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Changes in the security and defence policy of the State of Israel

Theses of the doctoral (PhD) dissertation

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1. Identifying the scientific problem

The security environment of the State of Israel and, consequently, its security and defence policy, can be considered very specific in many respects. This has been a consistent observation throughout the modern history of the Jewish state but is even more relevant today. For these reasons, and because of Israel's geopolitical location, neither the traditional IR theories, nor the concepts and principles of the Western, Westphalian system-based literature can be fully applied when it comes to a study of Israel's security and defence policy. The modern history of the Jewish state dates back to 1948, and since then it has been engaged in almost continuous armed conflicts with neighboring countries or non-state actors operating in their territories. The question arises whether the creation of the State of Israel has created a security environment in which these continuous armed conflicts are coded? If so, can it be said that the relationship between neighboring states and Israel has fundamentally determined the conflictuality of this region? If so, have any interstate peace agreements reduced the likelihood or level of intensity of armed conflict? Is it really worth focusing only on state actors when examining these relationships, or is the significance of non-state actors also relevant? Is it sufficient to focus only on neighboring states in our analysis, or is it useful to look further afield? Last but not least, if we accept that Israel's security environment is specific and that the state is constantly threatened by the outbreak of armed conflicts, what are the military capabilities and military equipment that have been able to guarantee the survival and security of the country in the past and that are capable of doing so in the present and the near future?

2. Aims of the research

During preparing this dissertation, I had the following objectives in mind:

1. To prepare a detailed analysis of how Israel's security environment has changed over the past 75 years, and how the creation and survival of the country has created the Levant sub-complex.
2. To demonstrate, through case studies, that the degree of conflict in the Levant sub-complex was fundamentally determined by the State of Israel's relationship with other states in the sub-region - i.e. the more hostile the relationship between the Jewish state

and the surrounding Arab states, the greater the likelihood of a large-scale armed interstate conflict.

3. To demonstrate that there have always been both state and non-state actors that threatened the security of the State of Israel during its history, however, during the period of interstate armed conflicts, Israeli security and defence policy focused primarily on state actors, while later there was an increase in the importance of non-state actors.

4. To demonstrate that today Israel must be ready for armed conflicts with non-state actors that have a high probability but pose low existential threat, and armed conflicts with state actors that have a low probability but pose high existential threat.

5. To explore how the Israeli security services could be capable of fighting both urban guerrilla warfare and conduct counter-terrorism operation, as well as fight a conventional war - even simultaneously.

6. To analyse how, historically, Israeli defence procurement and the domestic defence industry have tracked the relevant needs of the Jewish state, and what were and are the military equipment and capabilities that are critical for survival and effective management of the security environment.

3. Hypotheses

My hypotheses are, of course, in line with the objectives I have set myself, and they are the following:

H1: The creation of the Levant sub-complex was generated by the establishment and survival of the State of Israel.

H2: The degree of conflict in the Levant sub-complex was fundamentally determined by the State of Israel's relationship with other states in the sub-region - i.e. the more hostile the relationship between the Jewish state and the surrounding Arab countries, the greater the likelihood of a large-scale armed interstate conflict.

H3: Throughout the period under review, there have always been both state and non-state actors that threatened the security of the State of Israel, but during the period of interstate armed conflict, Israeli security and defence policy focused primarily on state actors, while later the importance of non-state actors increased. Today, Israel must be prepared for armed conflicts

with non-state actors that have a high probability but pose low existential threat, and armed conflicts with state actors that have a low probability but pose high existential threat.

H4: All of this can be achieved if the Jewish state can conduct counter-terrorism operations, fight urban guerrilla warfare and a conventional armed conflict, even simultaneously, for which adequate training and preparation on the one hand, and maintaining technological advantage, particularly in C4ISR, air defence and air power, unmanned and cyber capabilities, and precision munitions are essential.

4. Research methodology

As a theoretical framework for my doctoral dissertation, I used the Regional Security Complexes Theory (RSCT) created by Barry Buzan and Ole Weawer, and the complementary Security Sector Theory developed by the abovementioned authors and Jaap deWilde. I have used these theories as a basis for the case studies analysing armed conflicts in the Jewish state to illustrate the development of Israeli security and defence policy and the Levant sub-region. I have, however, analysed the very first period before the establishment of the state in a more comprehensive way, not through case studies, but by using a chronological framework: from the first Zionist settlements to the First World War, from the First World War to the 1939 White Paper, and from the 1939 White Paper to the establishment of the state. The reason for this is that there was no Jewish state at this time, the framework was looser, the historical context was different and the best way to describe the development in this period is to use these time boundaries.

My research is a problem- and case-oriented study, where the problem is always the security situation and the threats to Israel, and the cases are armed conflicts waged by the Jewish state. Since most of these conflicts took place in the past, I also regularly apply methods of historiography in my dissertation.[1] The positive side of these approaches is that they provide the researcher with the opportunity to comprehensively and thoroughly explain the "how" and "why" questions.

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[1] Robert K. Yin: Case study research: design and methods. Sage, 2003. pp. 5-9.

The primary methodological tool used in this doctoral dissertation is explaining-outcome process-tracing. The RSCT and security sector theory is in line with the process tracing method, as it examines actors at different levels (supranational/intergovernmental actors, states, non-stae actors) and roles (member of the RSCT, external power, isolating state), using different levels (global, regional, local) and different sectors (military, economic, political, social, environmental) to explain a given regional and/or local security structure - i.e., it seeks to identify the variables that affect regional security complexes. The dissertation analyses each case in isolation from the others, since the process tracing of outcomes is explicitly a single-case method, which implies that since the analysis itself is done within the case, conclusions can only be drawn within this framework.[2] In applying this method, an important circumstance is that only the cause itself (in this dissertation, the examined armed conflicts) can be considered as a certainty point, so that the research is as much about identifying the root cause as it is about understanding the process that led to the cause.[3] However, in addition, the cases of this dissertation - like the eyes in the chain – are interconnected and part of a larger, more comprehensive 'case': the development of Israel's modern history, security and defence policy. A collective, synthesizing interpretation of the aforementioned cases provides answers to the hypotheses of this dissertation.

The process of process-tracing is summarised below. The first step is to record the basic elements that are available.[4] These are the initial situation ('state A'), the cause ('state B') and the outcome ('state C') for each case study. This is also where any circumstances or actors that could potentially influence the sequence of events between the endpoints of the case studies are collected. The elements included should be broken down into as few discrete units as possible, and each element included should be necessary for the outcome of the process. This is followed by a second phase, during which the previously defined basics are operationalised. This will include the definition of specific analytical steps based on different sources (mainly literature) and the identification of evidence of causality.[5] The third step is to identify the elements of the process in a timeline. This is followed by a description of the results, a description of the activity carried out and a highlighting of the related intermediate processes, changes and an explanation

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[2] Derek Beach - Rasmus Brun Pedersen: Process-Tracing Methods: Foundations and Guidelines. University of Michigan Press, 2019.
[3] Melanie Punton - Katharina Welle: Applying Process Tracing in Five Steps. Centre for Development Impact, 2015.
[4] Nigel Simister - Vera Scholz: Process Tracing. INTRAC, 2017.
[5] Simister - Scholz: ibid.

of how these influenced the process as a whole.[6] The weight of each piece of evidence is then assessed. In this respect, a number of scaling methods are known. I used in this dissertation the most common that was developed by the methodological works of Stephen Van Evera, Andrew Bennett and David Collier.[7] This method uses four tests: straw in the wind, hoop, smoking gun, double decisive.

At the end of the process, I will evaluate my hypotheses regarding the process based on the evidence and tests carried out. It is important to note that the evidence for the mechanism as a whole is only as strong as the test results for the weakest points of the test. All this therefore opens up the possibility of confirm or disprove the whole mechanism as a basic hypothesis. [8]

In order to maintain the coherence of the analysis and to compare the effects of different armed conflicts, I have used the same procedure in each case. In chronological order, I have analysed the 1948 War of Independence, the 1956 Suez Crisis, the 1967 Six-Day War, the 1973 Yom Kippur War, the 1982 First Lebanon War, the 1987 First Intifada, the 2000 Second Intifada, the Second Lebanon War of 2006, tangentially the Gaza Strip operations and, in terms of its complex-forming effects, the 'Arab Spring' of 2011 - accordingly, **the period covered by the dissertation is from the establishment of the state to the post-2011 'Arab Spring' period, until 6th of October 2023.** As a starting point, based on the RSCT, I have presented the state of affairs and power relations in the Levant sub-complex (and, where relevant, the wider Middle East) at the time of the case studies. I examined Israel's security and defence policy problems, its security environment, the current attitudes of internal and external actors in the sub-complex, Israeli military developments and the role of external actors that were crucial for Israel's military needs. It is in fact a description of the situation prior to the conflict in question, based on the above aspects. In all the case studies, this was **state A**, which presupposes periods of more or less peace. From a methodological point of view, this was the description of the initial

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[6] Simister - Scholz: ibid.

[7] Straw in the wind test: passing this test is neither sufficient nor necessary to establish causation; if the evidence passes the test, it confirms the hypothesis but does not prove it; if the evidence does not pass the test, it suggests the irrelevance of the hypothesis but does not rule it out. Hoop test: Passing this test is not sufficient but necessary to establish causality; if the evidence passes the test: it confirms the hypothesis but does not confirm it; if the evidence fails the test, it excludes the hypothesis. Smoking gun test: compliance with this test is sufficient but not necessary to establish causality; if the evidence passes the test, it confirms the hypothesis; if the evidence fails the test, it suggests the irrelevance of the hypothesis but does not rule it out. Double decisive test: Passing this test is both sufficient and necessary to establish causality; if the evidence passes the test, it confirms the hypothesis; if the evidence fails the test, it excludes not only the hypothesis but all other hypotheses. Stephen Van Evera: Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science. Cornell University Press, 1997.;
Andrew Bennett: Process Tracing and Causal Inference. In Henry E. Brady - David Collier (eds). 823-830. o.

[8] Collier: ibid.

situation. A summary of each armed conflict was then presented, describing the main events and relevant facts, such as the number of belligerents, their military equipment, casualties, etc. These periods are typically short, intense and conflictual. For all case studies, this was **state B**, i.e. causation from a methodological point of view. I then analysed the post-conflict conditions, assessed its direct and indirect effects on Israel, the Levant sub-complex (if necessary, the wider Middle East) and external actors, and, if there was a significant shift, described the new security realities and their possible implications for Israeli security and defence policy. This post-conflict state is the **state 'C',** or outcome, for all case studies**.** This, like state A, the methodological starting point, assumes a more or less peaceful environment and covers a longer period.

For each sequence of events under investigation, there is a state A, B and C, so in the case studies, while investigating the 'how' and 'why', I use a process tracing methodology that also resonates with Hegelian dialectics. [9] In each case, the initial situation (i.e. the Hegelian thesis) is state A, the cause (i.e. the Hegelian antithesis), which is the conflict itself[10], is state B, while the outcome (i.e. the Hegelian synthesis) is state C.[11] state C, like state A, is more or less peaceful, but it is already a peaceful state that goes beyond state A by the effects of state B, and is therefore not qualitatively identical to state A. state C does not necessarily represent a greater degree of stability or a more secure environment from an Israeli perspective than the preceding state A, but it is qualitatively different. The continuity of the system is also reflected in the fact that the state 'C' of the earlier cases evolve into the state 'A' of the later cases. By juxtaposing the chain of states A, B and C, the boundaries of a threefold epoch are drawn for the whole dissertation. The first period is the interstate armed conflicts fought by the Jewish state, the last of which is the 1973 Yom Kippur War and the closing date of the first period is the 1979 Camp David Peace Treaty. The second era also began in 1979, but with the Islamic Revolution in Iran. The second era marks the period when Israel is no longer engaged in armed conflicts against states, but non-state actors (Lebanon wars, Intifadas, Gaza Strip operations). The end of the second era and the beginning of the third era is 2011, when two very significant regional

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[9] Hegel writes in his Phenomenology of Spirit: "The bud disappears when the blossom breaks through, and we might say that the former is refuted by the latter; in the same way when the fruit comes, the blossom may be explained to be a false form of the plant's existence, for the fruit appears as its true nature in place of the blossom. The ceaseless activity of their own inherent nature makes these stages moments of an organic unity, where they not merely do not contradict one another, but where one is as necessary as the other; and constitutes thereby the life of the whole." Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Phenomenology of Spirit. Akadémia Publishers, 1979. p. 10.

[10] Which erupts because of the unsustainability of the status quo, and essentially becomes the opposite of state A, relative peace, i.e. war.

[11] Which is the result of the collision of the unsustainable state A and state B.

events took place: the so-called 'Arab Spring' and the beginning of a significant decline in the US presence in the Middel East with the withdrawal from Iraq. These have led to the emergence of a security environment in which Israel must now clearly defend itself against a network of non-state and state actors, against their network, against their alliance system.[12] The third era is most succinctly described at the local level by the Israel vs. Iran-Hezbollah-Hamas (and other Palestinian terrorist organizations) hostility triangle, and at the regional level by the status quo states vs. resistance axis.

The essential difference between the case studies and the individual periods is that while in the former (albeit simplified, but profoundly correct) the peace-conflict-peace process is dominant, in the latter we clearly see a conflict-conflict-conflict process, where only the nature and characteristics of the conflicts vary. In both cases, however, maintaining a framework helps us to compare the parts and sub-elements qualitatively and, where applicable, quantitatively, while maintaining relative objectivity.

While my analysis focuses on the development of security and defence policy from the Israeli perspective, I also include a number of insights, for example, into the relations between the surrounding Arab states and the various external actors and other actors in the system, covering the local, regional and global spheres of analysis. The framework discipline of the dissertation is the research area of international security studies, but due to the interdisciplinary nature of the discipline, it also touches upon other fields and synthesizes the results obtained through their application. These include in particular military science, history, law and international studies. In terms of literature, my dissertation relies on statements by political and military leaders, public intelligence reports and armistice and peace treaties, UN General Assembly and UN Security Council resolutions as primary sources, and mainly on monographs and volumes of studies of Israeli, Western and, to a lesser extent, Middle Eastern authors, as well as studies and articles published in authoritative journals, and, where necessary, internet sources (mainly the official websites of arms manufacturers and authoritative newspapers) as secondary sources.

5. Conclusions chapter by chapter

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[12] The Axis of Resistance includes Iran, Syria, Hezbollah, the Houthis (Ansar Allah), some Palestinian groups (Hamas, Islamic Jihad), and other Iranian-backed Shiite militias in Iraq and Syria. The countries in the axis of resistance oppose Western regional influence (especially US influence), deny Israel's right to existence, and oppose certain extremist Sunni Islamist groups.

5.1. Chapter Two[13]

The second chapter reviews changes in Israeli security and defence policy from Ottoman times to the establishment of the state. I found that from the 1880s until the First World War, the idea of an independent Jewish state could be considered a project, a grand idea. Although various solutions were proposed, and Zionism received some degree of support from great powers from time to time, there was no realistic prospect of a state. At that time, there was no security and defence policy, since the armed activity of the Jews was limited to defending the settlements, occupying certain areas and setting up armed groups (Bar Giora, Hasomer). The First World War and the turbulence in international politics that followed, particularly British support (Balfour Declaration), brought the previously unthinkable, the creation of an independent Jewish state, a step closer. In the same time, it was the First World War when (after 2000 years) a Jewish military unit was created: the ZMC and later the Jewish Legion. However, the British also wanted to maintain good relations with the Arabs, and so, except in crisis situations (Arab uprisings), they always favoured them (White Paper 1922, White Paper 1939). The Jewish armed groups were almost always illegal, but it was the Arab uprisings that led to the creation of the Haganah, which was a better organized than ever before, and it was these uprisings that allowed British support to be given for a certain period. The most significant of these was the Arab uprising of 1936-39. Although the outbreak of the Second World War temporarily re-established common interest between the British and the Jews, the Zionist leadership after WWII clearly turned against Great Britain.

In the period between the adoption of UN General Assembly Resolution 181 (II) on 29 November 1947 and the proclamation of Israel's independence on 14 May 1948, a Jewish-Arab civil war raged, with (and partly because of) the deliberate inactivity of the British, at the end of which the Palestinian Arab forces suffered a major defeat, while the Jews took a major step towards consolidating their independent state.[14] However, as a result of these events (in addition to the still unresolved problem of Palestinian Arab refugees), the Jewish state became the primary security issue for neighboring Arab states, which were unable and unwilling to accept the defeat of the Palestinian Arabs, and thus implied the possibility of future attacks by these

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[13] The first chapter of the dissertation consists of the introduction, the theoretical and methodological framework, and the general principles of Israeli security and defence policy, so no partial conclusions were drawn in the first chapter.

[14] It should be noted that the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, and the formation of the Israel Defense Forces, which was largely based on the Haganah, is the culmination of a process of which there are just a few examples today: the transformation of a non-state actor into a state actor.

states. It is clear, therefore, that the establishment of Israel also led to the creation of a sub-complex within the Middle East, the Levant sub-region, as the emergence of the Jewish state in the region created a military-political environment in which the surrounding Arab states made its very existence a top security priority.

5.2. Chapter Three

The third chapter analyses Israel's armed conflicts between 1948 and 1973. In doing so, I revealed that Israel, which had changed from a non-state actor to a state actor, was the generating, creating factor of the RSC in Levant. Through the armed conflicts examined, I have demonstrated that without Israel, there would probably not be a separate regional security sub-complex in the region. This is because the establishment of the Jewish state created a military-political environment in which the surrounding Arab countries elevated Israel to the status of a primary security concern. This is evidenced by the fact that in the interstate conflicts in the region after 1948, one or more Arab states have always been on the same side against the Jewish state, while not waging war with each other (with exception of the so-called Black September of 1970, when Syrian and Jordanian troops clashed). Moreover, Arab states never have acted in alliance with Israel against other Arab states in armed conflicts. I proved that during the period of interstate armed conflicts, there was always hostility between Israel and the surrounding Arab countries (even in the case of Jordan, which sometimes cooperated pragmatically with the Jewish state), since from 1948 to 1979 none of them recognized the right of existence of the State of Israel - the turning point in this context was the peace with Egypt, which is still in force today.

5.3. Chapter Four

The fourth chapter analyses Israel's conflicts between 1982 and 2006. I revealed that the degree of conflict in the Levant sub-complex was fundamentally determined by the State of Israel's relations with other states in the sub-region: when Israel's relations with its neighbors were hostile, mainly along territorial claims (e.g. Sinai, Judea and Samaria), the Levant sub-complex was also in conflict (see Chapter 3). However, the countries that have made peace with Israel (Egypt and Jordan) have not been involved in armed conflict with the Jewish state after the peace treaty until today, so the peace treaties have proved to be a lasting stabilizing factor. I have also argued that lasting peace, given that each of Israel's neighbors had territorial claims,

required some kind of territorial compromise by one side or the other (Israel gave up Sinai, Jordan Judea and Samaria) - but only if state actors took control of the territories in question. When non-state actors such as the PA, Hamas or Hezbollah gained control of territories, conflictuality within the Levant sub-complex began to increase again, although they were all geographically limited and did not directly involve state actors other than Israel.

5.4. Chapter Five

In the fifth chapter, I examined the global, regional and local changes that followed the "Arab Spring" and the relative decline of the US presence in the Middle East and its impacts on the security environment surrounding Israel. I have proved that the period between 2011 and 6th of October 2023 has demonstrated that Israel must be able to simultaneously conduct counter-terrorism operations and fight urban guerrilla warfare primarily due to Hamas, and fight urban guerrilla warfare and unconventional armed conflict due to Hezbollah - while also being prepared for a possible Iranian attack, which is likely to be unconventional. I have shown that the threat posed by Hamas and Hezbollah have a high probability but pose low existential threat, while a possible armed conflict with Iran has a low probability but poses high existential threat. I have demonstrated that maintaining a technological advantage, particularly in C4ISR, air defence and air power, unmanned and cyber capabilities, and precision munitions can counterbalance potential numerical superiority of enemy forces, provide a head start in multi-front armed conflicts, and minimize losses in both manpower and military hardware.

6. Summarized conclusions

In my dissertation, I have shown that the State of Israel was founded in 1948 by a non-state actors (essentially Zionist Jews living in the British Mandate area of Palestine), thus transforming from a non-state actor to a state actor. This event was of paramount importance for the Middle East as a whole, and for the Levant sub-complex in particular: it was in fact the issue that became the common organizing force of the regional security complex in the Middle East, linking the area from the Atlantic to Afghanistan, and it was this event that specifically created the Levant sub-complex. During this period, between 1948 and 1973, Israel had to fight interstate armed conflicts with neighboring states, under constant threat from the south (Egypt), north (Syria) and east (Jordan). This situation changed after the Six Day War, with the threat from Jordan diminishing, and after 1973, with the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty of 1979 (the

Camp David peace treaty), the pressure from the south was drastically reduced. Thereafter, Israel's attention increasingly turned to hostile non-state actors, especially the PLO. In this process, the first Lebanon war of 1982 can be seen as a transitional episode, during which Israel made a show of force by striking a significant blow to Syria's military capabilities (thus reducing the threat from the north) and, although it was not long in coming, ultimately failed to achieve lasting success in Lebanon, despite having defeated the PLO militarily. In fact, the Lebanese intervention essentially 'created' a new enemy, Hezbollah, which was supported by Iran and which, in terms of capabilities and potential, today not only drastically exceeds the capabilities of Palestinian terrorist organizations (notably Hamas), but also dwarfs the military capabilities of many states compared to the Shiite terrorist organization - which, although not a state actor, it is justified to consider it as a state in many (mainly military) aspects. The threat from Syria has thus been considerably reduced since 1982, but on Israel's northern borders, in the form of Hezbollah, it was gradually rebuilt and even intensified until 2000 and continues to this day. The threat from the east, from Jordan, was effectively eliminated in 1994 with the peace agreement between the two countries, but the first and, even more so, the second intifada in Judea and Samaria, firstly through Fatah and then, nowadays, mainly through Hamas and Islamic Jihad, have also re-established itself in this area too - although to date this is where Israel has the greatest room for maneuver. Also, a consequence of the second intifada was the unilateral Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, which resulted in Hamas gradually taking control of the Strip between 2005 and 2007, thus reinvigorating the threat from the south and opening the way for a cyclical expansion of military clashes between the terrorist organization and Israel. Subsequently, as a result of these developments and other events in the wider Middle East, notably the Arab Spring and the relative decline of the US presence, the wider security environment in Israel and in particular the Levant sub-complex has become significantly more unstable than before, where Iran, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and, to a very limited extent (only with regard to issues directly threatening the country's security), Israel are competing for dominance, while none of them can become hegemonic. Israeli analysts assess the current strategic situation as being essentially determined by four interest groups: Iran and the axis of resistance, the pragmatic or moderate Arab states led by Saudi Arabia (+ Israel), the Muslim Brotherhood, and the Salafi, jihadist forces. Although no single actor or interest group has been able to achieve complete dominance, Iran, which also has considerable influence in Syria, Lebanon and the Gaza Strip, can be seen as the relative winner of this period. In addition, the Persian state does not recognize Israel's right to exist, is hostile to the Jewish state in all areas and has an extensive nuclear and ballistic missile program. As a result, given that Iran is behind non-state actors

hostile to Israel, the Islamic Republic of Iran is now Israel's greatest and most dangerous enemy, and the threats it poses fundamentally shape Israel's security and defence policy.

So there is a kind of cyclical pattern: between 1948 and 1994, Israel gradually (repeatedly) defeated its hostile neighbors, made peace with those it could, and tried to deter those it could not make peace with. Thus, slowly, threats from state actors in the north (Syria), east (Jordan) and south (Egypt) were eliminated or drastically reduced. However, in somewhat parallel to this, non-state actors have gained ground in all three direction, so that today the Jewish state also faces threats from all three directions.

In addition to the above, I have explored the military equipment and, to some extent, the strategies and tactics with which the Jewish state has fought its wars over the past 75 years. I have presented the equipment developed and deployed to address the most current problems. I demonstrated that during this time Israel has always needed a major power to provide it with high-tech military equipment, but that it has not only adapted and modified these to its own needs, but that Israel now has its own military developments and capabilities in many areas. I have analyzed that the current security environment requires the Jewish state to be able to conduct counter-terrorism operations, fight urban guerrilla warfare and an unconventional armed conflict, even simultaneously, for which adequate training and preparation on the one hand, and maintaining a technological advantage on the other, especially in C4ISR, air defence and air power, unmanned and cyber capabilities, and precision munitions, are essential.

I have shown both qualitatively and quantitatively that if relations between Israel and the surrounding countries were poor, the degree of conflict in the sub-complex was high, so they fought interstate armed conflicts with each other, which were short but of extremely high intensity. I have demonstrated that, with the cessation of interstate armed conflicts, Israel's armed conflicts with non-state actors were protracted, low intensity, and low existential risk. Consequently, the Yom Kippur War, followed by the Camp David peace treaty, and the first Lebanon War, the first phase of which was a transitional one, marked a clear epochal boundary.

All four hypotheses were confirmed after they were examined by the sooner described methodology. Accordingly, the summarised result of the research - in the light of the hypotheses - is that:

1. I have proved that the Levant sub-complex was generated by the establishment and survival of the State of Israel.

2. I found that the degree of conflict in the Levant sub-complex was fundamentally determined by the State of Israel's relationship with other states in the sub-region - i.e. the more hostile the relationship is between the Jewish state and the surrounding Arab states, the more realistic the possibility is of a large-scale armed conflict between states.

3. I have argued that there have always been both state and non-state actors that threatened the security of the State of Israel during its history, but that during the period of interstate armed conflict, Israeli security and defence policy focused primarily on state actors, while later the importance of non-state actors increased. I have also explored the need for Israel today to be prepared for both armed conflicts with non-state actors (that has a high probability but poses low existential threat) and armed conflicts with state actors (that has a low probability but poses high existential threat).

4. I have demonstrated that all of these can be achieved if the Jewish state is capable of conducting counter-terrorism operations, and fight urban guerrilla warfare and a conventional armed conflict, even simultaneously, for which adequate training and preparation on the one hand, and maintaining a technological advantage, notably in C4ISR, air defence and air power, unmanned and cyber capabilities, and precision munitions, on the other, are essential.

7. New scientific results

I consider the following to be new scientific results:

1. I have discovered and proven that the Levant sub-complex was generated by the creation of the State of Israel.

2. I have shown that there is a clear correlation between the likelihood of interstate armed conflict in the Levant sub-complex and the relations between Israel and the Arab countries of the sub-complex. I have shown that the worse the relationship is, the greater the likelihood of armed conflict is - but if the relationship between Israel and an Arab country is settled by a peace treaty, from that point onwards the likelihood of interstate armed conflict is reduced to almost zero, based on current experience.

3. I have examined the emergence and development of the main non-state actors hostile to Israel, primarily the PLO, Hamas and Hezbollah. During this examination, I have revealed that throughout the period studied by the dissertation, there have always been non-state actors alongside state actors that have threatened the security of the State of

Israel. At the same time, I have demonstrated through case studies that during the period of interstate armed conflict, Israeli security and defence policy focused primarily on state actors, but that later, as relations between the Jewish state and the surrounding Arab states settled down or became less conflictual for other reasons, the importance of non-state actors increased.

4. I have shown that today Israel must be prepared for armed conflicts with non-state actors (Hamas, Hezbollah), which has a high probability but poses low existential threat, and armed conflicts with state actors (Iran), which has a low probability but poses high existential threat. In addition, I have explored that due to different types of actors the Israeli security services have to be capable of fighting both urban guerrilla warfare, conduct counter-terrorism operations and foght a conventional war - even simultaneously.

5. For the first time in the Hungarian literature, I analyzed and evaluated the changes of the Israeli security and defence policy along an organic developmental process, using the same methodological approach (A-B-C stages), from the first Zionist settlements until 6th of October 6, 2023. In doing so, I have shown its organic evolution and how it has continuously adapted to the changing security environment.

6. I have demonstrated that Israel's modern history can be divided into cyclical pre-conflict ("A")-conflict ("B")-post-conflict ("C") periods, whereby the state of C in one period and the state of A in the next period may overlap, but are never qualitatively identical.

7. I have argued that the modern history of the Jewish state can also be divided into three major periods: the era of armed conflicts between states (1948-1973/1979), the era of armed conflicts with non-state actors (1979-2011), and the era of armed conflicts against a network of state and non-state actors (locally, the Israel vs. Iran-Hezbollah-Hamas hostile triangle, and at the regional level, the status quo vs. the axis of resistance).

8. I identified and summarized the qualitative data (manpower, military equipment, casualties, etc.) of the main armed conflicts of the Jewish state in a comprehensive system.

9. I was the first in the Hungarian literature to summarize the development of the State of Israel's defence capabilities and military equipment from the first Zionist settlements until 6th of October 2023. I have explored how Israeli defence acquisitions and the domestic defence industry have supplied the current needs of the Jewish state, what were and are the military assets and capabilities that are critical for the survival and effective management of the security environment.

8. Recommendations

The security environment in the State of Israel is constantly and dynamically changing, and therefore provides a constant basis for new studies, theses and doctoral dissertations. The present dissertation was completed on 6th of October 2023, but just one day later, on 7th of October 2023, events took place those in many ways led to a conflict on a scale not seen since the Yom Kippur War. Both the events of 7th of October 2023 itself and their aftermath could be an excellent area for research, both at the local, regional/sub-regional and global levels.

The strucutre of the Middle East security complex, as formulated by the Copenhagen School, could be an interesting issue to further examine from a theoretical perspective. A legitimate critical question is whether the statement that the Levant and the Persian Gulf sub-complexes are separate sub-regions or whether the high degree of overlapping between the two sub-complexes and the security problems of their actors has led to a fusion of the two sub-regions?

The results of the research could also be tested in more detailed researches specifically on bilateral relations between Israel and the surrounding Arab states.

9. Practical use of research results

The dissertation and its results can be used:
1. Researches related to regional security in the field of military and security studies.
2. To broaden the knowledge of security and defence policy researcher on the Middle East, the Levant sub-complex and the State of Israel, and to study the security and defence policy of the Jewish State in more depth.
3. For students enrolled in the National University of Public Service's Military Leadership and Security and Defence Policy degree programs, in the fields of security policy, regional security, defence policy, the Middle East, security challenges of the 21st century and military history.
4. In support of the work of the defence planning specialists of the Hungarian Defence Forces, as well as in training courses and training programs held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, the Hungarian Defence Ministry, the Hungarian Defence Forces and partner organizations.

10. Publication list

- István Mihály Király: A Yishuv biztonság- és védelempolitikájának változásai az oszmán időktől az államalapításig. In: Honvédségi Szemle, (150), 4. 113-127.

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- István Mihály Király: A Neturei Karta és a vallásos cionizmus hatása Izrael Állam biztonságára. In: Pohl Árpád (szerk.): Biztonság és honvédelem – Fenntartható biztonság és társadalmi környezet tanulmányok. Ludovika Egyetemi Kiadó, 2020. 1773-1787 .

- István Mihály Király: A szíriai polgárháború hatása a levantei szubrégió erőegyensúlyára – egy új szubkomplexum evolúciója? In: Szakmai Szemle, (18), 2. 53-75.

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- István Mihály Király: A szentföldi keresztények biztonsági helyzete. In: Kaló József – Ujházi Lóránd (szerk.): Budapest-jelentés a keresztényüldözésről 2018, Dialóg Campus Kiadó, 2018. 89-100.

- István Mihály Király: Szaúd-Arábia és Irán katonai képességeinek, védelmi iparának és védelmi költségvetésének összehasonlító elemzése. In: Nemzet és Biztonság, 2018/1. 100-114.

11. Professional-scientific biography

Dr. István Mihály Király hold a BA degree of International Studies (Eötvös Lóránd University, Faculty of Social Sciences, 2015), MSc degree of International Security and Defence Policy (National University of Public Service, Faculty of International and European Studies, 2017), and MA degree in law (Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary, Faculty of Law, 2021).

In 2015, she spent a semester in Turkey in the framework of the ERASMUS program at the University of Kocaeli. During this semester, the main focus was on Turkish, Middle Eastern and global politics, the relationship between religion and politics and minorities in the Middle East and Caucasus.

In 2014, she was a trainee in the Foreign Trade Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade for a two-month programme. Between 2016 and 2018, she held a political officer position at the Embassy of the State of Israel in Budapest.

His academic research focuses on the security and defence policy processes in Israel and the Middle East, especially the military dimension of sectoral issues of security, and the military history of the region. He has also published on the impact of Jewish religious extremism on Israeli security policy and on the relationship between international military law and the IDF Code of Ethics.