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THESIS

MORE EFFECTIVE WARFARE: WARFARE WAGED PSYCHOLOGICALLY

by

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June 2012

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The Powell Doctrine for waging war was generally focused on the use of overwhelming physical force to defeat the enemy. Destroying enemy combatants and capabilities faster and more severely than the rate at which they can inflict losses has traditionally resulted in victory. Consequently, kinetic operations have always been at the forefront. Despite this predominance of kinetic operations, history has shown that technologically superior, militarily advanced, and numerically overwhelming forces are sometimes defeated by ragtag groups of a few hundred guerrillas with inferior combat capabilities. Rather than attempting to convince our enemies through the use of violent action—which targets their physical well-being rather than their mental decision making—there is a more effective way to wage war: psychologically. By exploring case studies of Hezbollah, Hamas, and the neo-Taliban, this thesis examines whether resequencing psychological and kinetic operations, at various times throughout a conflict, will create stronger, more synchronized and believable messages, thus producing warfare waged in a more effective and efficient manner.

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MORE EFFECTIVE WARFARE: WARFARE WAGED PSYCHOLOGICALLY

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAF   Afghan Air Force

ANA   Afghan National Army

ANP   Afghan National Police

ANSF   Afghan National Security Forces

CIA   Central Intelligence Agency

CJTF   Combined Joint Task Force

FATA   Federally Administered Tribal Areas

HIG   Hizb-e-Islami Gulbedin

HN   Haqqani Network

IAF   Israeli Air Force

IDF   Israeli Defense Force

IDQB   Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigade

IED   Improvised explosive device

INS   Israeli Naval Ship

ISAF   International Security Assistance Force

ITIC   Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center

MB   Muslim Brotherhood

MIA   Missing in Action

MMS   Multimedia Messaging Service

NATO   North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NID   National Information Directorate

NGO   Non-governmental Organization

OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
PA	Palestine National Authority
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Teams
QIP	Quick Impact Project
QS	Quetta Shura
RC	Regional Command – North, South, East, West, Southwest, and Capital
SLA	South Lebanese Army
SMO	Social Movement Organization
UW	Unconventional Warfare
VBIED	Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive Device

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I.   INTRODUCTION

A.   BACKGROUND

The Powell Doctrine for waging war is historically based on the use of physical force to defeat the enemy. Destroying enemy combatants and capabilities faster and more severely than they can do to you has traditionally resulted in victory. Consequently, kinetic operations have always been at the forefront, whether it is laying siege to a castle, a cavalry charge, an infantry assault, or close air support. These types of operations have played major roles in combat due to their destructive nature, which results in a serious blow to the enemy's capabilities. Although these actions do have a psychological dimension—instilling fear and weakening resolve—their main purpose is to kill more of the enemy before they have an opportunity to inflict the same or greater damage on you. Subordinate to these types of kinetic operations have been psychological operations; diminishing the enemy's resolve, destroying their will to fight, and seeding their mind with feelings of futility; ultimately, destroying the enemy's desire to fight and their effectiveness as soldiers.[1]

Despite this predominance of kinetic operations, history has shown that technologically superior, militarily advanced, and numerically overwhelming forces are sometimes defeated by ragtag groups of a few hundred guerrillas with inferior combat capabilities. Hezbollah provides just one example of how victory can be achieved, at a fraction of the cost, against a regional power. Hezbollah did not rely on conventional military thinking when planning their operations that heavily influenced Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 2000, and again in 2006.[2] Instead, they combined the effectiveness of guerrilla warfare and psychological operations with one twist; the kinetic operations supported, and were synchronized with, the psychological objectives in order to achieve the greatest impact on their enemies and potential supporters. This

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[1] Ron Schleifer, "Psychological Operations: A New Variation on an Age Old Art: Hezbollah Versus Israel," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 29, no. 1 (Jan, 2006): 3.

[2] Schleifer, *Psychological Operations*, 8.

method has proven effective, not only by Hezbollah but also by Hamas, and its aim is to undermine the will of the enemy rather than have to fight and defeat them on the battlefield.

Put differently, placing psychological and kinetic operations in a symbiotic relationship, where at times the psychological objective may direct the kinetic operation and at other times the kinetic operation dictates the psychological response, will result in a more demoralized enemy force, higher enemy desertion rates, less population support for the enemy, increased support from the population towards friendly forces, and ultimately fewer American lives lost. Colonel William Donovan believed in and advocated just such a strategy over 70 years ago. According to Colonel Alfred H. Paddock, Jr.:

> Donovan's concept of psychological warfare was all-encompassing. The first stage would be 'intelligence penetration,' with the results, processed by [research and analysis], available for strategic planning and propaganda. Donovan called propaganda the 'arrow of initial penetration' and believed that it would be the first phase in operations against an enemy. The next phase would be special operations, in the form of sabotage and subversion, followed by commando-like raids, guerrilla actions, and behind-the-lines resistance movements. All of this represented the softening-up process prior to invasion by friendly armed forces. Donovan's visionary dream was to unify these functions…thereby forging 'a new instrument of war.'[3]

No longer do we live in a time when simply killing one's enemy spells victory. According to Sun-Tzu, "Preserving the [enemy's] army is best, destroying their army second-best. Preserving their battalions is best, destroying their battalions is second-best…Subjugating the enemy's army without fighting is the true pinnacle of excellence."[4] Seldom do we see opposing forces pitted against each other in a zero-sum game of power as was witnessed in the Second World War. Today, warfare is largely irregular, asymmetric, and based on a strategy of persistence and attrition. The enemy is

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[3] Alfred H. Paddock and National Defense University Press, *US Army Special Warfare: Its Origins: Psychological and Unconventional Warfare, 1941-1952* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1982), 6.

[4] Sun-tzu, *The Art of War = [Sun-Tzu Ping Fa]*, trans. Ralph D. Sawyer (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1994), 177.

entwined with the population, receives their support, and confronts us at a time, manner, and place of their choosing. Enemies use guerrilla tactics that allow them to engage a numerically superior force and then fade away into the population, while maintaining the advantage. According to the U.S. Department of the Army, we "measure outcomes in terms of effects on populations" rather than attrition of enemy military forces.[5] "Conflicts [are] much more likely to be fought among the people instead of around the people. This fundamentally alters how soldiers can apply force to achieve success in a conflict."[6] In this light, Jervis is correct to argue that to modify the actions of others, "judge how others are perceiving them, and predict how others will interpret their behavior, states have to understand the beliefs and images others hold, which may be different from those held by the state."[7] Since how we measure victory, within the rubric of conventional wars, has changed (according to Army doctrine),[8] as well as how kinetic operations are applied (fighting among non-combatants), it is time to re-evaluate our methods for conducting war. Rather than attempting to convince our enemies through the use of violent action—which targets their physical being rather than their mental decision making capacity—I posit that there is a more effective way to wage war: warfare waged psychologically.

## B.	PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE

The purpose of this thesis is to examine whether resequencing psychological and kinetic operations, at various times throughout a conflict, can increase effectiveness in war. Specifically, if all military actions were evaluated for their psychological implications, prior to execution, would it create stronger, more synchronized and believable messages, thus increasing efficiency and effectiveness in war? Since today's war is a "war of attrition where there are no actual winners and losers, psychological

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[5] Headquarters U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, *FM 3-0, Change 1 Operations* (February 2011), 1-4. http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/FM3-0/FM_3-0_C1_(WEB)1.pdf.

[6] Headquarters U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, *FM 3-0, Change 1 Operations*, 1–4.

[7] Robert Jervis, Richard Ned Lebow and Janice Gross Stein, *Psychology and Deterrence* (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 33.

[8] Headquarters U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, *FM 3-0, Change 1 Operations*, 1–4.

warfare plays a large role."[9] If we can successfully make war more effective and less costly, we will have an advantage over enemy combatants while simultaneously improving the likelihood of continued support from our domestic population. This advantage will more likely result in a complete win where the enemy has been pushed past his breaking point, control has been established over the political environment, and the social and political factors responsible for the insurgency have been effectively resolved. Our enemy's motivation to resist (mental) will be eliminated rather than just his means, or opportunity (physical).[10] Conducting warfare psychologically will allow us to achieve victory at a fraction of the economic cost while sacrificing fewer lives on the battlefield. Additionally, we will stand less chance of losing support from the American public (something our enemies prey upon as a weakness), and we will have a greater probability of creating allies, rather than enemies, in the process. This style of warfare is where Washington, and our Generals, have faltered most severely.[11]

C.   HYPOTHESIS AND SCOPE

It is my hypothesis that synchronized psychological and kinetic operations will result in warfare waged in a more effective and efficient manner than current modes of warfare. Within this thesis, I will test the hypothesis by evaluating several case studies.

The scope of this thesis will include a broad examination of several operations against three criteria: the use of psychological warfare by at least one side, the timing of psychological warfare (pre or post-conflict), and the resonance of narrative. In any

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[9] Guy Bechor, "Scare Tactics," *Ha'Aretz*, December 15, 1996. http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Archive/Articles/1996/SCARE+TACTICS+-+15-Dec-96.htm.

[10] Gordon H. McCormick, "The Complete Win," in *Gangs and Guerrillas: Ideas from Counterinsurgency and Counterterrorism*, eds. Michael Freeman and Hy Rothstein (Monterey, California: Naval Postgraduate School, 2011), 3–5.

[11] Michael Rubin, "Are We Playing For Keeps?," *Wall Street Journal* (February 27, 2006). http://www.meforum.org/898/are-we-playing-for-keeps.

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conflict there are at least three, distinct target audiences: friendly,[12] enemy, and neutral.[13] I will examine the enemy's means to resist, which is the dependent variable in my thesis.

What I seek to explore in this thesis is a way to meld conventionally accepted methods into an irregular option with greater effectiveness. To embrace this irregular option will require a paradigm shift that embraces innovation and creativity. To be sure, many will not respond kindly to an irregular option. As Dr. John Arquilla states:

> [The] current mindset of the American military, which seems to have a fixation for conventional operations and the offensive, is based on the military's response to industrialization some 150 years ago….That fixation is unfortunate, because American military culture has deep roots in irregular warfare…We must hope that our appreciation for the special effect of irregular operations will deepen as we move into an era in which the number of irregular conflicts is likely to increase.[14]

D.   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This thesis will examine the following questions:

1. Does influence over the behavior of a target audience lead to more effectively achievable political outcomes?

2. Is a strong narrative fundamental to waging war effectively and efficiently?

3. Do convincing actions support, and lend credibility to, the narrative?

4. Does preemptive and premeditated psychological warfare lead to quicker battlefield results?

The conjectured relationship among these questions is illustrated in Figure 1.

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[12] Although U.S. Army doctrine forbids the use of military information support operations (MISO - formerly psychological operations (PSYOP)) against citizens of the United States (United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, *FM 3-05.30 Psychological Operations*, April 2005), 1–12.) I will include them as they play an integral role in the support, and therefore the success, of war. I do not intend to examine the methods for engaging the American public, nor the challenges associated with doing so.

[13] Schleifer, *Psychological Operations*, 2.

[14] John Arquilla, "The Confederacy could have Won-Unconventionally: A Thought Experiment for Special Warriors," *Special Warfare* 14, no. 1 (2001): 13–14.
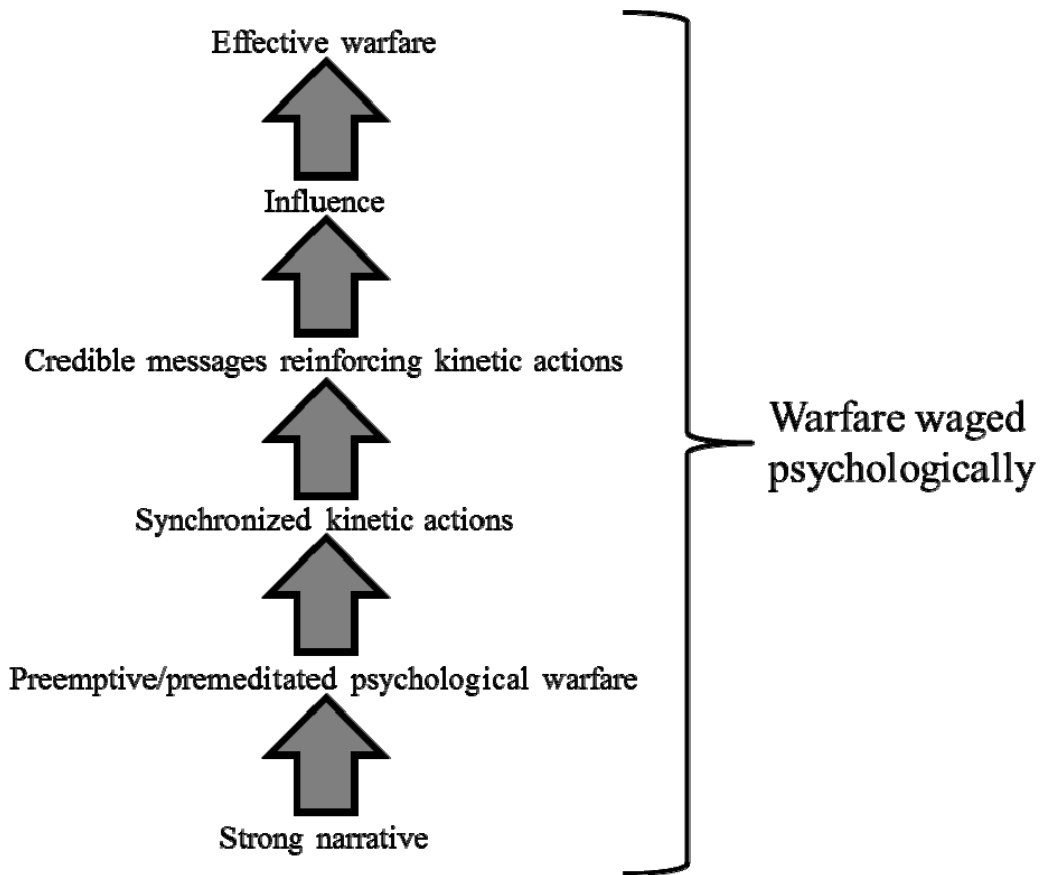
Figure 1.   The strategy to achieve a more effective form of warfare [15]

Within the literature in the field of warfare, there is a continuum for the application of psychological operations on the battlefield: no psychological operations, conducting psychological operations as shaping operations, and waging warfare psychologically. This continuum is portrayed by Figure 2 where at the low end there is no employment of psychological operations, the high end is where warfare is conducted psychologically, and somewhere in the middle are psychological operations conducted as

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[15] When waging warfare psychologically, the "preemptive/premeditated psychological warfare" step is critically important and "credible messages reinforcing kinetic actions" serve to support the initial messages. When psychological warfare supports kinetic actions, the "credible messages reinforcing kinetic actions" become the critically important piece, and consideration is given to the "preemptive/premeditated psychological warfare" step.

shaping operations[16] in support of kinetic operations (today's standard). Since it is largely recognized, by today's military, that psychological operations provide added value, I will exclude the low end of the spectrum (no psychological operations) from my analysis. This leaves two points on the continuum: the current and the proposed.

Low	Medium	High
No psychological operations	Kinetic then psychological	Warfare waged psychologically, Kinetics in Support
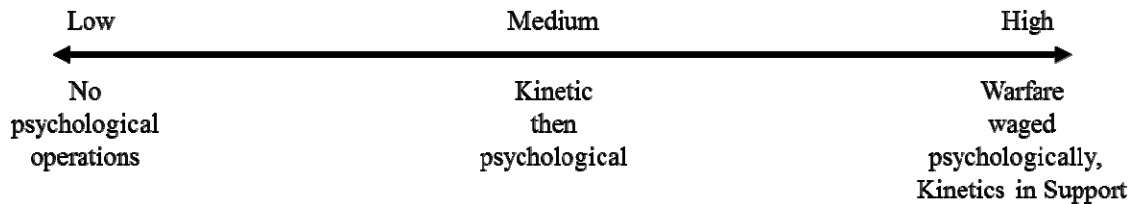
Figure 2.   A continuum for the employment of psychological actions in war

As previously stated, psychological operations forces are currently employed "primarily as shaping operations that create and preserve opportunities for decisive operations."[17] Within this context, their role is "to assist military commanders in articulating their objectives, to help identify the decision makers who can promote or interfere with these objectives, and to recommend appropriate courses of action to properly influence them."[18] This view, widely-held throughout the military, and promulgated by Army manuals on doctrine, subordinates psychological operations to kinetic operations. Unfortunately, believing it necessary to destroy one's enemy on the field of battle in order to be victorious is no longer always true.

Extensive academic work in the field of psychology has already been conducted surrounding the topics of influence and narratives. According to this research, a narrative is simply a story that assists our ability to recall events, motivates us to act, and tempers

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[16] United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, *FM 3-05.30 Psychological Operations*, 1–2.

[17] United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, *FM 3-05.30 Psychological Operations*, 1–2.

[18] United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, *FM 3-05.30 Psychological Operations*, 1–4.

our emotional responses to events.[19]   However, a narrative is much more. It is the justification—moral and ethical—for conducting war; it is meant to inform and influence both the domestic and the foreign target audiences as to why war is the only remaining option and what must be done in order for hostilities to end. It is critical that the narrative precede all other actions, and send a clear and enduring message.   The establishment of a strong, credible narrative is vital in that it can produce monumental effects on frames, with the ability to sway, manipulate, and persuade individuals, as well as organizations. Within social movement theory, framing is a way to "assign meaning to and interpret, relevant events and conditions in a ways that are intended to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support, and to demobilize antagonists."[20] As Snow et al. point out, "Frame alignment...is a necessary condition for movement participation."[21] Frame alignment, as defined by Snow et al., is "the linkage or conjunction of individual and SMO [social movement organization] interpretive frameworks."[22] Said another way, it is the level of connectedness and congruency between an individual's and a SMO's orientations, beliefs, values, goals, activities, and ideology. In order to build a strong narrative, Snow et al. theorize that there are two key sets of factors. The first factor "involves the content or substance of proffered framings and their degree of resonance with the current life situation and experience of the potential constituents."[23] This is the degree to which individuals can relate to various frames based on their experience and the frame content. The second factor is the "variation in the degree of frame resonance, such that the higher the degree of frame resonance, the greater the probability that the framing effort will be relatively

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[19] William D. Casebeer and James A. Russell, "Storytelling and Terrorism: Towards a Comprehensive 'Counter-Narrative Strategy'," *Strategic Insights* IV, no. 3 (March, 2005), accessed August 22, 2011. http://www.nps.edu/Academics/centers/ccc/publications/OnlineJournal/2005/Mar/casebeerMar05.html.

[20] David A. Snow and Robert D. Benford, "Ideology, Frame Resonance, and Participant Mobilization," in *From Structure to Action: Comparing Social Movement Research Across Cultures*, eds. Bert Klandermans, Hanspeter Kriesi and Sidney G. Tarrow (Greenwich, Connecticut: JAI Press, 1988), 198.

[21] David A. Snow et al., "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation," *American Sociological Review* 51, no. 4 (August, 1986): 467.

[22] Snow et al., *Frame Alignment Processes,* 467.

[23] Snow et al., *Frame Alignment Processes,* 477.

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successful."[24]   Simply put, the more an individual can relate to a frame, the more likely they are to adopt it and claim it as their own.

Credibility is an essential prerequisite to frame resonance and therefore frame alignment, which results in influence.   Without credibility, the argument is defeated before it is even presented.   Untrustworthy messengers or sources "undermine the potential frame resonance of a message by leading those audiences to question the source of information and argument.   Those with sufficient reputations, in contrast, will elicit trust and enhance prospects for successful message dissemination."[25]

Credibility can also be increased when a narrative is reinforced by and integrated with kinetic operations, and other actions seen to be inconsistent with the story. However, the utility of psychological warfare has been overshadowed by the predominance of kinetic warfare.[26]   Several authors theorize that we have been approaching the study of the art of war from the wrong perspective, i.e. by destroying the enemy's physical body (as is done in kinetic operations) we are able to defeat them. Unfortunately, this method often does little to change the will of the enemy, which is the real objective in war.[27]   In fact, kinetic operations may galvanize the support and will of the enemy.   As Hess and Martin note, "Repression sometimes can lead to greater movement mobilization: repressive events that are perceived as unjust have the potential to generate enormous public outrage against those seen as responsible."[28]   The proponents of this theory propose that by engaging the mind, rather than the body you are able to "conduct wars in nonlethal, noninjurious [sic], and nondestructive ways."[29]   This tactic has been used repeatedly by smaller, less advanced forces against more powerful

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[24] Snow et al., *Frame Alignment Processes,* 477.

[25] Quintan Wiktorowicz, "Framing Jihad: Intramovement Framing Contests and Al-Qaeda's Struggle for Sacred Authority," *International Review of Social History* 49, no. 00208590 (2004): 163-164.

[26] Richard Szafranski, "Neocortical Warfare? The Acme of Skill," in *In Athena's Camp: Preparing for Conflict in the Information Age*, eds. John Arquilla and David F. Ronfeldt (Santa Monica, California: Rand, 1997), 395.

[27] Szafranski, *Neocortical Warfare? The Acme of Skill*, 397.

[28] David Hess and Brian Martin, "Repression, Backfire, and the Theory of Transformative Events," *Mobilization: An International Journal* 11, no. 2 (June, 2006): 249.

[29] Paul E. Valley, "From PSYOP to MindWar: The Psychology of Victory" (Presidio of San Francisco, California), 3. http://www.xeper.org/maquino/nm/MindWar.pdf.

and technologically superior adversaries, and there is no reason the same principles cannot be applied in opposite, so long as the American public is able to quell their

unwarranted fear of the term psychological operations (or variations thereof). Supporters of this theory believe its employment will provide one of the "cheapest and best security investments we could make in the developing world."[30]

E.   METHODOLOGY AND CASE STUDIES

The focus of the thesis will be a micro level analysis of three case studies: Hezbollah during the war with Israel in 2006, Hamas during Operation Cast Lead at the end of 2008, and the neo-Taliban from 2005–2006. I will attempt to discern whether in warfare it is beneficial to consider the psychological implications of actions prior to their execution; therefore, necessitating the resequencing of psychological operations at various times in warfare in order to achieve a complete win.

My overall methodology is a controlled comparison of these three historical case studies with the intent of testing the applicability and validity of the arguments established in Section D. First, each case study will be separately evaluated against several independent variables: the narrative, the enemy's strategy, themes used in psychological operations, and the synchronization between psychological and kinetic operations. These independent variables have varying degrees of influence on the dependent variable of affecting the enemy's willingness to resist. Next, a cross-sectional comparison of the like-independent variables will be conducted to demonstrate which variables, and which case studies, achieved the greatest effect on the dependent variable. Lastly, it is my aim to assemble the strategies of employing psychological operations in war and demonstrate that warfare waged psychologically lends itself to a better return on investment, a key component of any successful strategy.

In Chapter II, I will discuss the case of Hezbollah and Israel during the 2006 Lebanon War, and how Hezbollah incorporated psychological warfare into their battle

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30 William F. Johnston, "Neglected Deterrent: Psychological Operations in 'Liberation Wars',"
Military Review (May, 1968): 90.

plans against the larger and technologically advanced Israeli Defense Forces (IDF). Israel not only failed to incorporate psychological warfare into their operations, but, and possibly more importantly, failed to counter Hezbollah, allowing Hezbollah to gain the initiative. Israel lost their domestic popular support base, and Hezbollah succeeded in driving them back across the border. With this case I will show the significance of waging warfare psychologically, the impact it can have against an adversary, and the power it possesses to sway the masses.

Chapter III will delve into Hamas; a similar case study as Hezbollah where a smaller, technologically inferior force benefited from the combination of psychological and kinetic operations in an attempt at defeating Israel and establishing an Islamic Palestinian State. This case introduces elements that demonstrate, despite a strong narrative and sound information campaign plan, the more technologically advanced party can still be defeated by a weaker adversary with a less comprehensive information campaign plan. With their strategy, Hamas gained support from the international community, specifically the Arab world, and was able to somewhat dictate Israel's actions during Operation Cast Lead. The Hamas case study should add weight and credibility to the ideas and tactics of waging warfare psychologically discussed in the Hezbollah case study.

Chapter IV is a case study of the neo-Taliban,[31] from 2005 to 2006, and how their tactics are influenced by the information gleaned from both previous cases. The neo-Taliban is a technologically inferior force, whose tactics and synchronization of psychological and kinetic operations have evolved greatly over the years. The neo-Taliban case study demonstrates the critical importance of a comprehensive narrative that resonates with the populace as the basis of an effective military strategy. Second to this is the synchronization of psychological and kinetic operations on the battlefield.

Throughout the case studies I will address the applicable counterarguments. The prevailing counterargument is a general, but unstated, attitude that we as Americans have

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[31] The term neo-Taliban is used to draw a distinction between the Taliban toppled by the U.S. in 2001 and the insurgency which emerged afterwards—the neo-Taliban. The neo-Taliban espouses a significantly different ideology and is comprised of myriad groups of actors.

always waged war by applying force on force and for the most part, it has proven successful. The United States possesses the world's preeminent military force and it is unmatched in its strength, so what reasons are there for adjust our current way of waging war? I will debate this argument, as well as others that claim "only smaller forces can successfully wage war psychologically," or "only forces that have the home turf advantage will be successful in waging war psychologically." Ultimately, these counterarguments will be established as falsehoods.

II. HEZBOLLAH'S STRATEGY OF WARFARE WAGED PSYCHOLOGICALLY

The first section of this chapter provides a brief overview of Hezbollah's history in an effort to better understand their leaders' mentality and the organization as a social movement. The next section delves into the strategy Israel chose to employ in order to defeat Hezbollah. Hezbollah's narrative, the themes they selected for employment, and the means they used to disseminate their messages to each target audience is described in another section. The subsequent section of this chapter examines the synchronization achieved by Hezbollah between their psychological and kinetic operations, followed by the effects of these actions on Israel's willingness to resist. Finally, the chapter is concluded with insights to Hezbollah's actions against Israel during the 2006 Lebanon War.

A. BACKGROUND

On April 18, 1983, the U.S. Embassy in Beirut was attacked by a suicide bomber driving a pickup truck loaded with explosives. Sixty-one people were killed and an additional one hundred twenty were wounded. Six months later, on October 23rd, the U.S. Marine and French barracks were destroyed by another car bomb. Two hundred forty-one Marines and fifty-eight French soldiers were killed, along with another hundred individuals wounded. A week later, on November 4th, the Israeli Army Headquarters in Tyre was attacked. Twenty-nine soldiers were killed and tens more were wounded.[32] These attacks signaled the entrance of Hezbollah[33] onto the world stage as a terrorist organization.

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[32] "Timeline of Hezbollah Violence," Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America, accessed August 12, 2011, http://www.camera.org/index.asp?x_context=2&x_outlet=118&x_article=1148.; Kirit Radia, "Beirut U.S. Embassy Bombing 25 Years on," ABC News, accessed 1 August, 2011, http://abcnews.go.com/International/story?id=4682319&page=1.; Eyal Zisser, "Hizballah in Lebanon: At the Crossroads," *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 1, no. 3 (September, 1997), accessed August 6, 2011. http://meria.idc.ac.il/journal/1997/issue3/jv1n3a1.html.

Hezbollah started as a terrorist organization funded by Iran and has evolved into what can be classified today as the premier Islamic activist organization, albeit violent, in the world. It is headed by a seven-member shura council, maintains a highly active military wing, and relies heavily on eight units—social, Islamic health, education, information, syndicate, finance, external relations, and engagement and coordination— for the bulk of its extensive organizational work. Through the coordinated employment of their various elements, Hezbollah developed as a highly effective SMO with considerable sway within Lebanon and surrounding areas.

The "Party of God" pioneered the evolution of twenty-first-century warfare with an ambitious, two pronged approach: the synchronization of psychological and kinetic operations on the battlefield, and the application of information operations beyond the confines of the battlefield, to include a foray into politics, education, and social services in order to influence public perception and opinion. Within this strategy the weapons are virtual: video clips shown on television, articles written in papers, pictures displayed on the internet, live radio broadcasts, published books, hard-copy media press releases, and sermons. As stated by a senior member of Hezbollah's battle information department, "Members of the resistance have come to the conclusion that while a bullet can wound a soldier or two, a picture can wound all of Israeli society, which is the most significant aspect of the conflict."[34] Hezbollah understands the significance of their strategy and the advantage it provides against their opponents.

Hezbollah was founded in 1982, in Lebanon's breadbasket—the Bekaa valley— by the Iranian government[35]. Formed during the first Lebanon war, after Israel invaded Lebanon in an attempt to eliminate Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) safe havens, Hezbollah was primarily considered a militant resistance organization whose stated

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[33] There are several spellings of Hezbollah used in the western world; they include Hizballah, Hizbullah, Hezballah and Hizb'allah. I have chosen to use this spelling (Hezbollah) because during my research I have found it to be the most common. Alternative spellings are retained when utilized by other sources.

[34] Reuven Erlich and Yoram Kahati, *Hezbollah as a Case Study of the Battle for Hearts and Minds* (Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Israel Intelligence Heritage & Commemoration Center (IICC), June, 2007). http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/pdf/hezbollah_e_0607.pdf.

[35] "Timeline of Hezbollah Violence," Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America.

objectives, as outlined by their 1985 "open letter," were: Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon and subsequent "obliteration from existence," the liberation of Jerusalem, the withdrawal of the United States, France, and their allies from Lebanon, and the opportunity for the Lebanese people to determine their fate by selecting a system of government (although they "urged" choosing the Islamic system).[36] Since its formation, Hezbollah garnered a significant base of support from the Shi'a community in southern Lebanon.

Subsidized by Iranian money, Hezbollah's "militant resistance" materialized in the form of countless terrorist activities throughout the 1980s and into the early 1990s. In their "open letter," Hezbollah claimed responsibility for the April 1983 attack on the U.S. Embassy in Lebanon, as well as the October 1983 attack on the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut. Over the years, their tactics have included car bombs, kidnappings, murders, and the hijacking of civilian airliners. In October 1997, fourteen years after their formation, the United States recognized and consequently listed Hezbollah as a terrorist organization.

In 1989, Lebanon ratified the Taif Agreement which called for the disbanding of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias, and "provided the basic mechanism for ending the civil war."[37] Despite this agreement, Hezbollah survived and began to transform itself into a nationalist organization with growing interest in politics, communication, education, and social welfare. With significant support from Iran, Hezbollah began building a network of schools, mosques, food banks, job centers, clinics, hospitals, youth

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[36] Hizballah, Nass al-Risalah al-Maftuhah Allati Wajjahaha Hizballah ila al-Mustad'afin fi Lubnan wa al-'Alam, February 16, 1985. http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf&AD=ADA351867.

[37] Hassan Krayem, "The Lebanese Civil War and the Taif Agreement," American University of Beirut, accessed August 12, 2011, http://ddc.aub.edu.lb/projects/pspa/conflict-resolution.html.

programs, private businesses, and local security organizations.[38] Their welfare centers cater to tens of thousands of families and their information network is unrivaled by any other terrorist organization.[39]

In 1992, Hezbollah participated in the Lebanese elections and won eight seats in Parliament. Although this was only a small fraction of the Parliament's 128 seats, it was viewed as a glowing victory for Hezbollah. More recently, Hezbollah participated in the 2009 national elections where they won ten seats in Parliament and two cabinet posts in the Ministries of Agriculture and Administrative reform.[40] Since its emergence onto the world stage, Hezbollah has undoubtedly become the world's preeminent terrorist organization, adroit at waging warfare psychologically in an effort to vanquish the "evil" Israelis from Lebanese soil—something they achieved in 2000 and again in 2006.

Under the astute leadership of Secretary-General, Hassan Nasrallah, the Hezbollah of today wears a different face than the Hezbollah of the 1980s and 1990s. According to Hilary Anderson,

> They took Terry Waite hostage, they are funded by Iran, they are Islamic extremists to the letter, or so the image goes…they surely should have been dressed in black, and had long, disapproving beards. But they weren't. They were young, smiling men in neat, camouflage uniforms. Some of them were even wearing spectacles. Some of them spoke English. No-one mentioned fighting for God or a religion. They said they simply wanted to drive Israelis from their land.[41]

Israel's strategy for defeating Hezbollah through the use of advanced technology and sheer firepower has been stymied. Time and again IDF forces have attacked and pushed into Lebanon, and time and again they are thwarted. Not even the advanced

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[38] Casey L. Addis and Christopher M. Blanchard, *Hezbollah: Background and Issues for Congress* (Congressional Research Service, January 3, 2011). http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/R41446.pdf.; Michael Rubin, "Are We Playing For Keeps?," *Wall Street Journal* (February 27, 2006). http://www.meforum.org/898/are-we-playing-for-keeps.

[39] John F. Burns, "Remade Militant Group Learns Press Kits and Web Sites have their Uses," *New York Times*, February 12, 2000.

[40] Addis and Blanchard, *Hezbollah: Background and Issues for Congress*, 9.

[41] Hilary Anderson, "Eyewitness: Meeting Hezbollah Fighters," *BBC News*, accessed August 10, 2011, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/733678.stm.

technologies of their tanks, aircraft, or helicopters have proven effective at destroying Hezbollah. This case study examines Hezbollah's tactics, techniques, and procedures during the 2006 Lebanon War,[42] also known as the 33-Day War, from 12 July, 2006 to 14 August, 2006, in an attempt to discern the utility of waging warfare psychologically—something Hezbollah has achieved great success with.

B.   ISRAEL'S STRATEGY OF KINETIC PREEMPTION

In an effort to better understand Hezbollah's actions and responses, it is critical to first understand Israel's strategy. With a more robust and technologically advanced military, Israel opted for a strategy of deterrence and preemptive attack, an approach they have utilized in other conflicts as well. This section will analyze the Israeli strategy and its effectiveness at successfully combatting Hezbollah.

Over the years, Israeli strategies resulted in little success for dealing with Hezbollah. During the 2006 war with Lebanon, Israel initially relied on a strategy of deterrence[43] and when that failed they employed an offensive, preemptive strategy, aimed at achieving their goals as quickly as possible.[44] This aggressive strategy was only possible due to their robust military might with its heavy reliance on advanced technology, superior firepower, and speed of maneuver. Unfortunately, Hezbollah's asymmetrical style of warfare rendered Israel's strategies ineffective.

Adding to Israel's failure was the fact that their political and military leaders were overconfident of their capabilities and underestimated Hezbollah's determination. As Janice Gross Stein notes,

> Underestimation by a defender may seriously impair its capacity to respond should an adversary choose to challenge deterrence. If leaders

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[42] U.N. Security Council resolution 1701 declared a ceasefire to the war on August 14, 2006. However, the official end date was when the Israeli government lifted the air and naval blockades of Lebanon on September 8, 2006.

[43] Dov Waxman, "Between Victory and Defeat: Israel After the War with Hizballah," *The Washington Quarterly* 30, no. 1 (Winter, 2006-07): 30.

[44] Clive Jones, "Israeli Counter-Insurgency Strategy and the War in South Lebanon 1985-97," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 8, no. 3 (December, 1997): 84–85. http://www.tandfonline.com.libproxy.nps.edu/doi/pdf/10.1080/09592319708423186.

> underestimate the capabilities…of a challenger, if they are overconfident in the effectiveness of deterrence, they may well be surprised, caught unawares, and unprepared. They may fail to reinforce deterrence before a challenger is fully committed to military action, thus forfeiting the opportunity to avoid war.[45]

Israel again fell into this exact trap. These strategic miscalculations led to Israel's failure to meet their objectives in the war with Lebanon, not once, but multiple times, and by default Hezbollah won.

Hezbollah's attack on the Israeli Naval Ship (INS) *Hanit*, a Sa'ar 5-class corvette ship, within the first 72 hours of the war is a prime example of Israel's overconfidence in its superiority. As the ship was patrolling Lebanese waters off the coast of Beirut, it was struck by an Iranian C-802 radar-guided missile. The missile exploded over INS Hanit's flight deck, killing four sailors and causing massive damage to the vessel. Israel's investigation following the incident revealed that a junior officer had shut down the ship's radar and Barak missile defense system without the knowledge or approval of the commander. However, the larger and more significant issues are that the ship's commander did not believe the ship was in any danger, and the Israeli Naval Intelligence was unaware that Hezbollah possessed such anti-ship missiles; therefore, the danger was "unrealistic and imaginary."[46] This is a clear instance of Israel's overconfidence in their military superiority and failure to correctly judge the capabilities of their challenger.

As a country surrounded by enemies, Israel has generally relied on a military strategy of deterrence, both directly in its negotiations with countries, and indirectly through dealings with intermediaries. However, many influential right-wing members of Israel's government believed their strategy of deterrence throughout the region lacked credibility and therefore their deterrent capability was questionable.[47] There was also a strong belief that Israel's credibility had to be restored in order to increase their

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[45] Janice Gross Stein, "Calculation, Miscalculation, and Conventional Deterrence II: The View from Jerusalem," in *Psychology and Deterrence*, eds. Robert Jervis, Richard Ned Lebow and Janice Gross Stein (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985): 62.

[46] Hanan Greenberg, "Officers Reprimanded Over Hanit Vessel Incident," *Y Net News,* January 1, 2007.

[47] Waxman, *Between Victory and Defeat*, 29.

deterrence ability in the region and with Hezbollah. Upon Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000, the Israeli government issued stern warnings that should there be any violations of the UN-sanctioned border agreement, retaliation would be swift and harsh.[48] Israel believed these threats were credible due to their "power to hurt"[49] Lebanon, and subsequently Hezbollah. However, the threats failed to have the desired deterrent effect because Israel continually failed to enforce their threats. Time and again Hezbollah conducted cross-border attacks and Israel did nothing. Thus, Israel's deterrence policy had no teeth, and Israel had no bite.

Advocates of Israel's deterrence policy made assumptions that ultimately proved false. They believed that Iran and Syria had the power to control Hezbollah and would do so if confronted by enough pressure,[50] and that the Lebanese government would reign in Hezbollah if enough weight was exerted on Lebanon itself.[51] Additionally, using Iran to pressure Lebanon in order to control Hezbollah was problematic because Israel had no direct line of communication with Iran and nothing to use as leverage.[52] Deterrence failed from the outset, so Israel sought to use Syria to control Hezbollah. This too failed. Israel's leadership had no intentions of using military force to coerce Syria and instead called for a renewal of peace negotiations.[53] Upon realizing that pressuring Iran and Syria to deter Hezbollah was useless, Israel opted for a strategy of coercion against Lebanon.

Israel tried to compel the Lebanese government to exert control over the rouge militia fighters operating from within Lebanon's borders. Israel blamed Lebanon for allowing Hezbollah to launch its July 2006 attack, which resulted in the capture of two

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[48] Shmuel Bar, "Deterring Nonstate Terrorist Groups: The Case of Hizballah," *Comparative Strategy* 26, no. 5 (December, 2007): 469. http://meria.idc.ac.il/journal/1997/issue3/jv1n3a3.html;.

[49] Thomas C. Schelling and Harvard University Center for International Affairs, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), 1–34.

[50] Bar, *Deterring Nonstate Terrorist Groups*, 480–481.

[51] Waxman, *Between Victory and Defeat*, 29.

[52] Bar, *Deterring Nonstate Terrorist Groups*, 480–481.

[53] Efraim Inbar, "How Israel Bungled the Second Lebanon War," *Middle East Quarterly* XIV, no. 3 (Summer, 2007): 57-65, accessed September 10, 2011. http://www.meforum.org/1686/how-israel-bungled-the-second-lebanon-war.

IDF soldiers and the killing or wounding of five more—from Lebanese "sovereign" soil. Ehud Olmert, Israel's Prime Minister, sought to deter Lebanon when he threatened, "the Lebanese government will be responsible for the consequences [of the attack]."[54] Nasrallah's claim after the war that he "did not see any risk, even one chance in a hundred, that the abduction operation would lead to a war on this scale"[55] makes it clear that Olmert's threats were too late and Israel's earlier tactics of deterrence were unclear and lacked credibility.

Israel's leadership believed by attacking Lebanese infrastructure and civilian targets, the Shi'a population of Lebanon would blame Hezbollah and rally in opposition, thus pressuring the Lebanese government to stop Hezbollah's activities.[56] However, this tactic backfired and instead of blaming Hezbollah, the Shi'a community blamed Israel and actually banded together in support of Hezbollah as their protectors, thus nationalizing Hezbollah and adding support to the movement.[57] Consequently, a cruel paradox was discovered by Israel: "The more force is used to retaliate, the more fuel is added to the terrorists' cause."[58]

Israel is militarily superior to Hezbollah in many ways: technologically, manpower, equipment, and training. This advantage allowed Israel to rely heavily on its military, and it did so on two distinct occasions, launching major offensives against Hezbollah: Grapes of Wrath and Accountability.[59] Both operations sought to undermine Hezbollah's military capability by destroying their supply lines, supply depots, training camps, and ultimately, their military units.[60] Strikes against Beirut, bombardments against Tripoli, attacks on Hezbollah's administrative buildings, and the employment of

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[54] Helena Cobban, "The 33-Day War: Hizbullah's Victory, Israel's Choice," *Boston Review* (November/December, 2006), accessed August 15, 2011. http://bostonreview.net/BR31.6/cobban.php.

[55] Cobban, *The 33-Day War*, accessed August 15, 2011.

[56] Waxman, *Between Victory and Defeat*, 32.

[57] Waxman, *Between Victory and Defeat*, 32.

[58] David Hoffman, "Beyond Public Diplomacy," *Foreign Affairs* 81, no. 2 (Mar, 2002): 83.

[59] Bar, *Deterring Nonstate Terrorist Groups*, 479.

[60] Laura Zittrain Eisenberg, "Israel's Lebanon Policy," *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 1, no. 3 (September, 1997), accessed August 5, 2011. http://meria.idc.ac.il/journal/1997/issue3/jv1n3a3.html.

the newly created, special forces unit "Egoz" did little to halt the determination of Hezbollah. Even the direct targeting and killing of Hezbollah's leader, 'Abbas Musawi, in 1992, failed to achieve the decapitating effect on the organization that Israel assumed would occur as a result of his death.[61]

Israel's strategies failed to achieve any of their essential objectives, incurred a cost of over $1 million per day, and allowed Hezbollah to emerge as the victor.[62] Instead of deterring Hezbollah from launching attacks against settlements in Northern Israel, Israeli actions began a cycle of violence where Hezbollah's rocket attacks would result in Israeli retaliation, causing civilian casualties. Hezbollah used this situation to garner additional public support, followed by more rocket attacks against Israel. Israel failed to protect its citizens from the Katyusha rockets, failed to prevent guerrilla attacks, and failed to sway the opinions of the Lebanese population against Hezbollah. Olmert "failed to bend the Lebanese government to his will [and] failed to secure the unconditional release of the two soldiers[63] whose capture by Hizbullah had triggered the war."[64]

C.   THEMES STRESSED BY HEZBOLLAH IN WARFARE WAGED PSYCHOLOGICALLY

A narrative is a compelling story that others can identify with which explains what an organization is, its beginning, vision for the future, and rational or justification for the organization's actions. It is critical to have a succinct yet thorough narrative in order to provide direction for the organization, garner additional support, and maintain the credibility of the organization's actions. Without a narrative the organization's members may lack the cohesion, drive, and vision required to successfully navigate the uncharted waters of progress. On the other hand, a strong, credible narrative can produce

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[61] Zisser, *Hizballah in Lebanon*, August 6, 2011.

[62] Al J. Venter, "South Lebanese Army Combats Internal Disintegration," *Jane's International Defense Review* 029, no. 008 (August 1, 1996): 55, accessed August 10, 2011.

[63] Gilad Shalit was returned to Israel and his family on October 18, 2011. He was freed during the first part, of a two-stage, prisoner exchange between Hamas and Israel.

[64] Cobban, *The 33-Day War,* accessed August 15, 2011.

monumental effects on framing key issues and events, with the ability to sway, manipulate, and persuade individuals, as well as organizations.

A frame is simply a way of seeing and understanding an event. It is also a way to "assign meaning to and interpret, relevant events and conditions in a ways that are intended to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support, and to demobilize antagonists."[65]   As Snow et al. point out, "Frame alignment...is a necessary condition for movement participation."[66] Frame alignment is defined as "the linkage or conjunction of individual and SMO interpretive frameworks."[67] Said another way, it is the level of connectedness and congruency between an individual's and a SMO's orientations, beliefs, values, goals, activities, and ideology.

1.   Narrative

Hezbollah's collective action framing process begins with the story of a downtrodden group of individuals, repressed by the West and forced to use violent tactics—even though they claim their preference is open dialogue—for the creation of an Islamic state. The downtrodden individuals assert they have been repressed by Israel, America, and France and will continue fighting until Israel is eradicated from the face of the earth.

There are several core framing elements to the collective action frame proffered by Hezbollah, the first being diagnostic framing. As their "open letter" claims, the victims are "all the world's downtrodden peoples and all those who fight our enemies and who are eager not to harm us, be they individuals, parties or organizations."[68]   The flexibility of Hezbollah's wording produces a collective action frame that is as inclusive as possible, despite the fact that the scope is predominantly relevant to the Shi'a

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[65] David A. Snow and Robert D. Benford, "Ideology, Frame Resonance, and Participant Mobilization," in *From Structure to Action: Comparing Social Movement Research Across Cultures*, eds. Bert Klandermans, Hanspeter Kriesi and Sidney G. Tarrow (Greenwich, Conn.: JAI Press, 1988), 198.

[66] Snow et al., *Frame Alignment Processes,* 467.

[67] Snow et al., *Frame Alignment Processes,* 467.

[68] Hizballah, *Nass Al-Risalah Al-Maftuhah Allati Wajjahaha Hizballah Ila Al-Mustad'Afin Fi Lubnan Wa Al-'Alam*, 6.

community.   Another feature of Hezbollah's collective action frame is problem identification and direction. In their "open letter," repression is identified as the problem and the remedy openly advocated in their attributional frame is armed confrontation against the West, specifically Israel, America, and France, as a remedy.[69]

Although Hezbollah's framing calls for violent confrontation against the West, their manifesto advocates the use of persuasion and dialogue for the establishment of their Islamic state in Lebanon. It says, "Therefore, we urge adoption of the Islamic system on the basis of free and direct selection by the people, not the basis of forceful imposition, as some people imagine."[70]   Hassan Nasrallah confirmed this non-violent approach to establishing an Islamic state when he said:

> The solution, in our opinion, is the establishment of an Islamic state in Lebanon and beyond, but this does not mean we must be hasty and impose such a solution by force on our country and countrymen…We prefer to wait for the day that we succeed in convincing our countrymen by means of dialogue and in an open atmosphere that the only alternative is the founding of an Islamic state.[71]

By using frame amplification in their manifesto and speech, Hezbollah is able to produce a greater resonance with a broader support base for their collective action frame. The non-violent democratic approach taps into people's core beliefs and values that violence and tyranny are evil, and it seeks to amplify these beliefs.

Hezbollah claims their story "must end with [Israel's] obliteration from existence," and their manifesto states there will be no recognition of "any cease-fire agreement, any truce or any separate or non-separate peace treaty with [Israel]."[72] However, since 2001 Hezbollah ceased to embrace this view and instead shifted its rhetoric to promoting Arab solidarity and Lebanese nationalism—goals which have

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[69] Hizballah, *Nass Al-Risalah Al-Maftuhah Allati Wajjahaha Hizballah Ila Al-Mustad'Afin Fi Lubnan Wa Al-'Alam*, 5.

[70] Hizballah, *Nass Al-Risalah Al-Maftuhah Allati Wajjahaha Hizballah Ila Al-Mustad'Afin Fi Lubnan Wa Al-'Alam*, 8.

[71] Zisser, *Hizballah in Lebanon*, August 6, 2011.

[72] Hizballah, *Nass Al-Risalah Al-Maftuhah Allati Wajjahaha Hizballah Ila Al-Mustad'Afin Fi Lubnan Wa Al-'Alam*, 12.

yielded more support. By extending their original frame from a select group of downtrodden individuals to a broader constituency, Hezbollah seeks to encompass important, yet external issues and concerns within their collative action frame as a SMO. They have effectively expanded their circle of inclusion to all Lebanese while simultaneously adopting additional grievances and concerns. This has allowed Hezbollah to greatly expand their organizations membership and to provide more support to the issues that most affect their new members. The cultural similarity between all Arabs presents itself as an opportunity for Hezbollah to extend their SMO's motivational frame and results in a political opportunity to unite all Lebanese under the rubric of nationalism.

2. Themes

Unlike Israel, Hezbollah elected to utilize a psychological approach to war. They have a "veritable system of psychological warfare, headed by a psychological warfare unit that specializes in the promotion of the doctrine and the image of the militia. This unit specializes in targeting civilian non-combatants, regardless of whether they are Israelis or Arab-Muslims."[73] Not only does Hezbollah's psychological warfare unit specialize in targeting civilian non-combatants, they have effectively targeted the IDF and South Lebanese Army (SLA) as well.

As noted by Schleifer, psychological warfare consists of "delivering messages by nonviolent methods, to target audiences, domestic and neutral as well as among the enemy, with the aim of furthering the war effort."[74] All three of these target audiences have been influenced, with varying degrees of success, by Hezbollah. Their messages, all reinforcing the organization's espoused goals, can be categorized into two distinct themes: garnering support for their cause, and Israel's inevitable defeat.

Hezbollah's support theme, demonstrated incredible effectiveness for swaying the opinions of the various target audiences and for solidifying support. Unity was one of the main messages espoused under this theme. The solidarity of Lebanon was continually

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[73] Pierre Cyril Pahlavi, "The 33-Day War: An Example of Psychological Warfare in the Information Age," *The Canadian Army Journal* 10.2 (2007): 17.

[74] Ron Schleifer, *Psychological Operations*, 2.

reinforced by messages claiming Hezbollah acted on behalf of all Lebanese. The SMO emphasized the legitimacy of their actions on behalf of a united Lebanon, and the proclamation that their path was justified by righteousness. Therefore, Lebanon would prevail in defeating the invading infidels. The messages crafted by Hezbollah encompassed all Lebanese, to include Christians, Sunnis, and Shi'a, so much so that in one instance a Christian woman gave Hezbollah a $15,000 check and declared that the money should be used for purchasing Katyusha rockets.[75]

Hezbollah is adept at using non-lethal actions to sway the support of vast swaths of the Lebanese population, especially when reinforced by their extensive social service network. Within the first two months after the Israeli's 1996 Grapes of Wrath campaign created significant damage in Lebanon, Hezbollah responded by quickly repairing over 5,000 homes and paying compensation to 2,300 farmers.[76] They were responsible for rebuilding roads, schools, and Lebanese infrastructure, as well as meeting the social service requirements of individuals by providing services such as electricity, sewer, gas stations, and hospitals. Hezbollah's benevolence did not stop there. Over a four year period, their financial aid committee spent over $90 million to assist the families and dependents of its fighters killed or wounded in combat actions.[77] A Hezbollah spokesman summed up their actions by stating, "Hezbollah is not only missiles and fighting; if it were, the people would have turned away from us long ago."[78]

Not only has Hezbollah skillfully used their support for the cause theme to win over the Lebanese people, but they have also proven this theme's effectiveness against the Israelis and the SLA. Hezbollah routinely targets poorly paid and inadequately trained SLA soldiers with messages seeking their defection, and entices them with monetary compensation and a pardon. The families of these soldiers are also targeted by

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[75] Frederic M. Wehrey, "A Clash of Wills: Hizballah's Psychological Campaign Against Israel in South Lebanon," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 13, no. 3 (2002): 61. http://www.tandfonline.com.libproxy.nps.edu/doi/pdf/10.1080/09592310208559197.

[76] Graham Usher, "Hizballah, Syria, and the Lebanese Elections," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 26, no. 2 (Winter, 1997): 64.

[77] A. N. Hamzeh, "Lebanon's Hizbullah: From Islamic Revolution to Parliamentary Accommodation," *Third World Quarterly* 14, no. 2 (June, 1993): 327.

[78] Pahlavi, *The 33-Day War*, 18.

Hezbollah in order to place additional pressures on the soldiers, and persuade them to defect.

The second theme used by Hezbollah is one of Israel's inevitable demise. This theme aims to impress on Israelis the enormous price they will pay for continuing the fight, and the fact that the cost will far outweigh any reward they might ever hope to gain. Under this rubric, messages are crafted so as to remind Israelis that the war will be protracted and Hezbollah fighters possess unrelenting resolve to see it through to victory. Hezbollah is adept at pointing out that Israel's goals and objectives are muddled while Lebanon simply wants Israel's departure from their country. This serves to drive a wedge between segments of the Israeli population. Probably the most effective messages against Israel were those fashioned around the idea of guilt.

Hezbollah quickly discovered and exploited the Israeli's apprehension toward graphic television images. Videos, produced by Hezbollah's psychological operations unit and al-Manar showing Hezbollah fighters ambushing Israeli convoys or assaulting Israeli outposts and raising the Hezbollah flag were often broadcast by Israeli television stations. Graphic images of mangled bodies, wounded children, and the destruction of war were also broadcast with chilling effects. Hezbollah's psychological campaign resulted in the formation of several Israeli anti-war social movements—Four Mothers being the most prominent—that demanded their government's unilateral withdrawal of all forces from Lebanon. Additionally, there was a major downturn in Israeli public opinion and support for the war, which is attributable to Hezbollah's intense psychological warfare campaign.

Each of the themes constructed by Hezbollah contained unique, mutually supporting arguments and were disseminated through a variety of medium to produce a constant bombardment against the target audience. In a war where "public opinion, perception, and persuasion were the real determinants of victory,"[79] Hezbollah effectively used these two psychological warfare themes to successfully target, influence, and ultimately modify the behaviors of all three target audiences.

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[79] "Combat Media Services," *Jane's Foreign Report* (December 18, 1997), accessed August 10, 2011.

3. Broadcast, Print, and Internet Channels

Hezbollah began its foray into the information operations realm with the establishment of a radio station (Sawt al-Islam) and a weekly paper (al-Ahed).[80] With these two simple tools, Hezbollah began influencing its members and surrounding audiences. Desire to spread their ideology and garner support of a larger constituency led them to expand into additional media formats.

Due to Iranian backing, and Hezbollah's heavy reliance on the internet to spread their ideology, it only made sense for Hezbollah to cultivate this capability. Their internet exposure began in 1997 with two websites; one for propagating their beliefs and one to garner support. Today, Hezbollah's internet network encompasses anywhere from fifteen to twenty different websites, whose content and quality, according to a study by the Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center (ITIC), "far exceeds those of local terrorist organizations."[81]

Hezbollah's flagship media enterprise, al-Manar, began as a land-based television station in the 1990s and has since expanded into the primary tool for influence. Ten years later, in May 2000, al-Manar launched a satellite television channel aimed at influencing public opinion concerning Israel. According to Ali Dahir, the station's first general manager,

> Hezbollah has founded the station to express the views of the oppressed…and advocate a mass media that respects Islamic moral and Muslim traditions. The goal of our station is to show the facts, focus on our hostility and hatred for Israel and its racist government system, whose downfall we see as one of our fundamental principles.[82]

Due to the ubiquity of a satellite signal, al-Manar's newest television station reaches areas previously inaccessible to the land-based station and provides Hezbollah with the means to transmit their messages to a greater number of people worldwide.

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[80] Schleifer, *Psychological Operations*, 13; Erlich and Kahati, *Hezbollah as a Case Study*, 60.

[81] Erlich and Kahati, *Hezbollah as a Case Study*, 54–56.

[82] Erlich and Kahati, *Hezbollah as a Case Study*, 43–44.

Over the past 30 years, and with massive monetary support from Iran, Hezbollah built an extensive, sophisticated, and comprehensive collection of communication tools; assets that would rival those of most third world countries. Today, Hezbollah boasts six journals (al-Ahed "the covenant," al-Bilad, al-Wahda, El-Ismailya, al-Sabil, and al-Intiqad "the promise"), three radio stations (Sawt al-Islam "The Voice of Islam," Sawt al-mustadh'afin "The Voice of the Oppressed," and al-Nahar "The Light"), two television stations (al-Manar "the beacon" and al-Fajr "dawn"), several publishing companies (Dar al-Hadi, Markaz Bequiyyat Allah al-'Azam lil-Dirasat, Imam Khomeini Cultural Center, and one run by the al-Mahdi Scouts—Hezbollah's youth movement) and countless internet-based websites[83] (al-Muqawamah "The Resistance," Wa'ad "The Promise," and numerous sites promoting their media outlets and social organizations).[84]

D. SYNCHRONIZATION BETWEEN HEZBOLLAH'S PSYCHOLOGICAL AND KINETIC ACTIONS

According to Schleifer, "It was not conventional military thinking that determined what Hezbollah would attack and why…When deciding on and planning an operation the organization would calculate its psychological impact of the enemy."[85]

Hezbollah knew from the outset they lacked the military capability to combat Israeli forces in a conventional battle, and therefore was forced to rely on a strategy that provided them with an advantage. Hezbollah demonstrated this strategy by ensuring psychological and kinetic operations were completely synchronized and their organization did not depend too heavily on successful kinetic military engagements.[86] Instead, Hezbollah's combat media services, composed of guerrillas trained as cameramen, were integrated with every unit and existed as part of Hezbollah's order of

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[83] Hezbollah is continually changing the URL of their websites in an effort to prevent their shutdown or cyber-attack.

[84] Schleifer, *Psychological Operations*, 13; Wehrey, *A Clash of Wills*, 65; Erlich and Kahati, *Hezbollah as a Case Study*, 2–112.

[85] Schleifer, *Psychological Operations*, 8.

[86] Rodger Shanahan, "Hizballah Rising: The Political Battle for the Loyalty of the Shi'a of Lebanon," *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 9, no. 1 (March, 2005): 3. http://meria.idc.ac.il/journal/2005/issue1/jv9no1a1.html.

battle.[87] Their mission: to capture the operation on film for exploitation. Hezbollah's leadership appears to have a grasp on this symbiotic relationship, as evident by one officer's statement: "On the field we hit one Israeli soldier. But a tape of him crying for help affects thousands of Israelis. Initially our tapes were used to galvanize our local audience. Then we realized the impact of our amateur work on the morale of Israel."[88] Now, video clips and printed bulletins are ready for distribution to the press only thirty-five minutes after the completion of a mission, often beating Israel's acknowledgment that anything even occurred.[89]

Hezbollah uses ubiquitous information networks to its advantage. Their spokesmen use personal organizers to check the facts of an ambush prior to discussing it with the press, videotapes recorded by their cameramen are provided to news agencies to broadcast on the evening news (even in Israel), and suicide bombers are immortalized as their faces are disseminated to target audiences everywhere via the internet. After Israel's defeat in May 2000, it was noted that "Seventy-five percent of Hezbollah's war was the videotapes," something that had a dramatic effect on influencing public perception.[90]

1.   Military Operations

We are not a regular army and we will not fight like a regular army.

- Hassan Nasrallah[91]

Since its inception in 1982, and specifically after its publication of the "open letter," Hezbollah's guerrilla forces have been embroiled in the ongoing Israeli-Lebanese conflict in an attempt at "rescuing Lebanon from subservice, expelling the Zionist occupation, and adopting a system which the people establish of their free will and

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[87] *Combat Media Services*, August 10, 2011.

[88] Burns, *Remade Militant Group Learns*, A4.

[89] Yaakov Katz, "Intel. Flaw to Blame in INS Hanit Attack," *New York Times,* October 16, 2000.

[90] Katz, *Intel. Flaw to Blame*.

[91] Edward Cody and Molly Moore, "The Best Guerrilla Force in the World," *The Washington Post*, August 14, 2006.

choice."[92] In the 1982 Lebanon war when Israel invaded Lebanon, Hezbollah's efforts contributed to the Israeli withdrawal three years later. As Israel was withdrawing the IDF from Lebanon, they established the "security buffer zone" in the south of Lebanon. The Lebanese people viewed this as an injustice and Hezbollah continued its resistance.

In 1993 Israel responded to Hezbollah's armed resistance, which had just killed five IDF soldiers within the buffer zone, with a massive attack against Lebanon in an attempt to disrupt their actions. The military campaign ended in a short-lived ceasefire which banned targeting civilians on either side. When an Israeli attack killed several civilians outside the security zone, Hezbollah retaliated with incessant rocket attacks,[93] several of which landed in northern Israel; although, Hezbollah denies responsibility and blames radical Syrian-backed Palestinians.[94] The rocket attacks sparked fierce retaliation by the Israelis in a sixteen day battle known as operation Grapes of Wrath. In May 2000, Israeli forces withdrew from southern Lebanon in a U.S. brokered agreement in which rockets would not be fired across the border into civilian areas.[95]

Although Israeli forces withdrew from Lebanon, sporadic fighting continued with cross-border attacks by both sides, and on July 12, 2006, Hezbollah fighters attacked an IDF patrol.[96] During that attack two Israeli soldiers were captured in an effort to force Israel's hand and negotiate a prisoner exchange.[97] Israel's response was an all-out war against Hezbollah with blockades and attacks into Lebanon, something Nasrallah had not expected.[98] The war lasted thirty-three days and ended with Israel's humiliating

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[92] Hizballah, *Nass Al-Risalah Al-Maftuhah Allati Wajjahaha Hizballah Ila Al-Mustad'Afin Fi Lubnan Wa Al-'Alam*, 8.

[93] Kevin Fedarko, "Operation Grapes of Wrath," *Time,* April 22, 1996, 67.

[94] Ed Blanche, "A Bizarre Yet Bloody Conflict Drags on in South Lebanon, Part II," *Jane's Intelligence Review* 009, no. 010 (October 1, 1997), accessed August 10, 2011.

[95] Blanche, *A Bizarre Yet Bloody Conflict,* August 10, 2011.

[96] Pahlavi, *The 33-Day War*, 12.

[97] Cobban, *The 33-Day War*, accessed August 15, 2011.

[98] Eyal Zisser, "Nasrallah's Defeat in the 2006 War: Assessing Hezbollah's Influence," *Middle East Quarterly* XVI, no. 1 (Winter, 2009), accessed August 2, 2011. http://www.meforum.org/2054/nasrallahs-defeat-in-the-2006-war.

withdrawal of its forces from Hezbollah-held Lebanon—without their captured soldiers. Hasan Nasrallah declared this a "divine victory" for Hezbollah.[99]

Since the end of the thirty-three day war, Hezbollah and Israel have continued to experience their "standard" border clashes. In July 2008, Israel freed five Lebanese prisoners in exchange for the remains of the two Israeli soldiers captured by Hezbollah in 2006. Although Hezbollah's military activities may have subsided, and their terrorist actions have waned, by no means does this signal Hezbollah's willingness to abandon military operations.

E. EFFECT ON ISRAEL'S WILLINGNESS TO RESIST AND THE LEBANESE MOTIVATION TO PERSIST

Hezbollah's ability to synchronize its lethal and non-lethal actions resulted in a multiplication of effects. Rather than just killing a few individuals on the battlefield via a roadside bomb, Hezbollah was able to effectively circulate and recirculate the same graphic image of IDF deaths to a majority of the populations in both Lebanon, as well as Israel. The effect was disastrous for Israel. "The broadcast of Hezbollah film footage on Israeli television was a major success. The film reached almost every Israeli household, many of which certainly raised questions about the need to stay tangled in the Lebanese mud."[100] Hezbollah meticulously described, with their still photographs and video footage, for its Israeli audience the price they would have to pay for going to war, in terms of human life, military equipment, and security.[101]

Hezbollah, reverting back to the terroristic tactics of their formative years, sometimes conducted snatch and grab operations with the specific aim of abducting Israeli soldiers for ransom. Currently, there are still seven Israeli soldiers declared as missing in action (MIA), with Ron Arad (the Air Force navigator captured in October

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[99] Bilal Y. Saab and Nicholas Blanford, "Seeing Red Along the Blue Line," *Foreign Policy* (July 29, 2011), accessed August 1, 2011.
http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/07/29/seeing_red_along_the_blue_line.

[100] Guy Bechor, "Scare Tactics," *Ha'Aretz*, December 15, 1996.
http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Archive/Articles/1996/SCARE+TACTICS+-+15-Dec-96.htm.

[101] Schleifer, *Psychological Operations*, 6.

1986) being the most recognizable.[102] One such kidnapping operation—Hezbollah's July 2006 attack and subsequent kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers—had dramatic and unintended consequences—the start of the thirty-three day war.

Hezbollah relied heavily on the use of carefully planned roadside bombings as a method of engaging convoys, but not for the sole purpose of creating casualties. They did so with the intent of instilling fear and creating uncertainty, thus compelling the IDF and SLA forces to limit their freedom of movement.[103] The Israelis responded by restricting soldiers to fortified outposts, increasing combat tour durations, and canceling all weekend leave and passes during the soldier's tour of duty for fear of losing soldiers on the hazardous roads.[104] Unexpectedly, this played into Hezbollah's hand by creating extensive periods of boredom filled with mundane and repetitive tasks which led to complacency in the IDF soldiers.[105] Adding to the soldiers' feelings of isolation, the Israeli military leadership banned all cell phone use (previously used by soldiers to call home to family and friends) due to paranoia that Hezbollah was able to intercept the calls and gather intelligence.[106] Hezbollah's view that a roadside bomb's effects could be amplified psychologically proved correct on multiple levels.

Hezbollah's extensive use of suicide bombers allowed the war to be framed as a Manichaean battle between good and evil, which permitted Hezbollah to easily amass a large pool of willing volunteers to become martyrs. With intense indoctrination, these would-be martyrs had a reduced fear of death, which provided them with the advantage in close-quarters combat.[107] Additionally, the establishment of the Martyr's Institute, which provided stipends and tuitions for the martyr's families, greatly increased individual's willingness to martyr themselves.[108] As noted by Nasrallah, "The fighter's

[102] Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Israel's MIAs," The State of Israel, accessed September 09, 2011, http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/MFAArchive/2000_2009/2004/1/Israeli+MIAs.htm.

[103] Wehrey, *A Clash of Wills*, 62.

[104] Blanche, *A Bizarre Yet Bloody Conflict*, August 10, 2011.

[105] David Eshel, "Counterguerrilla Warfare in South Lebanon," *Marine Corps Gazette,* July, 1997.

106 Blanche, A Bizarre Yet Bloody Conflict, August 10, 2011.

107 Wehrey, A Clash of Wills, 56.

108 Cody and Moore, The Best Guerrilla Force in the World.

strength and superiority does not stem from the type of weapon he carries, inasmuch as it stems from his will…and his advance towards death."[109]

Hezbollah's extensive reliance on videotapes served the organization well. In 1997, a security official of the SLA was killed by one of Hezbollah's roadside bombs. Israel immediately responded by falsely claiming the man was a civilian. Following Israel's declaration, Hezbollah released and broadcast video showing the man "getting up in a bedroom, coming out to the balcony to have his morning coffee, getting dressed, putting his combat webbing on, picking up his automatic rifle and coming out to meet his bodyguards" before getting killed by Hezbollah's roadside bomb.[110] With this single video, Hezbollah cast doubt on the Israeli government and garnered credibility for their own organization.

Not only was Hezbollah adept at synchronizing psychological and kinetic actions throughout its combat operations, but they continued to deliberately apply kinetic actions in support of psychological objectives. At the conclusion of the thirty-three day war, Hezbollah's social unit immediately set out to assist the hundreds of thousands of refugees, displaced from southern Lebanon, in returning to their homes—in utter disregard of IDF broadcasts warning non-combatants to refrain from returning to the south. Hezbollah ensured the refugees were provided with food, water, and supplies, and were welcomed back by victory banners and song.[111] As the refugees began to flow south, Hezbollah's construction unit immediately swung into action and began documenting losses, clearing the rubble, and rebuilding houses (whether owned by Christian or Muslim), schools, and infrastructure, something no other organization was able to duplicate. The American strategist Pat Long noted, "A proof of winning on the battlefield has always been possession of that battlefield when the shooting stops."[112]

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109 Amal Saad-Ghorayeb, Hizbuĺlah: Politics and Religion (London; Sterling, Virginia: Pluto Press, 2002), 128.

110 Combat Media Services, August 10, 2011.

111 Cobban, *The 33-Day War*, accessed August 15, 2011.

112 Cobban, *The 33-Day War*, accessed August 15, 2011.

F. CONCLUSION

Although Hezbollah may have started off as a simple terrorist organization, they have evolved into a highly effective Islamic activist organization, with nationalistic tendencies, aimed at removing Israel from Lebanese society. As part of their evolutionary process, they have refined and perfected an unorthodox, psychological approach to warfare which equalizes the battlefield when pitted against an opponent with advanced technology, a greater quantity of forces, and superior firepower. In the war against Israel, Hezbollah's asymmetric strategy proved to be more effective at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels when compared to Israel's strategy, which relied heavily on deterrence, and once it was clear that had failed, overwhelming superiority in technology and firepower.[113]

Hezbollah followed a simple formula in creating their strategy of warfare waged psychologically. They started off with a strong, uncomplicated, and easily understood narrative that could be internalized by others outside of the organization. The narrative explained Hezbollah's beliefs and their reasoning for being at war with Israel and the West. This straightforward and effective narrative made it possible to preemptively disseminate credible messages in an effort to convince and influence the three target audiences. Reinforcing of these messages were preplanned and synchronized kinetic actions followed up with additional psychological messages aimed at bolstering the kinetic actions. This cycle allowed Hezbollah to gain trust and support, and amass a large following. Once the population's confidence was obtained, Hezbollah was able to influence them, thus resulting in an effective unconventional warfare waged psychologically strategy.

As noted by Henry Kissinger, "The conventional army loses if it does not win. The guerrilla wins if he does not lose."[114] In an asymmetric conflict where the counter-

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[113] Jones, *Israeli Counter-Insurgency Strategy*, 85.

[114] Cited in Greg Mills and Terence McNamee, "Challenges and Choices," *Armed Forces Journal* (November 1, 2006). http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=AFNB&p_theme=aggregated5&p_action=doc&p_docid=115717576DF35 9F8&p_docnum=1&p_queryname=1.

state, or guerrilla organization, must not lose in order to win, the state must actively seek alternative methods besides a reliance on larger, better armed, and technologically superior forces. Hezbollah's reliance on information age technologies to influence and coerce public opinion, perception and support allowed them to not only "not lose," but to thwart Israel's efforts and strategy thereby preventing them from winning. This example of warfare waged psychologically has significant implications for the future of irregular warfare, should we be willing to take note.

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III. HAMAS AND EXPLOITED PSYCHOLOGICAL OPPORTUNITIES

This case study analyzes the events surrounding Israel's Operation Cast Lead (December 2008–January 2009) in an effort to compare the tactics, techniques, and procedures utilized by Hamas to those examined in the previous case study. The chapter begins with a discussion of the background of Hamas so as to better understand the organization and their roots. Subsequently, Israel's strategy is analyzed in an effort to see if, and how, they were able to achieve success over Hamas. The next section outlines the major themes exploited by Hamas in an effort to modify perceptions and rally support against Israel. An analysis of the psychological aspects of Hamas' plan will be followed by a section examining the synchronization between the psychological and kinetic actions on the part of Hamas in an effort to determine if, and why, Hamas was successful against a superior foe. Then I will discuss whether Hamas' strategy achieved any noticeable effects against Israel, and if so, to what degree did that play into the end result of Operation Cast Lead. Lastly, I will close the chapter with a section summarizing Hamas' successes and failures as they related to Israel's accomplishment of its mission.

A.   BACKGROUND

Hamas can trace its roots back to the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood (MB) which was founded in 1928 as a Sunni religious, political, and SMO advocating against colonial rule by the British. In 1967, during the Six-Day War, Israel captured the territories of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, Sinai Peninsula, and the Gaza Strip from Egypt, and Jordan, fostering resentment amongst the Palestinians in the now Israeli-occupied regions. On December 8, 1987, an Israeli Army truck ran over several protesting Palestinians, killing four and injuring seven. Many Arabs believed this was not an accident, but rather retribution for the stabbing of a Jewish salesman two days earlier.[115] The violent

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[115] Donald Neff, "The Intifada Erupts, Forcing Israel to Recognize Palestinians," *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* (December, 1997): 1–83.

Palestinian uprising that followed, later known as the intifada,[116] or the first intifada, spurred Sheikh Ahmed Yassin (a key leader of the MB) and six others to found Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya. Also known as the Islamic Resistance Movement, Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya became the paramilitary wing for the MB. Hamas, (an acronym which roughly means "zeal")[117] as the SMO is better known, began to develop its doctrine and structure that would guide the revolutionary organization.

By creating Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya, the older, more cautious leadership of the MB were able to separate themselves from the younger more militant Palestinians that sought a dedicated resistance organization.[118] Restructuring the MB and establishing a dedicated armed resistance wing allowed for a distinct separation of tactics. The MB focused on its long standing social institutions and organizations while Hamas concentrated on the militant armed struggle against Israel. This all changed in 1991 when Fatah, Hamas' rival faction and largest party of the PLO, began negotiating in the U.S.-led peace process. Those opposed to the peace process were left with only one choice—the MB—even if they were opposed to the tactics employed by the Brotherhood's Hamas wing. The wave of new members resulted in a more heterogeneous and expansive constituency for Hamas, who by now had surpassed the MB as the central Islamist SMO, with Hamas' militant leaders now at the reins of the entire organization.[119]

On August 18, 1988, Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya solidified its doctrine by publishing its Islamic covenant (charter)—edited and approved by Sheikh Ahmed Yassin. The covenant contains 36 articles which describes the SMO's ideology and lays the groundwork of their narrative. In one of the first paragraphs, Hassan al-Banna[120] is

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[116] "Intifada" is an Arabic word which translates as "uprising."

[117] Matthew Levitt, *Hamas: Politics, Charity, and Terrorism in the Service of Jihad* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2006), 8.

[118] Yezid Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State: The Palestinian National Movement, 1949-1993* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 630.

[119] Jeroen Gunning, *Hamas in Politics: Democracy, Religion, Violence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 39.

[120] Al-Banna, an important figure in Hamas' lineage, was a schoolteacher and imam who founded the Muslim Brotherhood in 1928. He was assassinated in Cairo on February 12, 1949.

quoted as saying "Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it, just as it obliterated others before it."[121]   The covenant maintains a radical Islamic viewpoint which proffers that the "land of Palestine is an Islamic Waqf[122]…[that] should not be given up."[123]   It asserts that there is "no solution for the Palestinian question except through Jihad," and that "peaceful solutions and international conferences, are in contradiction to the principles of the Islamic Resistance Movement."[124]   The charter stresses the spread of Islamic consciousness through education, science, media, youth, sheikhs, and Muslim men and women, with the goal of raising the banner of Jihad against the Jews.

Turmoil in the early 1990s brought structural and leadership changes to the Islamic Resistance Movement.   In 1991, Ziccaria Walid Akhel formed the Katib al-Shahid Izzedin al-Qassam[125] Brigades, also known as the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades (IDQB), whose mission was the kidnapping and execution of suspected Israeli collaborators.   After the confinement of numerous members of Hamas' senior leadership[126] and the deportation of 415 Islamist activists, the organization began restructuring itself to better allow for a dispersed leadership.[127]   It was divided into three wings: social, militant, and political, with the leadership segmented into internal and external.   The hardliners dominated the external leadership and served as militia leaders while less aggressive individuals served as internal leadership.[128]   This move resulted in

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121 Hamas, *The Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas)*, August 18, 1988.
http://www.standwithus.com/pdfs/flyers/Hamas_covenant.pdf.

122 "Waqf" is an endowment given to the Muslims by God.

123 Hamas, *The Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas)*, 6.

124 Hamas, *The Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas)*, 7–8.

125 The brigades were named after the Syrian-born martyr Sheikh Izzedin al-Qassam. He fought against the French in Syria during the 1920s and the British in Palestine during the 30s. He was killed in 1935 by the British.

126 Sheikh Yassin was arrested by the Israelis in May 1989 and sentenced to life in prison for ordering the killing of Palestinians who allegedly collaborated with the IDF.

127 Yonah Alexander, *Palestinian Religious Terrorism: Hamas and Islamic Jihad* (Ardsley, New York: Transnational Publishers, 2002), 1.

128 Mohammed M. Hafez and Marc-Andre Walther, "Hamas: Between Pragmatism and Radicalism," in *Routledge Handbook of Political Islam*, ed. Shahram Akbarzadeh (New York, New York: Routledge, 2012), 65.

the increased autonomy and decentralization of the Qassam Brigades, which allowed many members within the Brigades to act without authorization from the leadership. Additionally, the restructuring caused increased tension between the internal and external leadership elements while simultaneously creating opportunities for politicking that were previously non-existent. In 1992 Hamas beat Fatah in the elections for Chambers of Commerce in Gaza, Hebron and Ramallah. The following year, Hamas again beat Fatah by winning all nine seats in the Bir Zeit University student council, ending Fatah's 16 year reign in a region dominated by secular nationalists.[129]

By the mid-1990s, after rejecting the Oslo Peace Process and standing in opposition to the Palestine National Authority (PA)—controlled by Yasser Arafat's Fatah faction—Hamas began to enforce its doctrine through increased militant actions. In April 1994 the organization conducted its first car bombing, killing eight, and its first suicide bombing, killing five.[130] In response to the 1996 killing of their master bomb-maker, Yehiyeh Ayyash, widely known as "the engineer," Hamas intensified their attacks and bombings against Israel. The new terror tactics typically resulted in border closures, increasing the feelings of occupation among Palestinians, adversely affecting the Palestinian economy, and providing Hamas the opportunity to gain greater support as the champion for Palestinian rights.

On September 28, 2000, the violent skirmishes between Palestinians and Israelis reached a crescendo when Ariel Sharon, and a delegation from the Likud party, made a well-publicized and highly controversial visit to the Temple Mount (also known as Haram al-Sharif) in Jerusalem. Riots ensued, and thus began the al-Aqsa intifada.[131] Fatah and the PA were weakened by the ensuing events while Hamas experienced increased doctrinal autonomy; freedom to conduct its militant activities and fortify its

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[129] Geoffrey D. Schad, "Chronology 16 November 1993-15 February 1994," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 23, no. 3 (Spring, 1994): 164.

[130] The Associated Press, "Main Events in Hamas' History," *USA Today*, March 22, 2004.

[131] The al-Aqsa intifada is also known as the second intifada. The al-Aqsa Mosque is part of the Haram al-Sharif and regarded as the third holiest site in Islam. Sharon intended to publically assert the right of all Israelis to visit the Temple Mount; however, Likud claims that the visit was intended to show that under a Likud government the Temple Mount would remain in Israeli control.

political position as a key player.[132] Acceptance of suicide bombing swelled from 20 percent to well over 70 percent (tacit approval of Hamas' doctrine), and the Qassam Brigade's tactics became the model for other groups.[133] Israel's response was swift and harsh but only served to polarize the Palestinians even further, leading to a downward spiral of violence over the next half-decade.

After the terrorist attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001, Hamas found itself the target of American security and intelligence agencies, lumped together with all other radical Islamist movements.[134] However, Hamas' ideology is different than that of al-Qaeda. They are not linked to al-Qaeda, nor do they intend to conduct a "global jihad."[135] Hamas maintained a low profile in the post-9/11 world and despite requests from al-Qaeda did not support Osama bin Laden. This prevented the Islamic Resistance Movement from being viewed by the rest of the world—with the exceptions of Israel and the U.S.—as linked to al-Qaeda and prevented the Palestine question from being sidelined.

A year after Sheikh Ahmed Yassin was killed in a targeted airstrike (March 22, 2004), and after a subsequent transition in leadership from hardliners to moderates, Hamas made the public announcement that they would participate in the Palestinian legislative elections—a drastic deviation in their doctrine. Ten months later, on January 25th, 2006, the Palestinian world was rocked by a political "tsunami" when Hamas, led by Khaled Meshal, won 72 seats in the PA's 132-member parliament—a victory with structural implications for the organization.[136] For the first time since 1968, Fatah was deposed as the dominant party in transparent, democratic, and internationally approved elections. However victorious, Hamas' unity government with Fatah, and the Mecca

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[132] Gunning, *Hamas in Politics*, 49.

[133] Gunning, *Hamas in Politics*, 48–50.

[134] Hafez and Walther, *Hamas: Between Pragmatism and Radicalism*, 68-69.

[135] Gunning, *Hamas in Politics*, 227.

[136] Nathan J. Brown, *Aftermath of the Hamas Tsunami* (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006).

accord, failed to bring forth any noticeable progress, partly due to the lack of recognition bestowed by the "Quartet."[137]   Israel's Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, immediately announced:

> There will be no recognition of a Palestinian government with the participation or under the control of Hamas unless three conditions are met: the Hamas charter is changed to recognize the state of Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state; total dismantling of all weapons and a total cessation of terrorist activity; and acceptance of all agreements signed between the PA and the State of Israel.[138]

However significant Hamas' victory, it failed to gain control of Mahmoud Abbas' PA.

In 2007, Hamas orchestrated a takeover of the Gaza Strip and seized power from Fatah; although, Fatah retains control over the West Bank.   In an effort to quell the escalating rocket attacks and border clashes, Israel launched Operation Cast Lead against Gaza at the end of 2008.   On January 18, 2009, after 23 days of fighting, a truce was signed between Hamas and Israel.[139]

B.   ISRAEL'S STRATEGY—"WAR 2.0"

Israel took to heart the lessons learned from the 2006 Lebanon War—creating a new doctrine and a revamped strategy.   This time around, their stated objective was ensuring the safety of the Israeli people by halting the rocket attacks into Israel.[140] Israel never mentioned a timeline, and their actions were vastly different from those of the 2006 war and thus, more positively received by the international community.   The Winograd Commission's report may have provided the external impetus Israel

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[137] Israel, the United States, the European Union, and Russia comprise the "Quartet." Russia was the only member not to denounce the new Hamas-led government.

[138] Graham Usher, "The Democratic Resistance: Hamas, Fatah, and the Palestinian Elections," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 35, no. 3 (Spring, 2006), 30.

[139] "Hamas," *The New York Times*, sec. Times Topics, February 6, 2012.

[140] Gwen Ackerman and Saud Abu Ramadan, "Israel Seeks Heavier Blow to Hamas Armed Wing in Gaza," Bloomberg, accessed February 1, 2012, http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=newsarchive&refer=home&sid=a4GHWqk.K0t4.

required in order to decisively act on and implement the lessons learned from the failures of the 33-Day War.   Whatever the reason, Israel presented a vastly different, and undoubtedly much more successful, strategy during Operation Cast Lead.

One of the Winograd Commission's recommendations that Israel implemented was the establishment of an information and propaganda unit[141] in order to coordinate public perception across all media outlets, to include horizontal media.[142]   According to the Israeli Prime Minister's office, the resulting unit—established in the first half of 2008—the National Information Directorate (NID), was responsible for managing *hasbara* (Hebrew for "explanation") through the "direct[ion] and coordinat[ion] in the information sphere so that the relevant bodies present a unified, clear, and consistent message."[143]   One of the directorate's first tasks during Operation Cast Lead was to ensure its core messages were clearly translated to the media: Hamas was responsible for breaking the ceasefire with Israel, Israel's objective was the safety and security of its population, and the terrorist group Hamas was targeting Israeli civilians.[144]   Additionally, it has been claimed that Israel sought to restore its deterrent capability after its failure in the 2006 Lebanon War against Hezbollah.[145]   During the first few days of Operation Cast Lead, the NID was so successful at coordinating *hasbara* that the world media began parroting the Israeli messages verbatim. In other words, it was in control of the narrative for the conflict.

Israel's narrative, based on victimhood and self-defense, is similar to that of Hezbollah in 2006, and Hamas.   All three claimed to be defending their territory and

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[141] Rachel Shabi, "Israel Seeks Heavier Blow to Hamas Armed Wing in Gaza (Update 2)," Bloomberg, accessed January 9, 2012, http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=newsarchive&refer=home&sid=a4GHWqk.K0t4 ().

[142] Donald Shaw, "Vertical Versus Horizontal Media: Using Agenda-Setting and Audience Agenda-Melding to Create Public Information Strategies in the Emerging Papyrus Society," *Military Review* 86, no. 6 (Nov/Dec, 2006): 13-25. http://search.proquest.com/docview/225309726/134C9434218541DD5B/1?accountid=12702.

[143] William B. Caldwell IV, Dennis M. Murphy and Anton Menning, "Learning to Leverage New Media: The Israeli Defense Forces in Recent Conflicts," *Military Review* 89, no. 3 (May/Jun, 2009): 6-7.

[144] Shabi, *Israel Seeks Heavier Blow(Update 2)*, accessed January 9, 2012.

[145] Anthony H. Cordesman, *The 'Gaza War'* (Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), 2009).

people against an ever more violent and oppressive enemy. Israeli governmental officials from the top down all stayed on message in what proved to be a successful attempt to present the world with a cohesive narrative explaining Israel's limited, and very specific, goals in Gaza—there was no mention of completely destroying Hamas. President Shimon Peres told the press "We will not accept the idea that Hamas will continue to fire and we shall accept a cease-fire."[146] Similarly, Defense Minister Ehud Barak told the Knesset "The goals of this operation are to stop Hamas from attacking our citizens and soldiers."[147] When talking to reporters, Oved Yehezkel, Israel's Cabinet Secretary said, "The goal is to deal a serious blow to the terrorist infrastructure of the Hamas [sic]. The operation at this point is not expected to stop the fire, but we expect that it will be reduced,"[148] and Foreign Affairs Ministry spokesman Andy David said "My message is to say that the aim is very simple: that what has happened in the last eight years [rocket fire in southern Israel] will not happen in the future. The aim is to change the reality."[149] It is a testament to Israel's planning and coordination that the numerous governmental offices strictly adhered to the pre-coordinated talking points in order to explain the goals.

Conversely, there was an apparent lack of information conveyed to the media when it came to announcing a timeline for the operation. No promises were made as to when the fighting could be expected to end. Foreign Minister Tzipi Livini explained to the Cabinet that the "intensive diplomatic activity in recent days is aimed at deflecting the pressure for a cease-fire to allow enough time for the operation to achieve its goals."[150] Barak was quoted on several occasions as saying the operation will continue until all its goals are met. Israel was correct in their assessment that by using their narrative to frame the operation in a positive light, it allowed the Israeli Air Force (IAF) and IDF adequate time to continue their actions without the risk that world opinion would force a cease-fire prior to the achievement of the operation's objectives.

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[146] Ackerman and Abu Ramadan, *Israel Seeks Heavier Blow to Hamas*, accessed February 1, 2012.

[147] Nathan Jeffay, "Learning from Lebanon, Israel Sets Up Press Operation," *The Jewish Daily Forward*, accessed February 1, 2011, http://forward.com/articles/14851/.

[148] Ackerman and Abu Ramadan, *Israel Seeks Heavier Blow to Hamas,* accessed February 1, 2012.

[149] Jeffay, *Learning from Lebanon*.

[150] Ackerman and Abu Ramadan, *Israel Seeks Heavier Blow to Hamas,* accessed February 1, 2012.

Unlike the 2006 Lebanon War, Cast Lead was a thoroughly planned and coordinated operation with the integration of IAF, IDF, and cyber-space. Israel launched into Gaza with airstrikes on December 27th, and just two days later they launched into cyber-space with what one blogger dubbed "war 2.0"[151]—a calculated incursion into the world of blogs, vlogs (video logs), Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, Skype, and podcasts. Israel unveiled their own YouTube channel with footage—taken from unmanned drones in the skies over Gaza—depicting precision bombings of rocket-launching facilities, humanitarian assistance, and IDF tanks moving into attack positions. The IDF's YouTube channel was immediately propelled to the top as being the "second most subscribed channel and ninth most watched worldwide."[152] The Israeli consulate in New York used Twitter to conduct the first ever "governmental press conference," open to anyone with a Twitter account.[153] The NID sought to modify and adjust world perception by controlling the flow of information. They restricted independent foreign press in Gaza while simultaneously coordinating online sympathetic groups to serve as cyber force multipliers.

By the start of Israel's 2008 incursion into Gaza, not only did the IDF possess a newly developed doctrine, but the IDF was at a much higher level of preparedness than it had been in 2006. After the failure in Lebanon, inquiry teams discovered that the IDF's doctrine was "completely wrong" and "counter[ed] the basic principles of operating an army in general and the IDF in particular."[154] The doctrine had replaced traditional terms like "objective" with notions of "campaign rational" and "conscious burning" of the enemy, while simultaneously advocating "effects based" operations heavily reliant on stand-off weapon systems—mainly airborne—with the integration of ground maneuver

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[151] "On the Front Lines of Gaza's War 2.0," *The Irish Times*, January 10, 2009. http://www.lexisnexis.com.libproxy.nps.edu/hottopics/lnacademic/?sterms=PUBLICATION(The+Irish+times)&verb=sr&csi=142626.

[152] Caldwell, Murphy and Menning, *Learning to Leverage New Media*, 7.

[153] Yigal Schleifer, "Blogs, YouTube: The New Battleground of Gaza Conflict," *The Christian Science Monitor*, January 23, 2009.

[154] Alon Ben-David, "Debriefing Teams Brand IDF Doctrine 'Completely Wrong'," *Jane's Defense Weekly* (January 3, 2007): accessed February 1, 2012.

forces only as a last resort.[155] With the old doctrine deemed inadequate and shelved, the IDF proceeded with major adjustments to its training. For the first time in almost a decade, the Armored Brigade 401—a pivotal unit in Operation Cast Lead—trained for twelve weeks on skills such as basic crew drills, urban combat, and conventional warfare skills.[156] IDF reserve forces experienced a rapid increase in the pace and magnitude of their training. Many reservists were returned to their primary weapon systems and trained on the basics; their once lacking equipment began to be fielded. They received "tens of thousands of ballistic helmets and vests and night vision goggles, as well as significant quantities of grenades, small arms ammunition, and magazines."[157] With the IDF almost completely revamped—unharnessed from its old doctrine, properly trained, and fully equipped—they were now much more prepared than previously in 2006.

Despite the dramatic improvements Israel displayed during Operation Cast Lead, two flaws emerged in their strategy: their prohibition against international media entering Gaza, and their disproportionate use of force, something brought to light by the Report of the United Nations Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict (also referred to as The Goldstone Report).[158] During Operation Cast Lead, Israeli authorities imposed severe restrictions on journalists—they were banned from entering Gaza to cover the conflict— in what amounted to a "total news blackout."[159] Even IDF soldiers were ordered to leave their cell phones before entering into Gaza. The only official images emanating from Gaza were produced by IDF photographers and camera crews, images that were then reproduced and broadcast by media worldwide. Despite the ban keeping journalists out of Gaza, the IDF still managed to inadvertently bomb a building housing the Palestinian

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[155] Ben-David, *Debriefing Teams Brand IDF Doctrine*, accessed February 1, 2012.

[156] Yaakov Katz, "IDF Applying Lessons of War to Improve use of Tanks ," *The Jerusalem Post*, March 21, 2007.

[157] Matt M. Matthews, "The Israeli Defense Forces Response to the 2006 War with Hezbollah: Gaza," *Military Review* 89, no. 4 (Jul/Aug, 2009): 43.

[158] It is referred to as "The Goldstone Report" after its namesake and head of mission, Justice Richard Goldstone.

[159] "Media Blackout during the Gaza War," Doha Centre for Media Freedom, accessed February 13, 2012, http://www.dc4mf.org/en/content/media-blackout-during-gaza-war.

media.[160] Since media was banned from reporting in Gaza, many Palestinians took it upon themselves to provide information and images to the outside world. The "army of citizen journalists"—armed with mobile phones, laptops, and digital media—was immense.[161] By imposing a draconian level of control on the media, Israel in-fact lost control of its narrative. Journalists, restricted to Israel, resorted to narrating videos, provided by the Palestinians, as if they had been an eyewitness to the action being shown on screen, and much of the information presented was unlikely to have been checked for accuracy. Restriction of the press' access to Gaza resulted in much of the war being told from the Palestinian point of view, something Israel sought to suppress. Very few pictures of Hamas soldiers or rocket launchers crept into media reports; instead, the public was inundated with images of Palestinian suffering.

The second of Israel's flaws during Operation Cast Lead was the IDF's perceived disproportionate use of force. After the last of Israel's troops withdrew from Gaza, the world noticed that there were 1,300 Palestinians dead—"probably more than half of them civilians"—and only ten Israeli soldiers killed (four in accidents) along with three civilians.[162] In one incident, symbolic of the entire conflict, Israeli forces mortared a United Nation's school in Gaza killing as many as 40 Palestinians, among them five women and ten children. Only two of those killed were identified by the IDF as Hamas operatives and part of a mortar battery cell.[163] The Report of the United Nations Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict criticized Israel for targeting civilians and the supporting infrastructure. It found:

> There has been a violation of the grave breeches provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Unlawful and wanton destruction which is not justified by military necessity amounts to a war crime… In this respect, the Mission recognizes that not all deaths constitute violations of

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[160] As a result, Israel's Press Freedom Index, as reported by Reporters Without Borders, sank 47 places to position 93. In its current position, Israel trails Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and even Lebanon for freedoms provided to the press. Source: "Israel: Operation Media Crackdown," Reporters Without Borders, http://en.rsf.org/press-freedom-index-2009,1001.html (accessed February 13, 2012).

[161] "*On the Front Lines of Gaza's War 2.0,*" 3

[162] "Counting the Cost," *Economist* 390, no. 8615 (January 24, 2009): 53.

[163] Taghreed el-Khodary and Isabel Kershner, "Israeli Shells Kill 40 at Gaza U.N. School," *The New York Times*, January 7, 2009.

international humanitarian law. The principle of proportionality acknowledges that under certain strict conditions, actions resulting in the loss of civilian life may not be unlawful. What makes the application and assessment of proportionality difficult in respect of many of the events investigated by the Mission is that deeds by Israeli forces and words of military and political leaders prior to and during the operations indicate that as a whole they were premised on a deliberate policy of disproportionate force aimed not at the enemy but at the "supporting infrastructure." In practice, this appears to have meant the civilian population.[164]

Israel's actions brought unwanted attention from the international community urging Israel to cease hostilities and discuss a peace agreement with Hamas. Israel's main concern was the accomplishment of their objectives in Gaza before enough international pressure could be mounted forcing a cease-fire.

C. HAMAS' THEMES USED IN PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE

1. Narrative

Hamas's overarching narrative closely replicates that of Hezbollah. The diagnostic framing process for their narrative is one of collective action and opens by asserting a life or death "struggle against the Jews."[165] This struggle is framed as a religious conflict for the lands of Palestine, which can only be acquired after the destruction of Israel.[166] At the core of this argument is the belief that "Palestine is an Islamic Waqf [trust] consecrated for future Moslem generations until Judgement [sic] Day," and that the "banner of Allah" will be raised over the "Zionist invaders."[167]

Central to Hamas's diagnostic frame is a well-defined problem identification statement and path for Muslims to follow in order to remedy the conflict and provide for

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[164] United Nations Human Rights Council, *Human Rights in Palestine and Other Occupied Arab Territories: Report of the United Nations Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict* (United Nations, 2009).

[165] Hamas, *The Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas)*, 2.

[166] The Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement is clear in its desire for the destruction of Israel. However, there have been statements by Hamas leaders as to the viability of a two state solution, and the possibility of a Jewish presence in Palestine.

[167] Hamas, *The Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas)*, 4-6.

collective action. The covenant clearly states that Palestine is an Islamic land and must be freed from the invading Zionists. By framing Palestine as an Islamic land, the frame is inclusive and "welcomes every Moslem who embraces its faith."[168] Hamas' goals and methods for reaching those goals are widely known, especially throughout the Middle East, and therefore it can be said that the organization has successfully explained its diagnostic frame.

In their general prognostic frame, Hamas outlines steps to take in order to free Palestine. The covenant advocates violence as the only way for Islam to "obliterate" Israel and reclaim Palestine. It states "There is no solution for the Palestinian question except through Jihad," and "in the face of the Jews' usurpation of Palestine, it is compulsory that the banner of Jihad be raised."[169] Even the slogan for the Islamic Resistance Movement echoes this modus operandi when it claims "Allah is its target, the Prophet is its model, the Koran its constitution: Jihad is its path and death for the sake of Allah is the loftiest of its wishes."[170] More specifically, on December 18, 2008, Hamas clarified their prognostic framing of the current situation. They announced there would be no renewal of the ceasefire with Israel "because the enemy did not abide by its obligations" to halt its attacks or allow humanitarian aid into Gaza.[171] Hamas leaders stopped short of advocating an all-out war with Israel, but unmistakably framed Israel as an occupying presence and the cause of Palestinian hardships. They made it clear that Israel's offensive actions against the Palestinians were the cause of the problem, and that Hamas was justified in launching rockets into Israel in order to protect the citizens of Gaza.

There has long been debate over what is written in the covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement and what its leaders say as to which one is more representative of the SMO. The one part of the debate that is never in question is the fact that Hamas

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[168] Hamas, *The Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas)*, 3.

[169] Hamas, *The Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas)*, 8.

[170] Hamas, *The Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas)*, 5.

[171] Nidal al-Mughrabi, "Hamas Declares End to Ceasefire with Israel in Gaza," *Reuters*, accessed March 12, 2012, http://www.reuters.com/article/2008/12/18/us-palestinians-israel-ceasefire-idUSLI75623220081218.

subscribes to the use of violence and terrorism—although Hamas frames it as resistance—as a means to achieve its goals. The religion of Islam is the basis for the document and allows for its frame amplification, albeit to a small extent. The organization is inclusive of all Muslim as long as they follow Islamic ideology, as evident by its fourth article: "The Islamic Resistance Movement welcomes every Moslem who embraces its faith, ideology, follows its programme, keeps its secrets, and wants to belong to its ranks and carry out the duty."[172] The SMO's frame becomes restrictive when it begins excluding organizations such as the PLO: "the day The Palestinian Liberation Organization adopts Islam as its way of life, we will become its soldiers, and fuel for its fire that will burn the enemies,"[173] or after the end of the ceasefire when Hamas began criticizing Egypt and other moderate Arab states for not unifying and standing against Israel: "we call upon the Egyptian authorities to stop these strange positions which are not consistent with the positions of the Egyptian people and their historical positions in supporting the Palestinian cause."[174] Unlike Hezbollah, Hamas' covenant does not have a non-violent democratic appeal; instead it seeks rigid followers of Islamic law.

Within the motivational frame, the Islamic Resistance Movement seeks to "rally support for it and its stands, [and] strive towards enhancing the struggle. It is well-equipped for that because of the clarity of its ideology, the nobility of its aim and the loftiness of its objectives."[175] By framing their struggle in the context of religion it provides moral support to the SMO's goals, regulates compromise, and rallies others from the same faith behind the objectives.

Hamas' overarching narrative concludes with the obliteration of Israel, the reclamation of Palestine, and the establishment of Islamic Sharia. Although the destruction of Israel and the imposition of Islamic Sharia is something that many of Hamas' leaders have not publically discussed, it is made explicitly clear in their

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[172] Hamas, *The Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas)*, 3.

[173] Hamas, *The Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas)*, 16.

[174] Cordesman, *The 'Gaza War'*, 9.

[175] Hamas, *The Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas)*, 4.

covenant. The conclusion to their narrative, as told orally, is some form of a two state solution with recognition from Israel. However, the conclusion of Hamas' narrative surrounding Operation Cast Lead ends with a "great victory," eerily similar to that of Hezbollah.

2. Themes

During Israel's Operation Cast Lead, Hamas opted for a strategy that relied much less on the psychological aspect than Hezbollah did in 2006. The Islamic Resistance Movement instead relied on the IDQB and its combat troops, consisting of artillery forces for the offensive and ground forces for the defensive.[176] Despite its reliance on military forces, Hamas was unable to protect its media outlets against Israel's assault. Ultimately, many media outlets were destroyed, either partially or totally, and transmissions were interrupted.[177] In the days following Israel's withdrawal from Gaza, Hamas announced victory; their survival from the Israeli sea, air, and land assault constituted victory. Mosque loudspeakers in Gaza City announced a "gorgeous and great victory" that forced Israel to "stop its crimes."[178] According to Abu Obeida, an IDQB spokesman, Israel failed to achieve any of its goals and instead they "sunk in the sea of Gaza."[179] This is the typical style of exaggerated claims and propaganda that Hamas proffered during Cast Lead.

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[176] Yoram Cohen and Jeffrey White, "Hamas in Combat: The Military Performance of the Palestinian Islamic Resistance Movement," *Policy Focus*, no. 97 (October, 2009): 6.

[177] There is evidence to suggest that media targeting was a conscious and pre-planned effort by the IDF/IAF. "[Israel] prepared a campaign [that] ensured that there would be minimal media coverage in an area where virtually any image or report could aid Hamas." Source: Cordesman, The 'Gaza War', 15. According to reserve Colonel David Reisner, a former IDF chief legal adviser for international law, "A military target is defined as an object by which its nature, location, purpose or use makes an effective contribution to military action and whose total or partial destruction, capture or neutralization in the circumstances ruling at the time gives a definite military advantage." Source: Barbara Opall-Rome, "Israelis 'Document Everything' to Justify Strikes," *Defense News*, 2009. http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=AFNB&p_theme=aggregated5&p_action=doc&p_docid=125F6DEB0B04 09B0&p_docnum=1&p_queryname=1.

[178] Jonathan Ferziger and Daniel Williams, "Israel, Hamas Claim Victory After Gaza Cease-Fire (Update2)," *Bloomberg*, accessed February 15, 2012, http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=newsarchive&sid=aJSGAX4ozXcE&refer=africa.

[179] Ferziger and Williams, *Israel, Hamas Claim Victory*.

During Israel's Operation Cast Lead in Gaza, Hamas attempted to convey one main theme: Hamas is the Palestinian protector. Immediately after Israel's withdrawal Hamas began promoting another theme: Hamas achieved victory over Israel. Staying in line with the first theme, Hamas portrayed itself as the protector of the Palestinians; the Islamic Resistance Movement described itself as the victim of Israel's attack rather than as the provocateur. Hamas espoused a conspiracy theory that Israel had been plotting war for a long time. Jonathan Fighel supports this theory by claiming, "The reaction [to Hamas' rockets] was not spontaneous but well planned; it was not reflexive like in Lebanon."[180] The conspiracy theory was reinforced by Ismail Haniyah during his victory speech on January 18 when he said Israel had been setting the "political, regional, and international scene" for its "conspiracy" designed to eliminate the resistance, and the Palestinian issue; "This is a war our people was [sic] forced into with no choice."[181] By promoting and perpetuating the conspiracy theory theme, Hamas successfully played the politics of victimhood, which garnered additional support for its cause.

Within the protector theme, Hamas stressed two important sub-themes: Israel purposely targets civilians, and Hamas protects civilians. Hamas ensured its media coverage—those stations that were still broadcasting after the IAF's attacks—depicted images of destruction along with graphic scenes of civilians injured or killed by the IDF. The images of dead civilians, mainly women and children, were used to portray Israel as indiscriminate, inhumane, and responsible for war crimes. In a television interview, Haniyah demanded that international investigation teams be sent to conduct an inquiry into the "war crimes perpetrated by the enemy in the Gaza Strip."[182] Conversely, in an effort to downplay the severe blow to its infrastructure and operatives, Hamas refrained from publishing any information which discussed the deaths of any of its operatives, even the martyrs. One website went so far as to warn Palestinians "not to publish information

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[180] Jeffay, *Learning from Lebanon*.

[181] *The Battle for Hearts and Minds: Within Hamas's Effort to Perpetuate a Victory Myth in Operation Cast Lead, its Spokesmen Release False Descriptions about Events of the Fighting and their False Successes* (Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Israel Intelligence Heritage & Commemoration Center (IICC), January, 2009). http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/html/hamas_e048.htm.

[182] *The Battle for Hearts and Minds*, 14.

on those killed or injured in the fighting."[183] While Israel was framed as the aggressive perpetrator of war crimes, Hamas sought to portray itself as the defender of the Palestinian cause and protector of its citizens. To do so, they relied heavily on their network of social institutions which provided various services to the populace, a tactic learned from Hezbollah which Hamas sought to emulate. In a televised speech, Mashal declared that "[we] have already begun working to accomplish this project—the project of rebuilding, housing, compensating, and treating the wounded."[184] Within the scope of this project, he promised to provide emergency assistance to families whose homes were destroyed or damaged: "to the families of the martyrs and the wounded, and to the displaced families who have lost their homes, we will give specific sums of money."[185] Obviously, Hamas saw the powerful effect this had for Hezbollah and sought to imitate the increased level of support. Hamas' protector theme served its SMO well as the messages drew a clear distinction between Hamas and its actions, and its rivals Fatah and the PA and their inaction.

Even before the cessation of hostilities, Hamas' propaganda apparatus began spinning tales of brave IDQB fighters successfully defending Gaza against a much larger Israeli war machine. Spokesmen for the resistance claimed that prior to Israel's invasion the range of Hamas' rockets was limited to 20 kilometers, but during the battle the rockets were touted as successfully hitting places as far away as 40 kilometers.[186] They bragged that populated cities, such as Tel-Aviv, were now within range. Much ado was made about the ferocity of the IDQB fighters and their ability to withstand the formidable IDF. Haniyah claimed there were "seven IDF divisions operating in the Gaza Strip, a mighty air force that carried out more than 2500 raids, and psychological warfare directed by 'hundreds of experts.'"[187] The resistance fighters were portrayed as wildly successful in their attacks with videos of the gunmen routinely broadcast on the al-Aqsa television

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[183] *The Battle for Hearts and Minds*, 5.

[184] MEMRI, *Hamas Leader Khaled Mash'Al Claims Victory in Gaza War, Justifies Sacrifices, and Warns Against Transferring Aid Money through the PA* (The Middle East Media Research Institute, 2009).

[185] MEMRI, *Hamas Leader Khaled Mash'Al* .

[186] *The Battle for Hearts and Minds*, 6.

[187] *The Battle for Hearts and Minds*, 6.

station.[188] Although Hamas' propaganda attempted to portray the IDQB fighters in a positive light, there was little factual information to back up the outrageous claims. Hamas lacked synchronization between its kinetic and psychological actions and instead relied heavily on grossly exaggerated and/or completely fabricated stories. Without an attachment to the facts, the propaganda failed to obtain credibility and influence among the target audience.

After Israel terminated its operations and withdrew from Gaza, Mashal once again put into action a plan that was modeled on that of Hezbollah—a "great victory."[189] He declared:

> Does it not suffice that the goals of the enemy have not been accomplished? It has failed on the ground, just as it has failed politically. Ultimately, after three weeks, it was forced to declare a unilateral cease-fire and withdrawal, without any agreement or terms that bind or limit the resistance.[190]

With this theme, Hamas attempted to frame themselves as victorious over the Israelis, much like Hezbollah did; unfortunately for Hamas, their propaganda campaign does not appear to be as effective as Hezbollah's. They repeatedly claimed their military capabilities remained intact, their rocket stockpiles were still high, the leadership was unscathed, infrastructure was not destroyed, and their offices and facilities continued daily operations "even while the storm was raging."[191] In contrast to these claims, the situation on the ground was vastly different; Hamas' military capabilities were severely degraded, their rocket stockpiles dwindled, the leadership that was not killed went into hiding, infrastructure took a devastating hit, and their public services ground to an almost complete standstill—something noticed by the populace.

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[188] Mark Dubowitz and Jonathan Snow, "The Hamas Network: The Case for Boycotting Terrorist Media," *Pundicity*, accessed February 14, 2012, http://dubowitz.pundicity.com/4623/the-hamas-network.

[189] "Hamas Claims 'Great Victory'," *Sky News*, accessed February 15, 2012, http://news.sky.com/home/world-news/article/15205542.

[190] MEMRI, *Hamas Leader Khaled Mash'Al* .

[191] *The Battle for Hearts and Minds*, 10.

Hamas modeled much of its Gaza narrative after Hezbollah and the successes they experienced during and after the 2006 Lebanon War. Unfortunately, Hamas was not as prepared as Hezbollah to execute the plan, nor did they possess the same resources. The themes employed to influence the Palestinian populace were acceptable; however, the implementation was lacking. As will be discussed in section D, there was a large gap between the message and the reality that Hamas failed to bridge. What the population saw and experienced was not always what Hamas portrayed.

3. Broadcast, Print, and Internet Channels

Hamas maintains tight control over all media in the Gaza Strip. There is little freedom of speech, freedom of press, right to criticize, or freedom to express rival opinions. Those who criticize Hamas or act in any way that could be conceived as counter to the laws of Islam are immediately silenced. In 2008, Hamas raided the Gaza bureau of the official Palestinian News Agency (WAFA) and seized much of their equipment. Largely due to the small geographical size of Gaza, Hamas directly controls relatively few media assets, but none-the-less it maintains tight control over all media within the Strip. Any foreign owned media, such as al-Arabiya TV owned by Saudi Arabia, have a strong leaning in favor of Hamas, and those individuals or stations that express any discontent are immediately closed with all journalists arrested and audiovisual equipment confiscated. Reporters without Borders heavily condemned Hamas in a February 2009 report covering Operation Cast Lead in which a Gaza journalist was interviewed and claimed: "Hamas controlled information during the war. No open criticism can be made against Hamas. Journalists in Gaza do not have complete freedom."[192] The report provides multiple examples of Hamas' extreme tactics for regulating the media.

Hamas owns a satellite TV channel, two radio stations, two newspapers, a publishing house, and a fluctuating number of websites.[193] In January 2006, Hamas

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[192] *Operation 'Cast Lead': News Control as Military Objective* (Paris: Reporters Without Borders, 2009).

[193] As of 2007, the Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Israel Intelligence Heritage and Commemoration Center (IICC) counted over 20 websites in eight languages run by Hamas.

launched its satellite television channel al-Aqsa, which quickly became the primary source of news within Gaza.[194] There are two radio stations under the control of Hamas: al-Aqsa and al-Quda. There are four independent stations in Gaza, but they all broadcast under the strict regulation of the Palestinian Ministry of Islamic Endowments.[195] Two newspapers, Felesteen and al-Risala, are owned and operated by Hamas. Al-Risala is a twice weekly paper and the original media utilized by the Islamic Resistance Movement. The paper was founded in 1997. Felesteen was established in May 2007 and is a daily paper. Hamas has increasingly turned its efforts towards establishing itself and garnering support through the use of the World Wide Web. All of its media enterprises maintain internet websites, as does the IDQB.

Hamas exercised rigid control and censorship over all media within the Gaza Strip to guarantee they were the sole purveyor of information. This ensured Hamas could maintain its target audience and bombard them with persuasive and misleading messages. The SMO realizes the power of the internet and are expanding their influence onto the World Wide Web in an effort to garner sympathy and support for their cause.

D. SYNCHRONIZATION BETWEEN PSYCHOLOGICAL AND KINETIC ACTIONS

Hamas was caught off-guard and ill-prepared for Israel's attack; militarily, psychologically, financially, and politically. After the *tahdiyeh* (truce) with Israel ended in 2008, Hamas attempted, on numerous occasions, to renew it. As they actively sought to renew the *tahdiyeh* with Israel, Hamas did not expect Israel to launch a major ground offensive.[196] The resistance had no inclinations for war with Israel—at least at the present time—because they were far too preoccupied with their own problems: consolidating control of Gaza after beating Fatah in the 2007 elections, providing a sense

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[194] Dubowitz and Snow, *The Hamas Network*.

[195] *A fierce confrontation is being waged by Hamas and Fatah for control of the Palestinian media and for news coverage from the Gaza Strip and Judea and Samaria. It is part of the overall struggle between Hamas and Fatah for legitimacy.* (Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Israel Intelligence Heritage & Commemoration Center (IICC), August, 2007). http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/html/palestinian_media.htm.

[196] Cohen and White, *Hamas in Combat*, 5.

of normalcy to life in the strip, resisting the Israeli blockade, and proving they could provide a functioning government.[197] Hamas misunderstood Israel in terms of its military capability and intentions. This being the case, Hamas was forced to assume a defensive strategy that relied heavily on the IDQB forces protecting against the IDF's offensive into Gaza, with a secondary effort placed on the artillery arm's offensive ability to launch Qassam and Grad rockets against Israeli cities.[198] This strategy, loosely modeled after Hezbollah's, placed a lesser emphasis on the synchronization of psychological and kinetic operations.

1. Military Operations

Although not expecting Israel's invasion of Gaza in December 2008, Hamas did have war plans that could be implemented once Israel sent its IDF to attack. The plans called for 15,000 to 16,000 potential combatants and 2,000 members of the IDQB to form a defense in depth of three layers, with Gaza City being most heavily defended in an effort to protect government buildings, the populace, and most importantly, the leadership of the organization.[199] Unfortunately for Hamas, the actual combat did not unfold as planned.

Despite its well prepared defensive plans, Hamas failed to execute its ground strategy, in part because Israel had adjusted and refined their tactics after 2006. Israel's use of bomb-sniffing dogs and heavy firepower provided for a quick advance through urban areas and prevented Hamas operatives for employing small-unit tactics, suicide bombings, snipers, or kidnappings.[200] Improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and roadside bombs had little to no effect on the IDF's recently upgraded armored vehicles which moved quickly through the kill zones.[201] Hamas operatives failed to successfully and decisively engage the IDF. In one case, the commander of Hamas' Gaza City Brigade

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[197] Khaled Hroub, *Hamas: A Beginner's Guide (Second Edition)* (London: Pluto Press, 2010), 177.

[198] Cohen and White, *Hamas in Combat*, 5.

[199] Cohen and White, *Hamas in Combat*, 8.

[200] Matthews, *The Israeli Defense Forces*, 46–47.

[201] Mohammed Najib, "Hamas Launches Investigation into Military Failings," *Jane's Defense Weekly* (January 23, 2009): accessed February 1, 2012.

was fired after losing forty men and allowing members of the IDF's Givati Brigade to penetrate deep into Gaza; just 500 meters from the house of senior Hamas leader Mahmoud a-Zahar and one kilometer from the Shifa Hospital which sheltered Ismail Haniyeh and most of the organization's leadership.[202] According to Mohammed Najib, a Jane's Defence Weekly correspondent, communications proved to be a significant hurdle which Hamas was unable to successfully negotiate. Without advanced communication systems, Hamas' leadership was almost completely cut off from the front line fighters and was unable to effectively provide command and control.[203] In addition to the failures already listed, the IDQBs experienced extensive hardships in relation to their equipment. Mortars—one of their primary weapons—failed to be of any significant use, their antitank capabilities failed against the IDF's armor, antiaircraft missiles failed to down any IAF aircraft,[204] and most of their heavy machine guns were destroyed in the initial attacks by the IAF. Unlike Hezbollah, Hamas maintained no integration of cameramen with the Qassam Brigades and therefore failed to capture footage that could be exploited later. Although Hamas possessed an elaborate ground defensive plan, they failed in the execution after the IDF attacked and avoided any major ground engagements or close combat operations. Despite the obvious asymmetry between the IDQB and the IDF, Israel effectively adjusted their strategy, equipment, and training after Hezbollah's "divine victory."

There is little doubt that Hamas used human shields during the Gaza War;[205] what remains a question though is: how effective was this strategy? Hamas fighters used women and children, especially in urban environments such as Gaza City, to provide protection during their escape from the front lines, and insisted on utilizing mosques,

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[202] Yaakov Katz, "A Necessary Operation," *The Jerusalem Post*, August 4, 2009.

[203] Mohammed Najib, "Hamas 'on the Defensive' in Gaza Crisis," *Jane's Defense Weekly* (January 06, 2009): accessed February 1, 2012.

[204] Amos Harel, "Sources: Hamas Fired Anti-Aircraft Missiles at IAF Planes," *Haaretz*, January 11, 2009. http://www.haaretz.com/news/sources-hamas-fired-anti-aircraft-missiles-at-iaf-planes-1.267905.

[205] United Nations Human Rights Council, *Human Rights in Palestine and Other Occupied Arab Territories: Report of the United Nations Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict* (United Nations, 2009): 145-146.

schools, and hospitals as locations to store or fire rockets.[206] Although this tactic may have worked for the fighters at the time, as word spread perceptions of Hamas began to be negatively affected.[207] Whether Hamas used human shields or not, the rising civilian death toll and pictures of maimed women and children flooded into the media causing Israel's—not Hamas'—image to suffer. Pressure from throughout the region and around the world began to mount against Israel to halt combat operations.

Israel's invasion of Gaza in 2008 pitted two asymmetrical forces against each other; the Israelis relying on firepower and armor, and Hamas trusting in the lessons learned from Hezbollah during their clash with Israel. Unfortunately for Hamas, Israel had also incorporated lessons learned from 2006 into their tactics and were prepared for this conflict. The Islamic Resistance Movement failed to decisively engage the IDF on the battlefield—the few times they did, Hamas was completely out-gunned and out-maneuvered—and suffered from equipment failures, lack of training, and inadequate tactics. During the battle, there was little to no information coordination and the images that portrayed the suffering of the Palestinian people were largely due to civilian journalists using new media technologies rather than any synchronized effort on the part of Hamas.

E.   EFFECT ON THE ENEMY'S SOLIDARITY AND PALESTINIAN WILLINGNESS TO PERSIST

Throughout the Gaza War, Israeli domestic support to the operation remained relatively high,[208] especially when compared to the fragmentation between the public and the government during the Lebanon War. According to the Jerusalem Post, "Surprisingly, the Israeli media were, for the most part, supportive of the IDF offensive in the Gaza Strip. Moreover, most of the Israeli political Left supported the war too; those

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[206] Haaretz Service and Jonny Singer, "Israeli NGO: Hamas 'used Civilians as Human Shields' in Gaza," *Haaretz*, March 15, 2010. http://www.haaretz.com/news/israeli-ngo-hamas-used-civilians-as-human-shields-in-gaza-1.264785.

[207] Cordesman, *The 'Gaza War'*, 10.

[208] According to a poll conducted by the Geocartographic Institute, 90 percent of Israelis supported Operation Cast Lead and 69 percent of Israelis thought the government handled the offensive appropriately. Source: "Poll: 90% Support Cast Lead; 69% Pleased with Gov't's Handling of Op," *The Jerusalem Post*, December 31, 2008.

leftists who did not were largely ignored by the public."[209] The cohesiveness amongst Israelis has little to do with Hamas' strategy and can instead be contributed to Israel's framing of the situation. Hamas failed to launch any major psychological campaign until after Israel's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, when they began propagating their "divine victory." Without a synchronized plan between kinetic and psychological actions, Hamas missed a great opportunity to influence Israeli public perceptions and opinions about the war.

Israel suffered from the psychological aspects of the Gaza War in several ways. Once the images flowing from the Strip garnered international attention, Israel was pressured into providing humanitarian relief for the Gazans. International aid groups, such as the United Nations and the Red Cross, hounded Israel claiming "access to civilians in need is poor, relief workers are being hurt and killed, and Israel is woefully neglecting its obligations to Palestinians who are trapped, some among rotting corpses in a nightmarish landscape of deprivation."[210] The international pressure exerted on Israel forced them into allocating resources towards supplying Gazans with humanitarian aid, resources that could have otherwise supported the war effort. According to Ehud Barak, his decision to open the cargo border crossings into Gaza came after "calls from the international community;"[211] however, in an attempt to reframe itself as a good guy in the eyes of the international community, Israel stated that "currently there exists no [humanitarian crisis]."[212] Jonathan Finer of the Los Angeles Times claimed that "no doubt the Israeli government is worried about sympathies generated by stories of Palestinian suffering."[213] Whether Hamas orchestrated the pressure on Israel through its

[209] Shmuel Sandler, "Analysis: How the Election Played into Operation Cast Lead," *The Jerusalem Post,* March 14, 2012.

[210] Ethan Bronner, "Aid Groups Rebuke Israel Over Conditions in Gaza," *The New York Times*, January 9, 2009.

[211] Ibrahim Barzak, "Israel Allows Humanitarian Aid into Gaza," *The Huffington Post*, accessed February 14, 2012, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2008/12/26/israel-allows-humanitaria_n_153539.html ().

[212] Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Humanitarian Aid to Gaza during IDF Operation," The State of Israel, http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Government/Communiques/2009/Humanitarian_aid_to_Gaza_following_6_month_calm.htm (accessed February 13, 2012).

[213] Jonathan Finer, "Israel's Losing Media Strategy," *The Los Angeles Times*, January 14, 2009.

media control, or civilians took it upon themselves to publish personal stories of tragedy, the fact remains that in the eyes of the international community, and especially the Arab world, the Israeli image was blemished—a conclusion supported by Cordesman.[214] Not only was their image blemished, but they were forced into diverting resources towards supplying the Gaza Strip with over a million tons of aid—much of it supplied by outside organizations and countries.

While Israel was prepared with their psychological operations, they failed to synchronize these actions with the kinetic. The failure to integrate the two types of operations provided Hamas opportunities which they were able to exploit. On the other hand, Hamas was ill-prepared for the war but during the invasion they did plant seeds for post-conflict influence. Additionally, where Israel failed to garner support through civilian reporting (due to their overly-tight control), Hamas succeeded and garnered additional Palestinian support through its army of independent bloggers and photographers. Whether part of a propaganda plot or not, Hamas was able to profit by claiming Fatah informants provided sensitive information to the IDF prior to and during the war.[215] Not wanting to exclude its rival the PA, Hamas orchestrated demonstrations with thousands of individuals in the West Bank. Protestors demonstrated in support of the Palestinians in Gaza, and against Israeli military action and the PA, citing Mahmoud Abbas as appeasing Israel.[216] This provided Hamas with additional backing, leaving them stronger than ever. The resistance was able to build its credibility and support base through its continued rocketing of Israel for the duration of the war. The number of attacks diminished as the war went on—a fact Hamas will not concede—but the rockets never ceased falling on Israeli territory.

F.   CONCLUSION

Since the conflict, Hamas seems to have fared well, though not as well as Hezbollah. As the ruling party, Hamas continues to maintain tight control over Gaza.

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[214] Cordesman, *The 'Gaza War'*, 86–87.

[215] Najib, *Hamas Launches Investigation*, accessed February 1, 2012.

[216] Najib, *Hamas 'on the Defensive' in Gaza Crisis*, accessed February 1, 2012.

Khaled Hroub surmises that "the outcome of the war has left Hamas stronger and with an enhanced legitimacy among the Palestinians and within the region."[217] Israel's incursion served Hamas well in that it allowed Hamas to play the victim card and garner international attention and support. The Islamic Resistance Movement was able to justify its use of force against the invading infidels and served as protectors for the Palestinian people, both in Gaza and the West Bank.

Israel, on the other hand, was forced into a ceasefire and withdrew its forces due to international pressure. Their emphasis quickly shifted from a military offensive to having to provide humanitarian assistance—something they claim was intentional. In the eyes of the world though, Israel's image is still blemished. There are accusations that Israel violated Palestinians' human rights, used human shield, purposely inflicted wanton havoc and destruction of Gazan infrastructure, and was relentless in its disproportionate use of force resulting in thousands of civilian deaths. At no point during the operation was Israel successful at stopping Hamas' rockets from falling on Israeli cities.[218]

Hamas' propaganda machine failed to function at the same level of integration and effectiveness that Hezbollah's did in 2006; however, it was still able to produce positive effects. The biggest psychological operation initiated by Hamas was not launched until the conclusion of Israel's incursion: the divine victory. This theme served to unite Palestinians behind Hamas while simultaneously distancing Hamas and Fatah. Fatah was accused of "supporting Israel and providing it with intelligence,"[219] while Hamas protected the Palestinians and their land. Besides the divine victory, it is difficult to ascertain what effects can be contributed to Hamas' strategy of psychological operations and what was caused by the Palestinians acting on their own volition. It is my conclusion that a majority of the images that flooded onto the internet during the conflict were the result of individual action rather than a preplanned, coordinated psychological

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[217] Hroub, *Hamas: A Beginner's Guide*, 179.

[218] Cohen and White, *Hamas in Combat*, 17.

[219] Cohen and White, *Hamas in Combat*, 19.

operation aimed at influencing international opinion. Despite this conclusion, Hamas was responsible for capitalizing on these images and spearheading the movement with multiple appeals to the international community seeking support and aid.[220]

Why is it that an organization with an inadequate information campaign can defeat a foe that possesses a much more advanced information campaign? Hamas implemented a plan that should have resulted in their defeat, but instead, in many ways, they emerged from the conflict looking better than Israel. Hamas' information campaign was severely lacking; however, they succeeded in rallying international support, mainly the Arab world, through a mass of independent, civilian bloggers. Did these bloggers achieve a quasi "CNN effect"[221] where their actions prompted international attention and forced Israeli policy-makers to respond, or was there a predisposition in the Arab world toward "liking" the Palestinians?[222] In this situation, the Palestinians embodied what many Arabs feel: a repression by the corrupt infidels of the West. In this way, there is a similarity among the Arabs—something Cialdini claims is "one of the most influential" factors that can be used to produce liking.[223] Additionally, the Arab world, Palestinian bloggers included, was subconsciously influenced through previous contact with Israel and Israel's associations, namely the United States. "Often we don't realize that our attitude towards something has been influenced by the number of times we have been

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[220] Cordesman, *The 'Gaza War'*, 71.

[221] For more information on the "CNN effect" see: Samuel Feist, "Facing Down the Global Village: The Media Impact," in The Global Century: Globalization and National Security, eds. Richard L. Kugler and Ellen L. Frost, Vol. II (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 2001), 709-725. http://permanent.access.gpo.gov/websites/nduedu/www.ndu.edu/inss/books/Books_2001/Global%20Century%20-%20June%202001/C33Feist.pdf., Lawrence Freedman, "Victims and Victors: Reflections on the Kosovo War," *Review of International Studies* 26, no. 03 (2000): 335-358. http://dx.doi.org.libproxy.nps.edu/10.1017/S0260210500003351;., Steven Livingston, "Beyond the 'CNN Effect': The Media-Foreign Policy Dynamic," in *Politics and the Press: The News Media and their Influences*, ed. Pippa Norris (Boulder, Colorado: L. Rienner Publishers, 1997), 318., Steven Livingston and Todd Eachus, "Humanitarian Crises and U.S. Foreign Policy: Somalia and the CNN Effect Reconsidered." *Political Communication* 12, no. 4 (October, 1995): 413-429., Johanna Neuman, *Lights, Camera, War: Is Media Technology Driving International Politics* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 327., Piers Robinson, The CNN Effect: The Myth of News, Foreign Policy and Intervention (New York: Routledge, 2002), 192., Daniel Schorr, "CNN Effect: Edge-of-Seat Diplomacy," *Christian Science Monitor* (November 27, 1998). http://www.lexisnexis.com.libproxy.nps.edu/hottopics/lnacademic/?verb=sr&csi=7945.

[222] Robert B. Cialdini, *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion* (New York: Morrow, 1993).

[223] Cialdini, *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*, 173.

exposed to it in the past."[224] If those exposures are negative, people will develop a negative predisposition towards that particular thing, in this case Israel. Even if there is no predisposition towards Israel, their close association with the United States can cause someone to unconsciously transfer the negative feelings from the U.S. to Israel. This subject is an area that warrants additional study as it has dramatic ramifications. If the Arab world is predisposed against the United States and its associates, what does this mean; for Israel it meant the inadequate information campaign of an inferior opponent dictated their actions.

In Operation Cast Lead, a highly asymmetric battle, Hamas proved that success is measured differently for each participant. While Israel's IDF and IAF performed exceptionally well, and their strategy was well thought-out and incorporated lessons learned from 2006, they still failed to defeat Hamas. By default, Hamas was able to emerge the victor, with the support of much of the international community standing behind the organization, a tribute to their ability to capitalize on exploiting psychological opportunities and not their military skill, equipment, or a master plan.

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[224] Cialdini, *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*, 177.

IV.   THE TALIBAN: A MODERN-DAY ROBIN HOOD?

In this case study, I will examine the Afghan Taliban's[225] actions between 2005 and 2006, in an attempt to compare their tactics, techniques, and procedures to those examined in the previous case studies. By 2005, the neo-Taliban had reorganized and refocused their campaign efforts on southern Afghanistan. For the rest of that year, and into 2006, they aggressively contested the national government's control and the coalition's occupation in an effort to regain their power and dominance. This chapter begins with a description of the Taliban's background in an effort to provide an understanding of the movement and its roots. Afterwards, the coalition's strategy will be analyzed for its successes and failures against the Taliban. The subsequent section describes the Taliban's narrative, the major themes they employed in an attempt to influence and gain the support of the local population, and the media resources they harnessed in an effort to spread their messages. Following this, I will examine the degree to which the Taliban was successful at synchronizing their psychological and kinetic actions aimed at the "foreign infidels"[226] and Karzai's "puppet" regime.[227] Next, I will attempt to determine what, if any, affects the Taliban's strategy achieved. Lastly, the chapter will conclude with a section recapping the Taliban's successes and failures and the impact they had on the American forces and the Afghan government.

A.   BACKGROUND

The most popular story explaining the Taliban's emergence tells us that in October, 1993, a group of *talibs* captured a vast arms depot at Spin Boldak, Afghanistan.

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[225] Taliban, or alternatively spelled Taleban, comes from the Arabic word *talib*, which means student, or more literally "those who seek knowledge."

[226] Henry Schuster, "The Taliban's Rules," CNN.com, accessed January 29, 2012, http://www.cnn.com/2006/WORLD/meast/12/06/schuster.12.6/index.html?iref=allsearch. Such a term is used by the Taliban to describe any non-Afghan, non-Muslim individuals. Additional terms used are "foreign invaders," or "foreign troops."

[227] Ernesto Londoño, "U.S. Struggles to Counter Taliban Propaganda," *The Washington Post*, October 1, 2010.; Omar, Mulla Mohammad, interview by Ismail Khan, "Omar Threatens to Intensify War: Talks with Karzai Govt Ruled Out," *Dawn* (January 4, 2007): accessed March 14, 2012. The Taliban often refer to Karzai's government as a puppet government of the Americans and do not recognize its existence.

From the stockpile they acquired massive quantities of AK-47s, tanks, armored personnel carriers, aircraft, artillery, and ammunition.[228] Then during the summer of 1994, amid the chaos of what can be described as Afghanistan's civil war, a warlord kidnapped, raped, and killed several girls.[229] Outraged, but unable to do anything about the events, the locals turned to a *mullah*[230] from the frontier area, Mohammad Omar, and asked for his help. Omar recruited some of his *talibs* (the same ones that had captured Spin Boldak) from the *madrassas*[231] in Pakistan[232] and the Taliban proceeded to execute the warlord and disperse his militia.[233] This story, retold with slight variations, highlights the lawless situation experienced throughout Afghanistan in 1994, after ten long years of Soviet occupation and five years of a civil war. Freed of their Soviet occupiers, the Afghan population was heavily armed and quickly reverted back to tribal laws and customs; however, control was now based on military power rather than tribal heritage. The enormous weapon surplus created a clash between warlords grappling for control of the countryside. Anarchy, brutality, and corruption prevailed; individuals were victimized by lawless gangs and bandits. This is the situation in which the Taliban was born, and which they sought to reform in favor of strict Islamic order. In their infancy, they protected the weak, battled the strong, and righted injustices; much like a modern-day version of Robin Hood.[234]

Over the next five years, the Taliban swept from one province to another in an effort to restore a sense of stability to Afghanistan. In their wake they left peace and social order where war and unrest had once reigned; they repaired government buildings,

[228] Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban*, 1st ed. (New York: Da Capo Press, 2002), 280.

[229] Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil, and Fundamentalism in Central Asia* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2001), 25.

[230] Refers to an Islamic religious leader who typically has training in a *madrassa* and is responsible for the religious affairs of a village.

[231] Refers to a school, usually primary through high-school, where Islamic subjects and religion are taught.

[232] Thomas J. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 255–258.

[233] Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A New History*, 2nd ed. (London; New York: Routledge Curzon, 2002), 185.; Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History*, 279.

schools, and hospitals, and installed governance where none had existed. The population was overwhelmingly supportive of the Taliban and their accomplishments,[235] and within five years the Taliban had consolidated their rule of Afghanistan and controlled over 90 percent of the country.[236] However, by 2001, the population's euphoric feelings of support for the Taliban, their modern-day Robin Hood, had largely diminished—along with international acceptance.

Then, on September 11, 2001, due to its associations, the Taliban found itself in America's crosshairs. In the hours and days that followed, they adamantly denied having anything to do with the attacks on America.[237] Within the U.S. government, many individuals failed to distinguish the difference between Mullah Omar's Taliban and bin Laden's al-Qaida. In a meeting with President Bush and the most senior security advisors in the White House, CIA Director George Tenet said he thought the two organizations "were really the same" and "tell the Taliban we're finished with them."[238] Just over two weeks later, on September 27th, the U.S. led military campaign into Afghanistan began with the insertion of a covert CIA team, codenamed "Jawbreaker."[239]

Fast forward to early 2002, and the Taliban that began to re-emerge—sometimes referred to as the neo-Taliban—did so from the safety of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan. They are vastly different from the Taliban that established the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan in April 1992, and are composed of three main insurgent groups: the Quetta Shura (QS), the Haqqani Network (HN), and Hizb-e-Islami Gulbedin (HIG).[240] Unlike al-Qaida, whose goals are global, the neo-Taliban's

234 Rashid, *Taliban*, 25.

235 John Ward Anderson, "Afghans Say City is Calmer Under Militants: Once-Lawless Kandahar More Secure, but Control Maintained through Strict Islamic Rules," *The Washington Post*, March 2, 1995.; "Ah, Peace," *Economist* 337, no. 7938 (October 28, 1995): 38-40.

236 Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History*, 285.

237 Jon Lee Anderson, "The Assassins," *The New Yorker,* June 10, 2002, 72. http://search.proquest.com/docview/233140948/fulltext/135BB5A85DD60591987/10?accountid=12702.

238 Bob Woodward, *Bush at War* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002), 33.

239 Bob Woodward, "CIA Led Way with Cash Handouts," *The Washington Post*, November 18, 2002.

240 Shehzad H. Qazi, *The Neo-Taliban, Counterinsurgency, and the American Endgame in Afghanistan* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for Social Policy and Understanding, 2011).

goals are localized, [241] with many of the members acting as on-call combatants due to their livelihood as farmers or laborers. The neo-Taliban consists primarily of rural Pashtuns from the Ghilzai nation,[242] who had supported the old Taliban, in-part because of the Pashtun control they previously exerted over the country.[243] Pashtun dominance, local grievances, and a patrimonial system[244] of rule contributed to the rise of the neo-Taliban, and by the end of 2005, a vast majority of the Taliban's old leaders and field commanders had joined the neo-Taliban.[245]

B. COALITION STRATEGY—"SOCIAL WORKERS DRESSED IN MILITARY FATIGUES"

> Let me focus on NATO, which is my responsibility. In general, I think we are not doing too badly. But we are fighting with one arm behind our back.
>
> When it comes to video, we are frankly in the stone age. NATO has no ability to gather video from the field, to show people what is happening. We are also barely on the field when it comes to the web. And on the military side, only 5 NATO Allies have public affairs as a military function, with training and a career path for officers. Which means artillery officers are suddenly stuck in front of a microphone.
>
> As I said—one arm tied behind our back. And the other arm is pretty weak too.
>
> > - NATO General Secretary, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer[246]

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[241] Mujahid, Zabiullah, interview by Nic Robertson, "Transcript: Afghan Taliban Spokesman Discusses War," *CNN.Com* (May 5, 2009): accessed March 14, 2012.

[242] Thomas H. Johnson, "The Taliban Insurgency and an Analysis of Shabnamah (Night Letters)," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 18, no. 3 (September, 2007): 323. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09592310701674176.

[243] Robert D. Crews and Amin Tarzi, *The Taliban and the Crisis of Afghanistan* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2008), 286–288.; *Afghanistan: The Problem of Pashtun Alienation* (Kabul; Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2003).

[244] Antonio Giustozzi, *Koran, Kalashnikov, and Laptop: The Neo-Taliban Insurgency in Afghanistan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 15–21.

[245] Anand Gopal, *The Battle for Afghanistan: Militancy and Conflict in Kandahar* (Sacramento, California: New America Foundation, 2010).

[246] Thomas Elkjer Nissen, *The Taliban's Information Warfare: A Comparative Analysis of NATO Information Operations (Info Ops) and Taliban Information Activities* (Copenhagen, Denmark: Royal Danish Defence College, 2007).

The counter-insurgency effort in Afghanistan was formed through a conglomeration of countries and organizations whose strategies varied as much as their languages. The U.S. forces, consisting primarily of Special Operations soldiers, spearheaded the incursion into Afghanistan with Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). They, in-turn, were reinforced by a coalition of soldiers from 37 other nations, all limited in various ways by their country's policy makers.[247] The multitude of forces received direction and guidance from the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)[248] until August 11, 2003 when the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) assumed command.[249] Still playing a major role, ISAF's mission was continually expanded, and by the end of 2006 they were responsible for Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) in four Regional Commands (RC) of Afghanistan. Last, but not least, there are the Afghan components: Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) composed of the Afghan National Army (ANA) and the Afghan Air Force (AAF), and the Afghan National Police (ANP). In the early years of the war the Afghan components played minor roles; however, as time passed their responsibilities increased dramatically.

As highlighted by David Betz, "the most strategically debilitating aspect of the Afghan campaign has always been the incoherence of the mission's purpose."[250] War requires a more comprehensible narrative than punishing those who attacked the United States on September 11, and without it there is no foundation for strategy, policy, or action.[251] Betz goes on to note that "the campaign in Afghanistan suffers from diverse and often contradictory narratives…For the United States the war is about 9/11…For most of the rest of the coalition the war is about the coherence of NATO and the

[247] Konstantin von Hammerstein et al., "NATO Chaos Deepens in Afghanistan: 'the Germans have to Learn how to Kill'," *Spiegel Online* (November 11, 2006): accessed March 29, 2012.

[248] ISAF was created at the end of 2001 as a result of the Bonn Conference.

[249] "Afghanistan International Security Assistance Force," ISAF, accessed March 20, 2012, http://www.isaf.nato.int/history.html.

[250] David Betz, "Communication Breakdown: Strategic Communications and Defeat in Afghanistan," *Orbis* 55, no. 4 (August 17, 2011): 615.

[251] Michael Vlahos, "The Long War: A Self-Fulfilling Prophecy of Protracted Conflict-and Defeat," *The National Interest* (September 5, 2006).

relationship with the United States."[252] Unfortunately, it has been pitifully obvious that the Taliban were beating the coalition at the information campaign, something acknowledged by Donald Rumsfeld in a speech to the Council on Foreign Relations in 2006.[253]

In the beginning of 2005, the United Nations dictated a vague allocation of responsibilities, as opposed to a specific strategy, for the coalition forces in Afghanistan. According to the concept, the U.S. was responsible for training the ANA, the Japanese were responsible for demobilizing private militias, the Germans were responsible for training the ANP, the Italians were responsible for developing a new judicial system, and the British were responsible for leading the drug eradication program.[254] Although this may have sounded good on paper, it was quickly deemed impracticable and devolved into chaos. From the shambles, ISAF issued a new strategy, if it can be called that, and shifted away from large "clear and sweep"[255] operations to instead focus on fighting a "war of ideas" and "balancing kinetic and nonkinetic activity."[256] In what is now part of the rhetoric of the war in Afghanistan, the "hearts and minds" strategy "center[ed] on winning the allegiance of the population," commonly referred to as the "center of gravity,"[257] through the employment of smaller village-focused operations. Despite the overarching "strategy," the multitude of nations produced heterogeneous results with its implementation. British forces located in the southern province of Helmand continued to be focused on the kinetic fight, while "aid and development functions [were] fundamentally absent."[258] Canadian forces elected to concentrate on the three Ds:

[252] Betz, *Communication Breakdown*, 615.

[253] Donald Rumsfeld, "New Realities in the Media Age" (New York, NY, Council on Foreign Relations, February 17, 2006).

[254] von Hammerstein et al., *NATO Chaos Deepens in Afghanistan*, accessed March 29, 2012.

[255] Giustozzi, *Koran, Kalashnikov, and Laptop*, 194.

[256] Elizabeth Rubin, "Taking the Fight to the Taliban," *The New York Times*, October 29, 2006.

[257] David Rohde, "G.I.'s in Afghanistan on Hunt, but Now for Hearts and Minds," *The New York Times*, March 30, 2004. http://www.lexisnexis.com.libproxy.nps.edu/hottopics/lnacademic/?sterms=PUBLICATION(The+New+York+times)&verb=sr&csi=6742.

[258] Zroona aw Zenhoona, *An Assessment of the Hearts and Minds Campaign in Southern Afghanistan* (London, UK: MF Publishing Ltd, 2006).

defense, diplomacy, and development, which "proved unbalanced, with an offensive 'defence' far overarching any development effort."[259] German forces acted as "social workers dressed in military fatigues" rather than "fighters trained to kill other human beings."[260] And for the U.S. forces, a "softer attitude was adopted, involving communicating with the local population, building schools, digging wells and clinics."[261] I have found no evidence suggesting an overarching, unified coalition strategy for the 2005–2006 timeframe; thus, it is impossible to determine the impact. Since a grand strategy is absent, it may be beneficial to instead focus on how various military forces interpreted and implemented the U.N.'s allocation of responsibilities within each RC.

U.S. forces found the effort to train the ANA plagued with difficulties: low literacy rates, desertions, lower than expected re-enlistments, poor recruiting practices, and a lack of funding.[262] In an effort to combat this and ensure the high quality of soldiers, the training rate was slowed and the training capacity was reduced.[263] Outside of their training mandate, U.S. forces began seeing an increased level of cooperation from the local villagers in and around Kandahar,[264] yet throughout the country they were more-and-more involved in increasingly fierce combat.[265] Despite this fact, Major General Eric Olson, commander of Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF)-76, stated that "the Taliban is a force in decline."[266] U.S. troops attributed the decline to a strategy of nation building and their "hearts and minds" campaign, although direct action missions contributed significantly. Rather than focusing solely on killing insurgents, the Americans began working to bring a better life to the people of Afghanistan. Local

[259] aw Zenhoona, *An Assessment of the Hearts and Minds*, 21.

[260] von Hammerstein et al., *NATO Chaos Deepens in Afghanistan*, accessed March 29, 2012

[261] Giustozzi, *Koran, Kalashnikov, and Laptop*, 192.

[262] Antonio Giustozzi, "Auxiliary Force or National Army? Afghanistan's 'ANA' and the Counter-Insurgency Effort, 2002–2006," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 18, no. 1 (March, 2007): 45-67. http://www.tandfonline.com.libproxy.nps.edu/doi/pdf/10.1080/09592310601173220.

[263] Obaid Younossi et al., *The Long March: Building an Afghan National Army* (Santa Monica, California: RAND, 2009), 15, 29.

[264] Giustozzi, *Koran, Kalashnikov, and Laptop*, 192.

[265] Christopher Dickey, "The Taliban's Book of Rules," *Newsweek*, December 11, 2006. http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2006/12/11/the-taliban-s-book-of-rules.html.

[266] Tim Mcgirik, "The Taliban on the Run," *Time,* March 28, 2005.

clinics were erected and U.S. medics began treating Afghan locals. Contact was made with village elders and relationships began to form. Through these contacts, Americans began liberally distributing cash intended for building bridges, wells, irrigation systems, and various other infrastructure projects; however, there is debate as to whether this cash aided with the intended purpose or was funneled to the neo-Taliban.[267] Despite the fact that American forces conducted fierce kinetic actions during 2005–2006, American officials claim that "winning over the Afghans by piecing together their war-shattered country has done more to weaken the Taliban…than any military operation."[268]

The British approach in the south was similar to that of the Americans—a tit-for-tat strategy that attempted to entice local Afghans to provide information on the neo-Taliban by offering development benefits to villages. One of the ways this was done was through the implementation of the Quick Impact Project (QIP) program. The results of the program have been varied and the feedback mixed.[269] Mohammad Daoud, then the governor of Helmand, said the QIP team "had no contact with Afghan government departments or the tribal elders of the province. Their QIP projects I called SIP projects: Slow Impact Projects."[270] Meanwhile, British officials claimed that QIP teams were on course to spend their full budget (£6.5 million) and stated that "we are trying to work within the Afghan system rather than circumvent it because the ultimate exit strategy is one where the Afghans can provide the solution to what is an Afghan problem."[271] Another strategy used by the British to entice Afghans to report on the neo-Taliban was to offer tractors to villages that cooperated; again, this was met with mixed results.[272]

[267] Mirwais Atal, "U.S. Hearts and Minds Cash Goes to Taliban," International Relations and Security Network (ISN), accessed March 29, 2012, http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Current-Affairs/Security-Watch-Archive/Detail/?lng=en&ots627=fce62fe0-528d-4884-9cdf-283c282cf0b2&ots736=4888caa0-b3db-1461-98b9-e20e7b9c13d4&id=52066.

[268] Mcgirik, *The Taliban on the Run*.

[269] Jason Burke, "Fear Battles Hope on the Road to Kandahar," *The Observer*, June 24, 2006. http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2006/jun/25/afghanistan.jasonburke.

[270] Tom Coghlan, "British 'Quick Fix' Aid for Afghans Brought to Halt by Insurgents," *The Telegraph*, February 19, 2007.

[271] Coghlan, *British 'Quick Fix' Aid for Afghans*.

[272] Patrick Bishop, "Taliban or Tractor? British Try to Win Over Peasants," *The Telegraph*, September 16, 2006.

One area in which the British approach differed from that of the Americans was when it came to the issue of poppy eradication—their primary charge. Although both sides have waffled over their stance on the issue, the Americans largely favored eradication while the British opted to leave the poppy growers alone. The British were concerned that the eradication of poppy fields would alienate poor farmers with no other choice of livelihood and drive them to support the neo-Taliban.[273] Although supposedly following the same overarching "strategy" as the Americans, the British tended to be much more concerned with "winning hearts and minds" and employed a much softer approach in dealing with Afghans.

Lacking a clear narrative, the coalition is muddled and confused as to their direction. The fact that NATO has "yet to develop an internal consensus about their strategy and mission in Afghanistan"[274] contributes greatly to the turmoil at all levels of operation. Nations squabble over the definition of terms such as security, reconstruction, nation-building, and combat operations, while at the tactical level some units apply harsh tactics, even to the point that they have been criticized for abuse and torture of Afghans,[275] while other units seek to influence Afghans' through "hearts and minds" programs. The result is a coalition whose modus operandi is devoid of strategic or operational synchronization. The haphazard manner in which coalition forces execute their assigned missions contributes to the insurgency by way of inciting revenge, increasing neo-Taliban recruitment, and reducing levels of cooperation.[276] Even the

[273] Richard Norton-Taylor, "Britain Switches Tactics to Undermine the Taliban," *The Observer*, February 26, 2007. http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2007/feb/27/afghanistan.military.

[274] Vance Serchuk, *Post-Election Strategy in Afghanistan* (Washington, D.C: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 2005).

[275] Jeffrey Smith, "Army Files Cite Abuse of Afghans," *The Washington Post*, February 18, 2005. http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A33178-2005Feb17.html.; Kevin Sack and Craig Pyes, "Cloak of Secrecy Hides Abuse in Afghanistan," *The Seattle Times*, September 25, 2006. http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/nationworld/2003274095_torture25.html.; Craig Pyes and Kevin Sack, "Gung-Ho Rogue Troops Add Torture to their Arsenal," *The Seattle Times*, September 26, 2006. http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/nationworld/2003275766_torture26.html.

[276] Luke N. Condra et al., The Effect of Civilian Casualties in Afghanistan and Iraq (Cambridge, Massachusetts: National Bureau of Economic Research, 2010). https://ronna-afghan.harmonieweb.org/CAAT/Shared%20Documents/WORKING%20PAPER-THE%20EFFECT%20OF%20CIVILIAN%20CASUALTIES%20IN%20AFGHANISTAN%20AND%20IRAQ.pdf.

announcement of a "strategic partnership"[277] in May 2005, by Presidents Bush and Karzai, contributed little to the clarification of a guiding strategy for coalition forces in Afghanistan.

C.   NEO-TALIBAN'S THEMES USED IN PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE

1.   Narrative

According to Glenn Robinson, "to effectively popularize its ideology, a social movement must be able to provide clear summations of its ideology that resonate with its target audience. Such cultural framings represent the popular, bumper-sticker version of the broader ideology of the movement;"[278] something the neo-Taliban has done by revising their narrative into what it is today, a Robin Hoodesque story. In an attempt to utilize folklore and historical battles to their advantage, the neo-Taliban labeled their fighters *mujahideen*;[279] a term which resonates well with Afghans and appeals to Muslims worldwide. The *mujahideen's* struggle is a fight to expel the foreign invaders of Afghanistan so that the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan—based on *sharia*—can be reestablished, thus ending corruption and lawlessness, and ushering in an era of peace for the people of Afghanistan. According to Afghan political analyst Jelani Zwak, "people in provinces and tribal areas mostly accept this narrative, that [the Americans] are leaving Afghanistan and the Taliban is coming back."[280]

At the core of the neo-Taliban's diagnostic frame is the lawlessness, corruption, and collective struggle of the Afghan people, all caused by infidels and their attack on Islam. According to Vlahos, this is a "deeply coded Muslim counter-narrative" to the

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[277] George W. Bush and Hamid Karzai, "Joint Declaration of the United States-Afghanistan Strategic Partnership," The White House, accessed January 15, 2012, http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2005/05/20050523-2.html.

[278] Glenn E. Robinson, "Hamas as Social Movement," in *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*, ed. Quintan Wiktorowicz (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2004), 129. See Snow and Benford, *Ideology, Frame Resonance, and Participant Mobilization*, 197–217.; Robert D. Benford and David A. Snow, "Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment," *Annual Review of Sociology* 26 (2000): 611–639.

[279] An Arabic word which means those who are engaged in *jihad* - struggle. Can also be spelled as mujahideen, mujahedin, mudžahedin, mudžahidin, mujahidīn, or mujaheddīn.

[280] Londoño, *U.S. Struggles to Counter Taliban Propaganda*

west that is "apocalyptic in nature, going back to Islam's 7th century origins."[281] Foreign troops are portrayed as invaders and an "occupying force, bent on robbing Afghanistan of its sovereignty, culture, and religion."[282] Any Afghan who assists the foreigners or works with their "puppet government" in Kabul automatically gets lumped into the category with the infidels, and therefore shares in the assignment of blame within the prognostic frame of the narrative. In this way, the neo-Taliban attempt to prevent individuals from acting in ways which would counter their movement and its goals.

Zabiullah Mujahid, a spokesman for the neo-Taliban, summed up their prognostic frame in an interview when he said "The policy is quite clear. We ask from the beginning and we say once again to enforce the *sharia* law and Islamic government in Afghanistan, to remove foreign forces from our country."[283] Although not necessarily part of their narrative, the neo-Taliban's *Layeha*[284] clearly explains the methods, strategy, and rules to follow for the infidel's expulsion and subsequent *sharia* enforcement by an Islamic government. Mujahid explains the neo-Taliban's tactics for ousting the invaders: "I want to tell you clearly we have different kinds of tactics. One of them is the suicide attack. We will not target everyone with a suicide attack…When we need a target attack we will do a target attack, when we need a bomb blast we will do the bomb blast. When there is the combat war, we will do it in that place."[285]

Although the neo-Taliban seeks to rally support for the expulsion of foreign invaders, they limit their prognostic frame to the geographical boundaries of Afghanistan; in this way their narrative varies greatly from that of al-Qaeda. Fawaz Gerges suggests that the Taliban has never been focused beyond the borders of Afghanistan and "had no intention or desire to…wage global *jihad*;"[286] an assessment confirmed by Mujahid when

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[281] Vlahos, *The Long War.*

[282] Gopal, *The Battle for Afghanistan*, 20–21.

[283] Mujahid, Zabiullah, interview by Nic Robertson, *Transcript*, accessed March 14, 2012.

[284] Dickey, *The Taliban's Book of Rules.*; Sami Yousafzai and Urs Gehriger, "A New Layeha for the Mujahideen," *Die Weltwoche,* November 16, 2006. *Layeha* is Arabic for rule book.

[285] Mujahid, Zabiullah, interview by Nic Robertson, *Transcript*, accessed March 14, 2012.

[286] Fawaz A. Gerges, *The Far Enemy: Why Jihad Went Global* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 83.

he said, "We do not want to interfere in the Pakistan Taliban affairs. We are Afghan Taliban and our policy is clear against the foreign troops…Taliban is one thing and al-Qaeda is another. They are global we are just in the region."[287] The neo-Taliban's successful prognostic frame resonance has ensured that opposition to foreign troops is "due to a perceived attack on Islam but it is an attack that is perceived to be happening within the country by foreign forces."[288] Due to their ability to successfully bridge two different frames—the expulsion of foreign invaders and the insurgency's restriction of violence to the boundaries of Afghanistan—the neo-Taliban have created frame alignment in the minds of their supporters, and potential supporters, thus producing frame resonance.[289] Because of the high degree of frame resonance and by limiting their goals to Afghanistan, the neo-Taliban actually provides increased frame amplification and seeks to ensure improved mobilization in support of their insurgent movement. The nationalistic goals serve to enlist the support of a larger number of Afghans because the population can more easily identify with the goals and they resonate well. Once the population is mobilized and has successfully driven out the invaders, then an Islamic government can be created and *sharia* enforced. "Defensive *jihads* against a Christian onslaught…will continue until the 'defeat of the crusaders' army' and 'the establishment of a pure Islamic State'. This *jihad*, according to the narrative, is a collective responsibility of *all* Muslims."[290] By incorporating the concept of an Islamic State into their narrative, the neo-Taliban successfully create a high degree of frame resonance with all Muslims, and are able to apply cosmic coercive pressures toward those with whom the frame fails to resonate.

The neo-Taliban's clearly defined problem statement serves as a call to collective action for all Muslims and acts as their motivational frame as well. Since the invading infidels are portrayed as blood thirsty war mongers who seek to terrorize the population,

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[287] Mujahid, Zabiullah, interview by Nic Robertson, *Transcript*, accessed March 14, 2012.

[288] Sarah Ladbury, in collaboration with Cooperation for Peace and Unity (CPAU), *Testing Hypotheses on Radicalization in Afghanistan: Why do Men Join the Taliban and Hizb-i Islami? How Much do Local Communities Support the?* Department of International Development, 2009).

[289] Snow et al., *Frame Alignment Processes,* 464–465.

[290] Johnson, *The Taliban Insurgency*, 331.

disrespect women, and destroy the religion of Islam, "good Muslims" are pressured into supporting the movement and its *jihad* as the only viable alternative to resist the foreign occupation. Within this narrative of "cosmic war,"[291] Islam is consumed in a divine struggle against the infidels and those who associate with them, such as the Karzai government. By framing their struggle in the light of Islam, the neo-Taliban is able to declare their purpose "just," and their cause "holy." "It is an Islamic movement that does not recognize tribal, ethnic or linguistic boundaries."[292] According to Mullah Omar, "Our religion enjoins on us to avoid from indulging in any kind of activity involving prejudices based on ethnicity. The only bond, which binds us, is the bond is Islam."[293] Not only does Islam serve to unify the insurgency, but it also amplifies their frame and garners increased support for their cause—it helps that many Muslims view the occupation as temporary.

2. Themes

The neo-Taliban closely modeled their themes around the various frames of their narrative in an effort to successfully exploit situations, ideas, and grievances that already possess varying degrees of traction within the Afghan public. Although they may skew the facts, exaggerate the numbers, and revise the situation, the final story contains an underlying theme which, at a minimum, serves to rally support against the occupation, and if successful, in favor of the neo-Taliban. The main themes employed by the insurgency movement are core issues that easily invoke deep-seated emotions unrestrained by tribal affiliation or language. "Such was the starting point from which the Taliban began its outreach, feeding on local grievances but increasingly showing confidence and a sense of momentum."[294] Within the neo-Taliban's psychological operations arsenal during 2005-2006, there were three main themes, some containing up to two sub-themes.

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[291] Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence*, 3rd, rev. and updated ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 319.

[292] Thomas Ruttig, *How Tribal are the Taliban?* (Afghanistan Analysts Network, 2010).

[293] Ruttig, *How Tribal are the Taliban?*, 16.

[294] *Taliban Propaganda: Winning the War of Words?* (International Crisis Group, 2008).

The first theme used by the neo-Taliban to sway Afghan support in favor of the movement's cause is the "time-honoured Afghan practice of attacking foreign influence—a xenophobic message that has historically resonated with the Afghan people—which the Karzai government and the Americans represent in the eyes of the Taliban."[295] To reinforce this theme, the neo-Taliban relies on a sense of nationalism, and the long standing Afghan tradition which "dictates that foreign forces will be resisted to the last"[296]—similar frames as those contained in their narrative. The neo-Taliban's messages also exploit suspicions by relying on embedded conventions that dictate that foreigners are not to be trusted. Subordinate to, yet supporting of, this theme is the premise that foreign troops are killing Afghan civilians, particularly women and children. Allegations of abuse and overreaction by foreigners, who have never been held publically accountable, are often exaggerated and repeated. "Civilian deaths resonate enormously in communities, particularly given the terrible memories of Soviet bombing campaigns."[297] As foreign forces increase the number of public engagements, the neo-Taliban is afforded a greater number of examples which they are able to exaggerate, twist, and exploit for their benefit.

The second psychological theme—borrowed from their diagnostic frame—employed by members of the neo-Taliban is one of legitimacy, authority, and power; the Karzai government is illegitimate, the Taliban possess the authority to remedy the situation, and the Taliban maintain the power over the infidels. The government in Kabul is portrayed as corrupt, inefficient, and "a puppet of the Western powers, with much imagery based on the 'green dollars' paid to those who work with the international community."[298] Central to this theme is a cosmic war where Karzai and his puppet government are lumped into the category of infidels due to their association with the crusaders—Western governments. Conversely, the Neo-Taliban depicts themselves as true Muslims and righteous followers of the Prophet Muhammad. Through these two

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[295] Johnson, *The Taliban Insurgency*, 325.

[296] Syed Saleem Shahzad, "In Search of the Taliban's Missing Link," *Asia Times*, September 16, 2006.

[297] *Taliban Propaganda: Winning the War of Words?*, 19.

[298] *Taliban Propaganda: Winning the War of Words?*, 22.

portrayals, the neo-Taliban is able to claim the moral authority to remedy the situation and expel the infidel occupiers. The neo-Taliban continually portrays the international force as weak, while portraying themselves as strong. For the Afghan populace, the neo-Taliban are able to create the illusions that: they are everywhere while coalition forces are restricted by their bases, they can attack the infidels at a time and place of their choosing while the infidels are limited by what they can find, and they have the ability to wait for the international forces' withdrawal—although, this last one may be closer to a reality. Neo-Taliban *mullahs* "are fond of saying that 'the Americans have the wristwatches, but we have the time.'"[299] The issue of endurance over time is used to instill fear into the locals and discourage anyone from providing support to the foreign forces or the Karzai government, for which the penalty is usually death.[300] Within this theme, there are undertones of international Muslim support for the *mujahideen's* cause. These messages are typically aimed at western audiences and serve to bolster the credibility of other neo-Taliban messages.[301] Rising discontent, among the Afghans, with the corruption and inefficiency of the Karzai regime fuels grievances and serves to lend credibility to this theme. In contrast to the bleak outlook portrayed of the Afghan puppet government and their infidel puppet masters, the neo-Taliban describe themselves as the legitimate and righteous champions, unwavering in their commitment, dedicated to rid Afghanistan of infidels.

The last theme espoused by the neo-Taliban is a call to *jihad*. This is a broad appeal, based on Islamic tenets, to all Muslims to assist and support their *mujahideen* brothers in the fight against the infidels; stems from the neo-Taliban's prognostic frame. A 2003 public statement issued by the neo-Taliban, "stipulated that it was every Muslim's duty to wage jihad…against the U.S. forces."[302] By using Islam as the basis

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[299] Johnson, *The Taliban Insurgency*, 327.

[300] Johnson, *The Taliban Insurgency*, 339.

[301] Nissen, *The Taliban's Information Warfare*, 7.

[302] Amin Tarzi, "Rise of the Neo-Taliban," *The Albion Monitor,* August 8, 2005.

for this theme, the *mujahideen* seek to justify their request as a mandatory duty of all Muslims. Commanders utilize this theme in an attempt to motivate the population in a call to arms, much like Mansoor Dadullah did when he said:

> I have a message to the Afghan people and to all Muslims: They must continue to wage *jihad*, wherever they may be – whether it is *jihad* of the pen, of the tongue, of the sword, or of money. What is important is that they continue with the *jihad*, because it is an individual duty incumbent upon all Muslims.[303]

Waging *jihad*, or at least the support thereof, is the final theme communicated by the neo-Taliban in an effort to promote their insurgency and garner additional support.

The neo-Taliban utilizes the low literacy rate, shallow media saturation, and rural conditions to augment their reliance on historical prejudices common among the Afghan population. Their psychological themes distort, in order to exploit, these biases in an attempt at swaying allegiances and accumulating support for their movement. Although the neo-Taliban has added and removed themes from their arsenal over time, these three themes have been consistently utilized, especially during the period being analyzed.

3. Broadcast, Print, and Internet Channels

Given the low literacy rate in Afghanistan, it could easily be assumed that the neo-Taliban is limited in their message delivery means; however, this would be a poor assumption. Surprisingly, they have created a modern, technologically advanced communications apparatus which had enabled, and enhanced, the communication of their messages to all corners of Afghanistan, and beyond, through a growing range of media formats, spanning from low to high tech. Neo-Taliban messages have been heard on: phones, radios, CDs, DVDs, audio cassettes, MP3s, and loudspeakers; they have been read on: *shabnamah*,[304] pamphlets, leaflets, magazines, and newspapers; and they have been viewed on the: television, Internet, and in person. With such a broad range of medium at their disposal, it is no wonder why the highly dispersed insurgency movement

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[303] *Taliban Propaganda: Winning the War of Words?*, 24.

[304] Johnson, *The Taliban Insurgency*, 317–344. S*habnamah* are commonly known as night letters.

has produced "notable contradictions in…messaging," and lacks a "clear vision of their objectives beyond forcing foreign forces to withdraw."[305] Despite these inconsistencies, the neo-Taliban has adapted their dissemination methods extremely well to the available 21st century technologies.

After an *ijtihad*,[306] the neo-Taliban began to rely heavily on the press, typically radio, television, and newspaper reports (things the Taliban used to ban), to advertise their often exaggerated operations. French Defense Minister Herve Morin astutely noted that the neo-Taliban understand "that public opinion is probably the Achilles' heel" of the international community.[307] In an attempt to manipulate public opinion, commanders, and especially spokesmen for the neo-Taliban, ensure they are in constant contact with both international and regional media, often providing personal cell or satellite phone numbers to ease communication.[308] In addition to advertising their operations, the neo-Taliban has utilized the media to disseminate their *layeha* to their fighters.[309]

Within the neo-Taliban's wide arsenal of paper media, their use of the traditional *shabnamah* is most notable for introducing compliance. *Shabnamah* are a "well-tested, cost-effective method of instruction and intimidation," and are usually posted at night to the walls of mosques or government buildings where there is an educated target audience willing to read the *shabnamah* to the illiterate villagers.[310] Besides the overt message stated in the *shabnamah,* this form of communication also serves to warn the local populace that the neo-Taliban is operating in the area. Not to be limited to this one method of printed communication, the neo-Taliban also rely on six monthly magazines

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[305] "Taliban Communications, Old and New," *Jane's Terrorism and Security Monitor* (November 9, 2007): accessed March 12, 2012.
http://www4.janes.com/subscribe/jtsm/doc_view.jsp?K2DocKey=/content1/janesdata/mags/jtsm/history/jtsm2007/jtsm5099.htm@current&Prod_Name=JTSM&QueryText.

[306] An amendment, or making, of a decision in sharia.

[307] Jason Motlagh, "Why the Taliban is Winning the Propaganda War," *Time,* May 3, 2009.

[308] Matthias Gebauer, "Taliban Leader Mullah Dadullah: The Star of Afghanistan's Jihad," *Spiegel Online*, March 1, 2007, accessed March 29, 2012.; *Taliban Propaganda: Winning the War of Words?*, 1–41.

[309] Tim Foxley, *The Taliban's Propaganda Activities: How Well is the Afghan Insurgency Communicating and what is it Saying?* (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), 2007).

[310] Johnson, *The Taliban Insurgency*, 320–321.

(Sirk, 'Azm, Istaqamat, al Somood, Mujahid Ghag, and Tawakkal), two quarterly magazines (Murshal and Tora Bora), and two weekly newspapers (ad-Dami^r and Basoun), as well as various other pamphlets, leaflets, and books.[311] These publications are available in a variety of languages and although many of them list an Afghan address, "it is likely that production is done in Pakistan, possibly in Peshawar and Quetta."[312] Although some of the above-mentioned periodicals are not officially sanctioned by the neo-Taliban, "the supervisors and those who published and established these media/informational publications are journalists and followers of the Islamic Emirate, even if they prefer to publish these magazines and newspapers not officially as spokespersons for the movement's media unit."[313]

Largely utilized to recruit or highlight operations, CDs, DVDs, MP4 videos, and VHS tapes appeal primarily to the illiterate masses. This form of media "negates the need to the journalist as gatekeeper and offers the advantage of speaking directly to the audience."[314] DVDs and CDs are mass produced and either sold or strewn about in the same manner in which leaflets were distributed in the past.[315] MP4s are produced and disseminated by multimedia messaging service (MMS) from cell phone to cell phone, something that appeals to the younger, more tech-savvy generation of Afghans.

The neo-Taliban has attempted to gain control of the airwaves by operating their own radio stations; however, their efforts are often sporadic and have been met with fierce resistance. According to Mufti Latifullah Hakimi, a neo-Taliban spokesman, they own and operate three stations that broadcast to Kandahar; as of early May 2005, he claimed that two of the three "will start functioning soon."[316] Hakimi claimed the purpose of radio was to "report on the realities and facts" and to introduce "the goals and

[311] al-Somood Magazine, "The Media Activities of the Taliban Islamic Movement," *Al-Somood Magazine*, January 17, 2008.; *Taliban Propaganda: Winning the War of Words?*, 1–41.

[312] *Taliban Propaganda: Winning the War of Words?*, 13.

[313] al-Somood Magazine, *The Media Activities of the Taliban Islamic Movement*.

[314] *Taliban Propaganda: Winning the War of Words?*, 14.

[315] Ivan Watson, *Taliban Enlists Video in Fight for Afghanistan,* Ivan Watson, Radio, 2006 National Public Radio (NPR).

[316] Amin Tarzi, "Taliban Radio Back on the Air," Radio Free Europe, accessed March 15, 2012, http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1058786.html.

objectives of the Islamic Movement of Taliban."[317]   Despite the fact that the stations have to broadcast from mobile transmitters and only for a few hours at dawn and dusk, for fear of detection by the coalition forces, neo-Taliban supporters view transmissions as an accomplishment.[318]   For a more enduring message, audio cassettes are utilized. They often possess a large appeal to people's sense of nationalism through the use of songs, poetry, and stories rich with vivid imagery and history.[319]   Even if the listeners are not supporters of the movement, they still carry the cassettes because they enjoy the music and the cassettes serve as "protection" if stopped at neo-Taliban roadblocks.[320]

In an effort to reach outside the boarders of Afghanistan, the neo-Taliban has learned from other insurgencies and adopted the use of the Internet; although, coalition efforts have fiercely, yet ineffectually, resisted this move. This media has largely focused on promoting *jihad* through official websites, Facebook pages, YouTube videos, and Twitter feeds.[321]   The sites typically are published in a variety of languages, to include English, and like many messages broadcast through other medium; the messages on the Internet are often exaggerated claims of operations.

D.   SYNCHRONIZATION BETWEEN PSYCHOLOGICAL AND KINETIC ACTIONS

The neo-Taliban appear to have a schizophrenic coordination between their words and deeds; their psychological and kinetic actions. They claim their goal is not to take over the government, yet they usurp governmental control and influence by holding their own *sharia* courts to resolve disputes. In a phone interview, neo-Taliban spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid stated "one thing should be clear: our target is not taking the government. If that was our aim, we could have continued our rule simply by handing

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[317] Tarzi, *Taliban Radio Back on the Air*.

[318] Amin Tarzi, "Neo-Taliban Free to Communicate with Media," Radio Free Europe, accessed March 15, 2012, http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1060528.html.

[319] al-Somood Magazine, *The Media Activities of the Taliban Islamic Movement*.

[320] *Taliban Propaganda: Winning the War of Words?*, 1–41.

[321] Londoño, *U.S. Struggles to Counter Taliban Propaganda*; Foxley, *The Taliban's Propaganda Activities*, 1–19; al-Somood Magazine, *The Media Activities of the Taliban Islamic Movement*.

over Osama."[322]   However, the neo-Taliban's kinetic actions contradict this statement. They established "their own 'no-frills' administration…centered on the judiciary, whose services were in high demand in the countryside,"[323] and individuals who opted not to utilize these courts were punished.   The neo-Taliban has been, at times, adept at exploiting weaknesses, while other times they appear inconsistent and disorganized with their rhetoric claiming one thing and their violence supporting something else.

One arena in which the neo-Taliban appear confused is the delegation of a spokesperson. On numerous occasions, "several people have claimed to be speaking on behalf of the neo-Taliban, often in contradictory terms."[324] Recognized by the leaders, the neo-Taliban sought to rectify the situation by creating a Cultural Affairs Commission, whose responsibility is to coordinate, synchronize, and publish messages for the insurgency. As reported in al-Somood magazine:

> The Taliban Islamic movement has recognized the extraordinary importance of the news media…It is convinced that the media are among the most important elements of psychological warfare-and the war of morale, which is by no means less important than the field war. Accordingly, the movement undertook to begin its media activity, together with its military activity…The movement appointed a unit consisting of the journalistic cadres who formerly occupied important media positions within the Government of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan.[325]

The neo-Taliban has recognized the importance of synchronizing its words and deeds, and has sought to do so with the creation of the Cultural Affairs Commission; however, it is still too early to tell what effect, if any, this will have.

1.   Military Operations

The neo-Taliban has been highly successful when it comes to attacks against foreign troops, with the aim to kill, maim, or demoralize them. Their rhetoric is clear in

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[322] "Exclusive Interview with Taliban Spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid," The NEFA Foundation, accessed March 15, 2012, http://www.nefafoundation.org/newsite/file/nefatalibanintvu0108-2.pdf.

[323] Giustozzi, *Koran, Kalashnikov, and Laptop*, 111.

[324] Tarzi, *Rise of the Neo-Taliban*.

[325] al-Somood Magazine, *The Media Activities of the Taliban Islamic Movement*.

that they seek to expel the foreign occupiers from Afghanistan, and their kinetic actions reinforce their words. Tactics such as the employment of improvised explosive devices (IED), suicide bombers, snipers, and vehicle borne improvised explosive devices (VBIED) have exacted a heavy toll on coalition forces. "The Taliban counted on the fact that the international forces would rely heavily on air power to respond to such incursions. This would cause collateral damage no matter how much caution the international forces displayed, offsetting any tactical gains such air strikes achieved."[326] Situations such as this typically result in local Afghan condemnation, increased neo-Taliban support, and more often than not, an international outcry.[327] The neo-Taliban was highly successful with this and achieved a high level of synchronization between their kinetic and psychological actions.

When it comes to the issue of the Karzai government and its supporters, the neo-Taliban produce a low level of synchronization between their kinetic and psychological actions. The messages of the neo-Taliban leave no room for doubt as to how they view the Karzai government and anyone who works with them, to include teachers and non-governmental organizations (NGO). In their *layeha,* the neo-Taliban clearly state that individuals are "forbidden to work as a teacher," and that "anyone who works as a teacher for the current puppet regime must receive a warning."[328] If the teacher does not quit their job they must be "beaten," and if they still refuse a neo-Taliban leader "must kill him."[329] As for NGOs, the *layeha* states "[they] must be treated as the government is treated…we tolerate none of their activities…If a school fails to heed a warning to close, it must be burned."[330]   Time and again, the neo-Taliban have demonstrated their synchronization and enforcement of these statements by burning schools and killing

[326] William Maley and Daoud Yaqub, *A Long Hot Summer: Crisis and Opportunity in Afghanistan* (Sydney, New South Whales: Lowy Institute for International Policy, 2007). For a more detailed discussion on the effects of civilian casualties, see Condra et al., *The Effect of Civilian Casualties*, 1-69.

[327] Chris Sands, "'We Want the Taliban Back' Say Ordinary Afghans," *The Independent,* April 8, 2007.

[328] Yousafzai and Gehriger, *A New Layeha*.

[329] Yousafzai and Gehriger, *A New Layeha*.

[330] Yousafzai and Gehriger, *A New Layeha*.

civilians associated with the government.[331] However, there have also been statements by the neo-Taliban that they "are supporters of education. And the people who burn schools, they are not the Taliban. They are the enemies of Islam, they are the enemies of the Taliban.... Burning schools is not allowed under Islam."[332] The neo-Taliban display a level of consistency, albeit relatively small, with their messages and deeds about the government and those who work for it; however, when it comes to schools and teachers, the neo-Taliban appear highly confused and lack any synchronization between their psychological and kinetic actions.

The neo-Taliban experience a lack of coordination with regard to their treatment of civilians—those with no governmental, NGO, or teacher affiliation. Neo-Taliban spokesman Mujahid said, "We do not want to kill civilians. We sacrifice ourselves for the safety of the civilians; we never want to kill the civilians. Also we ask of the civilians don't be close to the troops, be away from them not to be targeted."[333] However, their actions are quite different.[334] Civilians are killed, and when it comes time to claim responsibility for the attack, there is often great confusion among groups of neo-Taliban with some claiming the attack and others denying their part in the attack.[335] Giustozzi defines this as the neo-Taliban's "(often clumsy) attempt to manage violence and to target it carefully."[336] In many instances of targeted killings, *shabnamah* were left

[331] For more information about these types of events see James Palmer, "Taliban Kill Afghan Students, Burn Schools," *The Washington Times*, May 28, 2009; Giustozzi, *Koran, Kalashnikov, and Laptop*, 102-107; "Afghanistan: Violence Surges," Human Rights Watch, accessed May 3, 2012, http://www.hrw.org/news/2005/05/23/afghanistan-violence-surges; *Lessons in Terror: Attacks on Education in Afghanistan* (Human Rights Watch, 2006). http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/afghanistan0706.pdf.

[332] Scott Baldauf, "Taliban Turn to Suicide Attacks," *Christian Science Monitor*, February 3, 2006. http://www.lexisnexis.com.libproxy.nps.edu/hottopics/lnacademic/?verb=sr&csi=7945.

[333] Mujahid, Zabiullah, interview by Nic Robertson, *Transcript*, accessed March 14, 2012.

[334] *Afghanistan: Civilians Bear Cost of Escalating Insurgent Attacks* (Human Rights Watch, 2009). http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/ioptqassam0809web.pdf.

[335] Agencies, "Death Toll in Afghan Bomb Attacks Rises to Four," *China Daily*, July 2, 2004; Reuters, "US 'Spy' Slain in Waziristan," *The Daily Lahore Post,* November 4, 2006.

[336] Giustozzi, *Koran, Kalashnikov, and Laptop*, 116–117.

warning the target to cease their activities or face the consequences; however, with the killing of civilians lacking a connection to the government, attacks have been indiscriminate.[337]

E.   EFFECT ON THE COALITION'S SOLIDARITY AND AFGHANS' WILLINGNESS TO RESIST THE INFIDEL OCCUPIERS

Due to the neo-Taliban's deadly surge in violence, and their enhanced number of missions, coalition deaths increased greatly during the period in question. During 2005, the number of coalition military members killed more than doubled from the previous year; in 2006 that number was more than triple the number of deaths in 2004.[338] Despite the dramatic increase in coalition deaths, there was little change to the level of American support for the war—Iraq remained in the spotlight. Similarly, NATO countries continued to lend their support for the war in Afghanistan, and even to the point that their level of support dramatically increased. Yes, there was infighting between the coalition members; however, it was mainly due to differences of opinions related to strategy and not the support for the war. The neo-Taliban's ability to produce a dramatic increase in the coalitions' body count did little to deter their involvement, sew discord, or sway support on the home front.

When analyzing the impact the neo-Taliban has achieved on local Afghans and their willingness to support the movement—or at the very least, to not support coalition forces—it is critical to understand the two main factors linked with the success, or failure, of counterinsurgency operations: "(1) the degree of local support for the government and (2) external support for insurgents, including sanctuary."[339] At the time the neo-Taliban

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[337] *Afghanistan: Civilians Bear Cost,* 1–28; *The Human Cost: The Consequences of Insurgent Attacks in Afghanistan* (Human Rights Watch, 2007). http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/afghanistan0407webwcover.pdf.

[338] iCasualties.org, "Operation Enduring Freedom," iCasualties.org, accessed April 20, 2012, http://icasualties.org/oef/.

[339] Seth G. Jones, *Improving U.S. Counterinsurgency Operations: Lessons Learned from Afghanistan* (Santa Monica, California: RAND, 2008).

experienced a "violent revival"[340] and the coalition forces felt the "fiercest fighting since the fall of the Taliban regime,"[341] there appeared to be little governmental security and protection; however, most Afghans supported their government and felt it was on the right path towards peace. In a 2006 ABC/BBC World Service poll,[342] 64 percent of Afghans felt that the present government was doing excellent/good work (down from 80 percent the previous year) combatting the top two problems facing the country: violence (33 percent) and the Taliban (24 percent).[343] More than half of the population expressed some degree of confidence that the parliament in Kabul was working for their benefit (down from over 75 percent in 2005), and an overwhelming majority of Afghans (88 percent) said they preferred the current government ruling Afghanistan rather than the Taliban (again, down from 91 percent the previous year).[344] Despite the increased level of violence, "most Afghans say the government and local police alike have a strong presence in their area. Few say so of the Taliban…[and] big majorities continue to call the U.S. led invasion a good thing for their country (88 percent)."[345] It is obvious that, while free of duress, a majority of the population prefers, and supports, the local Karzai regime over the neo-Taliban. Many Afghans remember what life was like while living under the rule of the Taliban and prefer not to go back to those conditions; however, when faced with coercion or the threat of violence, this may not be so.

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[340] Robert E. Hunter, "A Race Against Time," *The Observer*, November 16, 2006. http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2006/nov/16/theeusturninafghanistan?INTCMP=SRCH.

[341] Paul Wiseman, "Revived Taliban Waging 'Full-Blown Insurgency'," *USA Today*, June 20, 2005.

[342] Polling data was pulled from the years 2005-2006 because that is the time period in which the neo-Taliban is being analyzed. More current polling data is available in an ABC News/BBC/ARD poll released January 11, 2010, containing the same questions. See: Gary Langer, "Views Improve Sharply in Afghanistan, Though Criticisms of the U.S. Stay High," ABC News, accessed May 16, 2012, http://abcnews.go.com/images/PollingUnit/1099a1Afghanistan-WhereThingsStand.pdf.

[343] Gary Langer, "Strife Erodes Afghan Optimism Five Years After the Taliban's Fall," ABC News, accessed April 3, 2012, http://abcnews.go.com/images/politics/afghanistan_poll_061205.pdf.

[344] Langer, *Strife Erodes Afghan Optimism*, 18–19.

[345] Gary Langer, "2006 Poll: Strife Erodes Afghan Optimism," ABC News, accessed April 3, 2012http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/PollVault/story?id=2702516&page=1.

F.   CONCLUSION

Unlike the beginnings of the pre-2001 Taliban who protected the weak, battled the strong, and righted injustices, the neo-Taliban have done little to ingratiate themselves with the Afghan populace.   Instead, the nationalistic insurgency has conducted an effective terror campaign, and at best, a moderately effective influence campaign seeking the support of the population against the foreign infidels and the puppet government in Kabul. While forcefully exerting their power, the neo-Taliban has successfully bent the population to their will; however, once the neo-Taliban has been cleared out of an area, they experience little to moderate control over the population.   In comparing the neo-Taliban to Hezbollah and Hamas, there is one striking difference: the neo-Taliban have opted to stay out of the political arena and instead have maintained their movement strictly as a violent opposition to the government and not as an alternative to it.

Attacking foreign influence, the neo-Taliban's main theme, has resonated well with the population, but only to the point where it has elicited implicit support for the movement. In addition to a low level of synchronization between the psychological and kinetic, the neo-Taliban's narrative has failed to resonate to the degree that it stirs a majority of the populace into providing explicit support; something the insurgency requires in order to be a viable alternative to the government. The kinetic attacks of the neo-Taliban, against coalition forces, mesh well with their messages calling for the expulsion or killing of infidels. However, the messages have not had the desired result; they have failed to produce a large uprising of individuals willing to support the cause with *jihad*—despite the cosmic nature and "just" purpose espoused by the neo-Taliban.

Although the neo-Taliban has been able to fuel existing grievances among the local population and exploit those complaints in an effort to undermine the government, the insurgency has failed to produce "a large-scale shift in the mood of the Afghan population towards the Taliban as a result of their efforts to influence them."[346]   Their lack of effectiveness to rally support from the populace means that "significant Taliban progress in the northern half of the country remains unlikely…No significant shift in

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[346] Foxley, *The Taliban's Propaganda Activities*, 1.

popular attitude is likely in 2007–2008 unless the Taliban are able to demonstrate an increasing (and more substantial) presence in the south of the country."[347] Once again, the neo-Taliban has experienced only moderate success with purporting its narrative, and the synchronization with kinetic actions is poor. The increased pressure by coalition forces has largely prevented the neo-Taliban from following through on their threats and pushed the neo-Taliban to increasingly rely or terror tactics; ensuring their failure to foment a national movement of support.

The coalition has been plagued by conflicting narratives, which have served to confuse the target audiences rather than enlist their support. According to Richard Hallaran, strategic communication is "a way of persuading other people to accept one's ideas, policies, or courses of action."[348] With this definition in mind, it is easy to see that the coalition has failed to make significant progress in affecting the population's view of the insurgents or the Afghan government. In analyzing the conflict in Afghanistan and attempting to discern a cause of the dissatisfaction, David Betz concludes, "ISAF's strategic communications score poorly…It is hard to find fleeting episodes of coherence let alone a sustained pattern of it…In practice, none of the ideal elements are present as they should be."[349] As long as the narrative is muddled there will be a poor level of synchronization between it and the physical acts of war.

Although the neo-Taliban has yet to drive the occupation force from Afghanistan, or to oust Karzai and his regime from power, they are still waging their *jihad* across the country. Despite the coalition's dramatic increase in attacks, their narrative is still confused and their messages lacking. An overwhelming majority of Afghans (89 percent) do not view the neo-Taliban favorably, while 74 percent of Afghans (down from

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[347] Foxley, *The Taliban's Propaganda Activities*, 1.

[348] Richard Halloran, "Strategic Communication," *Parameters* 37 (Autumn, 2007): 5. Tatham expounds on this by defining it as "A systematic series of sustained and coherent activities, conducted across strategic, operational and tactical levels, that enables understanding of target audiences, identifies effective conduits, and develops and promotes ideas and opinions through those conduits to promote and sustain particular types of behavior." Steve Tatham, *Strategic Communication: A Primer* (Shrivenham, England: Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, 2008).

[349] Betz, *Communication Breakdown*, 628.

83 percent in 2005) view the United States positively.[350] Unfortunately, it is difficult to draw correlations between these figures and the actions of either competitor. What we have seen though is that due to an incoherent narrative with low levels of synchronization, the conflict between the coalition and the neo-Taliban has dragged on into a prolonged stalemate with neither side effectively coopting the population's support. The longer the conflict drags on, the more dissatisfied individuals will become; the only question, who will they blame?

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[350] Langer, *Strife Erodes Afghan Optimism*, 22.

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V. CONCLUSION

A. INTRODUCTION

In this final chapter, each case study is evaluated for its internal strengths and weaknesses, and then compared externally to the other case studies in an effort to evaluate effectiveness. The case studies are measured using the following criteria: how well did the narrative resonate, was preemptive psychological warfare employed, to what degrees were kinetic and psychological actions synchronized, how effective was the overall strategy for the organization, and was the strategy successfully countered? Limits and constraints for various aspects of the research are then brought forward, followed by the counterarguments to waging warfare psychologically. Finally, the chapter will conclude with a section discussing the implications for U.S. Military Information Support.

B. CASE STUDY COMPARISON

The case studies of Hezbollah, Hamas, and the neo-Taliban offer three differing examples of how the integration and use of psychological operations can affect the outcome of war. Each of the three organizations applied the principles of coercion and persuasion differently—some more effectively than the others. As a result, Hezbollah, Hamas, and the neo-Taliban experienced varying degrees of effectiveness. Conversely, each organization's opponents applied differing strategies, with vastly different goals, with the aim at defeating the protagonists. In all three case studies the opponents achieved varying levels of success with their strategies. Table 1 summarized each organizations success and failures as measured against the criteria required to achieve a more effective form of warfare—warfare waged psychologically. Within all three case studies there is much to be learned and gained, should we be willing to apply the lessons.

Hezbollah, Hamas, and the neo-Taliban have all effectively utilized religion and the idea of a cosmic war in their framing. Doing so helped each organization triumph over their enemies. Hezbollah will liberate Jerusalem and "obliterate" Israel, Hamas will

secure Palestine as an Islamic *waqf,* and the neo-Taliban will establish the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan with *sharia* as the foundation. By framing the situation as they have, each organization has pitted Islam against infidels and in doing so they seek to garner support from Islamic individuals worldwide.

Organization	Narrative Resonance	Preemptive PSYWAR	Degree of Synchronization	Effectiveness	Successfully countered?
Hezbollah	High	Yes	High	High	No
Hamas	Moderate	No	Low	Low[351]	Sort of[352]
Neo-Taliban	Low	No	Low	Low	Stalemate[353]

Table 1.   Comparison of attributes from each case study

1.   Hezbollah

Hezbollah as an SMO has not only experienced success at defeating a more technologically superior military through the synchronization of psychological and kinetic actions, but also at rebranding itself into a political organization. By painting anti-Israeli sentiments into a broad religiously mandated struggle, Hezbollah expanded their support base and attracted individuals that view change through political means as more congruent to their personal beliefs. During the 2006 War with Israel, Hezbollah's asymmetric strategy was highly successful at influencing public opinion, garnering support for the organization, and demoralizing the IDF. In the end, Israel was forced to withdraw from Lebanon, and Hezbollah declared a "divine victory."

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[351] It should be noted that Hamas by itself was able to achieve a low level of effectiveness against Israel; however, if the actions by the Palestinian civilian bloggers, photographers, and videographers are taken into consideration, the effect on Israel was medium.

[352] Without the international support, garnered by the activism of Palestinian civilians, Israel would have successfully countered Hamas. As it was, Israel ensured they bought enough time to allow the IAF and IDF to accomplish their objectives, and to that extent, they were able to counter Hamas.

[353] The neo-Taliban has only been successfully countered to the degrees that they have been slowed in the execution of operations, and the synchronization of psychological and kinetic operations has been hindered. The coalition has been ineffective at modifying perceptions of the neo-Taliban or the Afghan central government.

Hezbollah's highly synchronized psychological and kinetic actions were responsible for Israel's failure to achieve their objectives, and Hezbollah's subsequent growth. Contrary to conventional thinking regarding warfare, Hezbollah let their psychological objectives dictate kinetic actions; they ensured violence was used when and where it could most affect the psychology of their enemy. Their psychological warfare unit specialized in targeting non-combatants with messages aimed at garnering support,[354] but the unit was just as effective when it targeted the IDF and SLA. The messages supported Hezbollah's overarching goals and were in turn reinforced by synchronized, pre-planned kinetic actions. What made Hezbollah's job that much easier was the fact that Israel insisted on using conventional tactics, espoused no clear narrative, and promoted ambiguous goals. All three facts allowed Hezbollah's messages to go largely uncontested.

Unlike Hamas or the neo-Taliban, Hezbollah[355] used social institutions as an integral part of their strategy to wage warfare psychologically. They were prepared to mobilize and employ their institutions when it was clear that the Lebanese government could not, or would not, respond to a particular situation. After Lebanese cities were attacked by Israeli rockets, Hezbollah was quick to assume responsibility for clearing the rubble, rebuilding houses, ensuring schools were operating, maintaining functioning public utilities, and providing visible reassurances to the Lebanese people that Hezbollah was ensuring their security against the aggressive Israelis. The highly effective social institutions backed by Hezbollah were crucial to their psychological strategy and served to rally increased support for their cause.

A final factor that contributed to Hezbollah's high degree of success is the fact that they effectively reframed their organization as a political party. Doing so allowed them to amass a much broader support base by utilizing the technique of frame extension.

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[354] An example of this, as described in Chapter II, is when a Christian woman responded to Hezbollah's support theme messages by giving the organization a $15,000 check to purchase more Katyusha rockets.

[355] This is not meant to diminish Iran's part in manipulating and supporting Hezbollah as a proxy. See Robert Baer, Sleeping with the Devil: How Washington Sold our Soul for Saudi Crude, 1st ed. (New York: Crown, 2003).

Individuals that were unlikely to support a terrorist organization now saw that Hezbollah was attempting to work within the confines of the political system to affect change, and thus the individuals were willing to lend their support. Without reframing the organization the way they did, it is safe to assume that Hezbollah's support base would have been dramatically smaller.

2. Hamas

When Israel initiated operation Cast Lead against Hamas, Hamas was ill prepared to defend the Gaza Strip. Their military capability and execution was severely lacking—in large part due to the fact that Israel had implemented lessons learned from the 33-Day War with Hezbollah. Israel had undergone radical changes since extracting itself from the Lebanese mud and this time they conveyed a clear narrative with the aim of achieving very specific goals. Hamas on the other hand was muddled in their messaging and failed to implement a synchronized psychological campaign until hostilities began to wane.

At the time of Israel's invasion of the Gaza Strip, Hamas had a well prepared kinetic defensive plan. However, their execution of that plan failed, in part due to Israel's adaptation of tactics using lessons learned from the 33-Day war, and also due to issues internal to Hamas. One internal issue that backfired on Hamas was the use of human shields. At first, this tactic appeared to achieve its purpose; however, once the use of this tactic spread throughout the international community, Hamas was condemned.

Another aspect of Hamas' military tactics that was severely lacking was the synchronization between the kinetic and psychological operations. Kinetic operations were executed largely independent of, and without regard for, psychological operations. It is evident that within the planning, little consideration was given to the effects of an operation, other than the physical destruction of the enemy. Not until towards the end of the conflict was there a hint of psychological operations: when Mashal claimed a "great victory." Unfortunately, his claim was hollow and failed to achieve any significant effect; the claim lacked any synchronization with the physical, something the populace noticed.

Israel saw firsthand the effects of Hezbollah's psychological operations during the 33-Day War, so when they attacked Hamas, they were ready to implement their own campaign of psychological warfare. From the very beginning, Israel's incursion into Gaza was framed as a defensive operation aimed at protecting Israeli citizens from the lethality of Hamas' Katyusha rockets. With all members of the Israeli government echoing the same message, Israel was able to buy enough time from the international community for the IAF and IDF to accomplish their missions. This was unfortunate for Hamas, who sought to end the conflict quickly. Israel espoused a unified, synchronized, and well planned narrative that was reinforced by the way in which they framed various issues. Doing so created a climate which Israel was able to exploit to their advantage.

One thing Hamas did exceptionally well, although I suspect it was unintentional, was the activation of an army of bloggers and photo journalists who documented the harsh realities of war. This allowed images, videos, and personal stories of suffering to escape the Israeli media blackout across the Gaza strip and be transmitted around the world. The Palestinian activists armed with cameras and laptops were the most effective weapons Hamas exhibited. The actions of the advocates prompted international attention, rallied support, and forced policy makers to respond—Israel was coerced into providing aid.

3. Neo-Taliban

The neo-Taliban's case is one where the organization has achieved little success due to the employment of uncoordinated psychological operations. Instead, they have opted to wage a campaign of terror that has caused the population to respond out of fear—far less effective than responding by choice. The neo-Taliban's narrative is adequate; however, their coordination of action and influence is severely lacking. The one benefit the organization has relied on is the fact that the coalition's performance is not much better.

The neo-Taliban has, for the most part, an easily understood narrative with clear prognostic, diagnostic, and motivational frames. They have achieved frame amplification by espousing nationalistic goals—something most relevant to a large swath of the

populace. However, the neo-Taliban's motivational frame is probably the weakest. Although they use religion as a pressure point, they have only experienced uneven success. They have failed to inspire a large active support base for their organization.[356]

The area where the neo-Taliban has failed most miserably is the coordination of their psychological and kinetic actions. On multiple occasions they espouse one thing, yet their actions are contradictory—the examples of *shabnamah* could be argued as an exception. The neo-Taliban has even struggled to clearly delineate who speaks on behalf of the organization; at times multiple spokespersons have voiced contradictory messages. Similarly, on the issue of schools and school teachers, the neo-Taliban has been unable to promote one synchronized message. Instead, in one district the neo-Taliban may burn schools, while in a neighboring district they claim to support schools. This lack of consistency does little to promote influence, and instead creates confusion.

Unlike Hezbollah and Hamas, the neo-Taliban has refrained from venturing into the political arena. In fact, they have clearly stated they have no political intentions or desires.[357] However, this certainly is not the belief shared by all neo-Taliban members as the organization is highly fragmented.[358] This, coupled with their tactics, has ensured the organization remains firmly established as a terrorist organization rather than an SMO. By doing so, the neo-Taliban have severely limited the pool of people from which they can draw support.

To the neo-Taliban's benefit, the coalition has presented a muddled and contradictory narrative with a distinct lack of an overarching strategy. The multiple conflicting narratives have served to confuse the Afghans and ensure they remain as fence sitters, ripe for the neo-Taliban's influence. The coalition has failed to gain the

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[356] The neo-Taliban's momentum was decreased in 2010 and 2011, but there is little evidence this was due to the kinetic actions of the troop surge. With the additional forces, the neo-Taliban's inconsistent messaging was highlighted by increased coalition efforts at preemptive messaging. This hindered frame linkage and resonation of the neo-Taliban's messages amongst the Afghan people—their main target audience.

[357] See Zabiullah Mujahid's 2008 statement: "Taking over the government is not our target." *Exclusive Interview*, accessed March 15, 2012.

[358] Rashid, *Taliban*, 279; Giustozzi, *Koran, Kalashnikov, and Laptop*, 259.

support of the populace to assist with the accomplishment of the coalitions' mission, or to back the Afghan government. Fortunately, the neo-Taliban has proven no more adept at securing the population's active support.

C. CONSTRAINTS, LIMITATIONS, AND FURTHER STUDY

The case studies examined here bring to light some constraints and limitations for the theory of waging warfare psychologically. Further exploration and study is necessary to determine whether these factors have any noteworthy effect, whether that influence is positive or negative, and to what degree the effect is significant to the idea of waging warfare psychologically.

Probably the most significant constraint presented by these three cases is the fact that in all three instances the protagonist organization is under attack from outsiders— individuals or organizations external to the boundaries that the protagonist's organization claims as their home territory. This presents the aggressors with unique challenges as they have a tendency to be viewed unfavorably by the populace as foreigners, if not invaders. This situation allows an opportunity for the organizations under attack to craft a narrative based on victimhood.[359] In his book, Cialdini offers six tactics,[360] or weapons of influence as he calls them, that can be used effectively, either for or against the protagonist's narrative.[361] To differing degrees, Hezbollah, Hamas, and the neo-Taliban all utilized the concept of victimhood and experienced various levels of success.

Similarly, in the case of the neo-Taliban, the Afghan central government came to be portrayed, and viewed, as an outsider, or a "puppet" of the invading forces. Karzai's close association[362] with the coalition, specifically the U.S., allowed the neo-Taliban to

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[359] Juliana Ochs, "The Politics of Victimhood and its Internal Exegetes: Terror Victims in Israel," *History and Anthropology* 17, no. 4 (December, 2006): 355–368.

[360] The six weapons of influence are: reciprocation, commitment and consistency, social proof, liking, authority, and scarcity. Source: Cialdini, *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*.

[361] Cialdini, *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*.

[362] Cialdini, *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*.

frame the entire Afghan government as being a part of the outsiders' organization—adversely affecting the government's image. The significance of this is questionable; however, it is something that warrants additional inspection.

Lastly, the limits and constraints of predisposition, as it relates to waging warfare psychologically, deserve closer examination. In the case of Hamas, were individuals and states within the Arab world predisposed towards "liking" the organization because of a shared similarity?[363] If so, how can we overcome the subconscious idea of "liking" when we are the outsiders and the ones who appear most dissimilar? One possibility at the heart of unconventional warfare (UW) is the idea of working through indigenous peoples rather than spearheading operations ourselves. Assisting local resistance movements would partially mitigate issues of local resonance. Liking and predisposition for support are closely related; further research needs to be conducted on these subjects.

D.   COUNTERARGUMENTS

There are several counterarguments to the idea of waging warfare psychologically, especially when suggesting the employment of this strategy by the United States. The main counter to the U.S. utilizing this approach is "What reasons are there to adjust the current way of waging war?" This is a naive and romantic line of reasoning that implies the U.S. is at the pinnacle of excellence and therefore cannot improve the way in which war is conducted. Based on the quagmire, and ultimate stalemate, described in the neo-Taliban case study, it is evident that the United States must improve on its strategy, especially in irregular warfare. The U.S. has demonstrated its capability to engage enemies on two fronts, and employ unconventional warfare tactics; however, this does not relieve the U.S. from its responsibility to explore new tactics and methods for conducting warfare more effectively.

The second and third counterarguments, which can be grouped together due to their reasoning, to waging warfare psychologically, are that "only smaller forces can successfully wage warfare psychologically," and "only forces that have the home field

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[363] Cialdini, *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*.

advantage will be successful in waging warfare psychologically." The third counter argument in essence posits that local resonance cannot be overcome. These statements are inaccurate and based on faulty assumptions. The underlying concepts of persuasion and influence do not just apply in one direction, i.e. from the weaker individual to the stronger. Cialdini extensively shows how the "weapons of influence" are so common that they are utilized by everyone, often times unconsciously, from automobile dealers, to real estate agents, to accident victims. The principles of influence are largely universal and not bounded by positions of strength, weakness, or home field advantage—although the effects and individual susceptibilities may be varied.[364]   One way to counter the receptiveness to the home field advantage is to ensure that within the narrative and messages, there are locally resonating frames. This will ensure the clear transmission of an easily understood message.

Combat is precisely the time when the principles of influence should be utilized. The uncertainty created by an environment of war mitigates the constraint of local resonance and allows for Cialdini's six principles to be utilized to their fullest. As Cialdini notes:

> When we are rushed, stressed, uncertain, indifferent, distracted, or fatigued, we tend to focus on less of the information available to us. When making decisions under these circumstances, we often revert to the rather primitive but necessary single-piece-of-good-evidence approach.[365]

While embroiled in combat, forces are easily confused in the fog of war. For this reason, combat is when the full weight of the principles of influence and persuasion should be brought to bear on the enemy in an effort to spare as much national treasure as possible; however, this should not reduce the pre-combat influence efforts.

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[364] See: Robert H. Gass and John S. Seiter, Persuasion, Social Influence, and Compliance Gaining, 4th Edition ed. (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2010), 384; Daniel J. O'Keefe, Persuasion: Theory & Research, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 2002), 365; James Price Dillard and Michael Pfau, The Persuasion Handbook : Developments in Theory and Practice (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 2002), 874.

[365] Cialdini, *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*, 275.

E.   IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. MILITARY INFORMATION SUPPORT

What does all of this mean for the United States and our military? There are several lessons that can be applied immediately. First and foremost, is the idea of a strong narrative. The narrative is the foundation for effective warfare and if it is confusing, complicated, or lacking there is no way to lend credibility to it through physical or psychological actions, no matter how synchronized. The U.S. does not seem to understand this concept as evidenced by the war in Afghanistan. By reworking the narrative it can become more clearly understood by those abroad who believe U.S. forces are only in Afghanistan as occupiers. Hezbollah successfully demonstrated this idea of an effective narrative, as did Israel during Operation Cast Lead.

Secondly, the United States must inculcate an understanding amongst its military forces that all actions have effects, and these effects influence the actions and reactions of others. The military needs to become more concerned with the effects of their actions than with the actions themselves. When we are able to destroy a terrorist's safe haven in Afghanistan via an unmanned aerial vehicle, that is an advantageous situation for us. However, if by doing so we inadvertently enrage a village or tribe and polarize their beliefs against us then what effect have we really achieved? A better method might be to exploit the terrorist's brutality and frame our kinetic operations as honorable retribution against the neo-Taliban.

Forging successful outcomes is undermined if the U.S. military is unable, or unwilling, to completely synchronize its psychological and kinetic actions in support of a unifying narrative. The unity of actions is not something that can be done incompletely, or just some of the time. To do so will undermine our narrative and breed a culture of mistrust and doubt amongst those we seek to influence. We would be remiss if we did not revisit Aesop's Fable: The Boy who Cried Wolf. The fairy tale teaches us that liars are not to be believed; and, if we let our physical and kinetic actions continue to be mismatched, we are bound to lose credibility—just as the boy who cried wolf.

F.   CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The American way of waging war, historically based on the use of physical force, is aimed at destroying enemies and their capabilities faster than they can do to you. This method of achieving victory has proven itself effective in almost all of America's wars; however, there is a way to achieve the same victory at a fraction of the cost—waging warfare psychologically.   Influence operations have long been applied in differing degrees by a variety of forces, and by studying the application of psychological operations in combat environments we are able to uncover the best practices. Armed with the knowledge of what works, how, and why, we are able to implement these lessons learned to our own operations; the result being fewer lives lost, less treasure spent, and winning more quickly.

The case studies in this thesis have allowed us to answer the critical research questions outlined in Chapter I. The three cases examined in this thesis show that influence over the behavior of a target audience does, in fact, lead to more effectively achievable political outcomes. By influencing a population's behavior, you are more likely to be able to garner their support for your cause. Secondly, we have seen that a strong narrative is fundamental to waging war effectively and efficiently; without a solid foundation all else will fail. Thirdly, convincing actions add support and lend credibility to the narrative. Without the physical actions for support, the narrative collapses. Lastly, these cases demonstrate that preemptive and premeditated psychological warfare leads to quicker battlefield results. The application of preplanned influence operations that are integrated with kinetic actions assists in hastening a conflict to termination.   By resequencing psychological and kinetic operations at various times throughout a conflict we can create stronger, more synchronized, and believable messages, thus generating a style of warfare waged in a more effective and efficient manner—warfare waged psychologically.

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