, “Bint-Jbil, three kilometers from the border, again became a symbol - this time of failure.”⁹⁰

The new army doctrine that embodied EBO approach, as a cure to the casualty aversion syndromes of the Israeli army and society, was signed by Halutz three months before the war in April 2006, in which it cited in the first page, “Familiarity with and use of the concept of operation are the key to our success in warfare, in which the only option available is victory.”⁹¹ Consequently, the official abandonment of the new doctrine in the aftermath of the war signaled the failure of the Israeli concept of operation to succeed. Moreover, the Winograd report strongly criticized the new operational approach.⁹²

Meanwhile, the failure of the Israeli military strategy was more elaborated in the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee report on the Second Lebanon War. The report considered that the new technological advancement has impressed the decision makers in Israel to develop new methods in fighting wars considering that, “this

⁸⁸ Uri Bar-Joseph, “Their Most Humiliating Hour,” *Haaretz*, April 27, 2007, accessed December 23, 2013, <http://www.bintjbeil.com/articles/2007/en/0427-barjoseph.html>.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ Rapaport, *How we Failed*, 1.

⁹¹ Matt M. Matthews, “We Were Caught Unprepared: The 2006 Hezbollah-Israeli War,” *U.S. Army Combined Arms Center Combat Studies Institute Press*, (2008): 26, accessed March 16, 2014. <http://usacac.army.mil/CAC/csi/RandP/CSIPubs.asp>, citing Alex Fishman, “Struck by a Virus,” *Yedioth Ahronoth*, B4, (No Date).

⁹² Rapaport, *the IDF*, 11.

technological advance has seduced the military decision maker in Israel with the desire to create a revolution in the methods of commanding the military battles. Thus, the strategic target of this war was the application of the new military theories. The vision was that the heavy bombardment will result in the destruction of the enemy leadership, which in turn would open the way for the execution of classical operations that would be resolved to our side.”⁹³

Furthermore, the report considered that the failure in Bint-Jubayl has made the Israeli army reluctant to launch major military ground operations, out of the fear of the falling of large number of casualties. The report considered that the yearning of not sacrificing human lives represented a serious obstacle in making decisions regarding the battles, in addition to the psychological impact of the ‘Lebanese Quagmire’ that the Israeli army suffered from for 18 years long, “we can say that the field involvement in “Maroun el-Raas” and “Bint-Jubayl”, and other places in the first weeks of the war have deterred the decision makers from taking a decision to go into a military land operation that was bigger from that was known in South Lebanon. Therefore, the lack of success, and the occurrences of tens of injuries in small battles have constrained the involvement in a major military operation, which could lead to a catastrophic defeat accompanied by the fall of a large number of deaths.”⁹⁴ Again, the Israeli military strategy failed to address the casualty aversion syndromes inside the Israeli army, “here we can assume that the desire not to sacrifice human lives stood as a serious obstacle in front of the

⁹³ Abu ‘Amer, ‘Adnan, ed. *Lessons Derived from the Second Lebanon War on Lebanon* (July 2006): Report of the Committee of Security and Foreign Affairs in the Israeli Knesset (Issued in December 2007). Beirut: Al-Zaytouna Studies and Consulting Center, 2008, 14.

⁹⁴ *Ibid*, 103.

decision makers, as it prevented them from sending ground troops into Lebanon, and it is also possible to attribute the reason to the consequences of “the Lebanese Quagmire”, in which the army was involved throughout 18 years. [The above mentioned obstacles have] delayed, or blocked the issuance of such a decision, [of launching a major ground operation] by the government.”⁹⁵

Finally, the report recounts that the Israeli army has failed to overcome Hezbollah militarily adding, “There is no doubt that such kind of outcome symbolizes the lack of the ability of the [Israeli] army to reach the stage of decisiveness with Hezbollah; evidenced by the success of the latter to launch between 100 and 200 rocket-propelled grenade in a daily basis into Israel during the days of the war.”⁹⁶

Meanwhile, although Israel looked from the “*Operation Web of Steel*” to remedy the “Spider Web” rhetoric, and the so far shortcomings of the war, however, the war in general has reaffirmed this perception to Hezbollah. The unwillingness to pay a heavy price in terms of casualty tolls represented a serious obstacle that undermined the willingness of the Israeli army to continue fighting, and has withdrew the challenge of facing a steep steadfastness in defense. Moreover, in the “Operation Web of Steel,” EBO approach has manifested in the essential selection of a symbolic target, with a clear shortcomings in the application of other main elements that are embodied in the theory. On the other hand, Hezbollah proved on much proficiency in applying the EBO approach without adopting it theoretically. In regards to the importance of the knowledge of the self, the enemy and the situational awareness, which are basic EBO principles, Hezbollah

⁹⁵ Ibid, 103.

⁹⁶ Ibid, 100.

appeared to have a sufficient knowledge on those vital issues, and was able to produce a coherent action by succeeding in combining all kinds of national efforts; military, political, diplomatic, social cohesion, among others that were essential to produce the desired objectives of the war. Furthermore, the Israeli army forces failed to reach military decision with Hezbollah. Hezbollah's semi-state asymmetric development has surprised the Israeli forces which suffered from "intelligence blindness." In addition, the Israeli elite forces have failed to match the asymmetric fighting capabilities of Hezbollah combat units, despite the Israeli army use of special elite units like Egoz, which was especially designed to fight Hezbollah.

In sum, the Israeli military strategy that was adopted during the July war of 2006 has failed to a large extent. In fact, it has failed twice during the war; in the operation "*Adequate Pay*," and in the "*Operation Web of Steel*," in which the failure was even more apparent and devastating. Even more, the military strategy was abandoned unofficially during the war, due to its failure, with the launch of "*Operation Change of Direction*," for it was a classical ground operation that contradicted the essential belief in the decisiveness of the air power and the use of EBO, as a unique strategy to defeat an asymmetric foe.

CHAPTER VII

THE PREVALENCE OF HEZBOLLAH

Hezbollah's overall prevalence in the war goes back to the presence of several elements of power including; its decentralized structure, its secretive nature, its creativity in power conversion of primitive weapons into lethal weapons, the proficiency of its leadership, its adaptability with the Lebanese state, in addition to other aspects. In this regard, Israel has failed to meet its expectations from the war as a conventional power countering a semi-state military power. Moreover, Hezbollah's prevalence has affected the deterrence power of Israel, and has weakened the political power status of Israel and its allies in the region, in addition to redrawing the world map of power.

The overall success of Hezbollah in the war could be traced to several aspects including: the decentralized military structure of Hezbollah accompanied by a special communication system resulting in the almost impossibility of the system dissolution without the likelihood of its recovery.⁹⁷ In this respect, the military effectiveness of the Israeli army was not expected to produce a final success unless Hezbollah had chosen to relinquish its military apparatus. In fact, the communication, command and control (C3) system was Hezbollah's central power during the war, for the success in the military management of the war was largely due to the efficiency of the C3 system. Moreover, the secretive nature of Hezbollah and the "intelligence blindness" that Israel suffered from throughout the war was a strategic advantage that played for the benefit of Hezbollah, in which Hezbollah succeeded to surprise Israel in various levels and fields during the war,

⁹⁷ Tira, *The Nature of War*, 95.

resulting in the declining of the Israeli military effectiveness. Furthermore, according to the Israeli writer Ron Tira, Hezbollah has pursued an indirect strategy to reach its objectives. Hezbollah's strategy was based on generating an exhausted and unbearable situation for the Israeli army over time, in addition to offsetting the Israeli fire power and intelligence gains,⁹⁸ such strategy offered Hezbollah the opportunity to end the war without Israel achieving a military decision and allowed Hezbollah to achieve its stated military and political goals. Meanwhile, Hezbollah's advantage in this war was its deep knowledge of the enemy, which enabled them to identify Israel's centers of gravity and decides on the proper weapons to attack them, in this sense, Hezbollah was successful in "power conversion" that is in transforming primitive weapons like Katyusha rockets, and modern advanced weapons like anti-tank missiles into lethal weapons that threaten Israel's security. In this respect, the launch of Katyusha rockets has succeeded to disturb the military-political-civilian relationship, for the kind of pressure it imposed on the internal economic-civilian life, which in turn has produced a pressure on the political echelon to bring military achievements or pull out. In retrospect, the political echelon was obliged to turn to the military establishment in order to relieve the internal resentment. The failure of the Israeli army in bringing military achievements, and in limiting the number of the fired Katyusha rockets, ended in a dead lock, in which Israel was driven at the end to concede and withdraw. In the meantime, the leadership of Hezbollah played a key role in the war process and outcome. Hezbollah represented by its Secretary-General Hassan Nasrollah, succeeded to translate the military operational success of the war into a strategic victory, in utilizing and combining these achievements with political,

⁹⁸ Ibid, 111.

diplomatic, and internal resources to bring about the most applicable political outcome, which is in line with Hezbollah grand strategy. Whereas Israel has suffered during the war from a political-military leadership that lacked the necessary expertise in both the political and military field, a fact that was spelled by the Winograd report. Moreover, the supportive stand of the Lebanese Army provided Hezbollah an inside strategic backing, and has constituted a source of strength that enabled Hezbollah to succeed. It is also worth mentioning that the adaptability of Hezbollah with the Lebanese state, that is being part of the government and the parliament, has provided Hezbollah with a political backing to negotiate inside the government and be able to have a political legal vote, which served Hezbollah in dealing with the domestic and the international community to pursue a recognized political outcome.

According to Tira, “Israel did not grasp the nature of the war it fought with Hezbollah.”⁹⁹ The development of Hezbollah into a semi-state military organization was not detected by Israel. Hezbollah’s developed mode of warfare resulted in “the loss of effectiveness of the IDF’s paradigm to a great extent even before the first shot was fired,”¹⁰⁰ as Israel was forced to fight a war that it was not prepared for, and that depletes many of the advantages of the conventional power. In this regard, achieving a military decision against Hezbollah, by a mindset based on the use of advanced technological equipment, without intervening ground troops in the theater of operations, was a wrong start.

⁹⁹ Ibid, 93.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

In relation, as a semi-state military organization, Hezbollah has not run the test of military decision, and succeeded to attack the Israeli military-political-civilian stamina with a prime emphasizes on attacking the army stamina. In fact, Hezbollah influenced the military stamina in two direct ways: first, it has not only prevented the Israeli army from achieving a military decision, but was also able to resist the Israeli army incursions by fighting fierce defensive battles. Second, it prevented the Israeli army from achieving the goals of the Israeli government, in putting an end to the Katyusha rockets threat, in returning back the kidnapped Israeli soldiers, in occupying the Lytany river area in the south, in implementing the resolution 1559, and in empowering the Israeli backed alliance.

In this respect, classical war doctrine calls for giving an essential blow to the enemy forces which is a necessary step to achieve decision, in which eliminating 60 percent of the force of a military unit is equivalent to its destruction. However, Tira argues that, “this is no longer useful for assessing decision. Particularly in those wars where the enemy does not attempt to defeat Israel’s military in the theater of operations, but rather seeks to attack its civilian-political stamina, the enemy is not required to maintain full military fitness, and as long as the enemy retains residual defiance capability, it may well operate effectively to realize its plans.” This perception is true when Hezbollah was a guerrilla organization; however, the development of Hezbollah into a semi-state military organization has unveiled on a capability to defend the Lebanese territories from any Israeli occupation.

In fact, the massive difference in resource capabilities between Israel and Hezbollah devoted the two sides to construct a different paradigm of military structure.

The Israeli army as a classical army constructed its power to fight a conventional war, whereas Hezbollah which was born partly in reaction to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, dedicated its moderate sources (in comparison with the Israeli one) in a manner that could counter Israel's military effectiveness namely a counter-classical manner. According to Tira, Hezbollah was constructed in a manner that counters the Israeli army's rationale, capabilities, and modes of operation. Besides, Hezbollah was able to adapt to and confront the technological military advancement of the Israeli army.¹⁰¹

Indeed, Hezbollah's semi-state development involved the combination of classical and asymmetric tactics on the operational level. Thus, the Israeli army as a classical army found itself fighting a semi-state and not a guerrilla opponent. Therefore, from the beginning attaining a classical victory against Hezbollah was almost impossible. However, even by looking through the classical window, Israel had not made military achievements that fit its expectations as a conventional power. The classical conditions call for achieving one's political objectives as a condition to achieve victory. Over the course of the war, Israel was unable to achieve any of its declared political war goals which were subject to ongoing changes. Moreover, classical conditions necessitate the importance of achieving a military decision in order to achieve victory. Israel failed to achieve a military decision against Hezbollah, for till the last day of the war Israel was fighting in the border area zone in Maroun el-Ras, 'Dysih, 'Ytaroun, Taybih, Ayta el-Sha'b and others, and has not succeeded even to occupy a limited zone that is empty from Hezbollah fighters. Moreover, throughout the war Israel was not able to stop the firing of

¹⁰¹ Ibid, 90.

rocket missiles on its settlements, which if happened would have considered a strong indicator of Hezbollah's weakness. Meanwhile, Israel failed to inflict any critical blow to Hezbollah military capabilities, in terms of the fighting forces capabilities and the missiles arsenal. In the meantime, although in classical terms military decision could be achieved if the enemy's centers of gravity were destroyed, we should decide on the centers of gravity that are related to Hezbollah. The communication, control and command system was one of Hezbollah's center of gravity targets. Kidnapping and/or killing of a key leadership personnel was another center of gravity target. Also, destroying the rocket arsenal was considered a key center of gravity target. Israel's success in the dysfunction of those targets would have been considered a military decision against Hezbollah. The constant pattern in the number of rockets fired throughout the course of war, and the adhering to the two days humanitarian truce after the Qana massacre with no single violation, is a strong indicator that the communication, command and control system of Hezbollah had not been affected by the Israeli attacks. Moreover, no single Hezbollah leader figure was kidnapped or assassinated in the course of the war. Finally, there was no evident that the rocket arsenal of Hezbollah was strategically affected especially with the poor intelligence that Israel was suffering from in relation to Hezbollah, and the fact that cities like Haifa and al-Khodyrah that are 80 km from the border with Lebanon were attacked during the war with salvos of rocket missiles.

However, the heavy cost of the war represented a center of gravity that inflicted pain on Hezbollah; but, the communal support and sympathy with the resistance during the war minimized the effect of such pain, since it had not hindered Hezbollah from

continuing the military confrontations with the Israeli army, nor forced the party to make political concessions, that is, it failed to produce a psychological defeat reaction in light of the high toll in civilian casualties and level of destruction. In this respect, Tira considers that destroying the infrastructure of the enemy which usually aims at raising the cost of the war, or alter his political behavior, is a mere question of endurance and staying power, rather than a granted factor that ensures a quick military decision.¹⁰²In short, the course of the war proved that Israel has failed to achieve a military decision against Hezbollah.

Indeed, in this war, Hezbollah was able to dictate his own rules of the game, by dragging Israel into a war of attrition that contradicts its basic theory of security, and by denying it the opportunity to realize its political objectives. In essence, fighting a 34 day war contradicted the basic principle of the Israeli security doctrine, and the ground incursions that the Israeli army resorted to were the pure outcome of its failure to achieve military decision against Hezbollah using standoff fire. Thus, in an exhausted war of attrition, the Israeli army at the end had to concede and withdraw.

Moreover, for Hezbollah military decision and victory are located in accordance to a special context and formula. Hezbollah's winning formula should be diagnosed after taking into consideration the development of Hezbollah into a semi-state resistance organization that combines guerrilla and classical operational tactics. In fact, "winning by not losing," which is the winning formula of a guerrilla fighting organization, or "eliminating most of the enemy forces," which is the winning formula of a classical

¹⁰² Ibid, 7.

army, are not in fact Hezbollah's winning formula, as fighting a semi-state mode of warfare requires an achievement that is close to a classical achievement while not far away from a guerrilla preponderance.

The classical winning formula calls for the realization of the war political objectives, through the achievement of a military decision by giving a critical blow to the enemy force's capability of operating,¹⁰³ whereas the guerrilla winning formula demands the undermining of the invader's will as a preemption to his withdrawal. A semi-state asymmetric winning formula, involves both the necessity to realize the war political objectives through a military decision prevalence, which is within the parameter of denying the enemy forces the opportunity to operate effectively, and the necessity to succeed in undermining the "will" of the invader to continue fighting, thus, driving him at the end to concede and withdraw.

Hezbollah has prevailed in denying the Israeli forces to operate effectively, as Hezbollah made fierce defenses in border areas like Maroun el-Ras, Bint-Jubayl, 'Ytaroun, Taybih, 'Dysih, Ayta el-Sha'b, and Wadi el Hojayr, in which the Israeli army failed to occupy even a limited zone inside Lebanon. On the other hand, targeting the Hanit ship by two anti-ship C-802 missiles has affected psychologically and operationally the Israeli Navy Forces, in which the freedom of maneuver for the Navy power was largely constrained. Moreover, in what is known as the "Merkava massacre," Hezbollah used Russian-Sagger-35 and laser-guided Kornet¹⁰⁴ anti-tank missiles to destroy a large

¹⁰³ Ibid, 11.

¹⁰⁴ Hirst, *Beware of Small States*, 353.

number of Merkava tanks and army forces, resulting in denying the Israeli army the opportunity to maneuver effectively, in which many military incursions operations were either stop or cancelled, while many others were subject to failure. The Helicopter weapon was neutralized from the outset of the war, as Israel feared the possibility of Hezbollah having anti-aircraft missiles. Still, by the end of the war, an Israeli Sikorsky Helicopter was shot down, leading to the killing of its five crew members. Moreover, the use of Katyusha rockets against the internal front has paralyzed the economic-civilian life, and created a pressure on the political-military echelon especially with the length of the war. The Israeli army which was under pressure to make achievements against Hezbollah came under additional pressure with the firing of rockets, thus, creating an embarrassing situation to the army in front of the government and the public. The government, which was subject to intense criticism from the public and was in need of military achievements to realize any of its political objectives, was forced with the absence of such achievements to give up at the end to Hezbollah and stop the war. Therefore, Hezbollah has prevailed by fulfilling the semi-state asymmetric winning formula of hindering the Israeli military army from operating effectively, and of undermining the “will” of the military-political-civilian echelon to continue fighting, as it had at the end to concede and withdraw without achieving any of its declared goals. In the meantime, the July war of 2006 revealed that Hezbollah’s development into a semi-state resistance organization had not deprived the organization the determination and willingness to fight a protracted war, whereas the RMA had not satisfied the need of the modern army to fight ‘a luxury war without casualties’.

Hezbollah's military steadfastness at the operational level in denying the Israeli army the opportunity to advance inside the Lebanese territories has facilitated the way for the outcome to be concluded in the benefit of Hezbollah. Such outcome was not attainable without Hezbollah's equal success in the domestic political-civilian arena. Despite political controversy inside the Lebanese government, Hezbollah succeeded to preserve on a minimum political harmony level that was capable of producing a satisfactory political war outcome. The backing of the internal Lebanese community provided Hezbollah with the needed psychological support to continue without making concessions that equal Hezbollah giving up to the Israeli conditions. Indeed, Hezbollah revealed on a strong belief in the political-military-civilian stamina as a key to success, and one of Israel's war objectives was to weaken this relationship, for this political-military-civilian triangle was what constituted Hezbollah's power during the war.

On the other hand, the Israeli army's new doctrine which believed in the Air power as a decisive weapon using EBO approach failed to produce the desired outcome. The "*Adequate Pay*" operation's initial expectation to eliminate Hezbollah using Air power has evaporated with Hezbollah's continuing firing rockets. Both the Israeli army and political rank were surprised from the performance and capability of Hezbollah in handling an unprecedented military escalation, a situation that has gotten worse with the state of "intelligence blindness" that Israel suffered concerning Hezbollah. In the meantime, Israel's recovery attempts as part of the situational awareness process, resorted the Israeli army to start limited ground incursions in Maroun el-Ras, and to launch on July 24, 2006, "*Operation Web of Steel*," which was subject to controversies and intense disputes inside the military establishment. The failure to occupy the town of Bint-Jubayl

or 'Hizballah's capital' exacerbated the tension inside the Israeli military institute and disturbed the relationship with the government, whose ministers and PM were under pressure to end the war in Israel's terms and conditions. On August 11, 2006, Israel launched "*Operation Change of Direction*," which was a classical military operation signaling the failure of the new operational approach that Israel began its war with. "*Operation Change of Direction*" was a classical military operation with large deployments that brought the Israeli army back into the 'Lebanese Quagmire.' The operation's original aim was to occupy about 32 km (20 miles) inside Lebanon. The high cost of the operation in terms of the number of casualties fallen, and the number of Merkava tanks attacked and destroyed, in addition to the shot down of a Sikorsky Helicopter, has driven Israel to stop the war and look for a political pull out. In August 12 alone, 19 Israeli soldiers were killed in ground operations and 85 were injured,¹⁰⁵ the helicopter shot down led to the killing of five crew members, and on the last day of the operation that is on August 13 Israel lost additional 9 Israeli soldiers¹⁰⁶. Despite the high cost of the operation, Israel failed to occupy south Lebanon, whereas in the 1982 invasion the Israeli army reached Beirut in seven days. On 13 August, that is in the final day of the

¹⁰⁵ PM, "Since July 12, 40 Israeli civilians and 117 IDF soldiers have been killed," Prime Minister Office, July 12, 2006, accessed March 25, 2014, <http://www.pm.gov.il/PMOEng/Communication/IsraelUnderAttack/Lebanon+North/attacklebanonnorth.htm>.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

war, Hezbollah fired 250 rockets¹⁰⁷, a further assertion on the failure of Israel to end the war on its own terms and conditions.

The outcome of the war, which is disguised for many, was clearly spoken inside the Israeli unclassified official reports on the war. The Winograd report and the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee report on the Second Lebanon war, included the words “failure” “failed” and “failings” in reference to the Israeli war misconduct, for 37 times in the Winograd report (interim and final report), and 18 times in the Knesset report. However, the heavy political and media concentration inside Lebanon on the cost of the war in terms of the number of casualties that approximated 1100 dead Lebanese civilians, and in terms of the destruction in the civilian and state infrastructure, had minimized the overall image of Hezbollah victory.

The deterrence power of Israel, as an outcome of this war, was subject to strategic deterioration. The Israeli failure to achieve victory in a “life or death war,”¹⁰⁸ as described by Shimon Peres, Israeli vice Premier Minister during the war, was elaborated in the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security committee report on the Second Lebanon war. The report considered that “the 2nd Lebanese war has affected the Israeli deterrence in many fields,”¹⁰⁹ and included a number of factors that reflects this deterioration in the

¹⁰⁷ Secretary-General of Hezbollah Hasan Nasrollah in a live Speech, July 19, 2012, accessed April 3, 2014, <http://www.moqawama.org/essaydetails.php?eid=26312&cid=199>.

¹⁰⁸ AP Annual Reviews, “Lebanon and Israel Conflict (B),” Associated Press Television, Last modified July 25, 2006, accessed March 25, 2014, www.aparchive.com/...Peres/.

¹⁰⁹ Adnan, *Lessons Derived*, 157.

Israeli deterrence power, among which the continuous firing of rockets on the Israeli settlements and cities till the last day of the war, the Israeli army failure to put an end to the launching of rocket throughout the war, the preservation of Hezbollah on its military power strength, and the incapability of attacking any of Hezbollah Leadership.¹¹⁰

The failure of Israel to enhance the strategic balance of power with Hezbollah to its benefit, and repair the deterrence power, denoted a precedent in the Arab-Israeli conflict. The image of the invincible army and invincible state has almost disappeared in the Arab world and to a large extent inside Israel. Although Hezbollah has not achieved a decision against Israel in the classical manner, however, Hezbollah's semi-state paradigm that combined guerrilla and classical tactics, and was based on power conversion of primitive weapons into lethal strategic ones has succeeded to overcome Israel.

Secretary-General of Hezbollah Hasan Nasrollah, commenting on the Israeli failure, considered that Israel's main loss in the war was the declining confidence of its people in the army and the political leadership considering that, "the most important loss is the appearance, confidence, and the morale loss of the people of this entity in its leadership and its invincible army."¹¹¹ "When the people of this accidental state lose trust in their glorified army the end of this entity begins. Israel is a state that was built for an army however in Israel there is no army for the state."¹¹² Moreover, he considered that the prevailing of the resistance in this war was the mere product of the Lebanese army, civilian and resist

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Secretary-General of Hezbollah Hasan Nasrollah in a video-taped Speech, on Al-Manar T.V. station, July 29, 2006, accessed April 3, 2014, DVD.

¹¹² Ibid.

ance sacrifices adding, “at the end, this pure blood that drains from the women, children and the oppressed civilians, and from the martyrs and the mujahidin whether from the Resistance or the National Lebanese Army or from any sacrificing posts. Today this blood has to be victorious over the sword and this is the will of God.”¹¹³

The war outcome has empowered the power of Hezbollah and its alliances Iran and Syria, while it had weakened Israel and the political power of the United States in the Middle East, in addition to the power status of what was known as the “moderate Arab states” alliance that is of Egypt, Jordan, the United Emirates, and Saudi Arabia, which backed the Israeli retaliation against Hezbollah. Moreover, the western military thinking that believed in the decisiveness of the air power using EBO platform as the new deterrence against threats coming from asymmetric adversaries was widely abandoned.

Moreover, the July war of 2006 outcome had a share in changing the world balance of power order. The war in Syria, which many believe it was partly triggered and exacerbated due to the Syrian regime role in supporting the resistance during the July war, has altered the international order of power after the Geneva American-Russian agreement, from a hegemonic order to a multi-polar one, a change that July war of 2006 owes credit in altering.

In conclusion, the prevailing of Hezbollah’s military strategy in this war signified a new success for the asymmetric balancing of power as a mean to address the

¹¹³ Secretary-General of Hezbollah Hasan Nasrollah in a video-taped Speech, on Al-Manar T.V. station, July 26, 2006, accessed April 3, 2014, DVD.

conventional superiority of the Israeli army, and which if combined with other vital power elements, proved on a capability to overcome Israel in any upcoming war.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CONCLUSION

The Arab-Israeli conflict embraced the use of different military strategies to address the conflict. From the outset of the conflict Israel turned to a war paradigm based on hard balancing of power, in the form of constructing a conventional army, whereas the military strategy of the Arabs began as a hard balancing of power strategy, soon to transform into an asymmetric balancing of power with the changing actors involved in the conflict.

Hezbollah has been a leading actor in the use of asymmetric balance of power. The Israeli withdrawal from the south in the year 2000 signaled the success of this military strategy in addressing the conventional power of the Israeli army. The July war of 2006 was a new round of conflict in which Israel and Hezbollah tested a military strategy within the margin of their initial mode of balancing.

Israel's new military strategy in the war involved the use of air power accompanied with EBO approach, as a mean to defeat an asymmetric adversary like Hezbollah, whereas Hezbollah's military strategy involved the combination of guerrilla and classical tactics.

The failure of Israel and the prevailing of Hezbollah in the war, in which the endorsed military strategy played a key role in drawing the outcome, have produced strategic consequences in the domestic, regional and international level. The outcome of the war has eroded the deterrence power of Israel, while the power of Hezbollah has been aggrandized as a regional power.

The Arab-Israeli conflict is a world conflict, which involves religious, cultural, political and military dimensions. The military dimension remains the deciding aspect in the conflict, and the prevailing military strategy opens the door for the prevailing of the side that is fighting it.

The efforts are now devoted towards forecasting the future war scenario that would take place between Israel and Hezbollah. However, the consequent regional developments taking place in the region make it difficult to really introduce a precise one. Still, there are two basic scenarios that can be approached: a full scale war in which Israel seeks again to crush Hezbollah, or skirmishes and military operations that are limited in scope. The developments in Syria made the second scenario more realistic, and have pushed the former one for some delay.

All in all, the arena in the Middle East is now more open and comfortable for Hezbollah to attack Israel. The Egyptian front, the Syrian front, the Palestinian front, in addition to south Lebanon are now considered a theater of operations for Hezbollah to retaliate any Israeli aggression against Lebanon. Moreover, despite rapid fears and expectations that any future war would involve regional actors including Syria and Iran, such expectations remain far, for such involvement has not taken place during the July war of 2006. Hezbollah was able to handle the situation, and in any future war it is difficult to expect a direct military involvement of Syria and/or Iran as long as Hezbollah maintains on a satisfactory military position.

In sum, Hezbollah has become the most formidable actor challenging Israel in the region. The decreasing influence of the United States in the region and the reciprocal growing regional influence of Iran are among the backing power that enables Hezbollah

to build a deterrent power, which transcends into not only defending the Lebanese territories, but also the possibility of occupying the Galilee in the north in any future war.

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